

USS Columbus departs for Western Pacific

MC1 (SW) Cynthia Clark

Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

USS Columbus (SSN 762) departed from Naval Station Pearl Harbor for her first Western Pacific deployment in four years on March 11.

Cmdr. James Doody, Columbus' commanding officer, said his crew is eager to deploy after the ship's overhaul

period. Columbus returned to Pearl Harbor in December 2006 after spending two years at Submarine Base Bangor, Wash.

"The mood is pretty upbeat and everybody's pretty excited to get out there and do what we have to do," said Doody, "especially since a lot of people have done a lot of work not only to maintain the ship while it was in the shipyard, but to do all the operational preparation that it's going to take for us to be

successful."

Machinist Mate Fireman Robert Bresley, a recent check-in on board Columbus, agreed. "I just got here last week," he said. "I'm very excited and I'm all packed up and ready to go on my first deployment."

Columbus is heading to the Western Pacific where, according to Doody, they will be conducting the "traditional" intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance operations and

also will be ready to participate in any operation called upon by Commander, Seventh Fleet operational commander.

Columbus is the 51st of the Los Angeles-class attack submarines and the 12th "improved" version of this class, which includes a Tomahawk cruise missile vertical launch system and an improved hull design

for under-ice operations. Columbus has been homeported at Pearl Harbor since 1994.

Families and friends of the crew of USS Columbus (SSN 762) gathered on the pier at Naval Station Pearl Harbor on March 11 to say goodbye as the submarine left for a regularly scheduled six-month deployment to the Western Pacific.

U.S. Navy photo by MCSA Luciano Marano



U.S. Navy photo by Blair Martin

Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann thanks Sailors from the Hawai'i Region during the 2008 Earth Day Awards ceremony at Kapolei Hale in Oahu. The Sailors were recognized for their outstanding volunteer efforts on various cleanup projects throughout Hawai'i during 2007.

Navy Region Hawai'i honored at 2008 Earth Month Awards Ceremony

Blair Martin

Contributing Writer

The Department of Environmental Services of the City and County of Honolulu recognized Navy Region Hawai'i at the 2008 Earth Month Awards during a presentation ceremony on March 17 at Kapolei Hale.

Navy Region Hawai'i was one of 61 organizations that received "good neighbor awards" at the presentation due to its numerous community outreach projects and participation in the Department of Environmental Services' Adopt-A-Stream and Adopt-A-Block programs this past year.

Mayor Mufi Hannemann was on hand to personally thank the "every day environmental heroes" whose volunteer efforts have helped make the island he calls home a

better place to live.

"As citizens of Hawai'i, we should be leading the country in environmental efforts. Every day should be an Earth Day," he said proudly. "But the government cannot do this alone. What we can do is provide collaborative partnerships that go a long way, especially with your [volunteer efforts] driving us."

Recipients who accepted the "good neighbor award" on behalf of the Navy were Capt. Taylor Skardon, commanding officer, Naval Station Pearl Harbor; Chief Culinary Specialist Adeline Lopes, Fleet Family Readiness Program (FFRP), who coordinated volunteers for community outreach programs; and Senior Chief Gunner's Mate (SW) Danilo Boyles, Navy Munitions Command East Asia

See EARTH MONTH AWARDS, A-4

Paul Hamilton gets Battle "E"



U.S. Navy photo by CS3 Kunsoo Park

Capt. Michael Salvato, commander, Destroyer Squadron 21, presented USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60) with the 2007 Battle Effectiveness Award on March 11. Salvato was in Pearl Harbor from San Diego to present the award, which was part of a clean sweep by Pearl Harbor ships, claiming the award for each of the four squadrons represented in Hawai'i. Left to right are Salvato; Cmdr. Christopher Bushnell, commanding officer, USS Paul Hamilton; CMDCM Bryan Diekman, command master chief, Paul Hamilton. The freshly emblazoned Battle "E" is a symbol of the proud work of Paul Hamilton Sailors over a seven-month deployment.



Pearl Harbor Shipyard wins CNO Safety Award See page A-4



Tuskegee airman visits NCTAMS PAC See page A-6



COMSUBPAC staff participates in bone marrow drive See page A-6



Operation Homefront gives early Easter to military children See page B-1

Bush marks five-year anniversary of Operation Iraqi Freedom

John J. Kruzel

American Forces Press Service

President Bush reflected on the triumphs and tragedies of the Iraq war on Tuesday, five years after the U.S. ousted Saddam Hussein and roughly one year after a troop surge helped to tamp down violence there.

In the midst of what he referred to as an "understandable debate" over the merits of war and the prospects of U.S. victory, Bush expressed confidence in Operation Iraqi Freedom during a speech at the Pentagon.

"The answers are clear to me," he said. "Removing Saddam Hussein from power was the right decision, and this is a fight America can and must win."

Five years ago, tens of thousands of U.S. troops aided by "the most effective and precise air campaign in history" poured across Iraq's border to topple Saddam's ruthless dictatorship, Bush said. Since then, 12 million Iraqis have defied terrorism and cast votes in free Iraqi elections.

"The liberation of Iraq took incredible skill and amazing courage," he said. "And the speed, precision and brilliant execution of the campaign will be studied by military historians for years to come."

Meanwhile, however, progress in Iraq was undermined by al Qaeda attacks against innocent civilians, a harbinger of the brutality extremists would replicate in the United States if given the opportunity, the president



U.S. Navy photo by Ensign Christopher Weis

Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Khost executive officer, U.S. Navy Lt. Rob Holt, an individual augmentee (IA) from Hawai'i, surveys security set by a Arizona National Guard platoon attached to PRT Khost on Dec. 21, 2007.

added.

"We have watched in horror as al Qaeda beheaded innocent captives and sent suicide bombers to blow up mosques and markets," Bush said. "And they serve as a grim reminder that terrorists who murder the innocent in the streets of Baghdad want to murder the innocent in the streets of America."

The president conceded the war has been costly – both in terms of its price tag and human casualties. As of January, Operation Iraqi Freedom had cost \$416 billion, a Pentagon

spokesman said. Further, 3,988 U.S. servicemembers have died in Iraq to date, and 29,395 others have been wounded, according to the latest Defense Department statistics.

"No one would argue that this war has not come at a high cost in lives and treasure," the president said. "But those costs are necessary when we consider the cost of a strategic victory for our enemies in Iraq."

This time last year, the fight in Iraq was faltering, Bush said. "Extremist elements were succeeding in their efforts to plunge Iraq into chaos. They

had established safe havens in many parts of the country. They were creating divisions among the Iraqis along sectarian lines," he said, noting that Iraqi divisiveness was mirrored by political divisions in Washington.

In the face of mounting pressure to reduce the number of troops in Iraq, Bush said, his administration resolved not to "retreat in the face of terror," as force withdrawal could have ushered in violence of "genocidal levels."

Instead, in a dramatic shift in policy, the U.S. launched a 33,000-troop surge aimed at quelling sectarian-fueled fighting in Iraq and helping prepare Iraq's national forces to maintain security.

The deployment of the five additional combat brigades, which completed this time last year, coupled with an invigorated counterinsurgency effort led by Army Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander of Multinational Force Iraq, is heralded by officials as a widely successful U.S. strategic military move that has significantly reduced violence levels.

"General David Petraeus took command with a new mission: work with the Iraqi forces to protect the Iraqi people; pressure the enemy in his strongholds and deny the terrorists sanctuary anywhere in the country," Bush said. "And that is precisely what we have done."

Largely as a result of the surge, more than 90,000 Iraqi citizens are now aiding coalition forces as they work to secure Iraq with the more

than 100,000 Soldiers and police who joined the country's national security forces last year, the president said. In addition, the United States has doubled the number of civilian-expert teams, known as provincial reconstruction teams, operating across Iraq's 18 provinces.

"These Iraqi troops have fought bravely, and thousands have given their lives in this struggle," Bush said. "Together, these Americans and Iraqi forces have driven the terrorists from many of the sanctuaries they once held."

Bush called the security gains "fragile and reversible," adding that difficult fighting against extremism remains unfinished in Iraq and elsewhere.

"Throughout the war on terror, we have fought the enemy on every single battle front," he said. "And so long as terrorist danger remains, the United States of America will continue to fight the enemy wherever it makes its stand."

Before reaffirming his commitment to victory over extremism, the president expressed gratitude to troops around the world, and the families who carry the burden of their sacrifices at home.

"We're grateful to all the brave men and women of our military who have served the cause of freedom. You've done hard work far from home and far from your loved ones," he said. "We give thanks for all our military families, who love you and have supported you in this mission."

Hawaii'i Navy News Editorial

Safety first! Practice common sense!



U.S. Fleet Forces Fleet Master Chief (SS/SW) Rick West

Hoo-yah, warriors! Spring is certainly in the air and with that, many of you are starting to put away the and winter clothes in favor of shorts and warm weather recreation.

On duty or off, everything we do has some degree of risk

which, if not properly managed, could result in serious injury or even death. Whether it's firing up that barbecue grill or breaking the lawnmower out of the garage, applying simple operational risk management (ORM) to your everyday activities will ensure you're around to enjoy this spring and the next one.

Risk management is actually more than a decision-making process; it's a common-sense approach to thinking about everything we do. Learning to manage safety over risk is as simple as making and following a plan.

Let's look at the ORM procedures.

When we start any kind of activity, we all need to look at the five ORM steps:

- Identify hazards.
- Assess hazards.
- Make decisions.
- Implement controls.
- Supervise.

We use the steps of ORM as

a basic plan for determining the benefits of taking the risk involved.

ORM is a tactic, not a safety program. It is a way to deal with the threats and hazards we face every day. These threats are almost always under our control and the deadliest ones are our own human errors. We really use ORM all the time; we just don't recognize it.

One last issue I want to talk to you about is PMV [private motor vehicle] safety and I want to get right to the point. So far in Fiscal Year '08, safety center records show that as of March 14, we have had 49 PMV fatalities in both the Navy and Marine Corps.

Eighteen of those fatalities involved motorcycles, 29 involved four-wheel vehicles and two involved pedestrian fatalities. Of the 27 Sailor deaths, several personnel were not wearing seat belts,

helmets, or required PPE [personal protective equipment], and others were either speeding or driving carelessly. This is not executing basic ORM.

There have been 10 Navy motorcycle fatalities this fiscal year, as compared to 18 in the entire fiscal year of 2007, a trend we need to reverse now. With the gas prices at their current state, many of our Sailors have opted to buy and ride motorcycles as their primary mode of transportation.

Have you received the required training? Have you looked at the Naval Safety Center Web site for tips on safe operation? And are you using the required PPE? The National Highway Safety Administration estimates that helmets saved 1,658 motorcyclists' lives in 2007 and that 752 more could have been saved if all motorcyclists

had worn helmets.

Just for the record, I support and promote motorcycle and all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use as much as the next person. But I also support wearing the proper personal protective equipment and exercising the elements of ORM and I temper that support by insisting the requirements in OPNAVINST 5100.12G are lived up to in letter and in spirit.

So let me sum it up.....over the past few months, we have lost too many members of our Navy family to preventable accidents. We need to take a step back and remember all the safety training, operational risk management and common sense we've been taught.

Today, the Navy has some of the smartest and most dedicated Sailors I have ever had the privilege of knowing in my 27 years of service. We simply can't afford to lose any

more Sailors...it's not about the stats...it's about our people.

The safety center has a great Web site that you can use to foster a safe working and playing environment, download some great presentations, or just see what is new. I highly encourage you to introduce this site to your Sailors, our families and our Navy civilians. It could make the difference.

You can link up to the safety Center via www.safetycenter.navy.mil. While on the site, look at the PMV stats and the narratives...it doesn't paint a very good picture.

The bottom line is we've got the most technologically advanced Navy in the world with some of the best equipment that money can buy, but without our people our Navy doesn't exist. We need every member of the Navy team safely on the job every day. Be smart and be safe!

Motorcycle operator checklist

Naval Safety Center

If riding a motorcycle, use the following checklist to assess your "preparation to ride:"

- Do you have the proper endorsement on your license to operate a motorcycle?

- Are your motorcycle registration, state inspection, insurance and base stickers current?

- Do you have and use all the required personal protective equipment:

- DOT or SNELL approved helmet

- Long trousers
- Long-sleeved shirt (minimum requirement)

- Jacket designed for the motorcycle rider (preferred)

- Full-finger leather gloves

- Hard soled shoes with heels that protect the ankle

- Protective eyewear

If the bike has been stored for an extended period of time, prepare for operation using the procedures provided in your owner's manual. Before each ride, remember the pre-ride check:

lights/horn, tires/wheels, fuel/oil, cables and suspension.

Remember that tire pressure is a critical part of suspension. Inflate to manufac-

turer's recommendation. Remember that it has been several months since you have ridden your motorcycle. Regardless of your experience, it will be necessary to re-sharpen your physical and mental skills.

Be cautious. Start off slowly and practice your riding skills. Use an empty parking lot before taking to the streets. Get considerable solo experience before taking on a passenger.

Have them wear all the protective equipment and the same clothing specifically designed for motorcycling. Don't forget their safety briefing.

Again, it's a good idea for both of you to get comfortable in a parking lot before street riding. Practice in a parking lot with your passenger until you are comfortable with the critical accident avoidance skills of braking, cornering and swerving. Don't forget that you are responsible for their well-being.

Above all, remember that alcohol in any amount, excessive speed and lack of training/experience are each singularly deadly when applied to motorcycling. Combined, they are a sure-fire method of becoming a traffic statistic.

WAVES help with classified mail during war



Official U.S. Navy photograph, now in the collections of the National Archives
Yeoman 1st Class Marjorie Daw Adams, USNR(W), obtains a receipt from Mailman 2nd Class Wilbur L. Harrison, who is picking up classified mail for his attack transport, at Fleet Post Office, San Francisco, Calif. on June 13, 1945. He is armed with a handgun for security reasons. Much of the official Navy mail going to the Pacific Fleet passed through the Fleet Post Office's Registry Office. Note WAVES recruiting poster in the background.



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Michael A. Lantron

Sailors of the Pearl Harbor Motorcycle Association practice turning in an empty lot on Ford Island. The association was created to promote motorcycle safety and improve the riding ability of Sailors to decrease the number of Sailor deaths due to improper safety and lack of knowledge on how to properly ride a motorcycle.

Hawaii'i Navy News

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Pearl Harbor Shipyard wins CNO Safety Award

Marshall Fukuki

*Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard
Public Affairs*

Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard won the 2007 Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Shore Safety Award in the category for a large industrial activity within the continental United States (CONUS). The commander of the Naval Safety Center announced the winners of the CNO awards Feb. 26. The awards recognize outstanding support and achievement in safety and occupational health.

The shipyard's rate of injuries and illnesses declined 54 percent over the past five fiscal years and is now 56 percent below the 2006 national average for the ship building and repair industry. The shipyard's rate of employee time lost due to accidents and injuries is nearly one-third below the 2006 industry average.

Adm. Robert Willard, Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, extended his personal congratulations to the shipyard and other Pacific Fleet winners of CNO Safety Ashore awards. "Your accomplishments, innovative safety initiatives, and outstanding safety records are indicative of credible leadership and an all-hands commitment to protect and preserve our people and equipment," he said.

"Bravo zulu on a job well done!"

Capt. Gregory Thomas, shipyard commander, said, "This is a tremendous achievement. It's the result of a tremendous team effort and reflects our commitment to our people and their safety and well-being."

According to Rear Adm. Arthur Johnson of the Naval Safety Center, the winners excelled in directly supporting the Department of Defense (DoD) goal of reducing mishaps by 75 percent. Safety and prevention of mishaps have a huge impact on operational readiness and conservation of resources.

In a statement last year reiterating the goal, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said, "We can no longer tolerate the injuries, costs and capabilities losses from preventable accidents. He estimated that accidents cost the DoD \$3 billion per year, with indirect costs totaling up to four times that amount."

CNO Safety Shore Awards recognize commands with the best overall safety records and aggressive, innovative mishap prevention programs. For purposes of the award, the shipyard is considered part of CONUS.

"The shipyard workforce demonstrated excellence in safety and occupational health throughout 2007," said Lyrita Gochenouer, head of the shipyard's safety branch.

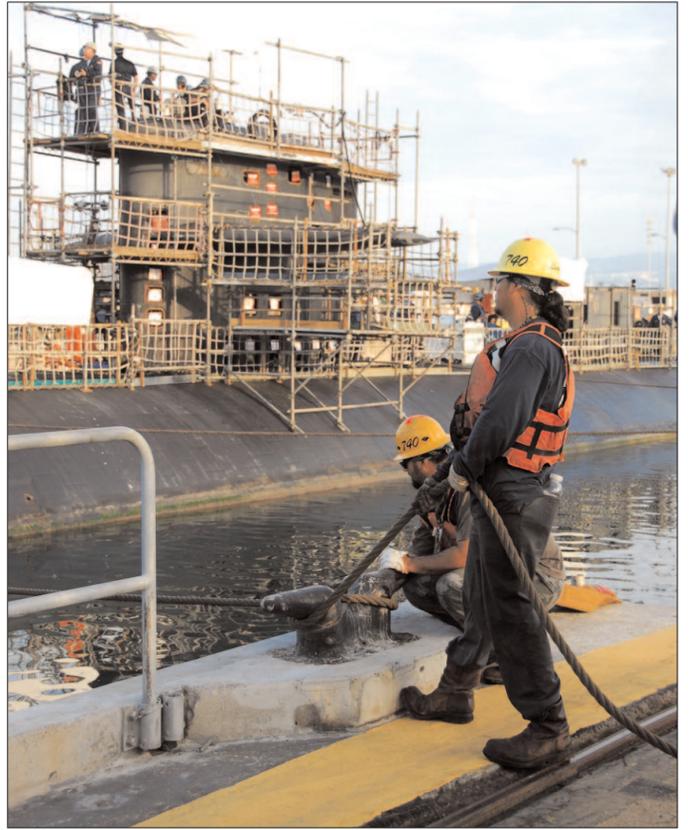
One of the shipyard's stellar achievements in safety occurred in mid-2007 when the command became the only DoD worksite in Hawai'i - and the 10th DoD site in the nation - to earn "star" status from the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Star is the highest level attainable under OSHA's Voluntary Protection Program (VPP). The rating designated the shipyard as a national model of excellence in employee health and workplace safety.

The quest for the Star began in 2004, said Gochenouer. She attributed that win and the current CNO Safety Ashore Award to "the leadership and encouragement by management and the union, and our workers' personal commitment to work safely and look out for the safety of their coworkers."

For more information on Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, visit <http://www.phnsy.navy.mil>.

Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard riggers guide USS Key West (SSN 722) into dry dock Jan. 10. The shipyard's outstanding record in safety and occupational health in 2007 was recognized with a Chief of Naval Operations Shore Safety Award on Feb. 26.

U.S. Navy photo by Michael Laley



Earth Month Awards: Navy Region Hawai'i recognized as prominent contributor

Continued from A-1

Division Detachment Pearl Harbor (NMC EAD DET Pearl Harbor); Chief Personnel Specialist Michael Baines, Afloat Training Group Middle Pacific (ATG MIDPAC); and Ship's Serviceman 1st Class Lovejoy Aquino, (ATG MIDPAC), who volunteered their help with various projects.

Aquino was one of 100 Sailors from various commands who participated in a bike path cleanup project last April. The volunteers picked up trash and debris along the historic 13.5 mile bike path

that runs along Pearl Harbor's waterfront.

"I personally enjoy community relations projects and giving back to the community," said the San Diego native. "This was one way to do that. I would encourage others to participate because it not only displays a positive image for the Navy, it left me very fulfilled. It's just a good thing to do."

Lopes said her participation with the Navy's community outreach programs included coordinating more than 625 volunteers for about 26 different community projects in the past two years. "It is important that the [Navy com-

munity] maintain a clean environment," she said. "I think the Navy has done a good job of showing support to the Hawaiian community with these [community] efforts."

Skardon said he was proud to see his Sailors become more involved with the Hawaiian community.

"We encourage our Sailors to get out in the community and work to clean up a city everybody uses," he said. "Our goal is to make Hawai'i a clean and safe place, not just for the military but for other families on the island."

Skardon said the Navy has

become a "good neighbor" to the island because it believes the Hawaiian culture is a tremendous asset to the naval community.

"We've maintained a good relationship with the [Hawaiian] community because they are our neighbors and we want to be good neighbors," he said. "The Hawaiian community and culture is filled with wonderful people and beautiful places. It definitely has a lot to offer all of our Sailors."

At the end of his speech, Hannemann closed with an old proverb reflecting ancient Hawaiian philosophy that encour-

ages preserving a rich environmental legacy for future generations. "The earth was not given to us by our parents," he noted. "It was loaned to us by our children," he added.

Earth Month for Navy Region Hawai'i will be observed with an Earth Day Fair at Navy Exchange at Pearl Harbor. A Pearl Harbor bike path cleanup project will be held from 8-11 a.m. April 19. Participants should meet at Neil S. Blaisdell Park in Pearl City. Interested volunteers should contact Grace Hew Len, environmental public affairs officer at 473-3958.

Pearl Harbor Highlights



Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Jan Camot cuts lasagna for the afternoon meal in the enlisted galley aboard the Pearl Harbor-based Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Russell (DDG 59). Russell recently completed underway training evolutions in preparation for its upcoming deployment as part of the USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) Carrier Strike Group.



Quartermaster 3rd Class Arthur Baines stands the forward lookout watch aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Russell (DDG 59) as the ship departs its homeport of Naval Station Pearl Harbor.

Strength in Freedom



(Above) Hull Technician Fireman Bryan Schnaars waits for orders during a toxic gas drill aboard the Pearl Harbor-based Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Russell (DDG 59).



(Above) Quartermaster 3rd Class Arthur Baines plots a course on the bridge aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Russell (DDG 59) as the ship returns to its homeport of Naval Station Pearl Harbor.



Sailors aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Russell (DDG 59) handle lines with pierside Sailors assigned to the Pearl Harbor-based Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Chosin (CG 65) as they moor pierside Naval Station Pearl Harbor.



U.S. Navy photo by MCSA Luciano Marano

Rear Adm. Joe Walsh, Commander, Submarine Force U.S. Pacific Fleet (COMSUBPAC); Capt. Robert E. Schuetz, COMSUBPAC chief of staff; and FORCM (SS) Mo Pollard, force master chief, receive the participation instructions from the drive coordinator, Chief Electronics Technician Rodney Yager on March 11.

COMSUBPAC participates in bone marrow drive

MC1 Cynthia Clark

Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs Office

Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet (COMSUBPAC) held a bone marrow drive March 10 -14 at Naval Station Pearl Harbor.

According to Chief Electronics Technician Rodney Yager, COMSUBPAC staff bone marrow drive coordinator, the COMSUBPAC drive is just one of many happening around naval station and the Navy to compile personnel volunteers for the national donor registry.

"There are more than 500 people in the Department of Defense (DoD), family members and active duty, who are sick with disorders such as leukemia that need life-saving bone marrow transplants," said Lt. Cmdr. Cindy Campbell, DoD bone marrow donor drive coordinator.

COMSUBPAC leadership supported the DoD's stance on the bone marrow donation

issue and many joined the donor program registry themselves.

"If anyone's not convinced this is important all they have to do is think 'that could be my child,'" said Capt. Bob Schuetz, COMSUBPAC chief of staff. "I can't think of a better or easier way to make a real difference in helping others in great need."

Over the course of the drive, more than 400 military service members, DOD civilians and family members from across Pearl Harbor's submarine community have participated in the drive. The procedure for donating a sample is much simpler than in the past.

"To provide a test the process is very simple," explained Yager. "All it takes is to fill out a form, which takes about five or 10 minutes. Then take four cotton swabs, wipe the inside of your cheeks, and put them in an envelope. I take care of the rest."

If a person is a match, they and a companion are sent on a five-day trip to Washington, D.C. for the donation process.

Tuskegee airman visits NCTAMS PAC

CWO4 Clifton A Jenkins

Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station, Pacific Public Affairs

In honor of African-American History Month, the Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station, Pacific (NCTAMSPAC) hosted a visit by Air Force Lt. Col. (retired) Alexander Jefferson of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen on Feb. 28. Jefferson visited Oahu in support of the Pacific Aviation Museum lecture series on World War II.

He was invited to tour NCTAMS PAC by Information Systems Technician 1st Class Joseph Wert, tactical plans (TACPLANS) leading petty officer at NCTAMS PAC. Wert and his family attended the Tuskegee Airmen's encore lecture at the Pacific Aviation Museum on Feb. 16.

Wert said, "My wife and I want our children to know the true story of these great men, their courage and dedication to liberty for all people. The lecture series at the Pacific Aviation Museum provided me with the opportunity to offer laurels to my heroes."

Cmdr. Robert Stachura, department deputy at NCTAMS PAC Plans, presented Jefferson with a NCTAMS PAC Command ballcap, command coin and a "Don't Tread on Me" patch to commemorate his visit to NCTAMS PAC.

Information Systems Technician Master Chief Donald Hair said, "It's great to look at the movies or read books about the



Photo by Anne Marie Wert

Information Systems Technician 1st Class Joseph Wert of Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station, Pacific visits with Lt. Col. (Air Force ret.) Alexander Jefferson of the famed Tuskegee Airmen.

Tuskegee Airmen, but hearing it from someone that was actually there and to get their true point of view and listen to the stories of someone who lived through this historic time and event was priceless."

It was a great honor meeting a truly great American who helped shape the military that it is today," he added. Hair presented Jefferson with an NCTAMS PAC chief petty officers' mess coin to honor his visit.

During a lecture followed by a question and answer session, Jefferson provided valuable insight on his lifetime experiences, from segregated service in the 332nd Fighter Group in World War II to his experiences in Korea and Vietnam. He also discussed his life as a school teacher in inner city Detroit, Mich. Jefferson strived to expand individual liberties and personal freedom from every possible avenue.

Throughout his lecture,

the veteran from the famed Tuskegee Airmen unit stressed the importance of education and participation in the democratic processes of our nation. "Life is a wolf and education is the stick one uses to drive that wolf away," he said.

Those in attendance agreed that Jefferson's colorful personality, no nonsense approach to life, and personal courage in the face of daunting obstacles makes him a man to be honored and emulated.

Some of the items he discussed were the inevitable struggle that African-Americans faced not only with civil rights, but also the racial prejudice that was prevalent in the military. He told the Sailors stories of how black Americans were accepted into flight school at Tuskegee University.

There were also stories of how African-Americans were not allowed to leave their military posts while visiting various ports over-

seas.

Jefferson discussed his time as a prisoner of war after his plane was shot down by the Germans. He said he spent six months as a prisoner of war, but he was not treated any differently than other prisoners of war. One of the most shocking things, he explained, was that when he arrived back in the United States and upon debarking the ship, Caucasians were directed to debark in one direction and African-Americans to debark the other way.

Upon hearing these stories, Information Systems Technician Chief James Stockman remarked, "To think that this man, who fought for his country and nearly sacrificed his life, would be treated this way is incredulous. I truly enjoyed listening to Lt. Col. Jefferson and his stories. I truly respect all he has done."

"I can say that this definitely was one of the greatest highlights of my naval career to meet this truly remarkable man. The legacy that he and his fellow airmen left enabled thousands of other African-Americans to succeed in a promising life in America," Stockman continued.

Following his lecture, Jefferson was given a guided tour of NCTAMS PAC operations center and satellite communications facility all of which he found "remarkable."

Wert said, "I received the opportunity to learn some real life lessons and share some concepts of faith and freedom with a man whose spirit soars with the eagles."

Nimitz, Essex Strike Groups complete strike force training

MCC (SW/AW) Ty Swartz
USS Essex (LHD 2) Public Affairs,
and MC2 Alexander Ameen
USS Nimitz (CVN 68) Public
Affairs

The Nimitz Carrier Strike Group (CSG) conducted an expeditionary strike force (ESF) exercise with the Essex Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) on March 14-16.

The ESF training brought together the two strike groups to test their ability to plan and conduct multi-task operations across a broad spectrum of naval disciplines.

"This training provided us the opportunity to refresh our skills in executing complex missions that require capabilities broader in scope than those provided by an individual strike group," said Rear Adm. Terry Blake, commander, Carrier Strike Group 11. "Successfully completing these training exercises ensures the ESF is ready to operate effectively as a joint maritime force to satisfy the broad array of 7th Fleet missions."

One of the benefits of ESF training is the preparation that it provides both strike groups.

"This enhances our ability in the future where a situation may come up and we're both deployed to the same area and we've practiced together," said Lt. Ryan Tashma, an operations officer from Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 23, embarked aboard Nimitz. "There are things [the Essex ESG] do differently and things we do differently from them. The fact that we get to exercise together now gives us the ability to interact in the future more seamlessly."

Participating in ESF training tests the ability of the participating ships to operate in a complex environment and hone their maritime skills. Consistent and continuous training allows the U.S. 7th Fleet to maintain readiness to accomplish assigned missions.

"Whether it's the type of capabilities that a carrier strike group brings or the type of capabilities - which really is our Marines, Harriers and helicopters - that an expeditionary strike group brings, ESF training enhances our ability



U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Joseph Pol Sebastian Gocong

The guided-missile destroyer USS Chafee (DDG 90) steams into position during an Expeditionary Strike Force (ESF) exercise. The Nimitz Carrier Strike Group (CSG) recently participated in an ESF with the Essex (LHD 2) Expeditionary Strike Group. The ESF exercise was designed to test the ability of the Strike Groups to plan and conduct multi-task force operations across a broad spectrum of naval disciplines and to refresh skills in completing complex missions that require capabilities that are broader in scope than the individual Strike Groups can provide alone.

to operate effectively as a joint maritime force in the 7th Fleet area of responsibility," said Rear Adm. Carol Pottenger, commander, Amphibious Forces 7th Fleet.

The ESF training event was scheduled many months ago in order to coincide with the Nimitz CSG deployment to the 7th Fleet area of responsibility. The Essex ESG is on its spring patrol deployment and recently completed Exercise Balikatan 2008 with the Republic of the Philippines.

The two strike groups took advantage of their time together by

practicing basic flight maneuvering, air defense and surface support mission exercises.

"We do close-air support exercises as well that simulate real world scenarios the ship may encounter," said Lt. Cmdr. Michael Garcia, Carrier Air Wing 11 strike officer.

Coordinating the large number of ships and aircraft involved in the ESF exercise was a true "team effort," Tashma said.

"There were weeks of planning by the strike group staff, DESRON staff, ship's company, the air wing and [operations officers] from the

different ships," Tashma said. "One of the big issues is, you've got our aircraft and you've got their aircraft and not a whole lot of actual air space. You have to really plan to make sure everyone's on the same page."

During Exercise Talisman Saber 2007, the Essex ESG worked with the Kitty Hawk CSG and the Australian navy, improving interoperability between the CSG and ESG as well as between the United States and Australia.

"Training that we do as an ESF is nothing new, it's training that we

do each year," said Capt. Anthony Pachuta, commander, Amphibious Squadron 11.

This ESF exercise is the first for the Essex ESG since it began operating under the Navy's new guidelines for expeditionary strike groups, but it is the second multi-strike group training for the Nimitz CSG in less than a year. Last year the Nimitz CSG joined the Bonhomme Richard and the John C. Stennis Strike Groups to conduct ESF training in the Persian Gulf.

The Nimitz CSG is comprised of Commander, CSG 11, the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Nimitz; its embarked air wing, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 11; embarked DESRON 23; the guided-missile cruiser USS Princeton (CG 59); the guided-missile destroyers USS John Paul Jones (DDG 53), USS Higgins (DDG 76), and USS Chafee (DDG 90), homeported at Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i; Helicopter Anti-submarine Squadron Light (HSL) 49 "Scorpions," HSL-37 "Easy Riders"; and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 11.

CVW-11's squadrons include the "Tophatters" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 14, the "Black Aces" of VFA-41, the "Sunliners" of VFA-81, the "Wallbangers" of Airborne Early Warning Squadron 117, the "Red Devils" of Marine Corps Strike Fighter Squadron 232, the "Black Ravens" of Electronic Warfare Squadron 135, the "Providers" of Carrier Logistics Support Squadron 30 and the "Indians" of Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron 6.

The Nimitz CSG departed on a regularly scheduled Western Pacific deployment Jan. 24.

Essex ESG departed Sasebo, Japan for its annual spring patrol throughout the Western Pacific region on Jan. 24.

Essex is the lead ship of the only forward-deployed U.S. ESG and serves as the flagship for Combined Task Force 76, the Navy's only forward-deployed amphibious force commander. CTF-76 is headquartered at White Beach Naval Facility in Okinawa, Japan with an operating detachment in Sasebo.

NCTAMS Sailor named NETWARCOM Shore SOY

MC2 (SW) Christopher Koons

Naval Network Warfare Command
Public Affairs

Information Systems Technician 1st Class (IT1) (SW) G.J. Jones of Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station Pacific (NCTAMSPAC) at Pearl Harbor received the Shore Sailor of the Year (SOY) honor when Naval Network Warfare Command (NETWARCOM) held its Sailor of the Year award ceremony March 14.

The event was held at the Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek Snug Harbor Officers' Club, Norfolk, Va. Four Sailors were chosen as the domain Sailors of the Year.

"I've never been comfortable with the term 'Sailor of the Year competition,' because everyone here is a winner," said Vice Adm. H. Denby Starling II, NETWARCOM commander, who presented the awards to the Sailors. "We have the challenge of choosing a winner who scores a 100 while everyone else scores a 99.5. They are all deserving of the honor."

Cryptologic Technician (interpretive) 1st Class (SCW) Ryan Roe of Navy Information Operations

Command Georgia was chosen as Sea SOY.

IT2 Kristell Faustino of NCTAMS PAC was selected as the NETWARCOM Junior Sailor of the Year.

"I am surprised and delighted to have won," said Jones. "I look forward to the chance to influence junior Sailors to strive for excellence and I hope that what I have been able to accomplish so far will continue throughout my career."

"I'm ecstatic and overwhelmed," added Roe. "The onus is now on me to perform up to the standard that has been set by winning this award."

During the week leading up to the ceremony, the SOY candidates were each interviewed by award selection boards made up of senior enlisted NETWARCOM Sailors. They also networked with each other, did physical training together, went on museum tours, went to receptions and enjoyed a dinner cruise around Norfolk Harbor.

"I had a great time," said Cryptologic Technician (collection) 1st Class (SW) Nayomie Richards of Navy Information Operations Command Hawai'i, who competed for shore SOY honors. "We had the best of the best in our group and got

along great. It's rare that you go to a competition and don't really care who wins. Everyone here deserved to win."

"I made at least 40 new friends during the week," Roe added. "I also got a sense of belonging from the chief petty officer community here, who really treated us as peers."

FORCM (SS/AW/SW) Charles Dassance, NETWARCOM's force master chief, said the Sailor of the Year candidates all bring talent and energy to the NETWARCOM team.

"The amount of brain power standing here is phenomenal," Dassance said. "They are always working hard to identify issues and propose solutions to them. They are all winners."

Information Systems Technician 1st Class (SW) G.J. Jones of Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station Pacific receives the Shore SOY award from Vice Adm. H. Denby Starling II, commander, Naval Network Warfare Command, during the Sailor of the Year ceremony at NAB Little Creek's Snug Harbor Officer's Club, Norfolk, Va. on March 14.

U.S. Navy photo



Construction projects around Pearl Harbor



Naval Facilities Engineering Command Hawai'i

Ward Field light pole replacement:

On Jan. 7, SAN Construction began replacing the lights at Naval Station Pearl Harbor's Ward Field. The \$1.2 million contract, awarded in 2007 by Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Hawai'i, is scheduled for completion on May 15. The project was needed to address structural concerns caused by severe corrosion of the existing light poles. It will also provide the field with an upgraded electrical system and energy efficient metal halide lamps.

Scheduled road work and

parking closures around Pearl Harbor:

- Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Pearl Harbor: Vincennes Avenue will be down to two lanes of traffic and parallel parking near buildings 474 and 475 will be unavailable due to the replacement of a water line from through April 9.

- Makalapa compound: A sidewalk improvement project will cause occasional road adjustments to one-lane on Halawa Drive between Borchers Gate and building 250 through March 31.

- Submarine base area: Oceanic work on a utility pole will cause the closure of three parking spaces near building 1335 along Kamehameha

Highway from March 24 - April 4.

- Repairs to F-76 and JP-8 fuel lines along North Road will close six parking stalls on either side of the North Road-Bole Lane intersection through May 17.

- Naval Station Pearl Harbor: Repaving and root barrier installation will impact building 1315's parking lot and service access road between Hale Alii and Paul Hamilton roads through April 21.

- Ford Island: Ford Island Bridge routine preventive maintenance will occur from 8:30 a.m. - 8:40 a.m. on March 26.

Scheduled long-term road closures:

- Ford Island: Due to public-private venture housing construction, a new temporary road

has been opened from Chafee Boulevard to provide access to the area near Wasp Boulevard north of Chafee intersection. Construction is scheduled to occur through June 30.

- FISC Pearl Harbor: Repairs to a conveyor roof will affect traffic between buildings 474 and 475 along Vincennes Avenue through June 11.

- Construction will cause portions of Simms Street between wharf K-9 and building 1900 to be closed through Sept. 30.

- Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard: Installation of a sewer main will cause the closure of one lane on Lake Erie Avenue during normal working hours through Aug. 15.

