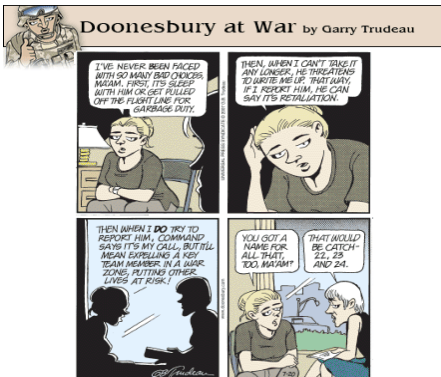


# ADVOCATE

## Doonesbury creator to accept award at September WIM meeting

Doonesbury© creator Garry Trudeau and retired Navy Capt. Barbara Brehm will accept the Alliance for National Defense Positive Voice Awards at the AND/WREI Eighth Conference on Women in the Military September 25.



Garry Trudeau is honored for his visible support of service women and women veterans in Doonesbury©.

Capt. Brehm is being recognized for her years of service for her years of service to the support of military women.

The conference, titled *Moving Forward Using the Lessons of* **Continued on Page 3**

## AND Awards 2009 Foote and Sadler Scholarships

The Alliance for National Defense has proudly awarded its 2009 Foote and Sadler scholarships to two deserving military women.

Honoring Brigadier General Evelyn P. Foote, USA, Ret., the Foote Scholarship is reserved for a currently serving enlisted woman who is enrolled for at least six credit hours at an accredited college or university; the Sadler Scholarship, named for Captain Georgia Sadler, USN, Ret., is intended for a woman enrolled in her second year in an accredited ROTC program. Each scholarship is for \$2,500.

The Foote Scholarship has been awarded to Sgt Trillitye Finlayson (below), a student



at Dickinson State University, Dickinson, ND. Sgt Finlayson is majoring in Biology and hopes to go to medical school and ultimately become an Army doc-

tor. She deployed to Iraq in June 2007 with the North Dakota National Guard where she worked in the command center at Camp Slayer and went on patrols. Sgt Finlayson is active in her community working with Big Sister Program among other activities.

The Sadler Scholarship went to Air Force ROTC Cadet Claire Fiandt (photo in the next Advocate), at Marquette University, Milwaukee WI majoring in biomedical sciences. Cadet Fiandt plans to be an Air Force physician. She volunteers weekly at a local hospital in the neo-natal intensive care unit, plays intramural sports and is active in student organizations.

AND directors plan to present the scholarships to recipients at the units or schools in early Fall.

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  - Pioneer RADM Michelle Howard...Page 14

**The Alliance for National Defense (AND)** is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to being a positive voice for military women. Supporters include officer and enlisted military personnel from all Services (active, retired, reserve and guard) and civilians interested in military issues. Support comes from contributors and outside donors such as individuals and foundations.

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## ***A Letter from AND's President***

It has been a busy spring and summer for the Alliance Board, members of the National Advisory Committee and our supporters, as we continue to work at outreach and service to women in the military.

I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge their work, and to provide some updates.

As you can see from another article in this edition of *The Advocate*, and posted on the website, the Alliance has awarded its first scholarships, to an ROTC cadet, and to an enlisted woman in college. There has been a lot of work in the process, and a learning curve for us. Special thanks to Barbara Lee for creating the idea and doing a final review, to Sandi Draude and Gen. Jeanne Holm for their great work in evaluating the applications, and to Sherry de Vries for shepherding the whole process. We're already looking forward to next spring's new round of applications and selections.

In other outreach, the Alliance sponsored participants at the Sea Services Leadership Association (SSLA) Women's Leadership Symposium in June. There were over 600 participants from the Sea Services – a steadily rising number at a gathering that provides more networking, mentoring and professional education opportunities every year. We look forward to working with the group next year, and hope to see similar Army and Air Force conferences that we can also support. Thanks to Stephanie Miller for her work on the symposium and getting us involved.

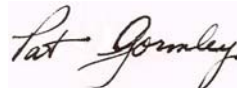
As this goes to press, Rep. John McHugh of NY has been nominated to be Secretary of the Army. In view of his actions in 2005 supporting HASC Chair Rep. Duncan Hunter in working to limit the status and roles of military women in combat theatres, the Alliance – Board and NAC members – and our allies, including WREI and the National Women's Law Center, mobilized to educate Senators on the issues surrounding the nominee. Particular thanks go to Holly Hemphill and Gen. Clara Adams-Ender [who visited Senator Webb and spent considerable time with him and his staff], as well as Duffy Campbell, Judy Youngman, Bob Kaufman, Lory Manning and Barbara Lee.

I regret to announce that we are losing Georgia Sadler as Editor of the *Advocate*. After eight busy years in this position, she thinks she has earned the right to a rest – hard to argue with that! Fortunately, she will remain on the board, and will be writing for the newsletter and collecting material. We appreciate her dedicated service.

As we work with WREI on the Fall conference, we are looking forward to presenting this year's Positive Voice Awards to Captain Barbara Brehm, for her years of service to the support of military women, and to Garry Trudeau, for his visible support of service women and women veterans in *Doonesbury*®. Check the website for details; we have a superlative schedule being arranged by Lory Manning of WREI. Hope to see you at the Women's Memorial on September 24 and 25.

Thanks to all our supporters for your encouragement and time and financial backing, for news and critiques, and for letting us know that we have a solid underpinning as we pursue issues in support of military women and veterans. If I have left out anyone here, my apologies. We are fortunate to have tremendous assistance from a variety of folks.

Lastly, thanks to the Alliance Board of Directors. What a stellar group, which provides leadership and direction and plain hard work. It is a pleasure working with them. And since they did sign on for another term, we'll continue to press on.



Pat Gormley, Captain, JAGC, USN (Ret)

# White House, VA Honor WWII Women

## WWII Wasps Honored



President Obama signed a bill awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) July 1 in a White House ceremony

"The Women Airforce Service Pilots courageously answered their country's call in a time of need while blazing a trail for the brave women who have given and continue to give so much in service to this nation since," said Obama.

"Every American should be grateful for their service, and I am honored to sign this bill to finally give them some of the hard-earned recognition they deserve."

Attending the ceremony were three WASPs and five active duty women Air Force pilots.

## Army Pioneer, BG M.C. Bailey Dies

Brigadier General Mildred Inez C. Bailey, 90, the eighth Director of the Women's Army Corps (WAC), died July 18, 2009 in Washington, DC.

She was born and raised in North Carolina. A 1940 graduate of the Woman's College, University of North Carolina, she also did postgraduate

*Continued on Page 10*

## Coast Guard Cutter Named for Capt. Stratton



for Captain Dorothy C. Stratton.

Stratton left her position as Dean of Women at Purdue in 1942 to organize the first Women's Reserve for the Coast Guard. During her four years as Director, she recruited and led 10,000 enlisted women and 1,000 officers. Stratton died in 2006 at age 107.

First lady Michelle Obama will serve as Stratton's sponsor. This is the first time a first lady has ever sponsored a

The Coast Guard has laid the keel for a new National Security Cutter named

Coast Guard cutter. As the sponsor the first lady will be involved in the life of the cutter. This is Obama's first formal association with a United States Coast Guard cutter and serving as Stratton's sponsor is an extension of her commitment to supporting America's men and women in uniform and their families.

"I am honored to serve as sponsor of the Coast Guard Cutter Stratton, named



after one of the most extraordinary women to serve our nation in uniform," said Mrs. Obama.

## AND/WREI Conference convenes Sept. 24

*Continued from Page 1*

*the Past Decade*, will be held at the Military Service for America Memorial in Arlington, VA, September 24 and 25.

The conference features a keynote address by Brigadier General Rhonda Cornum, Medical Corps, U.S. Army, as well as discussions on a wide range of timely, relevant subjects.

Panels and speakers will delve into *Military Culture and Its Impact on Women; The Quilt: Honoring Military Women; Women Deploying; International Issues; Veterans Medical Issues; and The Outlook for Women Veterans*.

A detailed, if still tentative conference schedule, registration information, online payment of conference fees and many more details on this must-attend event are now available on the AND website at <http://www.4militarywomen.org/WIM09.htm>.

Mark your calendars now and join us for this important event.

## Mothers' Deployment Effects Health



Photo courtesy: U.S. Army

Military women are being deployed overseas in greater numbers than ever before. Although separation of a service member from their family is always a hardship, for mothers of adolescent children, deployment comes at even more of a personal sacrifice.

This is the conclusion of a study conducted by George Mason University Associate Professor Mona Ternus released in Apr 2009. Ternus is also a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force Reserve.

Ternus analyzed survey responses from 77 women who recently completed a military deployment, including 60 percent who had deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan and who were also mothers of adolescent children aged 10 to 18 years.

Deployment served as a catalyst for health and behavior change of both mothers and their adolescent children—and the longer the deployment, the greater the effect. Ternus found strong correlations between the number of symptoms women experi-

enced during deployment and the number of days deployed.

Making arrangements for child care was one of the most common stressors mentioned by participants. Ternus also found that, as a result of single parent households or dual-military families in which both parents deployed at the same time, 36 percent of the respondents reported having no primary parent in the home during the time of deployment.

In addition, Ternus discovered that a longer deployment leads to increased risk behaviors among adolescent children such as non-accidental physical injury, physical fights, incidents involving weapons, cigarette smoking/chewing tobacco, alcohol, illegal drug use, self mutilation, drop in school grades and attempted suicide.

"A theme emerged in which the military women expressed a great deal of guilt related to their absence from the home. Mothers commented on missing family events, the effect on caregivers who were supporting the family and the need to be both at work and home," Ternus said. She hopes her research will help "to discover new ways that family relationships can be built even while people fulfill their military obligation, service and commitment to their country."

## Duckworth confirmed, honored

Iraq War veteran Tammy Duckworth was confirmed by the Senate to be Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs in the Department of Veterans Affairs. April 22.



Previously, she was the Director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs in Illinois.

Subsequently on May 5, she was honored by Running Start at their annual Women to Watch Awards in Washington, DC.

Running Start is a non-profit organization dedicated to inspiring young women to run for political office.

"We make our nation stronger by supporting the 200,000 women currently serving in the armed forces and the approximately 1.7 million women veterans in our country that need our help," she told the 300 young women at the event.

"It's time to stop being surprised that America's daughters are fully capable of doing their jobs and fighting for our freedoms. I recognize that I am here today because I stand on the shoulders of the men and women who opened the doors for women to serve," Sec. Duckworth added.

## More Honors for WWII Women

### Central Postal Battalion

Three members of the WWII Central Postal Directory Battalion received the Army's Freedom Team Salute Commendations at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial at Arlington Cemetery February 25.

The battalion of black women played a significant role in maintaining troop morale by



clearing a six month backlog of seven million pieces of mail in England in three months and then were sent to France to do a similar job.

The unit was commanded by Major Charity Adams Earley, who joined the Army in 1942 and became the first black woman to be a commissioned officer.

### SFC Gertrude Noone

Secretary of the Army Pete Geren presented the oldest living woman veteran, 110 year old Gertrude Noone, with a certificate honoring her accomplishments March 31 in Milford, CT.

"She has lived a life as part



of the history of our country and the history of the Army and we wanted to present her a token of our appreciation from our Army today," he said.

She served in the Army from 1943 to 1949, attaining the rank of Sergeant First Class. During the war she worked in a dispensary and one of her patients was General Omar Bradley who, she said, "used the clinic a couple of times a week for a very bad sinus problem." At the time of her discharge, her commanding officer wrote that "her great dependability, willingness to work and other forms of loyalty and devotion to duty will always be remembered by us." As part of the ceremony, three women and three men were sworn into the Army.

### Ruthanna Weber

Ruthanna Weber, a 94-year-old World War II veteran from Maryland, participated in the Blessing of the Fleets at the U.S. Navy Memorial April 4, 2009.

Of note are the light blue stripes on her uniform. During WWII it was decided that it

**ASK INSTEAD WHAT  
YOU CAN DO FOR WIMSA!  
Help AND Help WIMSA**



The Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation maintains and operates the nation's **only** major memorial honoring and telling the stories of the 2½ million female veterans.

WIMSA is hurting for cash and has launched a fundraising campaign it hopes will help maintain operations, make up for a two-year shortfall — and ultimately stave off closure.

AND is committed to helping in this important campaign and your contributions — large and small — can make a BIG difference.

Please contribute to WIMSA today—either directly or through the special Support WIMSA page on the AND website.

would not be appropriate for women officers to wear the gold stripes worn by male officers. Initially, senior Navy officers proposed red, white and blue stripes, but after the Director of the WAVES objected, it was decided to make them light blue.



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## Moving up

**Brig Gen. Susan Y. Desjardins, USAF** has been nominated to the grade of major general while serving as the Deputy Director, Strategic Plans, Requirements and Programs, Headquarters Air Mobility Command, Scott Air Force Base, IL.

**Brig Gen Susan J. Helms, USAF** has been nominated to the grade of major general while serving as the Director, Plans and Policy, Headquarters, U.S. Strategic Command, J-5, Offutt Air Force Base, NE.

**Brig. Gen. Janet C. Wolfenbarger, USAF** has been nominated to the grade of major general while serving as the Director, Intelligence and Requirements, Headquarters Air Force Materiel Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, OH.

**Brig Gen Mary Kay Hertog, USAF** has been nominated to the grade of major general while serving as the Director, Security Forces, Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics, Installations and Mission Support, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington.

**Brig Gen Susan K. Mashiko, USAF** has been nominated to the grade of major general while serving as the Vice Commander, Space and Missile Systems Center, Air Force Space Command, Los Angeles Air Force Base, CA.

**Brig Gen Suzanne M. Vautrinot, USAF** has been nominated to the grade of

major general while serving as the Deputy Commander, Joint Functional Component Command – Network Warfare, U.S. Strategic Command, Fort George G. Meade, MD.

**RADM (lower half) Janice M. Hamby, USN** has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral. Hamby is currently serving as director for Command Control Systems, J6, North American Aerospace Defense Command/director, architectures and integration, J6, U.S. Northern Command, Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.

**RADM (lower half) Michelle J. Howard, USN**, (see story on page 11) has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral and assignment as Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 2.

**COL Therese M. O'Brien, USAR** has been nominated for appointment to the grade of brigadier general and assignment to Commander (troop program unit), 300th Military Police Brigade (Internment/Resettlement), Inkster, MI.

**Col Eden J. Murrie, USAF** has been nominated for appointment to the rank of brigadier general. Col. Murrie is currently serving as the commander, 100th Air Refueling Wing, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Royal Air Forces Mildenhall, England.

**CAPT Nanette M. Derenzi, USN** has been nominated for

appointment to the rank of rear admiral and assignment as the Deputy Judge Advocate General of the Navy.

**CAPT Katherine L. Gregory USN** has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (lower half). She is currently serving as Chief of Staff, First Naval Construction Division, Norfolk, VA.

**CAPT Eleanor V. Valentin, USN** has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (lower half). She is currently serving as Chief of Staff, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD.

**CAPT Gretchen S. Herbert, USN** has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (lower half). She is currently serving as Deputy Director for the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Next Generation, N6, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, DC.

**CAPT Ann C. Phillips, USN** has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (lower half). She is currently serving on the Chief of Naval Operations Strategic Studies Group, Newport, RI.

**CAPT Elizabeth L. Train, USN** has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (lower half). She is currently serving as Commanding Officer, Center of Naval Intelligence at Virginia Beach, VA.

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## Moving up

**Brig Gen Judith A. Fedder, USAF** has been nominated to the grade of major general while serving as the Director, logistics, Headquarters Air Combat Command, Langley, VA.

**CAPT Diane E. H. Webber, USN** has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (lower half). She is currently serving as Executive Assistant to the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Communication Networks, N6, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, DC.

**COL Roma Amundson, ANG** has been promoted to the rank of brigadier general

in the Nebraska National Guard.

## Women Appointed to Senior OSD Positions

- The following women have been appointed to senior positions in the Office of the Secretary of Defense in Washington,.
- Rebecca Hersman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction), Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy).
- Kathleen Hicks, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Strategic Plans and

Forces), Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy).

- Elizabeth McGrath, Assistant Deputy Chief Management Officer, Office of the Deputy Chief Management Officer.
- Julianne Smith, Principal Director (Europe and NATO), Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy).
- Christine Wormuth, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Homeland Defense and America's Security Affairs), Office of the Under Secretary of (Policy).

## On the move

**Vice Admiral Ann E. Rondeau, U.S. Navy** to President, National Defense University, Washington, DC.

**Major General Kathleen D. Close, U.S. Air Force** to Director, Logistics and Sustainment, Headquarters Air Force Materiel Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, OH.

**Major General Mari K. Eder, U.S. Army Reserve** to Commander, U. S. Army Readiness Command, Fort Jackson, SC.

**Brigadier General Mary K. Hertog, U.S. Air Force** to Commander, Second Air Force, Air Education and Training Command, Keesler Air Force Base, MS.

**Brigadier General Michelle D. Johnson, U.S. Air Force** to Director, Strategy, Policy, Programs and Logistics, Headquarters, U.S. Transportation Command, Scott Air Force Base, IL.

**Brigadier General Mary A. Legere, U.S. Army** to Commanding General/Commandant, Army Intelligence Center and Fort Huachuca, Fort Huachuca, AZ.

**Brigadier General Anne F. Macdonald, U.S. Army** to Assistant Commanding General, Afghan National Police Development, Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan, Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

**Brigadier General Patricia E. McQuiston, U.S. Army** to Commanding General, 21<sup>st</sup> Theater Sustainment Command, U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany.

**Brigadier General Michele G. Compton, U.S. Army Reserve** to Commander (Troop Program Unit), 9th Mission Support Command, Fort Shafter, HI.

**Brigadier General Leslie A. Purser, U.S. Army Reserve** to Deputy Chief, Army Reserve for Human Resources, Office of the Chief, Army Reserve, Washington, DC.



## Woman to Lead Army Drill Sergeants School

Command Sergeant Major Teresa King is the first woman selected to be the Commandant of the Army's prestigious Drill Sergeant School.

"This is a male-centric part of the Army," says Sergeant Major King, noting that her appointment "shows that the Army is emerging and ... they don't have any reservations



about putting the right person where they need to be.

According to the Associated Press she does not expect any trouble commanding the

## Woman Seventh Generation USMA Grad

Caroline Miller became the seventh generation in her family to graduate from West Point and become a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army.

"I consider it more of a privilege than a burden," Miller said. "I'm walking where my great-grandfathers have walked and I'm having the same opportunity that they had, to see what they saw, to do what they used to do. I'm part of an incredible tradition."

service's toughest instructors.

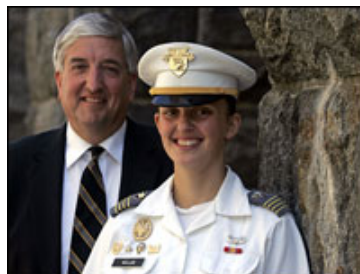
"It doesn't matter if you are male or female," she said. "I have always found that if you enforce your standards, people will respect you."

She hopes her selection will inspire other women in the military.

"If I can do it, other female soldiers can," CSM King added.

She told the *Fort Jackson Leader* that she is honored and humbled by the selection, and is grateful for the chance to take the reins.

"I feel like I'm chosen to lead a noncommissioned officer who is charged with a high degree of responsibility. I'm responsible for them as they lead, mentor, counsel and train America's finest. There's nothing else that can compare to that."



The line began in 1836 when Israel Carle Woodruff graduated and became a topographical engineer who helped defend Washington, DC against Confederate forces during the Civil War.

## WH Receptionist is Army-trained



Darien M. Page (seated above) is President Obama's White House receptionist .

She earned the job as a result of her work for the Obama campaign where she made travel arrangements and handled logistics for campaign field workers and senior strategists. But she also benefited from the experiences she had during her stint in the Army.

After finishing high school in Maryland, she followed a long line of others in her family by joining the Army. She worked as a paralegal in Baghdad, taking depositions in the Abu Ghraib prison.

She still wears a metal bracelet on her right wrist inscribed with the name of Sgt. Maj. Cornell W. Gilmore, her commander, who was killed when enemy fire struck his helicopter in late 2003.

Gilmore "taught us to lead, but to lead with a smile and be calm under pressure," she told Jeff Zeleny of the *New York Times*. "A lot of lessons that I learned in the Army help me here. There is a lot that goes on that I have to do with a smile even if I really don't want to."



## Ultimate Sacrifice

### Senior Airman Ashton L. M. Goodman, USAF, 21, of Indianapolis, IN



died May 26, 2009 near Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, of wounds sustained from an IED. She was assigned to the

43rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, Pope Air Force Base, NC. She was a vehicle operator dispatcher assigned to the Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team. This was her second tour in Afghanistan and just prior to her death had requested that it be extended. She told Master Sgt. Jason Neisen that she wanted to deploy because she enjoyed it and felt like she was really serving her country and helping people. She enjoyed interacting with and learning from Afghan women. She served as a member of the Provincial Reconstruction Team's women's affairs committee and regularly organized events and projects to directly improve the quality of life of Afghan women. She loved pets and had two cats and three fish. While in high school she had worked at a pet store and participated in the Zoo Teen Club, in which she volunteered at the Indianapolis Zoo. According to Sgt Neisen, "she knew all kinds of animal facts and was working toward becoming a veterinarian."

### Lieutenant Allison Oubre, USN, 27, of New Orleans, LA



died May 19, 2009 off the coast of Mexico in a crash during a training flight of a Navy HH-60 helicopter.

She was assigned to Helicopter Anti-Submarine Warfare Squadron 6 from Naval Air Station North Island, CA.

She graduated from Pope John Paul II High School in Slidell, LA and attended Vanderbilt University on a ROTC scholarship. She joined the Navy upon graduation.

Earlier this year she married LT Colter Menke, USN, and a formal wedding in New Orleans was planned for June.

Friends and family remember her as good-hearted, a problem-solver and an independent woman who was always ready for excitement. She had run with the bulls through the streets of Pamplona, Spain and toured cities in India when her ship made port calls.

At the time of her death, she and a friend were planning a trek up Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

### First Lieutenant Roslyn L. Schulte, USAF, 25, of St. Louis, MO



died May 20, 2009 near Kabul, Afghanistan of wounds suffered from an IED.

She was assigned to the Headquarters, Pacific Air Forces Command, Hickam Air Force Base, HI as an Intelligence Officer.

She grew up in Ladue, MO, near St Louis, and was captain of her high school's state championship lacrosse team.

She attended the Air Force Academy and graduated with military and academic honors in 2006.

Friends described her as smart, compassionate and determined. Even as a child, they said she always led the way. She was captain of the Air Force Academy's women's lacrosse team and was an intern for Senator Wayne Allard of Colorado. She assisted his staff with missile defense and other issues. Allard said that "she certainly fit that role of high-quality intern and did a tremendous job in our office." She was the first enemy combat-related death of a female graduate of the Air Force Academy.

# They Also Served — A Farewell to Old Friends

*Continued from Page 3*

work in languages there.

Bailey joined the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (later the Women's Army Corps) at Fort Bragg, NC in 1942, and attended the Officer



Candidate School. During her career she had a wide variety of assignments and culminating in her appointment on August 2, 1971, as Director of the WAC and promotion to Brigadier General, the second Army woman to be promoted to that rank. She retired from the Army in July 1975.

Her awards included the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal and six service ribbons.

In retirement, she traveled widely and served on a number of boards, including the WAC Foundation and the Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation, for which she raised \$1.7 million dollars.

**Johanna G. Schropp**, 77, died Apr 14, 2009 in Eagle River, AK.



In 1950, she enlisted in the Air Force and was assigned to McChord Air

Force Base, Washington in support of the Korean War. While there, she was a member of the WAF championship

swimming and basketball teams. She was discharged as a sergeant in 1951 and returned to Alaska where she worked as an office manager. In 1970, she married an Air Force officer and travelled the world until he retired in 1982. An avid outdoorswoman, she enjoyed hiking, camping and recreational mining. She also participated in sports, including ice skating, skiing, golf and was the member of a championship bowling team.

**Lieutenant Colonel Shelley Mayer, USMC (Ret)**, 59, died Apr 18, 2009 in San Marcos, CA of injuries sustained in a



motorcycle accident. She served in the Marine Corps for 21 years with a career that included

a number of firsts: the first woman Marine to be a Company Officer at the Naval Academy and the first woman to go into hostile fire zones in the Middle East. She was also one of the rare officers, male or female, promoted early three times. After retiring from the Marines in 1991, she joined the Los Angeles Police Department and took up golf, qualifying for national level tournaments. Family and friends described her an extremely gregarious, loving and fiercely loyal. Midshipmen who attended the Academy during her tenure there spoke of her with the highest regard. Reeta Whit-

ney said she "was a model of integrity, a prototypical Marine, a strict disciplinarian (although not without a sense of humor), and a person you never, ever wanted to disappoint. She was the type of officer and person we all wished we would one day become." Male midshipmen, even in the all male classes, also appreciated her. Joel Heil said "her tough but fair attitude combined with her leadership, professionalism and sincere empathy quickly won us over and made her a model to emulate during my 21 year Navy career." Steve Marr said "she was instrumental in providing him "a sound base of core values that I used in my 26 year naval career."

**Commander Ruth M. Pojeki, Nurse Corps, USN (Ret)**, 87, died Apr 19, 2009 in Palm Harbor, FL. As a career Navy nurse

her most memorable assignment was in 1965 when as a Lieutenant Commander she was



a member of a military medical team that worked for the State Department's Agency for International Development and was assigned to a provincial hospital to provide care to the Vietnamese, the Vietnamese military and "anybody else who showed up."

*Continued next page*

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# They Also Served — A Farewell to Old Friends

*Continued from page 10*

The hospital was located at an outpost in the Mekong Delta, not far from the end of the Ho Chi Minh trail. The head of the team said she and a fellow nurse were the ones that "kept the operating room and the recovery room humming." In a Nov 2004 issue of *Navy Nurse Corps Association News* she wrote that her most memorable experience was a 36-hour period when the hospital admitted 160 patients and performed 27 major surgical procedures. At the time of her retirement, she was the second highest ranking woman in the Navy.

**Margaret Joyce Williams**, 56, died Apr 24, 2009 in Tucson, AZ. She graduated from high school in 1970 and joined the Marine Corps the following



year. She completed boot camp at the top of her class and went on to Air Traffic Control School where she again finished first in her class and was the only woman graduate. She spent three years as an air traffic controller at the Marine base at El Toro, CA where occasionally she was the controller responsible for landing Air Force One with President Nixon aboard. After her discharge she became a dispatcher for the Oro Valley Police in Tucson and created a

911 call and dispatch center that was one of the finest communications centers in Arizona. She married and had a daughter, Sam Huff, who joined the Army and was killed by an IED in Iraq in 2005. Williams' remains were buried with her daughter's in Arlington National Cemetery,

**Airlie C. Bruce**, 94, died May 11, 2009 in Clyde Twp, MI. She graduated from the Henry Ford Hospital School of Nursing in Detroit in 1943 and served during World War II in the Army Nurse



Corps in New Guinea and the Philippines. In 1949, she moved to Alaska, where she worked as a nursing supervisor, TB consultant and Chief of the Public Health Nursing Section, Department of Health and Social Services. In 1979, she retired and returned to Michigan, where among her many activities she hosted a reunion of her World War II nursing unit.

**Lieutenant Colonel Virginia Sweet, US Air Force Reserve**, 88, died Jul 12, 2009 in Scotia, NY. In 1940, at age 19, she learned to fly in a civil pilot training program. When she completed 200 flying hours, she joined the WASP where she flew 52 different types of military aircraft as pilot-in-command, and qualified as co-pilot in four additional planes. After World War II she

received a commission in the Air Force Reserve and spent five years on active duty during and after the Korean War. She retired from the Air Force Reserve in 1979 with 30 years service. She had a lifelong aviation career, adding 55 different civilian types of aircrafts to her flight log, . She was an advanced ground school instructor and a flight examiner. She taught flying to ROTC cadets and civilian students. She was awarded diplomas from Duke University and the Sorbonne in France with degrees in languages. She later taught French, Spanish, and Latin.



**Delphine Biaggi Baeta**, 90, died Apr 24, 2009 in Sacramento, CA. She joined the Marines, along with three of her sisters, in 1943. Believed to be the first group of that many sisters to join a service branch, their swearing-in ceremony drew national news coverage and they appeared in promotional Marine Corps Women's Reserve ads. After basic training they were stationed at Camp Pendleton until released from service in 1945. In 1948 she returned to active duty, serving at Marine posts worldwide, retiring as a sergeant first class in 1968. In retirement she was treasurer and president of her local WMA chapter.

# News From At Home and Around the World

## Canadian Woman Soldier Killed in Afghanistan:

Trooper Karine Blais, 21,



was killed by an IED northwest of Kandahar City April 13. She had been in Afghanistan for just two weeks and was the second Canadian woman killed in action there.

Her commanding officer, Lt. Col. Jocelyn Paul told the Canwest (Canada) News Service that "Blais's gender never became an issue for the men who fought against the Taliban alongside her—she was simply a member of the squadron."

She went on to say that the Canadian Army has come a long way over the last 15 years. Right now, you can see women serving in every type of environment. These women show a lot of courage. They are here standing shoulder to shoulder with all the men in the battle group. Very often, especially with the younger ones, we don't make much difference now in terms of sex."

## All Female Crew Pilots Marine One:

Major Jennifer

Grievés, USMC was the first woman to pilot Marine One. She was designated to fly the President's helicopter in May 2008 and has flown both Presidents Bush and Obama.

On her last day she requested an all female crew and so was joined by co-pilot Major Jennifer Marino, USMC, and crew chief Sergeant Rachel Sherman, USMC, for another first.



Upon boarding the helo on the South Lawn of the White House, President Obama chatted briefly with Grievés and shook her hand.

Then she took off.

## First British Woman Soldier in Action in Afghanistan:

Lance Corporal Amy Thomas, 20, a Royal Military Policewoman, is thought to be the British Army's first female combatant in Afghanistan's. Her assignment to the elite Royal Marines is a result of more and more commanders requesting female military police support in Af-

ghanistan to conduct female searches in the culturally-sensitive environment and reduce resentment among the Afghan people.

Her other role was to join the male military police in gathering evidence and processing detainees in the fight to convict Taliban insurgents through the Afghan courts. She described to a reporter from the *Western Mail* in Wales how she quickly adapted to the male environment

"I was just myself – I just got on with it because you have to really," she recalled. "At first I thought I wouldn't be able to because I'm quite a girly girl, but once I was out the training just kicked in. The Marines did not treat me any differently as a girl, and I felt like one of the lads when

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I was out with them. Sometimes we would be out for four days at a time. I'd be carrying up to 48 hrs of rations, at least six litres of water a day, all my detainee handling and evidence-gathering kit, my personal kit, spare ammunition, helmet and body armour – it was heavy."

On March 20, 2009, the Marines, including Thomas, set off from Camp Bastion and were dropped by helicopter into a local town.

"As soon as we left the helicopters, the company came under fire and then it was non-stop with incoming small arms fire and mortars and 107 rockets," Thomas said.

"There were loads of Taliban in the area. I identified one of them running with a weapon and indicated him to the lads.

"They didn't see him so I took the shot. It went on all day and all night. We had to keep moving location through the village, moving from compound to compound. At the time I've never been so scared in all my life, but I don't think I was the only one."

**First Women Graduate from Palestinian Military Academy:** In June, 16 women were the first to graduate from the Palestinian Military Academy, reported the Associated

Press. In a rare display of women and men training alongside each other in the Middle East, it shows the growing influence of women



in a traditionally male-dominated society. Women did the same training as the men, which included marching, crawling, shooting, riding horses and jumping through rings of fire. The class included 148 men and the graduates will be incorporated into the Palestinian police, intelligence services and preventive security forces.

**British Military Women's Frontline Role Reviewed:** A review will be launched to examine whether female soldiers should be included in units whose key role is to seek out and engage the enemy on the ground. The review is partly due to European Union rules on equality that require reassessment of the issue every eight years. The Ministry of Defence said it has an open mind, but one former Army chief said integration would harm operations. In an interview on the BBC's Politics Show, Brig Richard Nugee, the Army's director of manning who is leading the review, said any

decision to change the rules would be taken for military reasons. "The real point is that we now have practical experience of women in combat in Afghanistan and Iraq and we want to see, genuinely want to see, what effect that will have on our military. "This is a very open-minded review, we have no conclusions yet."

In 2002, the Ministry of Defence decided there was not enough evidence to prove women could be integrated into the tightly-knit units which engage in the most extreme type of warfare. Former head of the Army, General Sir Mike Jackson, told The Politics Show he believed any change could lead to "concerns that operational effectiveness, particularly in the infantry, could be and probably would be, jeopardized".



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## Rear Admiral Michelle Howard: Navy's Modern Pioneer

*CDR Darlene M. Iskra USN (Ret), Ph.D.*

Rear Admiral Michelle Howard makes our nation proud as she continues to show she



is one of the most able naval warriors of our time. In April 2009, she took command of Expeditionary Strike Group 2 and several U.S. 5th Fleet task forces, including CTF 151, an international maritime coalition created to disrupt, deter and thwart piracy off the Horn of Africa. Only three days after Howard took command, CTF 151 was involved in the rescue of the captain of the cargo ship *Maersk Alabama*, who was kidnapped after the ship was attacked by Somali pirates.

In a recent NPR interview, she told host Robert Siegel, "we are focused on finding the pirates, countering the pirates, bringing the pirates to justice in each of our nations, or bringing the pirates to justice in a nation that is willing to prosecute. We understand the impact of the piracy on all of the commerce that flows through this area. This needs to be all the different nations of the world working to bring this to resolution."

This is not the first time Admi-

ral Howard has made the news. In March 1999, she became the first African American woman to command a U.S. Navy ship and is only the second African American woman in the Navy to become an admiral. She also is the first woman graduate of the Naval Academy to be selected for flag rank and recently was selected for two stars.

Admiral Howard has had an exciting sea-going career. Her initial tours were aboard a supply ship and the Navy's training carrier where she received the Secretary of the Navy/Navy League Captain Winifred Collins award for outstanding leadership. In the early 1990s, Howard spent four years aboard two ammunition ships. In 1996, two years after Congress rescinded the combat exclusion laws for women, she became Executive Officer of an amphibious warship. She also served as Commander, Amphibious Squadron 7 from May 2004 to September 2005, and deployed with Expeditionary Strike Group 5 which was involved in Indonesia tsunami relief efforts and maritime security operations in the northern Persian Gulf.

During her very busy 26 years of service she has served on eight different ships and deployed eight times. Her back-to-back sea tours are unusual for a Surface Warfare Officer and show that she is tena-

cious in her zeal to serve and that she is highly regarded by the Navy.

Her shore tours have not been much of a break. She was an action officer on the J-3 staff in the Pentagon on 9/11. Days ran into nights during the crisis, and during the subsequent war. She also served on the Joint and Navy Staffs and was the Senior Military Assistant to the Secretary of the Navy before she took her current command.

In a 2006 interview, Howard told me that she could not do what she does without the love and support of her husband. He is constantly seeking ways to help her in her career. When was she scheduled to get an award at the end of her Joint Staff, tour, he called to find out what award she was going to get. He then updated her ribbons, so after the ceremony she was able to put on the new set of ribbons and not be out of uniform for the reception. Now that's a supportive husband!

Fortunately for the Navy, Admiral Howard is still enthusiastic about her responsibilities, her support of the mission, and her commitment to acting as mentor and role model for the many men and women who look up to her.

We at AND salute her and wish her all the best in her current command.



## Congress Expands VA Health Care for Women

In June, House and Senate committees on Veterans Affairs agreed to expand health care services for female veterans, reported Rick Maze in *Navy Times*.

Provisions in the legislation will increase women's access to mental health counseling. Additionally, a three-region pilot program will be started in providing women who are primary caregivers access to VA employee childcare centers while receiving outpatient treatment. Women veterans receiving VA maternity care will be able to receive seven days of neonatal health care, either directly or by contract.

Also included in the legislations was a provision for internal and external reviews of VA programs to be conducted to determine whether women face any barriers to care. Rep. Michael Michaud (D-ME), chairman of the House health panel, said he believes these studies are among the most important provisions because they will look at whether the stigma of seeking mental health services, clinic operating hours, the distance of care and low gender sensitivity are factors discouraging women from getting the treatment they have earned. Michaud said their needs should not "fall by the wayside as we explore ways to

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improve health care for our veterans."

## Congress to SecDef: Revitalize DACOWITS

In April 2009, Reps Carolyn B. Malony (D-NY) and Eric Massa (D-NY) wrote to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates urging him to restore the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) "as a meaningful advisory body with authority to independently advise the Secretary of Defense on issues concerning military women."

They said that doing so "would be a highly effective way to quickly identify and address the obstacles to women choosing long-term careers in the armed forces, and would ensure the U.S. military is well prepared for today's wartime realities."

Specific actions should be taken, they said, to reestablish DACOWITS under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, increase its size to at least 25 members and provide it with an adequate budget to carry out analysis and data collection.

## VA reviews sexual assault care billing

The Department of Veterans Affairs will review the billing practices of its health centers in the wake of a *New York Times* article alleging improper charges for care relat-

ing to military sexual assault, the VA announced May 6.

The department is required by law to provide free care, including counseling and prescription drugs, to veterans who were sexually harassed or assaulted while in military service. However, the VA's Office of the Inspector General found this year that an outpatient clinic in Austin, TX, had repeatedly charged veterans, mostly women, for those services. Concerned that the practice may be more widespread, the VA decided to expand its review to a sampling of veterans' health care centers and clinics nationwide. Meanwhile, the Central Texas Veterans Health Care System, which oversees the Austin clinic, reimbursed patients who had been improperly billed.

The inspector general's review was prompted by complaints from a woman in Texas who said the clinic in Austin had for years charged her for care relating to military sexual trauma.

Her complaints reached Senator Daniel K. Akaka, (D - HI), Chair of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, who requested the review.

"Disabilities resulting from military sexual trauma, physical or invisible, must be treated like other service-connected wounds: V.A. has an obligation to provide and pay for the care," he said.

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