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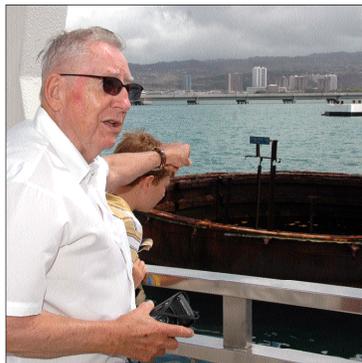
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Volume 32 Issue 32



PEARL HARBOR SHIPS PARTICIPATE IN VALIANT SHIELD 2007

U.S. Navy photo by MCI Hana'ei Shimana
 USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), and Pearl Harbor-based USS Chafee (DDG 90) (left) and USS Key West (SSN 722) transit in formation during a group photo concluding Valiant Shield 2007. The Kitty Hawk, John C. Stennis and Nimitz Carrier Strike Groups participated in Valiant Shield 2007, the largest joint exercise in the Pacific this year. H4 in the Guam operating area, the exercise included 30 ships, more than 280 aircraft and more than 20,000 service members from the Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. Kitty Hawk is entering the third month of its summer deployment. (More of Exercise Valiant Shield 2007 on page A-2 and A-5)



Pearl Harbor survivor and former Chief Machinist Mate, Louis R. Billmyer, 86, from Cresco, Iowa, points out a gun turret of the USS Arizona (BB 39) which is protruding from the water during a visit to the USS Arizona Memorial.

Pearl Harbor survivor pays tribute to fallen shipmates

Story and photo by MCSN Byung K. Cho

U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

Pearl Harbor survivor and former Chief Machinist Mate Louis R. Billmyer, 86, of Cresco, Iowa and his family members visited the USS Arizona Memorial and historic Pearl Harbor on Aug. 6 for the first time in more than 20 years.

Billmyer's visit was a tribute to his fallen shipmates who were lost during the attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941.

"It's sad to see what happened, but I'm glad I came to pay my respects to the fallen men and women," said Billmyer.

Assigned to the optical instrument department on board USS Medusa (AR 1), a fleet repair ship, Billmyer was a seaman 3rd class on Dec. 7, 1941 and witnessed the attack and USS Arizona (BB 39), a Pennsylvania-class battleship, as she took a fatal hit which set her ablaze.

According to Billmyer, Medusa was credited with shooting down two Japanese airplanes and contributed to the sinking of a two-man submarine during the attack.

Billmyer and his family also paid tribute to the Sailors of USS Utah (BB 31/AG 16) and USS Nevada (BB 36), and visited the Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet boat house.

"It's a real honor for us to be here today," said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Mark Billmyer, son of Louis Billmyer.

"My son made all the arrangements and made it possible," said Louis Billmyer. "I just wanted to come back one more time before I die."

Capt. Janet Stewart takes command at NCTAMSPAC

CWO4 Clifton Jenkins

Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station, Pacific Public Affairs

Capt. Janet Stewart relieved Capt. Jim Donovan as commanding officer of Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station, Pacific (NCTAMS PAC) during a change of command ceremony held Aug. 9 at NCTAMS PAC. The ceremony also marked the completion of 34 years of naval service for Donovan.

Vice Adm. H. Denby Starling II, who recently took command of Naval Network Warfare Command in Little Creek, Va. presided over the ceremony. Rear Adm. Elizabeth A. Hight, vice director of Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), served as guest speaker. The ceremony took place in the scenic antenna fields of NCTAMS PAC with the Waianae mountain range as a backdrop.

During the ceremony, Starling presented Donovan with the Legion of Merit award, citing his exceptional vision, brilliant leadership, unparalleled resourcefulness and tireless dedication. Starling said that Donovan led a command of more than 1,800 men and women to excellence in communications support for Pacific naval, joint and allied forces during combat Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, as well as several major Pacific theater exercises.

The citation also noted Donovan's superb vision while preparing the command for a period of unprecedented growth, with the introduction of four major military construction projects. This included the replacement of NCTAMS PAC's aging operations center with a new, state-of-the-art regional network operations and security center.

A native of North Quincy, Mass., Donovan enlisted in the Navy in July 1973 as a seaman recruit. Advancing through the enlisted ranks as an ocean systems technician (analyst), he filled assignments within the Integrated Undersea Surveillance System (IUSS) including Fleet Sonar School, Key West, Fla.; NAVFACs at Bermuda, Keflavik, Iceland, and Barbers Point, Hawaii; and Readiness Training Facility, Centerville Beach, Calif. He achieved the rank of chief petty officer in September 1981.

Donovan was commissioned as a lim-



U.S. Navy photo MCI3 John Ciccarelli

Capt. Janet Stewart relieved Capt. Jim Donovan as commanding officer of Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station, Pacific (NCTAMS PAC) at a change of command ceremony Aug. 9 at NCTAMS PAC. Members of the official party included (left to right) Vice Adm. H. Denby Starling II, Commander, Naval Network Warfare Command; Rear Adm. Elizabeth Hight, vice director of Defense Information Systems Agency; Capt. Jim Donovan; Capt. Janet Stewart; Capt. Kathy Donovan and Lt. Demetric Felton, Navy Region Hawaii's chaplain.

ited duty officer in March 1983 and reported to U.S. Naval Facility Keflavik, Iceland. Additional tours followed on the staff of Commander, Oceanographic Systems, Atlantic in Norfolk, Va. and U.S. Naval Facility, Brawdy, Wales.

Donovan transferred to the general unrestricted line (fleet support) in 1994 and completed a variety of demanding assignments, including commanding officer, Naval Ocean Processing Facility, Dam Neck, Va. and chief staff officer, Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station, Atlantic (NCTAMS LANT) in Norfolk. Before assuming command of NCTAMS PAC on July 15, 2005, Donovan was assigned to Naval Network Warfare Command as director of training and community sponsorship. He is a graduate of the Naval War College, the University of the State of New York and Troy State University where he earned a master of science degree in management.

Stewart succeeds Donovan to become the 51st naval officer to hold the post and arrived after a successful tour on the staff of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the C4 systems support division chief and current operations division chief for

the J6 Directorate.

Prior to that, she served as N6 on the staff of Commander Carrier Strike Group Six in Mayport, Fla. During her tour, the staff led the USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67) Strike Group during its 2004 combat deployment to southwest Asia.

Stewart completed several other operational tours, culminating in a successful tour as commanding officer of Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station, Bahrain, which provided direct communications support to warfighters throughout southwest Asia in support of Commander 5th Fleet, including Operation Enduring Freedom.

She is a native of Mascoutah, Ill. and graduated from McKendree College, in Lebanon, Ill. Following Officer Candidate School in Newport, R.I., she was commissioned an ensign, general unrestricted line on Oct. 1, 1982.

She is authorized to wear the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (four awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (two awards), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (two awards), and a variety of other service and campaign awards.



Paul Hamilton excels at Valiant Shield 2007 See page A-2



Navy Sailor delivers daughter See page B-2



Welcome home MDSU-1 See page A-2



Batter up! Youth softball to begin See page B-1

Paul Hamilton excels in Valiant Shield 2007

MC2 (SW) Davis Anderson

USS John C. Stennis Public Affairs

USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60) homeported at Naval Station Pearl Harbor participated in Exercise Valiant Shield 2007 in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility (AOR) which concluded on Aug. 14.

Valiant Shield 2007 brought together more than 30 ships, 280 aircraft and 20,000 service members from the Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard in the Guam operating area.

With so many moving parts involved, to include the John C. Stennis, Nimitz and Kitty Hawk Carrier Strike Groups, there are certain challenges which the participants had to overcome for the exercise to succeed.

"Anytime you have a group of ships and an air wing working together with a carrier, it's a complex environment," said Lt. Justin Harts. Paul Hamilton's operations officer. "With three carriers, you have three times the complexity. You're talking about trying to integrate three different common operating pictures. It's a lot to sort out."

While Paul Hamilton participated in Valiant Shield 2007, its role was to protect USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74). They did this by conducting anti-submarine warfare exercises.

For Sailors working in the Combat Information Center (CIC) aboard Paul Hamilton,



U. S. Navy photo by MC2 Davis Anderson

Sonar Technician (Guided Missile) 1st Class Marcelo Cadiente monitors the surface search radar in the combat information center aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60) as part of exercise Valiant Shield 2007.

this exercise provided a great training opportunity and highlighted Paul Hamilton's ability to operate and integrate with a carrier strike group or combat organization.

"It's actually been going much smoother than I thought it was going to," said Harts.

"The challenges are as anticipated, but we are more than capable of overcoming them quickly."

Paul Hamilton has been deployed since January and has gained valuable operational experience working with several different carrier and expeditionary strike groups.

"We have been operating independently in 7th Fleet AOR for the last seven months," said Harts. "That has allowed us to work with the Stennis Strike Group, Kitty Hawk Strike Group, the Essex Strike Group, Ronald Reagan Strike Group and again with Stennis."

He added that although

strike groups have the same elements, they don't all operate in exactly the same manner; there is a learning curve when ships enter a new strike group. The seven months of practice operating independently with the different strike groups has taught the crew how to integrate with three strike groups at one time.

"Paul Hamilton is doing really well," said executive officer Lt. Cmdr. Mark McCulloch. "We've proven throughout deployment that we can join a new strike group and plug in and learn the specific procedures for the strike group and contribute right away."

At the completion of Valiant Shield 2007 on Aug. 14, Paul Hamilton fulfilled its mission requirements for their regularly-scheduled 2007 deployment and will sail to her homeport of Pearl Harbor.

(Additional photos of Exercise Valiant Shield on page A-5)

MDSU-1 welcomes home Detachment Three from CENTCOM

Lt. Andrew Baldwin Mobile Diving Salvage Unit One

Mobile Diving Salvage Unit One (MDSU-1), Detachment Three returned Aug. 5 from a successful six-month deploy-

ment to Bahrain in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and the global war on terrorism (GWOT).

Divers from MDSU-1, attached to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit Four, were responsible for all force protection, salvage and underwater

ships husbandry dives within the Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility (AOR). The divers had the opportunity to work with several countries in the theatre, including Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Seychelles, Oman and Kuwait.

Community relation projects were conducted in Bahrain and Seychelles where divers cleaned the grounds and painted the building of an autistic school in Bahrain and painted a school house in Seychelles.

Divers spent two weeks in Seychelles diving on a vessel that had been partially submerged for over 30 years. The project involved cutting the vessel flush with the ocean floor and removing the navigation hazard in order to free up pier space near the local Marina. U.S. Navy divers worked hand in hand with the Seychelles navy divers in this joint effort.



Photo by Brister Thomas

A Navy service member from Mobile Salvage Diving Unit One, Detachment 3, greets his children after returning from a six-month deployment to Bahrain in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the global war on terrorism on Aug. 5.

Chung-Hoon Sailors support coalition efforts in north Persian Gulf

MC2 (SW) Christopher T. Smith

Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/Commander, U.S. 5th Fleet Public Affairs

USS Chung-Hoon (DDG 93) has been conducting maritime security operations as part of Combined Task Force (CTF) 158 in the north Persian Gulf for more than a month.

Chung-Hoon conducts a variety of missions, but its primary focus is working with coalition partners to maintain security around Iraq's most significant economic assets, the Al Basrah and Khawr Al Amaya Oil Terminals.

"We're assisting the coalition in conducting maritime security operations and training Iraqi marines, but our primary mission is the defense of the oil platforms," said Cmdr. James Aiken, Chung-Hoon's commanding officer. "That focus is number one based on coalition efforts in maintaining stability and security in the region."

Chung-Hoon brings mission-essential capabilities to the coalition's efforts in the north Persian Gulf.

"Primarily, we serve as the command and control platform and we do a lot of communicating in different ways with coalition forces," said Aiken. "We have a robust

boarding team and we are also the air defense commander for this region. We have top-notch air defense capability with helicopters that help secure the oil platforms by supporting the surveillance of this area and boarding team operations."

Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HSL) 43 Det. 2 is embarked aboard Chung-Hoon. Lt. Greg Lembo, HSL-43 Det. 2 maintenance officer, said his team provides coalition assets with an aerial view of the north Persian Gulf.

"We provide an all-weather capability for day and night helicopter coverage for all sorts of missions that go on," said Lembo. "We provide a higher degree of situational awareness for ships and boarding teams who can't see what we can see at 500 feet. We see the big picture, which is essential in deterring threats."

That big picture helps ensure the security of coalition visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) teams, who directly interact with regional mariners.

Ensign Renae Renken, one of Chung-Hoon's boarding officers, said local mariners support coalition operations in the north Persian Gulf because they know coalition partners are present for their protection. She also said that Chung-Hoon personnel participate in training

Iraqi forces. "Coalition forces conduct boardings with the Iraqi marines, usually with tankers and tugs," said Renken. "At the same time that we're carrying out the mission, we're able to train the Iraqis on areas where they may need improvement. It's very much a joint project that builds trust and unity."

Coalition VBSS teams also learn from each other. "Working with other countries exposes us to different boarding tactics," said Renken. "We can then modify our methods to become more effective."

Aiken is proud of his Sailors' efforts during their deployment.

"If there's one thing that I'm proud of with Chung-Hoon, it's that we have 300 people on board who are coming together as a team and who are completing a mission bigger than themselves," said Aiken.

Sailors aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51) transfer midshipmen to the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Chosin (CG 65), homeported at Naval Station Pearl Harbor, using a rigid hull inflatable boat (RHIB). The ships are underway in the Indian Ocean on a scheduled six-month deployment in support of the global war on terrorism.

U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Kiara McKissack



Navy begins public hearings on draft Environmental Impact Statement for Hawai'i Range Complex

U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

The U.S. Navy welcomes public comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS) for the Hawai'i Range Complex and will begin a series of four public hearings on Tuesday on Kauai.

The draft impact statement and more information about the Hawai'i Range Complex are available online at <http://www.govsupport.us/hrc>.

The Navy will hold public hearings to gather public comments about the draft EIS/OEIS:

- Kauai: Aug. 21, Kauai War

Memorial Convention Hall, 4191 Hardy St., Lihue

- Oahu: Aug. 23, McKinley High School, 1039 South King St., Honolulu

- Maui: Aug. 27, Baldwin High School, 1650 Kaahumanu Ave., Wailuku

- Big Island: Aug. 29, Waiakea High School, 155 West Kawili St., Hilo

Each public meeting will begin with a 5 p.m. open house where Navy representatives will be available to provide information and answer questions about the Hawai'i Range Complex EIS/OEIS project. A project overview will be presented at 6 p.m.

Public testimony will follow. Each speaker will have three minutes at the microphone. People who wish to speak will be asked to sign up at the hearing site. Written testimony will also be accepted at the public hearings.

In addition, written comments may be submitted by Sept. 17 via:

- Mail to Public Affairs Officer Pacific Missile Range Facility P.O. Box 128 Kekaha, HI 96752
 - E-mail to deis_hrc@govsupport.us
- The project Web site, www.govsupport.us/hrc

Oil spill response students at U.S. Naval Activity Souda Bay participate in a training exercise on their final day of instruction.

U.S. Navy photo by Paul Farley



Commentary

Chapel Pennant

Being real

Lt. Cmdr. Robert Fuhrer
Naval Medical Clinic Pearl Harbor

"Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12

When I read the words of advice from the Apostle Paul to his young friend Timothy, a pastor in training, I am captivated at his emphasis on how important our character is. Character development must be an emphasis, not a program. Our Navy uses the core values of honor, courage and commitment to develop character in each of us. Our Navy will not be effective if it is simply a system of terminology used to motivate us to be more productive. It must become a part of each of us and who we are. Character begins with each of us and our own personal commitment to demonstrate and develop it in ourselves. It is out of

our discovery of the importance of character that we can genuinely recommend it to those with whom we serve. Because the words, decisions and actions of a leader have greater potential for benefiting or damaging the Navy than those of others, the role of character is more important for those in leadership positions. People naturally expect more of leaders than of themselves. Supervisors, managers and executives, both military and civilian, should consider as they seek to apply a "higher standard" of the quality than what is expected of any employee. However, this doesn't make any of us less responsible for our own actions. Everyone needs to do their part.

Remember, it is by our example that the most effective character development will take place in our homes and in our communities. All of us are under the magnifying glass of life. So how does it look for you?

Makin Island Raid, August 1942

Official U.S. Navy photograph, now in the collections of the U.S. National Archives

Conversation aboard USS Nautilus (SS-168) after her return to Pearl Harbor from Makin Island on Aug. 26, 1942. Those present are (from left to right): Lt. Cmdr. William H. Brockman, Jr., commanding officer, USS Nautilus; Cmdr. John M. Haines, Commander, Submarine Division 42, and Lt. Col. Evans F. Carlson, USMC, commander, Second Raider Battalion. Note .45 caliber M1911A1 pistol worn by Carlson in a cross-draw.

Hawaii Navy News

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U.S. Navy photo by MCI Evelyn P. Haywood

Aviation Electronics Technician 2nd Class Frank Velez, assigned to the "Skinny Dragons" of Patrol Squadron Four (VP-4), directs a P-3C Orion returning home from a six-month deployment to Japan.

"Skinny Dragons" return home from WestPac deployment

Lt. j.g. Danny McMaster

Patrol Squadron 4 Public Affairs

The "Skinny Dragons" of Patrol Squadron Four (VP-4) completed another successful western Pacific (WESTPAC) deployment with unprecedented accomplishments as they turned over Commander Task Group 72.2/4 responsibilities to Patrol Squadron 10.

After spending six months in Japan, VP-4 returned to Marine Corps Base Hawai'i - Kaneohe Bay leaving the "Red Lancers" of VP-10 to continue the global efforts throughout the Pacific area of operations.

Since December, VP-4 has maintained two deployment sites in Japan. One was located in Misawa, 450 miles north of Tokyo, and the other was on the island of Okinawa. The last VP-4 aircraft, "Dragon One" departed for Hawai'i on June 9 with commanding officer, Commander Lennie Reed, at the controls.

The P-3C Orion, which serves as the Navy's primary maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft, conducts anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and anti-surface warfare (ASUW) missions. Deployed squadrons to Japan support Commander 7th Fleet operations throughout the Pacific Theater. Part of VP-4's operational commitment was to fulfill a ready alert aircraft posture that was prepared to, on a moment's notice, launch and conduct any number of a variety of missions.

Combat air crews train to launch in less than one hour after being alerted and can fly for extended periods. From such an alert stance, VP-4 successfully launched five search and rescue missions credited with saving 35 lives. With its extended range capabilities and well prepared crew, the P-3C and VP-4 contributed to many success stories throughout the Pacific theater.

The "Skinny Dragons" flew over 3,400 hours, working with 11 different countries around the Pacific Rim. VP-4 also contributed to Operation Enduring Freedom efforts through the participation of several operational missions. Joint training operations were also capitalized on during the deployment as VP-4 crews participated in 16 multi-national exercises, including exercise Foal Eagle, the largest maritime patrol joint training exercise conducted between the U.S. and South Korean maritime patrol forces.

The hard working men and women of VP-4 proudly returned home, closing another chapter in the command's long and prosperous history. "I am humbled as I look back at our efforts over the past six months and realize how much they have contributed to the Navy's influence in the Pacific Theater," stated Lt. Cmdr. Mike Vitali, the squadron's maintenance officer.

Patrol Squadron Four will continue training efforts over the next 18 months in preparations for the next deployment and a new chapter in the squadron's 60 years of service to our nation.

Dental students tour USS Russell

Story and photo by
Ensign Theresa Donnelly

USS Russell (DDG 59) Public Affairs

Fifteen dental students from the University of Hawai'i's pre-dental association toured USS Russell (DDG 59) on Aug. 4.

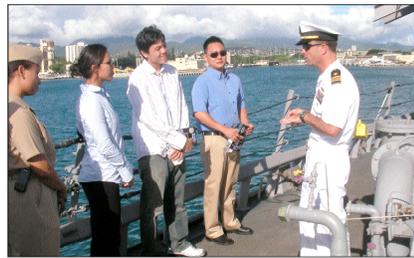
The visit was designed to generate interest for the undergraduate students who are considering a career as dentists in the U.S. Navy. Rear Adm. Ben F. Gaumer, the assistant deputy surgeon general for total force integration, who was in Hawai'i for the National Medical Association Conference, accompanied the students on the tour.

Prior to coming onboard the ship, he gave a presentation to the students on the benefits of the Navy dental program, life as a dental officer, officer career path, and post-Navy civilian opportunities.

Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Cahill, the ship's executive officer (XO), led one of the tour groups throughout the ship, explaining more about Russell's various operations. The XO related many of the Navy's missions with the direct impact that the students could play in upcoming deployments.

"Today our Navy is working to foster relationships in many different areas of the global maritime environment. One of the enablers of this relationship building endeavor is our unique ability to quickly and proactively respond to a humanitarian crisis. We can rapidly assemble a medical team, move them into an area and use them to have a dramatic effect on a global scale," said Cahill. "We live in a moment of truly historic change in the Navy, a moment in which we are changing how we think, operate and use the many unique skill sets differently than we have in the past which reside in the medical community."

The dental students were taken on the bridge and Quartermaster 1st Class Charles Hughes showed the



Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Cahill, Executive officer of USS Russell (DDG 59), explains to potential dental students from the University of Hawai'i's pre-dental association the equipment used during an underway replenishment.

group the various pieces of navigation and detailed the tools the bridge watch team uses to safely get underway from the pier. Students saw first hand the radars, electronic charts and the method the ship uses to steer and operate the engines.

"Many pieces on the ship are designed for safe navigation and contact avoidance. My number one job is to prevent collision and grounding," said Hughes.

Gaumer also emphasized to the students that they can qualify as officer of the deck (OOD) when they report to their ship. The OOD is overall in charge of the bridge and is the commanding officer's direct representative for the safe navigation of the vessel.

"You can become an integral part of the crew and not just the dental officer," explained Gaumer.

After touring the combat information center and seeing the tactical aspects of the ship, the students were given the opportunity to see Russell's medical spaces. This part of the tour was of particular interest, considering this would be the area that they would be serving.

Chief Hospital Corpsman Manuel Contreras, Russell's independent duty corpsman, described Russell's capability to rapidly diagnose and treat many

medical conditions even in a wartime situation.

"If we were ever to get engaged in combat, we have two battle treatment stations, one on the forward end of the ship and the other on the aft," said Contreras.

The students learned that when the ship performs operations with an aircraft carrier, the Sailors can be flown off Russell and sent over to the carrier for more extensive treatment.

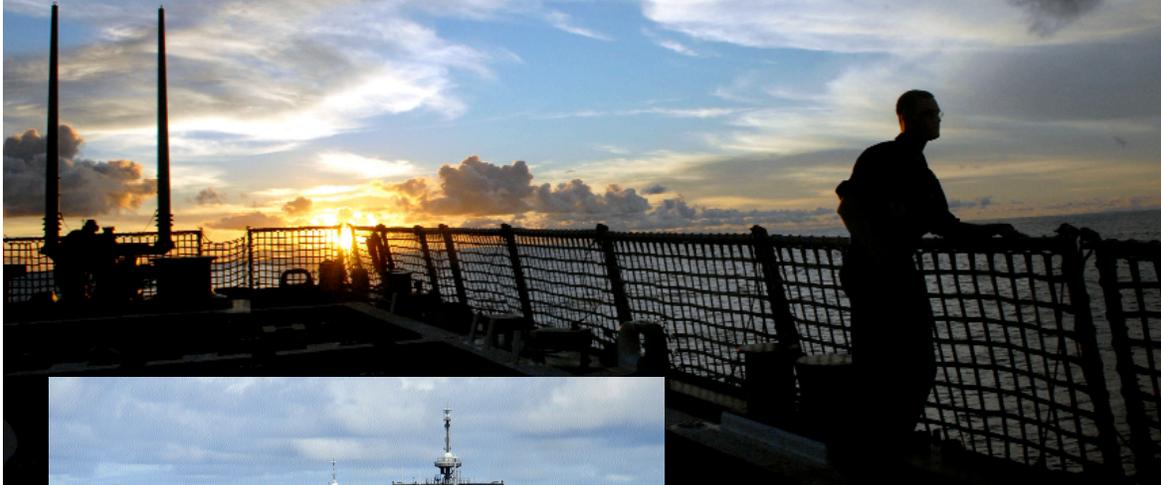
Overall, the tour was an opportunity to give the dental students a rare look at how operations on a warship are conducted.

Michelle Le, the president of the pre-dental association said, "The tour was great. It really gave me insight into what it would be like to be in the Navy. We really enjoyed the fact that we got to go inside and go to different areas. I had never been in a ship like this before."

When asked if the trip will have an impact on her decision to make the Navy a career, Le said, "It will definitely impact my decision. It's one thing just to hear about a warship, but another to actually get a glimpse of it."

USS Russell is currently assigned to the USS Abraham Lincoln Strike group and in preparations for an upcoming deployment.

Pearl Harbor Highlights



Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Joseph Vincent looks out to sea from the flight deck of the guided-missile destroyer USS O'Kane (DDG 77) during Valiant Shield 2007

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Joseph R. Vincent



U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Denny Cantrell

USS Antietam (CG 54) (right), USS Preble (DDG 88) (center) and USS O'Kane (DDG 77), transit in formation during a joint photo exercise (PHOTOEX) concluding Valiant Shield 2007. The PHOTOEX featured 15 ships and 17 aircraft from Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps including a B-52 bomber. The John C. Stennis, Kitty Hawk and Nimitz Carrier Strike Groups were participating in Valiant Shield 2007, the largest joint exercise in recent history. Held in the Guam operating area, the exercise includes 30 ships, more than 280 aircraft and more than 20,000 service members from the Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Joseph R. Vincent

An SH-60F Seahawk, assigned to the "Eightballers" of Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 8, lands on the flight deck of the guided missile destroyer USS O'Kane (DDG 77) as part of exercise Valiant Shield 2007. O'Kane is part of the John C. Stennis Carrier Strike Group.



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Joseph R. Vincent

Electrician's Mate Seaman Nastasia Andreadoff operates a fire hose during repair locker training on the flight deck of the guided missile destroyer USS O'Kane (DDG 77). O'Kane is part of the John C. Stennis Carrier Strike Group participating in Valiant Shield 2007.



U.S. Navy photo by ETC William Purdell

Capt. Jim Donovan reports to Vice Adm. H. Denby Starling II, Commander, Naval Network Warfare Command, as he is relieved by Capt. Janet Stewart as commanding officer, Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station, Pacific (NCTAMS PAC) on Aug. 9. Other members of the official party included (left to right) Rear Adm. Elizabeth Hight, vice director of Defense Information Systems Agency; Capt. Kathy Donovan and Lt. Demetric Felton, Navy Region Hawai'i chaplain.



U.S. Navy photo by MCSn Byung K. Cho

Gunner's Mate 1st Class Austin Hensley, assigned to Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, lines up a gun scope with the barrel for a MK-38 25mm machine gun aboard the guided-missile frigate USS Rueben James (FFG 57). The Rueben James is preparing for an upcoming deployment.

A member of Boy Scout Venture Crew 457 Explorer Post 2195, views the equipment in the central control station aboard the guided-missile frigate USS Rueben James (FFG 57), during a visit to Naval Station Pearl Harbor. The scouts interacted with the Sailors during their visit to learn more about life aboard a Navy ship.

U.S. Navy photo by MCSn Byung K. Cho



JCCSSG Completes Exercise Valiant Shield 2007

MC1 (SW/AW)
Frank E. Neely

USS John C. Stennis Public Affairs

The John C. Stennis Carrier Strike Group (JCCSSG) successfully wrapped up Exercise Valiant Shield 2007 while operating in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility (AOR) on Aug. 14.

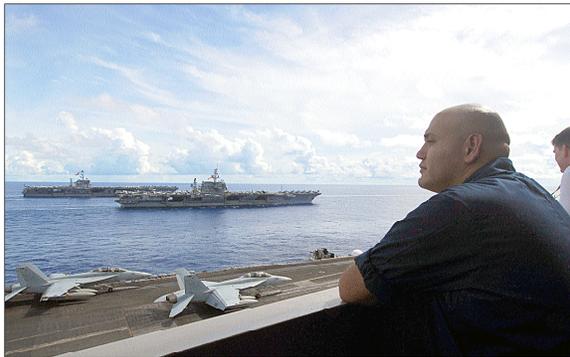
The eight-day exercise, conducted off the coast of Guam, tested the military's ability to rapidly bring together joint forces in response to any regional contingency. It also enabled the United States to contribute to regional security and stability and demonstrated U.S. commitment in the Pacific.

"The purpose of the exercise was to train in our ability to work in a strike force and joint environment," said Rear Adm. Kevin M. Quinn, Commander, Carrier Strike Group 3. "We practiced our ability to carry out all of our mission areas in a very dynamic and robust training environment. It's been great training."

Valiant Shield, the largest joint exercise in recent history, brought together more than 20,000 Sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and Air Force Airmen to participate in operations consisting of 30 ships and 280 aircraft.

"What we found in Valiant Shield is that we can come together at sea, working in a joint military environment, having not worked with each other a lot before and fall into a strike force construct to conduct integrated combat operations," said Quinn.

Along with JCCSSG, Nimitz and Kitty Hawk Carrier Strike Groups also participated in Valiant Shield. The exercise offered a unique opportunity to have multiple aircraft carriers train together in a maritime environment



U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Paul J. Perkins

An F/A-18F Super Hornet from the "Black Knights" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 154, assigned to Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9, launches off the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) after completing a training mission as part of exercise Valiant Shield 2007.

and enhance operational proficiency.

"What was very striking to me was how well we were able to bring together three separate carrier strike groups and integrate them into a carrier strike force," said Quinn. "It's difficult enough to integrate all the elements of a carrier strike group into one cohesive fighting force. It's another order of magnitude to do that with three strike groups. However, the John C. Stennis Carrier Strike Group performed very well. In fact, all the strike groups in Valiant Shield performed extremely well."

With the vast area of the Pacific Ocean, integrated sea and air power is essential for immediate response to any contingency.

By bringing these forces together, this training enabled real-world proficiency in detecting, locating, tracking and engaging units

at sea, on land and in the air in response to a range of mission areas.

"Valiant Shield showed the flexibility of a carrier strike group," said Capt. Christopher Murray, deputy commander, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9. "When we need to get in close to support ground troops, we can do that, and we've done that. This exercise showed another area of expertise; our ability to conduct operations in the open ocean."

For the "Death Rattlers" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VMFA) 323, a Marine squadron assigned to CVW-9, Valiant Shield provided a valuable learning experience.

"This exercise was vastly different than the combat operations we conducted in the 5th Fleet area of operations," said Maj. James Erwin, VMFA-323 pilot and operations officer. "It was very much a shift in focus

compared to when we're providing close-air support for ground troops. In Valiant Shield, we practiced attacking and defending ships. For a Marine squadron, our typical focus is supporting ground forces. However, being integrated into a carrier air wing, we are expected

to expand our skill sets to cover all the operations carrier air wings will participate in, and overall, we did well."

This is the second year the U.S. military has conducted Valiant Shield; the first was held June 2006.

JCCSSG includes the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74), embarked CVW-9, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 21, the guided-missile cruiser USS Antietam (CG 54), the guided-missile destroyers USS O'Kane (DDG 77) and USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60), homeported at Naval Station Pearl Harbor, USS Preble (DDG 88) and the fast combat support ship USNS Bridge (T-AOE 10). More than 6,500 Sailors and Marines are assigned to JCCSSG.

The squadrons of CVW-9 include: the "Black Knights" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 154, "Blue Diamonds" of VFA-146, "Argonauts" of VFA-147, Death Rattlers of VMFA-323, "Yellow Jackets" of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 138, "Golden Hawks" of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 112, "Top Cats" of Sea Control Squadron (VS) 31, "Eightballers" of Helicopter

Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 8 and "Providers" of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 30.

Stennis, JCCSSG's flagship, left her homeport of Bremerton, Wash. on Jan. 16 for a regularly-scheduled deployment and has conducted operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet and U.S. 7th Fleet AOR.

"My strike group has performed magnificently and I couldn't be more proud of them," said Quinn. "Contributing to security and stability in the Middle East, as well as the Pacific, is one of the most important missions of the United States Navy."

With the conclusion of Valiant Shield, Stennis and its strike group will sail to the U.S. 3rd Fleet AOR, where they will finish the remainder of their 2007 deployment.

"When I look back on this great adventure of ours, the thing I'm most proud of is the performance of our young Sailors and Marines," said Quinn. "They've left the comforts of their homes, they've left their families, they've gone forward into the combat zone to fight for our country, and their performance in that combat zone has been outstanding."



A Sikorski S-61 takes off from USS Russell (DDG 59)

After performing deck landing qualifications onboard on Aug. 9, the helicopter was in the Hawaiian operation area performing range operations and weapons retrieval for the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF).

U.S. Navy photo by Ensign Theresa Donnelly