

# Nimitz MWR

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SURIGAO STRAIT (NNS) -- Life aboard the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) involves long, hot days for every Sailor aboard. Sailors work hard and don't stop until the job is done, keeping everything running as it should.

But, at the end of the day, these Sailors are still people. People, who still like to relax and have fun after a long day of work, just like their loved ones back home.

Although, fun isn't a word that comes to mind for most people when they think of a warship, Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR), a division of Supply Department, is in charge of making sure the crew stays entertained.

John Porter, the Recreation Afloat Specialist for the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68), is the man in charge of MWR aboard the ship. Most Sailors refer to him as the "Fun Boss," simply because fun is his job.

"MWR gives Sailors an escape from the work that surrounds them at all times," said Porter. "I'm here to make sure Sailors have something to do in their off time by presenting new and alternative events to what goes on every day."

Porter and his team of 11 Sailors, from S-7 division, run the three different MWR offices on board Nimitz; the ticket office, the gear issue office and the MWR office.

The ticket office is where they sell tickets to events such as bingo, where Sailors can win big prizes while out to sea.

Nimitz has its own gear issue office which allows Sailors to check out items such as basketballs, video games, board games, and even music equipment. They have a selection of more than 1800 movies to rent. And the best part is, all of the gear issued is free! You only have to pay for it if you lose it.

The MWR office is the hub for the events aboard Nimitz. They prepare and host events such as hangar bay movie nights, instrumental jam nights, card and game tournaments, volleyball, dodgeball, bingo, and many more.

"I wish that more people knew that we are here and would use us," said Porter. "We have so many things that go unused and people that miss events that we have, just because people didn't know we had them."

You can find a calendar of different MWR events for the month on the ship's SharePoint. Events are also posted outside the MWR office and are usually sent to all hands via email.

With Nimitz being on deployment, this is the longest many Sailors have been out to sea. The extended amount of sea time can take a toll on the Sailors, so MWR has been coming up with more activities, to ease the pressure or stress of deployment.

"I like that they're pushing out a lot more events now that we're on deployment and I feel like it helps raise the morale of the crew," said Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Nicholas Keller, a native of Hartville, Ohio, one of the many Sailors who enjoy what MWR has to offer.

Since Nimitz is on deployment, MWR plays a pivotal role in providing Sailors with activities during port visits. MWR plans different tours for the ports that the ship will pull into and tries to give Sailors the

best experience possible in the little amount of time they have to explore a new place.

"Working on upcoming port visits is the fun part," said Porter. "Making sure you have enough to do is the hard part, but it's also very rewarding. I don't want to see Sailors sit around and do nothing when we pull into these countries, go out and explore, ride an elephant, see some culture!"

"Even if we don't have an event that you're interested in, come by the office with your idea and we'll try to put it together," said Porter.

MWR is now taking requests on their SharePoint page where Sailors can submit their ideas for events.

"It's a great time to be military because everybody appreciates everything you do," said Porter. "Our job is to make sure Sailors enjoy themselves in their down time. They are the ones working to defending this country, so they deserve every benefit that we can get them."

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