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Have a safe and happy Turkey Day. Enjoy the long weekend.



Last C-9 takes flight at Oceana



Photo by Harry Gerwien

Aircraft 16004, the last C-9B Skytrain II belonging to VR-56, piloted by Lt. Cmdr. Gary L. Humphries, leaves the NAS Oceana flightline on Nov. 15 for its final flight to "the boneyard" in Arizona. The "Globemasters" are transitioning to the C-40A Clipper.

BY CATHY HEIMER
Jet Observer

The "Globemasters" of Fleet Support Squadron (VR) 56 brought another chapter in their 35-year history to a close with the final flight of their last C-9B Skytrain II aircraft on Nov. 15.

Aircraft 16004, flown by Lt. Cmdr. Gary L. Humphries, departed the flightline at Naval Air Station Oceana for its flight to the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center near Tucson, Ariz., more commonly known as AMARC or "the boneyard."

The Globemasters have begun the transition to the C-40A Clipper and are expected to receive three new aircraft in April 2012, a month after the planned opening of their new hangar, under construction on the Oceana flightline.

"The C-9B, the Skytrain, has allowed me to travel the world with some colorful, professional and great Americans. While we travelled the world, we did some good things. We could not have served the nation as well as we have without the help of our good friend," said VR-56 Commanding Officer Cmdr. Mike Gravitt, who first joined the squadron in 2000 as a lieutenant.

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USO gives service members a reason to give thanks

STORY/PHOTOS BY
MC1(AW) TIM COMERFORD
The Flagship

It may have been a cold and rainy day, Nov. 17, but it was particularly busy for United Service Organization (USO) volunteers who lined the room in building J-50 on Naval Station Norfolk as they prepared for the annual Thanksgiving feast.

The USO occupies some of the space in building with the Naval Mobile Processing Station (NMPS) Norfolk and the event gives comfort to many of the commands in Hampton Roads.

"This is the 5th annual Thanksgiving dinner we have had at NMPS," said Anne Morris. "We have gone from our first year of 200

people to the most we have had, which is 700 people. This year we have enough food for 500."

Morris has dedicated her time and a good portion of her life to the USO at Naval Station Norfolk. Always quick with a smile, she helps service members, leaving and coming back from individual augmentee (IA) assignments, get settled while they are at NMPS Norfolk, providing a safe, quiet and welcoming environment for them to relax. But it was almost the opposite on Thursday as volunteers waited in anticipation as Morris instructed them in plans for dinner.

"They will enter here," she said motioning over to where a table filled with rolls stood.

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ADAN Connor Newcome from Norfolk Transient Personnel Unit, makes his way around the gauntlet of Thanksgiving food served at the USO at Navy Mobilization Processing Station Norfolk on Nov. 17.