

Hawai'i News

Serving the "Best Homeport in the Navy"

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Volume 36 Issue 11



Bridging support

Seabees deploy to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. See story on page A-9.



U.S. Navy photo by JO3 Ryan C. McGinley

Volunteers distribute and receive materials for the annual NMCRS fund drive during the kickoff March 14 at Sharkey Theater.

NMCRS kicks off annual fund drive

JO3 Ryan C. McGinley
Staff Writer

The Navy Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) in Hawai'i held its annual kickoff information session March 14 at Sharkey Theater, marking the beginning of their annual fund drive, which will run from March 21 through April 22.

The information session provided NMCRS Hawai'i representatives with an opportunity to hand out informational packages to commands across the island, hoping to reach their goal of 100 percent contact with the 2005 slogan, "We protect them, while you're

protecting us."

"That's a pretty good theme when you think about what we are doing in Afghanistan and Iraq, having so many of our families, particularly here in Hawai'i, that are deployed right now," said Rear Adm. Michael C. Vitale, Commander, Navy Region Hawai'i and Commander, Naval Surface Group, Middle Pacific, who spoke at the event. "It is something we see and feel every day."

Paul Belanger, director of NMCRS Hawai'i,

▼ See NMCRS, A-8

NEX readies to redeem recyclable HI-5 cans, bottles

Navy Exchange Hawai'i Marketing

On March 29, The Mall at Pearl Harbor will establish a redemption center for authorized patrons to return their beverage containers with the HI-5 logo for a refund deposit.

The redemption center will be located in the Navy Exchange Mall parking lot across from the Commissary and next to Bougainville Drive.

In November 2004, the state of Hawai'i enacted the Bottle Bill in an effort to keep Hawai'i streets and byways clean and bottle and aluminum can-free.

Hawai'i's beverage container law (Bottle Bill) was enacted as a way to promote recycling. Hawai'i uses approximately 800 million beverage containers each year and only 20 percent is recycled. The remaining 80 percent ends up in the waste stream or as litter in the community.

The new bottle bill program places a five-cent redeemable deposit on each beverage container as an incentive for people to recycle their empty containers. This additional five-cent charge took effect on Nov. 1, 2004.

Some people have been asking, "How do I get my five-cent deposit back?" One answer is the new redemption center.

The redemption center hours of operation are from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesdays and Saturdays.

Honolulu Recovery Systems will bring container trucks, which will have vending type machines that accept cans, plastic and bottles. Patrons can place bottles, cans or plastic containers in the designated machine.

The machines will accurately register each can, plastic or bottle for correct refund amount. The customer will receive a machine printout that will include the refund dollar amount.

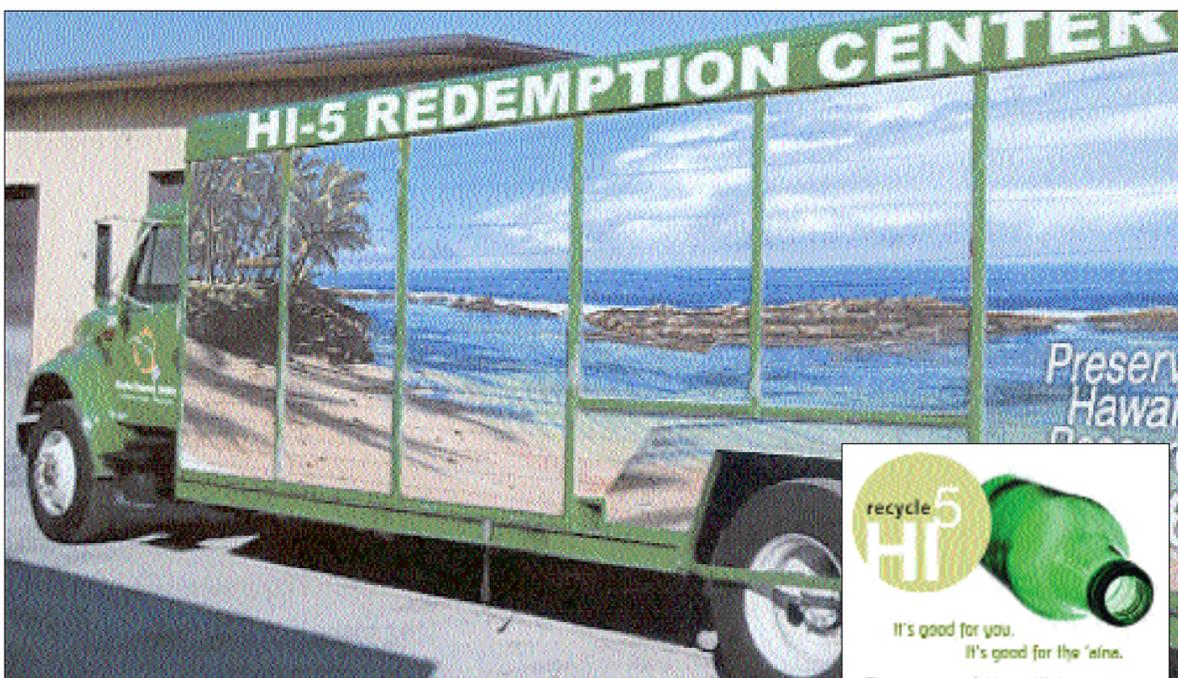
Authorized patrons will be able to take the machine printout to the Navy Exchange Mall at Pearl Harbor cash registers inside the Navy Exchange (excluding contracted kiosk vendors) to receive their refund. Patrons may also redeem the printouts at any NEX outlet, like base mini marts.

No cash refunds will be issued by Honolulu Recovery systems or by the on-site redemption center. The center is provided by the Navy Exchange to the military community as a service and is intended for use by only authorized patrons of the Navy Exchange.

Refunds will apply to beverages in glass, plastic and metal containers labeled with the HI-5 logo.

The dispensing machines will accept beverage containers size 64 fluid ounces or less. Containers must be clean and empty and must not be crushed.

Items not authorized for a refund will include: food containers, bottles for alcoholic beverages, milk containers, two-liter soda, wine, detergent, containers with liquid inside and crushed containers.



The Navy Exchange at Pearl Harbor will have a redemption center where authorized NEX patrons can bring bottles and cans with the HI5 logo and receive a receipt for a refund inside the NEX. The center will be in the parking lot near the commissary and will be open Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The state of Hawai'i is encouraging consumers across the state to recycle bottles and cans with the HI5 logo.

Region's recycling program saves energy, resources, dollars

Terri Kojima
COMNAVREGHI Environmental
Public Affairs

Garbage isn't a subject most people want to think about every day, but unless people learn to manage the tons generated each year, the people of Hawai'i will face serious environmental and economic consequences.

Everyone can take action to help preserve Hawai'i's unique and fragile environment. One way is to make recycling in the workplace a habit.

Navy Region Hawai'i's recycling program is turning materials that would otherwise become waste into valuable resources. Since the program began operating at Naval Station Pearl Harbor in the early 1990s, tons of materials have been processed through the center in building 159.

Last year, the center diverted over 1,200 tons of materials from the Pearl Harbor Naval Complex area away from Hawai'i's landfills and incinerators. Disposing of the material would have cost the Navy nearly \$20,000.

According to Michael W. Twilligear, who oversees the Region's recycling program, "Recycling not only saves energy and supplies valuable raw materials to industry, but it also conserves valuable resources for our future and our children's future."

The Region's recycling program has an added benefit for Sailors and other Navy personnel in Hawai'i. Legislative incentives provide for the return of net proceeds from the sale of recyclable materials to support Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) activities.

"Tossing your recyclables in the recycling bins instead of your regular trash cans is easy and the right thing to do," said Twilligear. "Recycling protects our environment and improves the quality of life for our Sailors."

The program manager credits the success of the region's recycling program to the tireless efforts of the 19-



Photo by Terri Kojima

GM2 Christopher R. Irving, a technician at Navy Region Hawai'i's recycling center, shovels a load of shredded paper into the compressor. The paper will be compacted into a 1,500-pound bale called an "office pack."

member recycling team.

At the recycling center, forklifts zip across the warehouse to stage bales of paper and cardboard weighing up to 1,500 lbs. each. Other workers operate giant compressors that compact paper and cardboard while some technicians conduct grind and acid tests to determine the type of metals that have been turned in so they can be properly segregated.

Throughout the work week, recyclables are picked up from over 135 pre-arranged points, including office spaces, mini marts, piers, etc. Materials including glass, metal, plastics and paper are collected, separated and sent to facilities that can process them into new materials or products.

To establish a new pickup point or to arrange a pickup for bulky or other special items by appointment, workplace managers are encouraged to contact the recycling office at 474-9207.

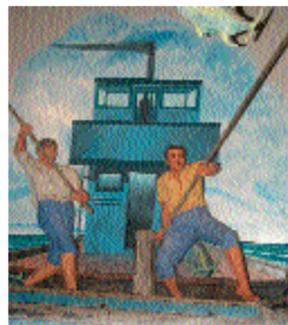
The center is also open for drop-offs from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday

through Thursday and from 8 to 11:30 a.m. on Friday. There are also window bins at the center for off-hour and weekend drop-offs.

According to Gas Turbine Systems Technician-Mechanical 1st Class Daniel Ryan, the center's operations manager, the recycling process works like clockwork when everyone follows the rules and guidelines.

"Segregating your recyclables is an important step and saves us (recycling center team) a lot of time," said Ryan. "The less time spent on segregating materials results in more time available for our folks to pick up additional recyclables."

A list of materials that may be turned in to the center for recycling and an exclusion list are provided by the center for the convenience of offices and commands on base. Recycling bags are provided by the center. For more information about the Navy Region Hawai'i Recycling Center, contact Mike Twilligear at 474-9207.



History of the seas

Maritime Museum looks at Sailors of yesteryear. See story on page B-1.

Hawai'i Navy News Briefs

Sailor dies supporting Operation Enduring Freedom

The Department of Defense announced March 11 the death of a Sailor who was supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

Petty Officer 1st Class Alec Mazur, 35, of Vernon, N.Y. died March 9 in a non-combat related incident. Mazur was assigned to Underwater Construction Team 1, under operational control of Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command.

The incident is under investigation.

Safety office relocates

Commander Navy Region Hawai'i safety department employees have separated from the Navy Public Works Center (PWC Pearl) and relocated to building 371A in the Hospital Point area of Naval Station Pearl Harbor. The PWC safety department (code 09SF) and its employees will remain at the PWC compound in building X-11.

All the safety training videos that are on loan to customers have also moved with the regional safety department and will be located at building 371A. For PWC customers, the intranet on-line reservation will remain in service. A five-day advance notice is required for video reservations done online so that video retrieval can be coordinated between the two offices. All customers are welcome to call the regional safety office to reserve videos.

The region safety department will host an open house beginning at 9 a.m. today. A dedication ceremony and blessing will begin at 10 a.m. with refreshments to follow.

For more information, contact the regional safety office by calling 474-3447 or by fax at 474-3431.



U.S. Navy photo by J02 Jessica B. Davis

Musician 3rd Class David Watts shares music to "Anchors Aweigh" with a euphonium player from the Kansai Student Band Federation. The Pacific Fleet Parade Band and the student band played together March 11 during a friendship visit. The two bands also performed separately at the Honolulu Festival Grand Parade March 13.

Japanese students, PacFleet band share music

J02 Jessica B. Davis

U.S. Pacific Fleet
Public Affairs

Talking about music, laughing and playing air hockey was the scene after a March 11 friendship visit made by Kansai Student Band Federation to the Pacific Fleet Band rehearsal hall.

The student band and Pacific Fleet's parade band also performed as two units in the annual Honolulu Festival Parade on March 13.

Before the parade performances, the two bands shared culture, music and fun.

After introductions through an interpreter, Kiyomo Hato, the Pacific Fleet Big Band performed for the students. The 22 Japanese musicians listened intently as the band gave a high-energy, enthusiastic

performance of "Old Man River," "Almost Like Being in Love" and "The Way You Look Tonight."

The Pacific Fleet band received a standing ovation by the students and teachers for their performance. After the band played, the Japanese students picked up their instruments so they could all play together.

"This visit is to encourage [the students] in their future and to help them understand music," said Takeo Terada, Kansai Student Band Federation's chief director, through Hato. "I believe this experience will teach them the international spirit of music."

"When you let the musicians get together, they find a way to communicate," said Lt. Ken Collins, Pacific Fleet band director. "I bet at the end, it will be hard to separate them. There is a special

bond between musicians."

The musicians shared music sheets and instrument techniques and performed "Zippity-Do-Da" and "YMCA."

After those songs, Terada showed Collins a sheet of music and started to hum a tune. Terada and Collins shook their heads in agreement. A quick shift of the music sheets had "Anchors Aweigh" flowing throughout the rehearsal room.

After a group photo and the official part of the visit was over, there was no apparent language barrier as the students asked for autographs and enjoyed pizza and root beer.

"This is good relations for all," said Musician 3rd Class Devin Stephenson. "We don't understand much about each other's language and culture, but we still manage to communicate and get along."

Submariner gets \$100,000 re-enlistment bonus

JOC(SW/AW) David
Rush

COMSUBPAC Public Affairs

On March 1, Chief Electrician's Mate Robert Cruanes, reactor control division leading chief petty officer stationed aboard USS Bremerton (SSN 698), signed on to stay Navy. In doing so, he is slated to get \$100,000.

In the Navy for 11 years, Cruanes said he would have re-enlisted regardless of the amount.

"I re-enlisted at the Bowfin Museum on March 1 and I will get a re-enlistment bonus of \$100,000," he said. "I would have re-enlisted with or without the bonus. I made chief last September and had already decided that if I made chief I would stay in the Navy. This was icing on the cake," said Cruanes.

As a submariner who holds a nuclear NEC, Cruanes credits the Navy's latest bonus increase for senior Sailors to the gap the Navy saw in leadership in the 12-17-year career mark. "It's for the zone 'C' re-enlistment under the enlisted supervisors retention bonus for the nuclear trained ratings. It just started last November," Cruanes said.

The ceremony included gifts for those in attendance at his ceremony.

"I was the first one on my boat under this new program," Cruanes explained. "I gave out \$100,000 candy bars

to all the people at my re-enlistment. I thought they would appreciate that."

According to Cruanes, he has been fortunate to get re-enlistment bonuses and even more fortunate to see them grow over the years.

"The bonuses for the nuclear ratings have always been there since I have been in the Navy, but it seems like they are getting better and better," said Cruanes. "My first bonus was \$12,000 and for my second I got \$60,000. That time we were in the (Arabian) Gulf so it was tax-free."

Although the bonus was a factor in re-enlisting, Cruanes said he loves his job and the camaraderie of submariners.

"I love being in the Navy; there's a sense of doing something worthwhile in my life. Whenever I retire, I can look back and say I made a difference. I tell my Sailors the Navy's not for everyone, but I have heard from a lot of my friends who have gotten out of the Navy that they miss the people that they worked with and that they were doing an important job," said Cruanes.

When Cruanes does get his bonus, he plans to make sure it is there for his family's future.

"I haven't received the money yet," he said. "I have a wife and eight-month-old daughter and I invested most of my last bonus and I will do the same thing with this one.

My goal is whenever I retire from the Navy, I can live on my investments and retirement pay," Cruanes said.

Cruanes is also investing in his future with a college degree, just a few courses away from his bachelor's degree in nuclear engineering from Thomas Edison State University. He advised fellow Sailors to think about their futures as well, not just in education, but financially.

"The earlier you start investing, the better off you will be. I started when I was 27 and I'm kicking myself for not starting earlier. There's no reason not to put some money away every month, whether it's the Thrift Savings Plan or a Roth IRA, or mutual funds," said Cruanes.

According to the Navy Personnel Command, nuclear-trained Sailors can get the biggest bonus for re-enlisting. Those with at least six years of service, but no more than 10 can get as much as \$65,000. Sailors eligible for the enlisted supervisor retention pay can get even more, up to \$100,000 if they meet the requirements.

The enlisted supervisor retention pay program is separate from the selective re-enlistment bonus and is designed to keep senior enlisted supervisors in critical jobs.

Those who accept the supervisor bonus are not eligible for the selective re-enlistment bonus.

2nd Fleet, NATO launch transformational Center of Excellence

Commander U.S. 2nd Fleet Public Affairs

At a ceremony Monday 14, aboard the 2nd Fleet flagship USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7), Commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet moved forward to establish an interim-capability U.S. Combined Joint Operations from the Sea (CJOS) Center of Excellence (COE).

Hosted by the United States, this CJOS COE will facilitate joint maritime expeditionary transformation in support of NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (ACT). Second Fleet will be looking forward to the participation of NATO signatory nations to volunteer a few of their talented personnel to work side by side with the 2nd Fleet staff in developing and advancing capabilities and concepts.

"We couldn't be more excited," said Vice Adm. Mark Fitzgerald, commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet. "This center will position us to better enable interoperability with our allies as we develop and vet burgeoning concepts in maritime command and control, including rapidly evolving technologies like communications and collaboration."

The COE is not envisioned to be a part of NATO Command Structure (NCS), but when approved by NATO, will help form part of a wider framework supporting the NCS.

"Drawing upon the collective wealth of our national experiences



U.S. Navy photo by PH2 Gregory A Roberts

Vice Adm. Mark Fitzgerald, Commander, Second Fleet, and Spanish Army Maj. Gen. Angel Guinea Cabezas de Herrera, assistant chief of staff capabilities Allied Command Transformation, answer questions regarding the command's move forward to establish an interim capability U.S. Combined Joint Operations from the Sea Center of Excellence, following a ceremony held aboard the U.S. Navy amphibious assault ship USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7). Hosted by the United States, this CJOS COE will facilitate joint maritime expeditionary transformation in support of NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Transformation.

and expertise, we are looking to create, to meld and to orchestrate revolutionary and evolutionary transformation within the alliance," said Spanish Army Maj. Gen. Angel Guinea Cabezas de Herrera, assistant chief of staff Capabilities Allied Command Transformation. "To

accomplish these dramatic and wide sweeping changes, we are embarking upon a number of new approaches that are in themselves transformational."

Speaking after the event, U.K. Commodore Peter Walpole, deputy commander, NATO Striking Fleet

Atlantic (CSFL) said, "This organization is truly going to be lean and mean."

"A center of excellence for combined, joint network-enabled operations from the sea integrated within the 2nd Fleet staff will capitalize on the ongoing exercises and operations here, in particular the conduct of training, experimentation, transformation and development of concepts and doctrine," said Walpole. "Second Fleet is uniquely positioned for a COE in this regard, and I'm excited about what the future holds."

While NATO and the participating countries will benefit, members of the 2nd Fleet staff will also gain broader understanding and insight in combined operations by virtue of having the expertise resident in the staff. Meanwhile, the integration also allows represented nations access to U.S. training and transformational initiatives that improve interoperability through more realistic, robust training conducted with 2nd Fleet operations and exercises.

Much of that training today includes significant experimentation in maritime operations. The Hampton Roads area allows the center to leverage the technology of the Navy Network Warfare Command, as well as Air Force Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) Langley, Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and Joint Forces Command (JFCOM).

"The COE will be fantastic for

experimentation in our transformation efforts," said Cmdr. Chris Kennedy. "Such a symbiotic arrangement within the alliance will promote and exploit the use of the sea in future conflict, and will explore joint command and control from the sea, including Sea Strike and Sea Basing," he said.

As militaries work to deal effectively with transformation, this maritime COE affords some degree of continuity in a sea of change. Since the center is uniquely positioned to be supported by embedded members of the sea-going 2nd Fleet staff, the COE will target its activities on areas where gaps may exist in maritime experience and expertise within the alliance. Maintaining linkage to the U.S. development in expeditionary maritime operations offers potential in improving NATO efforts, such as Operation Active Endeavor.

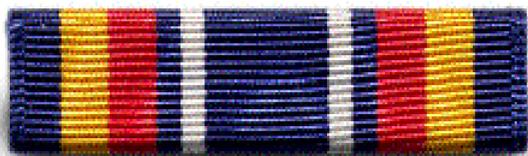
The integrated COE will leverage concepts through synergistic, opportunistic cooperative efforts. It will draw benefits directly from the operational tempo of its surroundings and maintain a high state of operational readiness. This organization will support NATO's transformation by maintaining a core group who can develop, test, and refine the means and mechanisms by which a leader can command and control from afloat a key pillar when assigned contingency tasking such as the maritime component commander for NATO's response force.

Comments, opinions or ideas? Write to us at hnn@honoluluadvertiser.com

Hawaii Navy News

Hawaii Navy News Editorial

ORM - Take it home with you



Establishing the Global War on Terrorism Medals

President George W. Bush
The White House

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including my authority as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. There is hereby established the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal with suitable appurtenances. Except as limited in section 3 of this order, and under uniform regulations to be prescribed by the Secretaries of the military departments and approved by the Secretary of Defense, or under regulations to be prescribed by the Secretary of Homeland Security with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal shall be awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who serve or have served in military expeditions to combat terrorism, as defined by such regulations, on or after September 11, 2001, and before a terminal date to be prescribed by the Secretary of Defense.

Section 2. Global War on Terrorism Service Medal. There is hereby established the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal with suitable appurtenances. Except as limited in section 3 of this order, and under uniform regulations to be prescribed by the Secretaries of the military departments and approved by the Secretary of Defense, or under regulations to be prescribed by the Secretary of Homeland Security with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal shall be awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the

United States who serve or have served in military operations to combat terrorism, as defined by such regulations, on or after September 11, 2001, and before a terminal date to be prescribed by the Secretary of Defense.

Section 3. Relationship to Other Awards. Notwithstanding section 3 of Executive Order 10977 of December 4, 1961, establishing the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and section 3 of Executive Order 12985 of January 11, 1996, establishing the Armed Forces Service Medal, any member who qualified for those medals by reason of service in operations to combat terrorism between September 11, 2001, and a terminal date to be determined by the Secretary of Defense, shall remain qualified for those medals. Upon application, any such member may be awarded either the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal or the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal in lieu of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal or the Armed Forces Service Medal, but no person may be awarded more than one of these four medals by reason of service in the same approved Global War on Terrorism expedition or operation to combat terrorism, and no person shall be entitled to more than one award of the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal or the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

Section 4. Posthumous Award. The Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal may be awarded posthumously to any person covered by and under regulations prescribed in accordance with the first or second sections of this order.

Section 5. Nothing in this Executive Order shall be construed for any purpose as fixing, or authorizing the fixing of, the dates of initiation or termination of armed hostilities between the United States and terrorists of global

Commentary
FLTCM(AW/SW)
Jon Thompson
U.S. Fleet Forces Command
Command Master Chief



When was the last time you applied the principles of operational risk management (ORM) to changing your oil? How about mowing the lawn? What about taking a trip?

While you may think ORM is for Navy work only, I think you will find that ORM, if applied correctly, can make you and your family safer in almost everything you do.

Off-duty mishaps are devastating to our operational readiness. I always shake my head when I read how mishaps occur. Often the reason is a complete disregard for simple safety tips or overextending one's personal capabilities. My point is: almost all off-duty mishaps are completely preventable.

Since October 2004, the Navy has lost 45 Sailors from mishaps and hundreds more have been hurt. As a matter of fact, 31 of these Sailors died in motor vehicle accidents. It's no wonder the Naval Safety Center calls traffic safety their "number one readiness issue."

Oh, and as an interesting statistic, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for ages five-29 years old. Given the

majority of our Sailors are in the 18-29-year-old range, I'm absolutely sure we can do a better job of mitigating accidents and deaths on our roads and highways. Applying ORM might just be the key.

Operational Risk Management is the process of dealing with risk associated with an activity that includes risk assessment, risk decision-making and implementation of effective risk controls. Essentially, applying ORM means you identify hazards, assess the hazards, make risk decisions, implement controls and then supervise the activity.

Sound simple? It is. The difficult part is actually applying these steps.

Most mishaps occur for one of five reasons:

- Individual failure - You are trained and know how something works, but elect not to follow the standard (self-discipline).
- Support failure - The equipment or material you use is not designed for the job.
- Leader failure - The supervisor(s) do not enforce the known standard.
- Training failure - You attempt something you are not trained for (insufficient, incorrect or no training on task).
- Standards failure - The procedures for a task are not

clear or practical, or in some cases, do not exist.

Shipmates, I suspect at one time or another we've all cut corners, disregarded safety precautions, pushed ourselves beyond our limits and tempted fate. The problem is, the law of averages is against us.

Just because you can rewrite a light without turning off the power once doesn't mean you can do it over and over. Eventually, fate catches all of us and the result can be fatal.

I guess I have to ask, "What activity, project or trip in your life warrants risking your personal safety or the safety of your family?" I'm guessing most of you would agree that almost nothing would warrant such a risk and I would agree with you. However, think back in your own life. How many times have you unnecessarily put yourself and/or your family in harm's way?

Here's what I'm talking about: When was the last time you took a trip and drove hundreds and hundreds of miles without proper rest? How many times have you used machinery without wearing ear and eye protection? How many times have you used chemicals without gloves and goggles? Ever fix something with the wrong tool? You get the point.

In our daily lives, we encounter situations each day that dictate us to ask a couple simple questions about the risks associated

with what we are about to do. Unfortunately, we often don't assess those risks, or we minimize them by telling ourselves, "Nothing will happen to me." Of the 45 Sailors who have lost their lives in mishaps this fiscal year, I wonder how many of them said the same thing?

The Navy directs us to apply ORM in our professional lives. Operational readiness demands it and the safety of our people makes this a top issue for every command.

If the Navy takes this so seriously and incorporates it into our workplace, it only makes sense we should carry it home with us. There's nothing childish or silly about asking oneself the simple risk questions before starting a project or making a trip.

If risk is involved, you owe it to yourself, your family and the Navy to evaluate how you will deal with the risk.

My suspicion is if you think about the risks, you'll deal with them. Ignoring risks will not make them go away. My challenge to all of you is to take the principles of ORM home with you, discuss them often with your family and apply those principles as often as necessary.

For those of you with children, where do you think they will learn proper safety? Yep, they watch (and imitate) you. Skip steps today and they will skip steps tomorrow. Good luck Shipmates and stay safe!

Hawaii Navy News

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Coast Guard 'polar roller' comes to the rescue

PA2 Brooksann Anderson

Coast Guard District 14

Public Affairs

The crew of the Coast Guard cutter, Polar Star, settled in for the ride to Antarctica in support of 50th Operation Deep Freeze, carrying several scientists and their gear.

It isn't called a polar roller for nothing. When the deck is moving up and down and swaying from side to side, the crew says it makes for a hard time walking.

The deployment from November to April is a routine operation to break a channel in the ice to McMurdo Station, a scientific outpost, which is located on Ross Island near the Ross ice shelf. The ship then escorts supply and research vessels into the station as well as assists the scientists onboard with their studies of the weather, the ice, the animals and even the sun's rays.

This year, their routine journey would turn out to be anything but routine.

When the ship docked in Honolulu, tragedy struck. Petty Officer 1st Class Mark Mueller, an information technology specialist, died while recreationally scuba diving. The crew held a memorial service with full military honors while at sea.

"It was devastating to lose a member of my crew," said Capt. Richard "Mac" McCullough, commanding officer of the CGC Polar Star and the 11th Golden Ancient Mariner of the Coast Guard.

Nevertheless, there was a mission to complete so the crew pushed on with what had to be done. They were expecting to have to clear about 15 miles of ice for the channel, which is the norm.

Two years ago, an enormous piece of the Ross ice shelf near McMurdo Station had broken loose and floated to the other side of Beaufort Island, blocking other icebergs from floating away or melting. This made it necessary for the Polar Star to have to crush its way through a record-setting 80 miles of



U.S. Coast Guard photo by PA2 Brooksann Anderson Helicopter tie down crews on the Coast Guard cutter Polar Star attach a bundle of supplies to an HH-65 helicopter in preparation for distribution.

ice with the help of the Krasin, a Russian ice breaker. "This was the worst ice season yet, but we got it done and on time," said Petty Officer 1st Class, Joseph D. Shiver, a boatswains mate.

After completing this monumental task as well as dealing with other mechanical problems, which at one point had the ship moored for three weeks awaiting parts, the ship was on a course for home. The most unexpected mission of their journey was about to begin.

Tropical Cyclone Olaf had barreled through the smaller isolated eastern islands of Tau and Ofu in American Samoa with 130 mph winds and 30-foot seas. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) called on the Coast Guard to help with the relief efforts. But how could they get the thousands and thousands of pounds of supplies to those who needed it quickly and safely?

First, Coast Guard C-130 Hercules aircraft and crews from air stations at Barbers Point Hawai'i and Elizabeth City, N.C. transported supplies and FEMA personnel to Pago Pago, American Samoa.

"Every time I have worked with



U.S. Coast Guard photo by PA2 Brooksann Anderson

The Coast Guard cutter Polar Star pulls in to American Samoa and prepares to dock before loading up with relief supplies for outlying islands hit by Hurricane Olaf.

the Coast Guard, they are excellent professionals and always ready to help. This time was no exception," said Les Becicka, a FEMA field coordinating officer observer.

Secondly, the CGC Polar Star was transiting the area, quietly making its way to Seattle where dry dock repairs for the ship and rest for the crew awaited.

"We were the perfect asset; we were in the right place and had the capacity to carry the load. It was a great way to break the monotony of the sail home and we were going to help those in need. There was no downside," said McCullough.

Eager to help, the ship picked up the supplies in Pago Pago on Feb. 21 and that same day, headed to the island of Tau to start off loading.

"I still cannot believe how much they accomplished in the first day of off loading. Some of these people

were literally sleeping on the ground with no fresh water to drink," said Arno Percival, projects manager from the territorial office of homeland security who was in charge of the distribution of the supplies. "I am thankful the Coast Guard crew was there to help."

The crew worked from first light the next day to finish off loading to Tau and then moved on to the neighboring island of Ofu.

"Seeing those people's faces as we were pulling up to the dock was a feeling like no other. You could tell they were really glad to see us," said Shiver. "We never get to do missions such as these being a polar roller, but it is the reason we all came in - to help others."

Everyone on board helped in one way or another regardless of rank or job title, offloading 70,600 pounds of life-giving supplies in the

brutal heat. One of the newest members of the crew, Krista Howell, a fireman apprentice, said she was amazed at what she had seen and done since reporting to the ship only three short months ago.

"Rescuing others is the reason most people say they joined. I just didn't think I would be a part of it right away," Howell said.

The ship is set for home, but will first make a port call in Honolulu for some much deserved fun and rest.

To add to the morale, the ship and its crew are ahead of schedule and will be home almost a month early.

"I am so proud of my crew for what they have accomplished this trip," McCullough said. "They really pulled together and always kept a positive attitude."

Submarine commodore mentioned in Covey book

JOC(SW/AW) David Rush
COMSUBPAC Public Affairs

A Pacific Fleet submarine commodore is included in the latest book by Dr. Steven R Covey, one of the most influential leadership authors.

Capt. David Marquet, Commodore Submarine Squadron Three, is a practitioner of Covey's "7 Habits of Highly Effective People." Thanks to his effective leadership skills, Marquet is in Covey's latest book, "The Eighth Habit — From Effectiveness to Greatness."

According to Marquet, he began implementing Covey's ideas as an executive officer. "I was the executive officer on USS Hawkbill (SSN 666) when I started using Covey's habits. It helped me in my personal life and when I began as an XO, I saw how the officers that I worked with could benefit from Covey," said Marquet.

Marquet said that following that tour, he went to shore and didn't have the opportunity to apply Covey's principles, but upon returning to sea duty as commanding officer of USS Santa Fe (SSN 763), he immediately implemented it in his wardroom.

"When I got my command, it was easy then. I gave every officer who reported onboard a copy of the Seven Habits," said Marquet. "We used it like a textbook. How could we apply some of the information on how we run a submarine? We tried to make it practical."

"The mechanism we developed was instead of asking permission the officers would say, 'I intend to.' I had seen this practiced on other submarines that ran well," explained Marquet.



U.S. Navy photo

Capt. David Marquet, Commodore Submarine Squadron Three, stands with Dr. Stephen R. Covey's, author of "7 Habits of Highly Effective People." Thanks to his effective leadership skills, Marquet is in Covey's latest book, The Eighth Habit — From Effectiveness to Greatness.

"The ship showed a lot of improvement during the time that we implemented the 'I intend to,' as well as some of the other Covey habits," said Marquet.

While commanding USS Santa Fe, Marquet had the opportunity not only to meet Covey in person, but also to show him how he was using his ideas to operate his submarine.

"My squadron commander, Adm. Mark Kenny, who was a captain at the time, knew that we were trying to apply some of Covey's principles. There was an opportunity to get Covey out on a submarine so we were

the perfect match. We picked him up in Lahainan and it coincided with a family member cruise. Usually you don't want to mix distinguished visitors and family cruises, but in this case it was perfect," said Marquet.

The 'I intend to' inspired Covey to include this leadership tool in his latest book "The Eighth Habit."

According to Covey, his experience onboard USS Santa Fe left a lasting impression. "An opportunity arose, which I jumped at. I was invited to board Capt. Marquet's sub and interview him. Never before had I observed such empowerment. We

stood on the bridge of this multibillion-dollar nuclear submarine with a football field of vessel in front of and behind us. A young officer approached the captain and said, "Sir, I intend to take this ship down 400 feet." Capt. Marquet asked about the sonar and sounding and then instructed this young man to give us another 20 minutes on the bridge before carrying out his intention.

Throughout the day, people approached the captain intending to do this or do that. The captain would sometimes ask a question or two, but then say, "Very well." He reserved only the top decisions for his own confirmation and empowered others to make the rest. He said he wanted to empower his people as far as he possibly could within the Navy's confines. He felt if he required them to own the problem and the solution to it, they would begin to view themselves as a vitally important link in the chain of command. He created a culture where those Sailors had a real sense of adding value."

Marquet continues to use Covey's habits and encourages others to do the same. "I recommend the book to every one. It changed my life, personally and professionally. I think it really changes your effectiveness."

The primary tool, according to Marquet, is proactive leadership. "The very best thing is to be proactive. If that's the only thing you do, you will probably become 10 times more effective of a person or organization. There's a difference between someone who waits for something to do, instead of just doing it. Response ability — I have the ability to control my response in any particular situa-

tion and taking responsibility for my life and my actions," Marquet concluded.

Lt. j.g. Mark Lookninan, Squadron Three weapons officer, has taken Marquet's advice on improving his leadership skills by using Covey's ideas. "I am a former torpedo mate chief and this is my first job as an officer. Capt. Marquet directed me to read the "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" and it really has had an impact on my life, personally and professionally," said Lookninan.

Lookninan said he understands why Marquet believes in Covey's principles. "The more I learn from the book, I can see how Capt. Marquet uses the habits and how he has gained from the book. The first habit the book talks about is how to be proactive. We cannot just sit back, we have to be out there and make sure our submarines are ready to do their missions."

Lookninan recommends other leaders, enlisted and officer, read Covey's "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" and suggests that they have a positive attitude about his ideas. "Read the book with an open mind. You have to want to learn from it and practice the habits Covey presents," Lookninan concluded.

In 2000, USS Santa Fe was awarded the 1999 Arleigh Burke trophy for most improved submarine, ship or aviation squadron in the Pacific.

Dr. Covey, who has an MBA from Harvard and a doctorate degree from Brigham Young University, is an internationally respected leadership authority, family expert, teacher, organizational consultant and author.

Louisville Sailors conduct JTFEX



U.S. Navy photo by PH3 Shannon E. Renfro

The Pearl Harbor-based attack submarine USS Louisville (SSN 724) underway off the coast of southern California. Louisville is currently conducting a Joint Task Force Training Exercise with Carrier Strike Group Eleven (CSG-11).

Skinny Dragons volunteer to help Djibouti children

VP-4 Public Affairs

Several Skinny Dragons of Patrol Squadron Four, based at Marine Corps Base Hawai'i - Kaneohe Bay and on detachment in the Horn of Africa, have been helping children in need.

Intelligence Specialist 2nd Class Dawn Turner is leading a team of Dragons in lending a helping hand in a orphanage in Djibouti Africa. The orphanage houses children as young as a week old. These children are in the orphanage for many different reasons. Some children were given away by parents who could not afford to raise them, others had parents who passed away.

Least fortunate of all are those born disabled and then abandoned by their parents. Housing more than 30 infants, the orphanage is understaffed. Three to five times a week, the Skinny Dragons help feed and care for the babies which may otherwise lay

unattended for hours.

"I have children of my own. I want to give these children the love and affection they need," said Turner.

A typical day of volunteering consists of making sure the infants get fed, then feeding and playing with the older children. Along with their time, the Dragons have donated supplies and money. Over the course of a month, \$5,000 was raised to help fund for the orphanage.

Diapers, toys, food and clothing have been brought to make sure the children are getting the things they need. Lt. Erica Hayes said: "I saw a boy, about seven; as we passed he waved. I waved back and I witnessed the biggest smile I think I have seen in a long time. It made me smile in return." Other Skinny Dragons volunteering their time include: Lt. j.g. Ryan Davis, Lt. Ray Guethler, Aviation Warfare System Operator 3rd Class Tezonna Perry and AW1 Kenneth Stringer.

USS Lake Erie earns Ney

U.S.S. Lake Erie Public Affairs

USS Lake Erie (CG 70), the United States Navy's only ballistic missile defense cruiser, received the highest honor a supply department's food service organization can be awarded, the prestigious Captain Edward Ney Memorial Award.

The nomination of USS Lake Erie (CG 70) came following the ship's supply management assessment and inspection (SMA/SMI) in June 2004, scoring a water front-best 99.24 percent.

Judged in the medium afloat category, Lake Erie competed against 50 other ships during SMA/SMI for one of two nominations under Pacific Fleet. Also nominated were USS Curtis Wilbur (DDG54) of Pacific Fleet, USS McFaul (DDG 74) and USS Vicksburg (CG 69) of Atlantic Fleet.

According to CS1(SW) Abraham A. Seei, food service division leading petty officer, the award is an important acknowledgment of the hours of work culinary specialists (CS) and food service attendants (FSA) perform on a daily basis.

"It is an honor to be selected for such a high award," he said. "It shows they acknowledge our hard work, determination and expertise in the field."

CSC(SW) Ferdinandnestor Q. Frando, leading chief petty officer, added that this recognition is significant not just for the food service division, but for the entire ship.

"It is not just recognition for our division; it's for the crew as a whole," he said. "We received tremendous supports from all departments, especially engineering and medical department personnel, who put in a lot of efforts and long hours. Without their support, we wouldn't have been nominated for this award."

Lake Erie had the honor to be evaluated by the first CWO5 of the Navy, Leon A. Cole, during their Ney evaluation. "It is a great honor to meet Mr. Cole. I learned so much from him. CWO5 Cole leaves a lifelong treasure of great impressions," said Ens. Thuan Nguyen, the food service officer.

The Ney Award is named in honor of Capt. Edward F. Ney, Supply Corps, United States Navy, and was established in 1958 by the Secretary of the Navy and the International Food Service Executives Association (IFSEA) to improve and recognize the quality of food service in the Navy.



U.S. Navy photo by PHC Johnny Bivera

Former Chief Information Systems Technician Malcom S. Simien earned his commission through the limited duty officer (LDO) program, and will serve as an automatic data processing officer. All officers on active duty will soon be given regular appointments regardless of commission source.

All officers given regular appointments

Lt. Kyle Raines
Chief of Naval Personnel
Public Affairs

All officers commissioned to the active duty list in the Navy will be given regular appointments regardless of commissioning source, beginning May 1. This change is directed for all services by the National Defense Authorization Act of 2005.

"This furthers the Navy's efforts to create one aligned and integrated force for the 21st century under our human capital strategy," said Vice Adm. Gerry Hoewing, Chief of Naval Personnel. "We are seeking ways to reduce barriers, eliminate unnecessary or duplicated processes

and create a more efficient Navy. There is no reason to have these designations."

Reserve commissioned officers currently on the active-duty list will transition to regular officer status no later than May 1, 2006, as long as they meet the necessary requirements set forth in Officer Appointments Law 10 U.S.C. § 532. The officers' rights and obligations under their original contract remains unchanged and their oath of office remains in effect.

This change in law will also eliminate the need for future augmentation selection boards. Redesignation boards for officers seeking to change competitive categories will continue to be held.

Benefits offset exchange rates at overseas banks

American Forces Press Service

Military members overseas will not suffer from higher currency exchange rates at military banks, officials said, because allowances increase to offset the higher rate.

Defense Finance and Accounting Service officials noted that overseas military members and other customers of the community bank have asked why the foreign exchange rate at these banks differs from that at other banks on the local economy or other published exchange rates.

The exchange rate at the community bank branch, known as the community bank accommodation rate, differs because the community bank charges a 2.5 percent commission fee to defray costs, officials said. Costs incurred include currency acquisition and delivery to bank customers.

However, to offset this out-of-pocket cost for overseas military members, the overseas housing allowance and cost of living allowance are increased an equal amount.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service operates community banks overseas through a competitive solicitation process and award of a contract to a stateside financial institution. The current contractor is Bank of America.

Banking products, services, fees and charges are determined by the military departments. All revenues received from fees and charges are used to offset the cost of the banking program. The bank contractor does not profit from or receive any incentive

from the revenues generated.

Community banks also are not in competition with local foreign banks, but are established to support the U.S. dollar economy on bases overseas and to provide stateside-like banking services to individuals and organizations, DFAS officials said.

The community bank accommodation rate is used to compute overseas station allowances for military personnel in Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, United Kingdom, Ireland, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Finland, France, Austria, Japan, Okinawa and Korea.

The per diem, travel and transportation allowance committee compares the accommodation rate to the exchange rate used in the pay systems. When the accumulated difference is five percent, the committee resets the pay system exchange rate. This ensures the pay systems rate is as close to the actual bank rate over time as possible.

Servicemembers residing on the economy in these countries have their rent and utilities recorded in the military pay system in the local currency of the country.

When DFAS computes monthly payroll, the amount of allowable rent and utilities is converted to dollars at the latest pay system exchange rate. Since the pay system rate is based on the community bank accommodation rates, the member in effect receives enough dollars to buy the local currency from the bank needed to pay rent and utilities.

The net effect on the individual's pay is zero, officials explained.



U.S. Navy photo by GM3 Austin Brittain

YNSN Brandon Javellana, search and rescue swimmer assigned to the amphibious assault ship USS Essex (LHD 2), uses a knife to free one of three large sea turtles trapped in a fisherman's net. Essex spotted the turtles while transiting the Persian Gulf. The ship used its rigid hull inflatable boat to get close to the turtles and cut them free from the netting. Essex is the Navy's only forward deployed amphibious assault ship, homeported in Sasebo, Japan, and the flagship for Amphibious Squadron 11 Amphibious Ready Group.

Essex Sailors rescue sea turtles

JOC (SW/AW) Christina Johnson

USS Essex Public Affairs

USS Essex (LHD 2) crew members launched an unusual rescue operation to save three giant sea turtles that were caught in a fisherman's net March 10.

The sea creatures were spotted by the officer of the deck while the ship transited the Persian Gulf. Capt. Martin J. Keaney, Essex commanding officer, took immediate action to help the turtles

and Petty Officer Melone and I cut the net away from their necks and then from their bodies with our SAR knives," said Javellana. "There were three turtles and one was injured pretty badly by what looked like a shark bite on the left part of its shell."

Getting tangled up in fishermen's nets, and ultimately drowning, is the number one cause of death for sea turtles, according to the World Wildlife Fund Web site.

"The Navy takes stewardship of the seas very seriously," added Keaney. "Whether keeping plastics from the sea or assisting sea creatures in distress, we are trying to do things right," he said.

Essex is transiting the Persian Gulf, heading home following the backload of 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit personnel upon their completion of combat operations in Iraq. Essex is the Navy's only forward deployed amphibious assault ship from Sasebo, Japan and the flagship for Amphibious Squadron 11, Amphibious Ready Group.

"Chief [Boatswain's Mate Eric] Randall (boat officer) used the boat hook to pull the turtles to the side of the boat

and Petty Officer Melone and I cut the net away from their necks and then from their bodies with our SAR knives," said Javellana. "There were three turtles and one was injured pretty badly by what looked like a shark bite on the left part of its shell."

Navy aims to reduce lost civilian work days

Derek Nelson
Naval Safety Center Public Affairs

The Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Safety asked all commands March 4 to review their progress in reducing the number of work days lost by civilian employees.

Civilian lost-time injuries is one of the areas targeted in the Navy's ongoing mishap-reduction campaign, which aims to cut mishaps by 50 percent by the end of this fiscal year.

"Every person, military and civilian, who contributes to the Navy mission contributes to readiness," said Capt. Charlene Brassington, the safety center's OSH director. "Whether they are repairing ships, processing supplies, or fixing aircraft, all of them matter."

According to Brassington, once

commands are aware of their current rates and specific mishaps, they can more effectively target their prevention efforts.

"We understandably lose production and work time to many routine reasons, such as sick days, training time and annual leave," Brassington said. "To lose more work time to injuries or work-related illnesses is unacceptable and is something we must prevent."

"We have found that many of these lost work time injuries are ergonomic - musculo-skeletal injuries, back injuries, repetitive motion - and these are preventable," added Brassington.

In an effort to assist commands with reducing civilian lost workdays, the Navy provides a wealth of outside assistance. For example, the Naval Facilities Engineering

Command's ergonomic team helps commands adapt equipment and work processes to the physical requirements of the human body.

"NAVFAC has been on the forefront of ergonomics improvements," said Cmdr. Dexter Mills, OSH programs division head at the Naval Safety Center. "Their east and west coast teams will visit commands and redesign and reconfigure hazardous work practices," producing a safer workplace.

The Navy is also trying to reduce lost workdays through a return-to-work initiative, whereby full-time human resources experts, or injury compensation program administrators, oversee the worker's com-

"Every person, military and civilian, who contributes to the Navy mission contributes to readiness."

Capt. Charlene Brassington

Naval Safety Center
OSH director

ensation programs at the headquarters level. They provide helpful guidance about return-to-work programs, compensation case management and injury compensation program rules.

"The current return-to-work initiative will help local commands find productive work, such as light-duty jobs, that can be done by peo-

ple recovering from injuries," explained Mills. "This initiative creates increased opportunities to properly evaluate and place each injured worker. If that worker is recovering from an injured back, for example, their doctor might say they can't lift, but they can sit and file. An attempt is made to find a job to

fit the person's capabilities while they recover and can resume their original job, if possible."

The safety center Web site has other information to help commands focus on prevention efforts and return employees to work as soon as appropriate at www.safetycenter.navy.mil/osh/shore/lostworkday.htm.

STORY IDEAS

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Hawaii Navy News

Army at Ford Island



U.S. Navy photo by J02 Devin Wright

Soldiers from Unit 121 Infantry, from Schofield Barracks, explore Ford Island while on a short break from their work detail. The infantry unit is at Ford Island off loading mobilization equipment from Iraq. The equipment will be returned to Schofield when the offload is complete.

NMCRS: Society 'can help Sailors in an emergency'

Continued from A-1

reiterated Vitale's words by noting the importance of the NMCRS, which granted more than \$47,000 to bring families members of the 27 Marines and one Sailor, who died in a helicopter crash near Ar Rutbah, Iraq on Jan. 26, to Hawai'i for their memorial service.

"That is only one example of how the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society can help Sailors and Marines in an emergency," he said.

NMCRS's 2004 fund drive raised more than \$590,000 and featured the highest per capita in the world at \$27.39.

"We have hundreds if not thousands of examples of why the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society makes a difference," said Vitale. "Last year we had a great year and obviously we want to keep up that tradition of raising a great deal of money for our Sailors and our Marines."

According to its Web site, the mission of the

Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society is to provide, in partnership with the Navy and Marine Corps, financial, educational and other assistance to members of the naval service of the United States and their eligible family members and survivors when in need, and to receive and manage funds to administer these programs.

NMCRS provides assistance with basic living expenses, emergency transportation, funerals, medical bills, essential car repairs, pay problems and other emergency needs. Assistance is provided in the form of interest-free loans and/or grants, depending on financial need and type of assistance rendered.

For more information on the fund drive, contact the Pearl Harbor NMCRS office located in building 1514 at 423-1314 or the Marine Corps Base Hawai'i - Kaneohe Bay NMCRS office, located in building 4016, at 254-1327.



U.S. Navy photo

Seabees from NMCB-4 build a bridge over the Euphrates river.

Pearl Harbor Seabees deploy in support of OIF

JO2 (SW) Chad V. Pritt

Commander, 30th Naval Construction Regiment Public Affairs

Seabees from Pearl Harbor-based Commander, 30th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR) and Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit (CBMU) 303, Detachment Hawai'i, deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

More than 20 servicemembers said goodbye to loved ones and boarded planes to Port Hueneme, Calif. from Feb. 22 to March 6 for processing before flying to Camp Moreell in Kuwait and, ultimately, Camp Fallujah, Iraq to support the demanding task of reconstruction.

"The most challenging part of this deployment, as far as operations go, is to keep everybody safe and have them come home in one piece," said Senior Chief Utilitiesman (SCW) Kevin D.

Hartford, 30th NCR Safety Chief. "What we do is hazardous enough, but being in a combat zone multiplies it."

While at Camp Fallujah, the 30th NCR will provide command and control for Huntsville, Alabama-based Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 24 and Gulfport, Mississippi-based NMCB 1.

This is the second deployment to Iraq in support of OIF for 30th NCR, which deployed for the initial drive to Baghdad two years ago. Though the operation is the same, the mission this time is very different.

During the 2003 deployment, 30th NCR stayed in step with the Marine Corps like never before, serving as Task Force Mike (mobility) and providing non-standardized bridging for the advancing Marines.

For this deployment, the regiment will remain stationary, working directly under II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF) and providing command and con-

trol to the battalions, which are currently involved in several reconstruction efforts throughout the country.

Unlike conventional fleet deployments, the 30th NCR has split its scheduled year-long deployment into two halves. To do this, the regiment needed to activate and integrate nearly 30 reservists from First Naval Construction Regiment into the command to back-fill positions and deploy to Iraq themselves.

"I think I can learn a lot more by deploying with active duty than I could by being deployed with just reservists," said Seaman Stacy Tate, who will deploy to Iraq during the second wave. "I'll get to learn more about my job before I go in country to perform it."

Commander, 30th Naval Construction Regiment maintains administrative and operational control over four NMCBs, eight construction battalion maintenance units and an underwater construction team.

Seabee divers survey Iraqi piers

IC1 Kelly Preston

Combat Camera Pacific, Bahrain Detachment

Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1, Air Det. Alfa Seabees completed a survey of all waterfront facilities at the Iraqi naval base in Umm Qasr March 10.

The project covered piers, a quay wall and all supporting structures, totaling more than 1,000 meters of Iraqi coastline.

"The mission's objective was to collect data for a structural analysis and potential port development," said Lt. Sylvester Adamah, civil engineer operations officer for Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/Commander, U.S. 5th Fleet. "The aim is to develop a usable base and a new port for the Iraqis so they can provide protection for the oil terminals. It's a very significant port."

Since last year, the Iraqi navy has received training from multi-national forces to protect the offshore Al Basrah and Khawr Al Amaya oil terminals (ABOT and KAAOT) and other infrastructure nodes within their territorial waters. These key infrastructures form the foundation for much of the region's economic growth, stability and prosperity, and can significantly impact the global economy.

The Iraqi navy began performing maritime security operations (MSO) in Iraqi territorial waters alongside coalition maritime forces Oct. 1. Umm Qasr is presently the most operational port in Iraq.

On March 6, the 12-man UCT 1 team loaded their gear aboard fleet ocean tug USNS Catawba (T-ATF 168) and headed to Umm Qasr. There they completed the first mooring of a U.S. Navy ship to

an Iraqi pier and immediately began their work by lowering a rigid hull inflatable boat (RHIB) over the side of Catawba to engage in a "side scan survey" of the piers.

"We used a unique torpedo-shaped device called a 'tow fish,'" said Equipment Operator 1st Class (SCW/DV) Nicholas Gegg. "The tow fish is lowered into the water and then dragged by the RHIB. In an instant, it beams back to its mobile console an image of what is underwater."

Using the tow fish, the divers had a good idea of any obstructions before they even got wet.

Following the side scan survey, divers spent more than 600 minutes underwater in zero visibility and heavy current conditions, inspecting pier support structures (called piles) for corrosion, crumpling and excessive sea growth.

"It made working a lot harder. They had to feel every bit of pile," said Senior Chief Construction Electrician (SCW/MDV) Henry Stark, UCT 1 master diver.

Despite the challenges, UCT 1 completed the project ahead of schedule, finishing the estimated 10-day project in just four days. They also took measurements of the piers and drafted computerized models of the structures.

The Seabees of UCT 1 helped clear the way to making Iraq safe for future naval operations.

The Iraqi navy provided boat security for UCT 1 divers and Catawba for the duration of the project.

"They did a great job," said Stark.

The Iraqi navy also conducts policing operations on the Iraqi coastline and territorial waters to counter terrorism, smuggling, piracy and other unlawful activities.