Summer is officially here. The kids are out of school, the pools are open & vacations are being planned & taken. June is PTSD awareness month. If you or a family member have experienced a traumatic event, consider whether you may have PTSD related symptoms. Attached you will find information regarding PTSD symptoms, treatment and a definition of exactly what it is. Deployments to combat zones can affect each individual and family in different ways. We owe it to ourselves to be honest with ourselves & each other about the impacts this type of stress may have had on us. Consider the information that I have attached, do more research online and talk with your medical provider. Whatever you do, don’t suffer in silence or deny the impact a traumatic experience may have had on you. If nothing else, talk with each other and attempt to understand it. Everyone deserves to live life to its fullest and a failure to deal with PTSD issues not only impacts you but it impacts those around you, particularly those that are closest to you.

Don’t forget June 19th is Father’s Day!!

**Resources at a Glance**

- Military OneSource, 1-800-342-9647, www.militaryonesource.com
- Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255/www.veteranscrisisline.net (24/7/365)
- National Suicide Hotline, 1-800-273-8255
- Ohiomeansjobs.com
- Columbus VA, 614-257-5200, www.columbus.va.gov (Outside of Colum-
In the mountains of Santa Paula, California, dogs and their handlers are trained to perform searches for human survivors of natural disasters or terrorist attacks. Whether an earthquake or a bombing, The Search Dog Foundation (SDF) makes sure that the dogs and the handlers are prepared for a variety of situations that they may be called upon to handle.

Search Dog Foundation (SDF) was founded in 1995 by retired schoolteacher, Wilma Melville when she and her Advanced-Certified search dog were deployed to the site of the Oklahoma City bombing. Only one survivor was found by a dog, and it was clear that the country had a severe shortage of Canine Disaster Search teams.

Prior to SDF, only about 15% of the dogs in America training to be disaster search dogs reached DHS/FEMA Advanced Certification. Of the dogs in SDF’s program, 85% achieve Advanced Certification.

SDF provided 13 of the search teams deployed at Ground Zero and in 2005, 26 SDF teams were sent to Hurricane Katrina and Rita to assist with rescue.

Dogs are recruited from shelters and breed rescue groups. Only a special few have just what it takes to meet the rigors of the program and the demands of deployment.

Once recruited, they are placed with a Canine Prep Home Family for socialization. Afterward they undergo six months of professional training. Once the dog completes its training, it is partnered with a handler and training is provided to the team. The team then undergoes regular ongoing training to stay prepared and ready.
Seabees from NMCB 25 began arriving in April to perform work on the training facility for the Search Dog Foundation. From moving rubble piles to a new location to installing drywall in a tilted house to moving and installing donated school buses, the Seabees had their work cut out for them in the California heat.

This is all in a day's work to complete the new training facility for dogs and their handlers for the Search Dog Foundation in time for the September 26, 2016 Grand Opening. Once the Seabees have completed their work, SDF will have several new disaster simulations on which to train their dogs and handlers. The slanted house and mock hotel will be complete. The existing rubble pile will be relocated to another area to make way for the donated school buses which will be placed to simulate buses involved in a disaster.

So what, you ask, is the Navy doing involved with this organization? As we are all aware, Navy Active Duty and Reservists must participate in training. Not only does the Navy have its own internal training, thus the two-week training yearly, it also participates in the Innovative Readiness Training program sponsored by the Department of Defense. This program is designed to pair readiness training with community service. [http://irt.defense.gov/Home.aspx] By participating in these projects our military members obtain real life, hands on experience while providing a community service to an organization that has applied to the program.
The dogs and the handlers will perform searches on these simulated areas to prepare for the day when they may be deployed to search a real life disaster for survivors. The disaster teams will be trained and ready and so will our Seabees.

It is important for our Navy Reserve troops to be ready and when they can obtain training to do so and also help community organizations, everyone wins.

As military family members, our role is to support our servicemembers during both active duty deployments and in their reserve obligations. At times, we may not fully understand what it is that they do. It is my hope that this article will provide you with one example of the good work that our husbands and wives, sons and daughters, and mothers and fathers perform while serving their country in the United States Navy.

Because the day of this tour was our anniversary, I was able to have someone take our picture at the end of the tour. That evening, we were able to carve out some time to have a very nice dinner complete with a Frank Sinatra impersonator.

(This article was a result of my trip to spend time with my husband in Port Huenme, California where I was fortunate to be able to take a tour of the Search Dog project and learn more about their organization. No government funds or resources were used in furtherance of this trip as it was solely at my expense)