

Sailor keeps sonar eye on the prow

By Preston M. Huret
special writer

Patrolling the world's oceans and keeping watch on a potential opponent's ships and submarines is an unceasing responsibility of the U.S. Navy. And aboard each Navy vessel, it requires an alert and diligent crew to get the job done.

Navy Petty Officer Third Class Mark Williams of Farmington Hills can verify that. He's one of 270 sailors serving aboard the San Diego-based frigate USS Bradley, a ship designed and equipped to perform a variety of tasks as part of the Pacific Fleet.

"I'm a sonar technician, and I use electronic equipment to listen for underwater contacts near the ship," said the 22-year-old son of John and Margaret Williams of Farmington Hills. Williams and other sonar technicians also service electronic equipment and operate computers.

"The challenges are keeping the equipment up," said Williams. "If we allow our gear to go down, then we've just defeated the ship's primary mission — anti-submarine warfare."

"The enjoyable thing about this occupation is moving up in rate," he said. "Everyone in my division works as a family. We help each other with work assignments, and we also spend some off time together."

"SHIPBOARD DUTY requires you to be dedicated to your job, playing on your toes," Williams added. "You aren't told exactly when you'll be in a port, so you need hobbies to occupy

your spare time."

To perform her mission, the 414-foot frigate can operate offensively as a member of an anti-submarine task force or provide a defensive screen for battle groups.

The Bradley is armed with torpedoes, two five-inch .38-caliber gun mounts, radar and sonar. She carries supplies and spare parts that allow her crew and machinery to operate independently for at least 30 days. Specializing in anti-submarine warfare, she can accommodate a Light Airborne Multipurpose System (LAMP3) SeaSprite helicopter.

LAMP3 helicopters are used for extending a ship's range in detecting and tracking enemy subs, and through a digital data link, transmit vital information to the ship's combat information center.

When the Bradley is not deployed to the western Pacific or Indian Ocean, she and her crew frequently participate in readiness exercises off the Southern California coast.

A 1980 graduate of Farmington High School, Williams enlisted in the service through a delayed-entry program.

"I came into the military because I wanted to travel and explore different cultures," Williams said.

"Famous people who were in the Navy had an influence on my decision to go Navy," he added. "People such as Jimmy Carter and John F. Kennedy."

After completing boot camp at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center, north of Chicago, Williams received advanced job training as a sonar technician.



Navy sonar technician Mark Williams locks weapons computer onto a simulated hostile air target during a training exercise. Williams is

a 1980 graduate of Farmington High School and a three-year Navy veteran.

Sinai Hospital offers speechreading class

A five-session speechreading (lipreading) class is being offered for hearing impaired adults by the audiology section of Sinai Hospital's Nathan I. and Betty Goldin Health Care Center in West Bloomfield.

The five-session class will begin July 22 and will be held on consecutive Mondays 5:30-7 p.m. There is a \$10 fee for each session.

The course will focus on increasing participants' knowledge of hearing, hearing loss, amplification and helping them to establish better communication strategies.

Any interested persons who have questions or concerns regarding a possible hearing loss, or would like further information about class registration can call 661-9400.

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