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## 'Comics on Duty' comes to Northwest

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Laughter and a sense of humor were the order of the night during recent shows at Naval Base Kitsap and Naval Station Everett when hundreds, Sailors, civilians, friends and family members enjoyed a night of comedy.

Four national headliner comedians visited the bases as part of "Comics on Duty" World Tour and allowed the audiences to displace their own lives for a couple of hours while laughing at each comedian's unique sense of humor.

The tour, hosted by Navy Entertainment and Morale Welfare and Recreation, was established 14 years ago by Rich Davis, executive producer, Davis Entertainment Group, so that military personnel could enjoy a relief from the stresses of war and military service.

"I wanted to do something positive for the forces and expressed the initial concept of Comics on Duty to a national sponsor," he said. "The sponsor liked the idea and promoted us for the first eight years, which lent us immediate credibility with booking and with securing high caliber talent."

According to the Comics on Duty Web site, the tour has entertained hundreds of thousands of military personnel during more than 2000 shows worldwide since 1992.

"It is about laughter, escape and forgetting the trials and tribulations people go through," said Davis. "The positive impact of the shows is important, so that the military personnel can let loose for a bit and have fun."

Tom Foss appeared first and launched quickly into his take on traffic, family and interpersonal relations, while Warren B. Hall, whose mother was in the audience, talked about a puppy and its representation of checkmate to his girlfriend. After Hall, Gary Brightwell talked about life as a single guy and rules of conduct at a bachelor party. The last comic to keep the audience amused was Derek Richards, who spoke of his blue collar upbringing, gift giving and how his mother treated her dog as if he were human.

The show concluded with all four comics taking the stage and throwing baseball caps to the audience.

For Davis, the shows offer variety and something different to audiences because the ultimate goal is laughter.

"The comics will affect the audience," he said "and have the ability to present the best possible material for the show to make people laugh."

Foss does not serve in the military, but sees that he is supporting the military with his humor.

"It is the best thing I can do with what I have," he said. "As a comedian, I use freedom of speech, so anyone who defends that will get my entertainment any time."

Hall knows what the military lifestyle represents, because his mother serves in the Army Reserve.

"I grew up in the military and I appreciate what the military personnel do," he said. "If they did not do what they do, I could not do what I do."

For Brightwell, getting the audience away from its life for a bit was his goal.

"I just like doing it. The audience had a good two hours to escape," Brightwell said. "It was a nice evening."

Richards also hoped the audience was able to push stress away for a while.

"Comedy can provide a great stress relief for everybody," he said. "That is the key and we provided a great opportunity to laugh and have a good time."

At least one audience member enjoyed the opportunity.

"The show was fabulous. They were very good quality comedians," said Mo Worley, a retired senior chief petty officer. "I laughed the whole time. Comedy is important because it makes the world go around and you can handle anything if you can laugh about it."

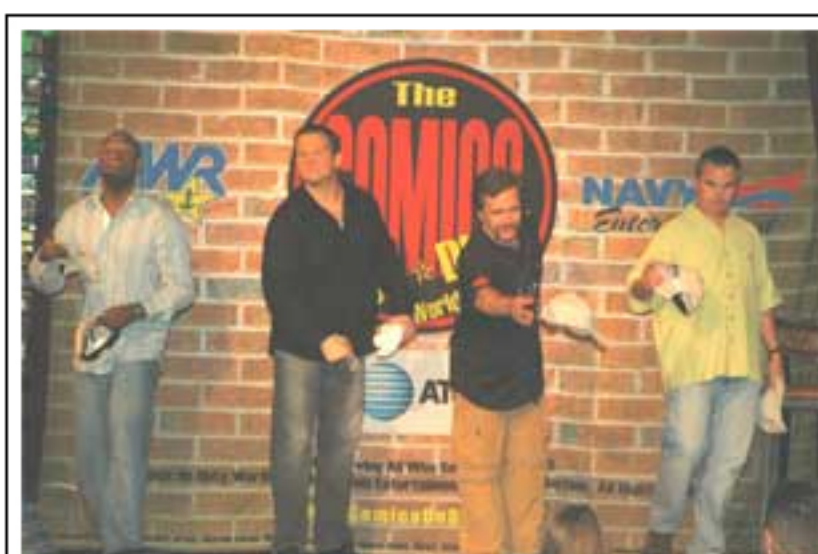


Photo by JO1(SW) Spencer Webster  
Comedians Warren B. Hall, Derek Richards, Tom Foss and Gary Brightwell throw baseball caps to the audience following their Comics on Duty World Tour show at the Bangor Plaza on Naval Base Kitsap March 17. The comics also toured Naval Station Everett.