

**Naval Historical Center
Oral Interview Summary Form**

Interviewers:

CDR Karen Loftus
YNCS(AW) Kathleen Wright

Interviewer's Organization:

Navy Combat Documentation Det 206
Navy Combat Documentation Det 206

Interviewee:

CAPT Jeffrey Lemmons

Current Address:

OPNAV N31R

Date of Interview:

24 Jan 2002

Place of Interview:

Navy Annex

Number of Cassettes:

One

Security Classification:

Unclassified

Name of Project: Pentagon Terrorist Attack Incident

Subject Terms/Key Words: Pentagon; Terrorist Attack; 11 September 2001; triage; evacuation; lessons learned; Defense Protective Service; FBI; carnage; Navy Command Center; renovation

Abstract of Interview:

Interviewee Information:

Born in [REDACTED], LA but raised in Brownwood, TX. He went to the Naval Academy and graduated in the class of 1979. He went to flight school and was assigned to P-3 squadron in Brunswick, ME. He left the Navy in the Washington area and affiliated with the Navy Reserves at NAF Washington, DC with VP-68. He remained with VP-68 until they decommissioned in 1996 and then went to Norfolk, VA for a short time. He then was in a couple of augmentation units at NAS Willow Grove, PA and then came to the Navy Command Center unit as Commanding Officer.

Topics Discusses:

On September 11 he was heading into the Pentagon to meet with CAPT Masso, who was the CO of NCC Det 106, the reserve unit assigned to the Navy Command Center. He had delayed his meeting with CAPT Masso due to the fact his mother was in town. His mother and him had not had much time together so she had decided to delay her flight home until the 11th of September. CAPT Lemmons was going to drive his mother to National Airport and then meet with CAPT Masso at the Navy Command Center spaces in the Pentagon. If he had not delayed his meeting with CAPT Masso it was very likely he and CAPT Masso would have been in the Navy Command when the plane struck.

As he was heading to DC with his mother when they heard about the World Trade Center. While he was crossing the 14th Street Bridge he saw the smoke coming from the Pentagon. He headed to ADM Totushek's office at NC1 in Crystal City and stayed in his offices the rest of the day to help in any way he could. His mother remained with him during the day. Sometime during the day he did hear that the plane hit the Navy Command Center. He did make contact with CAPT Masso on his Blackberry on the 11th but due to the traffic being so horrendous near the Pentagon they were not able to meet up.

During the next several days he and CAPT Masso worked on such issues whether to defer their change of command, taking care of the Navy Reservists who were killed (CDR Vauk and LCDR Elseth), helping the families and CACO matters. Also the composition of watch teams, watches at the USMC command center, crisis action teams and Site R to name a few.

Over the last year the role of the reserve unit had been transformed to be more integrated into the day to day operations of the NCC. The Navy had started to get out of using an active duty officer to man the Navy Duty Captain desk by having a reserve officer in this position. There was an ongoing qualification process to train qualified watch standers for the NCC. It was very fortunate this had taken place considering what happened.

Casualty Officer Calls Officer (CACO) duties took up a lot of time of the reserve unit. John Mulverney was the CACO for CDR Vauk and CAPT Eilleen Roemer was the CACO for LCDR Elseth family. Everybody, to some degree, helped out. These were very "varsity players". Leadership from all levels of the unit really stepped forward and made things work.

The reserve unit NCC Det 106 is made up of approximately 30 enlisted and 80 officers. Most officers are O-5 and above, very top heavy. Every year the unit has a turn over in the officer ranks of about 1/3 and it takes several months to get the new officer qualified as a watch stander. About 75% of the officers are NDDO (Navy Department Duty Officer) watch qualified.

Immediately after the attack the Navy Command Center staff went to the USMC Command Center at the Navy Annex. It was a great tribute to the Navy-Marine Corps team as how well everything worked out. Both services assisted each another, it was a great credit to the professionalism of both command center staffs.

The NCC Det 106 reserve unit is providing 100% of the Navy Liaison Officers to the National Military Command Center (NMCC). Every day they are on the floor and at all the briefings. They speak for the Navy. The reserve officers are interacting with all 2 and 3 stars from the other services, answering their questions and being fully integrated into the NMCC. Only the Navy has reserve officers fulfilling this role.

The NCC will be moving back to the Pentagon in a few weeks. The new spaces will be between the 2nd and 3rd corridors, "A" ring, on the first floor. DPS was to have these spaces but they were given up to reestablish the Command Center. After the 11th of Sept he and CAPT Masso helped establish a "Tiger Team" to work on the relocation of NCC and N3/N5 back to the Pentagon. CAPT Yurina and CAPT Ed McDonald are the principal coordinators for the Tiger Team on the relocation. They and the reserve unit helped find the spaces; conducted site surveys; negotiated with DPS for the spaces; put in phone drops and secure phone lines. The

enlisted from the reserve unit worked around the clock being escorts for the contractors, especially on the weekends, so work could continue.

From his point of view the support from NCC Det 106 could not have gone better. His Department Heads stepped up and were proactive and got things done. The command structure worked very well, better than expected. He has never seen anything like this before where a reserve unit jumped in so fast to seal the breach to the damage done to a Navy staff. They are providing 100% of the NDDO watches, 100% of the NMCC Navy liaison staff, 85% of the N3/N5 CAT team (Crisis Action Team), staffed up Site R, and provided logistic support on the move back to the Pentagon.

They were very happy to have access to the SPRINT team. They had all hands meetings to talk things over, had memorial services for the active duty and reserve members lost. They are trying to be very sensitive in dealing with people's emotions. As problems pop up they encourage the person to get help.

NCC Det 106 had at one time 23-24 personnel either mobilized or on extended active duty orders. As of now they have 15 mobilized with a couple more to be called up. What is interesting is they were never directed to mobilize these personnel. His Department Heads came to him with a list of where the damage was done to the Navy staff, the suggested reserve personnel needed to fill the breach and recommendations to push this immediately to N3/N5. The reserve unit did the analysis and they went to the active duty to tell them they needed to mobilize the reservists.

CAPT Lemonns is a captain with American Airlines. Balancing time between American and the Navy has been o.k. American has been very supportive of his work with the reserves during this time. His wife and children have also been very supportive. All of this lets him focus on his job with the Navy. He and his wife have been going to memorial services for victims of the Pentagon and from American Airlines. He knew both pilots from Flight 77 and flew many times with the pilot, Captain Burlingame. He and his wife knew almost all the flight attendants (his wife is an American flight attendant) on the flight and they knew passengers on both Flight 77 and on one of the planes that struck the World Trade Center.

Abstract by:
YNCS Kathleen Wright
31 Jan 2002

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Born in [REDACTED], LA but raised in Brownwood, TX. He went to the Naval Academy and graduated in the class of 1979. He went to flight school and was assigned to P-3 squadron in Brunswick, ME. He left the Navy in the Washington area and affiliated with the Navy Reserves at NAF Washington, DC with VP-68. He remained with VP-68 until they decommissioned in 1996 and then went to Norfolk, VA for a short time. He then was in a couple of augmentation units at NAS Willow Grove, PA and then came to the Navy Command Center unit as Commanding Officer.

Topics Discusses:

TAPE ONE—Side One

Q. I know you took over as CO of the Command Center in September. What day was that?

A. I believe it was either the first Saturday after the 11th or shortly thereafter. It was within a week or two of the attack.

Q. You'd obviously had been talking to CAPTAIN MASSO and maybe had gone to the Command Center prior to September 11th?

A. Yes, several times and was actually on my way to meet him at the Command Center on that morning.

Q. Can you tell us a bit about that, then? Tell us about that day from the day it started—everything that you can remember.

A. Well, the events of that day really were precluded by a visit from my mother on the weekend prior. She had come up from Texas to spend some time with us and was scheduled to go home on the 10th, but we didn't get much time together due to work conflict and weather was not that good, so she said she would stay over if I didn't mind. I said, "Well, if you'll stay over then I will rearrange my 11 September schedule and go in late to the Pentagon," because I was going to meet CAPTAIN MASSO there and start talking about turnover items for the change of command and I wanted to go in early and get there around 7:00 o'clock to watch the watch turn over—actually, earlier than that, around 0600 to catch the morning brief and the watch turnover and start to get a spool on for how the Command Center did business.

Q. So if your mom had not been here, you and CAPTAIN MASSO would have been there?

A. Well, I think so. As it turned out, she said, "Well, I'll stay over," and I said, "Then I'll have coffee with you. I'll drop you at Washington National—you can catch a 10:00 o'clock flight back to Dallas and I'll just scoot on over and do what I need to do with CAPTAIN MASSO later on that morning." So as we were coming into the District, we heard about the World Trade

Centers and then as we came across the 14th Street Bridge we saw the black smoke go up. So, thankful to God and to my mom that she stayed an extra day.

Q. Gosh, yeah. So you and CAPTAIN MASSO were actually on the bridge when you saw the smoke?

A. No, I was going to meet CAPTAIN MASSO. He was coming from his work in Crystal City, and he was coming in later that morning, and he actually—and if you haven't interviewed him, he has a fascinating story—he actually had gone up -- I think he had mall parking -- had stopped by SECNAV's Office to visit a friend and then was on his way to the Command Center when the plane actually hit. I think he was at the top of the escalators on the A-Ring in the new wedge when the plane actually hit. He, himself, was there--part of the rescue effort, of getting people out into the inner roadway.

Q. You said you saw the smoke. When did you learn that it was the Pentagon that was hit and what did you do at that point?

A. Saw the smoke and was hearing about it on the radio pretty much around the same time as I was coming across the bridge. Had my mother with me and she, being unfamiliar—I couldn't just get out of the car and leave her, so I thought, "Well, I'll just go on to Crystal City and go up to ADMIRAL TOTUSHEK's office on the 3rd deck of NC1, and then whatever needs to be done, at least I know she'll be safe and can sit in his outer office and wait, and that's what we did.

When we got there, the staff said it was recommended everybody just stay put and stay tight until we see what the needs and desires are. So we spent most of the afternoon there trying to keep

abreast of the situation. Then, later that afternoon when the traffic died down, we snuck our way out toward Dulles and over the top of the beltway to get back to Annapolis.

Q. It was an exciting afternoon, or morning, for your mother.

A. Oh, it was—well, it was a tragic, tragic day for us all.

Q. Did you have any interaction with CAPTAIN MASSO that day or with the goings on at the Command Center at that time?

A. That day, no, because the Command Center being wiped out, was impossible to reach. At some point during that day we either made cell phone communication which, if it happened, was later in the day because the lines were pretty well wiped out. We were able to send a few e-mails back and forth on our Blackberries wireless accounts.

Q. You and CAPTAIN MASSO both had Blackberries?

A. Yes. Well, he has some other wireless instrument, but I had a Blackberry.

Q. When did you first realize, now we knew the Pentagon was hit—when did you first realize or first hear that the Navy Command Center itself was directly struck? Who told you or how did you find out that information?

A. I don't know, but I knew about it that day. Somehow it came to my attention that day that the airplane had buried itself into the Command Center.

Q. What did you do after that?

A. After that day? Well, the first order of business was to get mother back to my house where she ended up staying for the next, almost, four weeks just because travel was impossible out of here. I then got on the e-mail, got on the telephone, got on the cell phone, started making contact with CAPTAIN MASSO and other friends and acquaintances in the area, and then the very next day, joined CAPTAIN MASSO down at his offices in Crystal City where we spent the better part of the next week—that week, together working Command Center issues. There were casualties in the Command Center, Reserve personnel, and working issues with the families and things like that, and me getting to know the active duty staff as we had pulled out of the Command Center, out of the Pentagon and come up here to the Annex to work out of the Marine Corps Command Center.

Q. Can you tell us some of the issues you were having to work that week?

A. From a unit perspective, we were working on casualties: BOB ELSETH and RON VAULK, their families, funeral arrangements, services, CACO issues. SONNY was trying to wrap up a few Change of Command items, fit reps, evals. There was a discussion on whether or not we should even have the Change of Command, that perhaps we might want to defer and delay it for awhile, and taking that to the active duty staff to ADMIRAL ZORTMAN and ADMIRAL KEATING, their EA's. There were a lot of issues surrounding watch team composition. We had immediately placed a watch team out at Site R and whether to stand them down or leave them in place, what our watches should look like in the Marine Corps Command Center, what communications were available to us there and what might need to be added, standing up crisis action team and what type of augmentation it would require from Reserve personnel. The Command Center, over the last year, had transformed itself into more of a viable watch stand or

provider for the N3/ N5 in the Navy Command Center. The Navy was getting out of the business of having a full-time Navy Duty Captain on the desk and were giving more and more of the watches to the Reserves in the unit. So there had been an ongoing qualification process and thank goodness they had undertaken that effort because it provided a tremendous number of qualified watch standers to fill in these positions over that week.

Q. Who on the active duty staff did you all work with--since the Reserve unit had taken over the responsibilities of the NDDO--who was involved in the decisions that you were making with the Command Center?

A. That helped to reach that decision or who were we working with from that point on?

Q. That week, because I know CAPTAIN GETZFRED—wasn't he the senior watch officer, or he was responsible for—

A. He was a driving force in getting the Reservists more integrated into the watch. After his death on the 11th, we continued working with the N31, the N52 who was ADMIRAL ZORTMAN, and his EA, CAPTAIN DAVE THORSON. Combinations of discussions with them and also the front office with CAPTAIN JERRY RONCOLATTA who was KEATING'S EA, and we didn't have any discussions about this with ADMIRAL KEATING, but I'm sure they were taking it in, back and forth to him. ADMIRAL KROL, the deputy N3/N5—all those people -- when you're jammed into a small space like that, you see them and conversations happen quickly and some things happen on the spot and some were taken into conference. But those were the principles—and also to mention CAPTAIN RICH TENGA, who was the last Navy Department Duty Captain on the staff, and so he sort of stepped up and took over CAPT

GETZFRED'S role. I told him he was our "Sea Daddy," that he had to watch out for us and make sure he fought for us. He was a tremendous help.

Q. Sir, what other things—after that first week—what other issues did your Reserve personnel personally work? I know JOHN MULROONEY was the—wasn't he the Command Rep or was he the CACO for RON VAUK?

A. He was the CACO for JENNIFER VAUK and RON VAUK. We had EILEEN ROEMER who provided the same service for the ELSETH family. Although, in an unofficial capacity, we had LCDR BILL SCARING [Phonetic], who was good friends with PATRICK MURPHY who was a Lieutenant lost in the attack. He was very close with him and MRS. MURPHY, so he helped the CACO out on a lot of those issues.

Q. Was he part of the Command Center—MURPHY?

A. He was not, but—

Q. He was a Reservist, right?

A. But he was in there working at the time and a lot of folks knew him. Having just come to the unit I had not met any of these people, but he sort of took that on as a special project and gave feedback to the chain of command on that.

Q. Who else was involved?

A. Everybody, to some degree, was involved and that was the beauty of walking in and watching—I hate to use the work magic, but it was—watching the leadership take place. The

staff that CAPTAIN MASSO had assembled, which eventually became mine, were all talented -- I call them varsity players. They didn't need to be prodded; they didn't need to be told. They had things in motion immediately and were just reporting in on what they were doing and giving opportunity for correction or guidance if desired or needed. They started things in motion. The Operations Officer, CDR GREG MARVEL, started the wheels rolling to get Site R manned up with watch teams. We have some personnel that live outside of the Beltway up on the Pennsylvania line that were very opportune first-call responders and they were placed out in the alternate site. BARB SWERDOSKI [Phonetic] was taking care of getting orders and making sure that everything was papered correctly. She's the training officer. DON DEETSFORD [Phonetic], the manpower guy, was helping, making sure things—people were available. There was a time when we were going to be losing people at the fiscal year boundary due to normal attrition. New accessions were coming in off the apply board, VTUers, or some folks were scheduled to go the VTU and go away—the N1, DON DEETSFORD and his manpower guy DON WARD, BARB SWERDOSKI, JIM BONNER, my N2, who worked all the quals and security clearances; those guys did a tremendous effort of keeping people in place and not allowing them to be losses at this critical moment. Perhaps great credit and a guy who probably is less apt to step up and take credit for a lot of what happened was the senior watch officer, who is CAPTAIN CARL JORDAN. He is a magician at coming up with the right combinations of people and watch periods and reliefs, and he actually has coordinated the entire watch bill since before and after. He's just amazing; how he can fill in holes in the watch and keep things going the right way.

Q. With the Reserve unit for the Command Center—could you give us the total number of personnel and the split between officer and enlisted so we have an idea of how large your unit is?

A. Well, you know how RUADs go, (laughter), the last drill weekend I pulled the RUAD and I've got 30 enlisted and 80 officers. That's roughly the size -- it flexes up, flexes down, people go below the line and they come back in billet, but that's about two to one on the officers, a little over two to one, and most of the officers are very senior. I've got probably--approaching half of those are O-5s and above.

Q. How many of your officers are NDDO qualified?

A. Well, I'd have to give you a percentage, a rough percentage, and I would say that it's probably around 75 or 78%. We have about a third turnover every year from the apply board and so those people have to go into a qual period and they're just starting to emerge. That first third for this fiscal year is just starting to emerge with their quals now so that number will be going up and will get higher as we get through the fiscal year. There are some officers that I have that don't hold clearances and will not be DDO qual'd and there's some that just are providing great functionality in other areas and that's where we keep them from getting (Unintelligible)

Q. How did things work out up here at the Navy Annex as I think the Marine Corps let you use their spaces up there or shared spaces with you?

A. They've been fantastic. I mean, that's one of the finer examples of Navy team integration. They said, "Come on in. Jump in," cleared out a corner for us, gave us four terminals, four telephones. We shoved the Navy Command Center on one side and the CAT on the other side and have been up there ever since except we pulled the CAT out to go back to the Pentagon when we got back in the N3/N5 spaces. The NDDO and the Navy Command Center will be leaving sometime in mid-February to go into the new spaces that are being prepared back in the

Pentagon. But it's been an outstanding evolution. Even through the holidays, great hosts brought the turkey out and everybody shared it. It has been a very, very good experience. It's been very helpful for both Navy and Marine Corps because we have both representatives in the National Military Command Center, which, for the first time, the NCC-106 Reservists are filling 100% of the Navy Liaison Officer positions in the NCC. So they are there on the floor at all the turnover briefs, often turned around and questioned by the three stars at the table—what's Navy's position—so they are there to speak or get messages for Navy. So this has been another wonderful product of the vision that LARRY GETZFRED and SONNY MASSO had about integrating the watch. These guys were able to run in there and provide that functionality. The Marines have a rep there and oftentimes when we are trying to get information, it's good to be co-located when you work together and, "Did you guys get this?" "No, we didn't," "Well, let's take a look at it together," and being co-located has helped.

Q. Where are your new spaces located?

A. Our new spaces are going to be in between the 2nd and 3rd corridors on the A-Ring down on the 1st floor. They'll be just right around where the DPS security spaces were to be built. They gave those to us.

Q. Okay, so, 1A, 2-something?

A. Yeah, 1A2, or 1A or 1B, I think we have the block between A and B Corridors, or A and B-Rings between the 2nd and 3rd Corridors down on the first floor.

Q. That's not temporary, that's permanent, so it will look pretty much like the one that had just been built?

A. Yes. Maybe even a little bit better.

Q. Has your group been involved in that reconstruction effort?

A. Very much so. One of the other initiatives that we were given when we retreated up the hill on Sept 11th was to put a Tiger Team together to begin locating spaces for, not just the Navy Command Center, but for the N3/N5 to move back into the Pentagon. So, again, CAPTAIN MASSO called on his friend, another Reservist, CAPTAIN MIKE YURINA [Phonetic]—I don't know if you've interviewed him, but you probably should—CAPTAIN YURINA, and I provided LCDR ED McDONALD, and there were a couple of other people that worked on the periphery, but they were the two principals, did a lot of the site survey coordination with CAPT BILL TODI [Phonetic] who was Navy Staff's point of contact to find spaces, went over there and dug around and located suitable spaces for the N3/N5 organization to move back to. They not only found the spaces, they were instrumental in working with DPS to give us their command center for the Navy Command Center, and they went in and laid out the footprint, all the phone drops, all the secure lines, all the red switches, got the contractors together. NCC-106 provided Reserve enlisted personnel to be escorts in the secure spaces so contractors could come in and out. We've had watch teams in there every day working long hours to give access to the contractors. MIKE YURINA was down at the gates making sure Verizon could get in on off days and weekends when security restrictions were higher. A tremendous amount of effort by ED McDONALD and MIKE YURINA to get, not only Navy Command Center, but the whole N3/N5 organization back into the Pentagon.

Q. Is N3/N5 kind of molded into the Command Center or do they have their separate spaces outside of it?

A. Well, right now we're working with the Command Center still up here and N3/N5 in the building. We're obviously separate. When we go into the new space, I'm not sure if the entire N3/N5 organization will go down to the new space. It is going to be a little bit smaller than the old—I say the old—the new—the destroyed Navy Command Center, but there will be large portions of the N3/N5 down there with the Navy Command Center. Right now, N3/N5 is occupying 5D660, which is a fairly large SCIF. That's also where the N3/N5 CAT team is working out of. The N51 people, and some of the N52 people are working in the old Navy Command Center.

Q. I was going to ask you who was in there.

A. Because it had—it was mostly intact, a little smoke damage in the back of it, but it was a good location to put the POL/MIL people given the auditorium availability, and it's a non-SCIF area and we can bring foreign nationals in and out for briefings. So they are there. Those two spaces we have and then we'll pick up all the Navy Command Center spaces, so it's going to be difficult to say where everybody will end up.

Q. Can you think of any lessons learned that you'd like to pass on if this were to happen again—something that could have been done better?

A. Well, I don't know how it could have been done better. You know, you prepare for contingencies, you prepare for emergencies, but nothing is ever like you prepare for. Yeah, we'll

take lessons learned from it and we will make some changes and improvements—some enhancements, we hope. Those are being made and a lot of that has to do with switching and wiring and command and control decisions. From an NCC-106 perspective, I don't see how they could have been better prepared. There was tremendous synergy. There was tremendous proactive response from the department heads who did not need to be told or wait to be told. The command structure was sound. Everybody jumped right in and went to work. You could prepare all you want for something like this, but it's like when you get in the boxing ring, you know you're going to get hit. You know before it's done you'll be hit in the nose, but the first time you get hit, it still kind of startles you. So, these folks took the training they had, they jumped right in, and we did a tremendous job.

Q. I have one more I want to ask you about. Has anyone in the senior leadership given your unit special recognition or are there plans in the works for individuals in the unit to get recognition?

A. Oh, absolutely, and that's part of my job to make sure that they are recognized for what they have done. You know, you've got to consider—and you folks probably better than I—from everything I've been able to read on my own—I don't know where a Reserve component attached to a major Navy staff has ever jumped up so quickly and sealed the breach. I think the N3/N5 organization lost around 23 or 24 personnel—was a large chunk of their staff. A large chunk of that was Navy Command Center, and we stepped up and filled—what we're doing now—we're filling 100% of the Navy Department Duty Officer watches. We're filling 100% of the National Military Command Center Navy Liaison Officer watches. We're filling—we may be filling—we're filling, probably, 85% of the N3/N5 CAT team, Crisis Action Team watches. We provided the logistic support to move the organization back into the Pentagon. We're

providing all the duality in the watch to move the NCC back to the new NCC spaces. On top of that, we're able to man-up a pick up team at Site R and provide continuing improvement, study enhancements to Site R watch capabilities. All that stuff ongoing--it's really not seen by the actives so much because it's happening every day on phones and e-mail and site visits and watch teams. It's been a very transparent evolution, but I don't think that there's ever been something of this high an order from a Reserve augmentation unit sealing the breach from combat damage and destruction to a major Navy staff. That's what's impressed me about the people.

Q. How did the people on Reserves unit, as far as emotionally, deal with the fact that they lost shipmates, they lost people they knew from the active duty side. Was there, like, a vetting process—did the SPRINT team come in and speak with—

A. We have been very grateful to have the SPRINT team availability. We had a couple of “All Hands.” SONNY had some almost immediately. We had a memorial service as a part of the drill weekend where I assumed command. We've had tremendous participation in all the memorial services, not only for the Reservists, but the active -- try and make people go, encouraging them to go and deal with their emotions. We've had, over the course of the months, sometimes some emotional issues aren't readily identifiable and they manifest themselves in different ways, and slowly, and as we've seen them perk up, we get people still -- we take them and get them in touch with chaplains and SPRINT team counselors. We encourage them to go see their private physicians and we've had some of that and we've had good results, positive results; people coming back to us thanking us for getting them the help that they needed. I have one DM1 who was injured, I'm sure you've interviewed PAUL GASTON. Interesting— couple days ago I got a phone call from the Reserve Center down at Anacostia notifying me that he had been

mobilized—was going to be mobilized to stand gate guard duty at the Navy Yard as part of the auxiliary security force. I called him up and I said, “Did you hear that you were being mobilized?” and he said, “Yes,” and I said, “Is this something that you want to do?” and he said, without hesitation he said, “I know why I signed up. I know why I serve. If my Navy needs me, I’m ready to serve.” Here’s a man who was injured and wounded in the attack, lost great friends, and has been going through some survivor guilt himself. So then I thanked him for his service. I thanked him for his patriotism and his willingness to serve, and then I let him know that I was enacting my letter of agreement between ADMIRAL CROWDER, the N310, and ADMIRAL HARVEY, the N12, which we put in place to keep valuable NCC assets from being mobilized for other command usage. I need everybody I’ve got to sustain this effort, to be able to relieve the people that are mobilized now and at the fiscal year. The predictions are six years of this, so I’ve got a fence in place, so to speak, and I scooped him back on my fence. I said, “If anybody mobilizes you, it’s going to be us and you’re going to work for us and that’s the end of the discussion.”

Q. So he didn’t go back to work for—

A. No, I got it shut down yesterday. So, he’s mine. If he mobilizes, he’ll be mobilized to me or to the Navy Command Center.

Q. He was one of the most rewarding interviews I think I was ever sitting in on.

A. He’s a fine gentleman. Right now, we’ve got -- let me see -- we’ve had people on active duty and then brought off. At one time we were pushing 23 or 24 personnel mobilized or on extended active duty orders. Right now we’ve got probably right around 15 mobilized to support this, and

we'll probably mobilize a couple more which was another thing—we were never directed to mobilize anybody. We were never tapped. We were the ones that turned around to the N3 and 5 and said, “Look, this is where your gaps are. This is where your holes are. You have lost personnel. We don't see anybody being ordered in for the watch to continue. You're going to need to mobilize personnel, and here's the list of people. Sign here and let's get them mobilized.” That was, in part, in large part, due to my department heads who just came forward and said, “We've identified this requirement, Skipper. We need to mobilize these people.”

Varsity team.

Q. Can you explain your civilian job as far as for the historical record, and how do you balance not only physically, but mentally, your civilian job with what also you're doing here with the Reserves?

A. I am a Captain with American Airlines. Balancing time is the difficult piece. If I told you then everybody would be doing it and I wouldn't be able to do it anymore, so -- (laughter). I've got a great job. I've got a great employer. They're very supportive of what I need to do. If I need time off for military, I get it. They are very flexible with me, so I could not ask for a better employer, or more understanding. I've got a fantastic wife who allows me to go and do as much as I need to. She's probably got more Navy blue in her blood than I do. So, I have no problem there. My children are supportive. Having all those things lined up takes away a lot of conflict and stress and lets you focus on what you need to focus on. As many Navy memorials and services as I went to, we also had those in the American Airlines family. Both the pilots that hit the Pentagon were acquaintances of mine--had flown a lot with the Captain (Editors Note: CAPT Charles Burlingame). We knew almost all the flight attendants on that flight. We also had good friends

on board as passengers on that flight and the flight that hit the World Trade Center. It was not an easy time period, but when you roll all of that together and you realize that not only did an enemy strike us here on our own soil, but they did it with friends and equipment that are part of my livelihood and part of the other loves of my life, it makes it very easy--very easy to come and work and do. It's the right thing to do.

Q. Do you have anything else you'd like to add for the record, Sir?

A. No, but just to say thanks for preserving all this and the compilation of which will be important, not only for the historical record, but I think this is all part of prepping and shaping the next generation that comes behind us; to read and see and understand why we value our freedom so much and what price it carries. Thanks.

Thank you.

Transcribed by:
Carol Barfield for Tim Ayoub
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