

4 May 1966

Dear Families and Friends of NOA:

Since the NOA's return from the GEMINI 8 recovery mission "all hands" in her crew have been enjoying an extended up keep period. This time, in our homeport, has been most welcome. We have had a good opportunity to place the NOA in better condition, but best of all, many of the men with families in or close to Mayport have been able to spend more time at home. Also, many men have been away-enjoying leave while others have been attending schools.

Many of you have surely noticed that the NOA has spent more time in Mayport this year than in years past. Except for those periods when a ship is deployed to the SIXTH Fleet in the Mediterranean, the goal is to operate at sea no more than 30 or so days out of every 90. On the NOA we have made every possible effort to see that everyone has the most liberty and leave consistent with the security and safety of the ship. Interestingly, the NOA, to the best of my knowledge, is one of 8 destroyers out of about 75 destroyers in the Atlantic Fleet which grants liberty on a six section liberty basis. This speaks highly of every man in the crew. This amount of liberty can be granted only if the men are well qualified and perform in an outstanding manner.

The wives of destroyer-men in Mayport have started a nursery at the dispensary. It is presently located in a large trailer near the entrance to the dispensary. Mothers will be able to leave their young well children at the nursery while they are in the dispensary for their own treatment or for the treatment of another child. There is no charge for this service; however, the success of this endeavor is dependent upon the wives of destroyer-men donating their time. I urge the wives of men on the NOA, who live in the Mayport area, to donate their time, a few hours a month at the most, to this most worth while effort. You are needed to staff the nursery with attendants to watch over the children. Let them know at the nursery when you will be available and for how long. The time you donate will be very much appreciated by all the other wives. To those wives who have already or will offer their services, Thank You Sincerely.

A little more information on the NOA's deployment to the SIXTH Fleet which begins when we leave Mayport on the 21st of June. On arrival in the Mediterranean the NOA expects to continue on to the Suez Canal, go through the canal and remain in the seas and ocean areas of the Middle East from 18 July to 11 September. Our ports of call are not yet known; however, a port south of the equator has been requested. We would like to convert our "pollywogs" into crusty "shellbacks". It's been a long time since King Neptune last visited the NOA. If my request is granted we should have a most interesting ceremony as we cross the equator - an event no navy man ever forgets.

On April 16, 1966 I had the pleasure of promoting 34 men in the crew and presented them with their petty officer appointments. These men worked and studied hard and earned their advancements. They are to be congratulated for their achievement.

On the 21st of May the NOA will commence a 30 day period in port in Mayport. This period is to be used to prepare for our deployment. One item of concern to me is allotments. Due to the NOA being in the Middle East

during the deployment mail will be slower than usual. Opportunities to send mail from the ship back to the U. S. will not be frequent. Please ensure that allotments from your husband or son are adequate and that you are not dependent upon regular supplements in the form of money orders, which may not arrive on schedule nor as needed.

At the present time NOA is in the Key West providing services to the Fleet Sonar School. Fishing is great!

I am most appreciative for the letters you have sent in response to the last Family-gram. Regretfully, I have not been able to answer all of them.

The next Family-gram will be mailed a few days before we sail for the Mediterranean.

Sincerely,



W. W. DOESCHER