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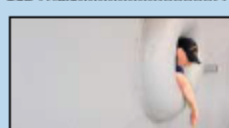


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TODAY NAVY HISTORY

1898 U.S. squadron bombs Santiago, Cuba.

1965 Navy Department schedules reactivation of hospital ship Repose (AH 16), first hospital ship activated for Vietnam conflict.

Sailors Save IKE

Receive Spot NAM on the Bridge

By MC3 Sean Burgess
5-Star Staff Writer

Aviation Boatswains Mate (Handling) 1st Class Thomas Laferriere and Aviation Boatswains Mate (Handling) 1st Class Ismael Gomez from Air Department, V-1 Division, were presented Navy and Marine Corp Achievement Medals (NAM) for discovering and preventing a possible flight deck mishap onboard USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN-69) (IKE) June 12.

Laferriere and Gomez were making routine rounds on the flight deck and saw unusual steam coming from the deck where a fuel hose appeared to be melting from the heat of an emergency diesel generator (EDG).

"My first reaction, when I saw the steam and the melting fuel hose was to get water on it and get the hose off the deck," said Laferriere. "Even though this was an extremely dangerous situation, we had to act accordingly and prevent any further damage."

The two petty officers discovered the EDG exhaust on the port side blowing hot exhaust onto a fuel house and the catwalks, causing the hose to start melting and the paint on the catwalk to bubble.

"With quick action, they



Aviation Boatswains' Mate (Handling) 1st Class Petty Officer Ismael Gomez and Aviation Boatswains' Mate (Handling) 1st Class Petty Officer Thomas Laferriere receive Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal on the bridge Tuesday morning. (Photo by MC3 Erick Kogler)

moved the fuel hose and got a fire hose on the deck plates to cool down the area," said Chief Aviation Boatswains Mate (Handling) Andrew Grimes, V-1 division's leading chief petty officer. "These two individuals surely prevented a major catastrophe."

Gomez said it took about 20 minutes of cooling the deck to lower the deck and catwalk's temperature.

"Even after shutting the EDG down and cooling the metal with water, the deck and catwalk registered 154 degrees," said Gomez. "It's a good thing we're always

training and ready to know how to respond to any casualty."

Laferriere and Gomez were awarded NAMs by Capt. Marcus Hitchcock, IKE's commanding officer, Tuesday morning on the ship's bridge.

It's a really great honor, said Laferriere and Gomez.

"We didn't set out to be heroes or anything like that," said Gomez. "We were just doing what had to be done."

IKE is currently at Naval Station Norfolk as her crew prepares for Flight Deck Certification and Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV).