



For additional details, contact:

Amy Lewis
Strategy Communications
Phone: 619-713-0622 (office), 858-752-1085 (cell)
Email: Amy@scpublicrelations.com

PRESS RELEASE

Naval Air Station North Island: The Birthplace Of Naval Aviation
The San Diego Navy Base's Historic Journey

SAN DIEGO, June 13, 2007: The small strip of "island", a community of San Diego that we know as Coronado, includes Naval Air Station (NAS) North Island, the birthplace of Naval Aviation. NAS North Island began its path to existence in 1886 upon the sandy, uninhabited flats of Coronado, when the area was purchased by a wealthy resort owner named J.D. Spreckles. Mr. Spreckles became the owner of the Hotel Del Coronado and allowed his guests to use the grounds for hunting and horseback riding.

The leisurely hobbies continued until WW I when the land was put to use as a flying school, and Naval Air Station North Island was born. In 1917, Congress commissioned two airfields on the land for military purposes. The Navy and the Army shared the facilities for 20 years, until the Army left and then the Navy expanded throughout the island.

Along NAS North Island's journey, many of the major aviation milestones occurred within its borders. These monumental aviation firsts include the first mid-air refueling and the first non-stop transcontinental flight, both in 1923.

Today, Naval Air Station North Island is the home to the largest aerospace-industrial complex in the United States Navy. The island serves as host to 23 squadrons and 80 additional tenant commands and activities, one of which, the Naval Aviation Depot, the largest aerospace employer in San Diego.

North Island Naval Air Station and the City of Coronado also serve as the setting for this year's 10th annual Coronado Speed Festival, and is set against the stunning backdrop of San Diego Bay. This Fleet Week event will feature 225 of the world's most unique and pedigreed racing machines at one of the most distinctive motor sports locations - Naval Air Station North Island. The event will be held on October 6th and 7th, 2007.

To showcase the historic traditions of NAS North Island, a multitude of current Navy jets and helicopters, special boats and hovercraft, as well as vintage aircraft, will be on display at the entrance of the event. Pilots will be eager to answer questions, show you, and allow access into the aircraft, boats and military equipment. This will be a perfect opportunity to take pictures and to ask any questions you might have.

The Coronado Speed Festival is co-produced by San Diego Fleet Week Foundation and General Racing Ltd. and is hosted by the Navy Region Southwest and the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Program (MWR). MWR retains revenue generated by tickets sold to the Military and a percentage of the overall revenue generated by the event. They in turn provide positive support

for the active duty military community and their families through Quality of Life Programs including single Sailor Recreation Centers, Fitness and Aquatic Facilities and the Base Theatre Free Movies. The Southern California community is given this unbelievable opportunity to thank the men and women defending our freedom in person.

Advance purchase general admission tickets are available by on the Fleet Week Website (www.fleetweeksandiego.org/coronadospeedfestival) - \$25 one day and \$30 for both days. Tickets will also be available at the venue (\$30 for one day and \$40 for both days). Children 12 and under are free with paid adult admission.

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