In Remembrance of December 7, 1941

Commemorative Edition

"Navigator"

HO'OKELE

Pearl Harbor - Hickam News

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Hickam honors legacy, pays tribute to storied past

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Mike Meares

15th Wing Public Affairs

Former Tech. Sgt. Lou Roffman speaks with Hickam Airmen before the 70th Anniversary Remembrance Ceremony on Dec. 7, 2011 of the attacks on the former Hickam Field, now Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

At 7:55 a.m., some 70 years ago, lives on the sleepy island of Oahu were forever changed by an attacking force. Hickam took a living glimpse into a storied past filled with heroism, honor and valor on historic ground Dec. 7.

On the very site where Old Glory never left her post and men like Joseph Jedrysik of Manchester, N.H, bravely fought and died defending her, the former Hickam Field survivors, Airmen and their families gathered at the Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam historic flag pole at Atterbury Circle for the 70th Remembrance Ceremony to honor those men and women who fought for America's freedom on Dec. 7, 1941.

Seated on the front row as honored guests were 10 men who Gen. Gary North, Pacific Air Forces commander, called "warriors, survivors and absolute heroes."

"To our veterans here today and to our veterans who are here in spirit, we say thank you for your service, for defending our way of life, for defending our freedom, and defending our national colors." said Col. Sam Barrett, 15th Wing commander. "We draw great strength from all of you. We recognize that you place a sacred trust in those of us who wear the uniform today, and we vow never to let you down. You are the foundation upon which our United States Air Force stands so very strong today."

Coinciding with a ceremony at the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center at the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument to mark the time the attacks began, the Hickam ceremony featured a performance of "Lest We Forget," a song written by Chief Master Sgt. Larry MacTaggart, by the Band of the Pacific's Hana Hou. Four 19th and 199th Fighter Squadron F-22s flew a four-ship missing man formation during the song. As one of the Raptors climbed toward the heavens, disappearing into the clouds, the Hickam honor guard prepared to raise a flag to half staff. A light sprinkling rain began to fall, as if the heavens were mourning the men being honored, which is a Hawaiian blessing.

"I think it's fitting for those of you who know the Hawaiian traditions that we are being sprinkled on from the heavens," North said.

An unannounced military strike by the Japanese against the U.S. naval base and Army Air Corps air fields thrust the U.S. into World War II. The largest airborne force ever assembled by the Imperial Japanese Navy launched from the decks of aircraft carriers with the intent of crippling the aerial assets and fleet anchored at Pearl Harbor. There was very little air opposition because they furiously struck Hickam, Wheeler and Bellows fields.

"Seventy years ago, you were forced to go to war when you were attacked by an enemy who sought to destroy your ability, along with your will, to fight back," he said. "They sought to destroy the aircraft that were here on the ramps of Hickam Field and the other air bases across the island of Oahu.

"They sought, in Pearl Harbor, to strike a devastating blow to our ships and our men and women in port," he continued. "They sought to destroy each one of our Soldiers, our Sailors, our Airmen and our Marines in service here in Oahu and, more importantly, they sought to destroy the Americans Spirit, hoping to win what they would call a very quick victory by making your families and fellow Americans retreat in fear, and to refuse to fight back. Oh how they underestimated America, and the American men and women in uniform and our civilian citizens," North said.

"While you initially had limited means to which to fight back, they could never destroy your will," the general said, addressing the 10 men in the front row.

Stories of heroism provided a glimpse into the past as the men sitting here re-lived in their minds the first wave of attacks from the windows in their homes and dormitory, and immediately recognized the call of duty.

A buck private, Frank Karas, was sleeping in that Sunday morning rather than heading for the chow hall. It was a decision he believes saved his life. At about 8 a.m., a Japanese dive bomber scored a direct hit on the barracks near the main entrance of the chow hall, killing as many as 35 airmen having breakfast. The blast awoke Karas, and he quickly put on his clothes and assisted in transferring and distributing ordnances and ammunition from the storage bunkers during the hailstorms of bombs and bullets from enemy planes.

"It brings back many memories, many memories of all the things that have happened," Karas said. "I only wish there were more of us. Too many of us are dying. It was a tough day. We just go on, go on; it's all you can do."

Max Baker, then a private, was lying in bed considering what he wanted for breakfast. When he heard the first explosions, he thought it might be the Navy practicing. Situated below a window in the 3,200-man barracks, he sat up in bed and saw a low flying plane with a giant red "meatball" on the wing.

After the first wave of attacks, he ran to the flight line and saw that most of the B-17s were destroyed. There was an undamaged airplane a short distance from the hangars, so he and two others ran out to the plane when the second wave of Japanese planes swooped in on them. Lying face down on the runway, the strafing bullets hit all around, never touching any of them.

After the air raid, Baker returned to his dorm and found that a bomb had penetrated the barracks roof, third floor and detonated on a delayed fuse on the second level, killing two. The only personal items remaining were a pair of rolled up socks and a bloody Bible riddled with pock marks from debris. His grandmother and aunt inscribed the Bible, "Give God the morning's first minutes, and He will bless the day's long hours."

Dan Jones, then a staff sergeant, stood near base operations and watched as a formation of planes heading for the base, back dropped by a crystal clear blue sky, headed in his direction. A dive bomber peeled away from the formation, exposing

See HICKAM, A-4

Joint service commemorates 70th Pearl Harbor Day in Hawaii

National Pearl Harbor Survivors Association will disband

Story and photo by MC2 (SW) Mark Logico

Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs

Pearl Harbor survivor David Shoup stands to be recognized during the 70th anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day.

More than 5,000 distinguished guests and the general public joined current and former military personnel for the 70th anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day at the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center at the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument on Dec. 7.

Hosted by the National Park Service and the U.S. Navy, the joint memorial ceremony had the theme: "The Enduring Legacy: Pearl Harbor 1941-2011." Two of the guest speakers for the ceremony were Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus and Pearl Harbor survivor Mal Middlesworth.

"It is important for us to thank the survivors of Pearl Harbor. It is important for us to remember the ones who didn't survive," Mabus said. "It is important for us to carry on the legacy of the things that were started here on Dec. 7, 1941, the heroism, the dedication, the patriotism to carry on for future generations."

The ceremony was held on the lawn of the visitor center, which looks directly out to the USS Arizona Memorial situated in Pearl Harbor. More than 300 Pearl Harbor survivors and other World War II veterans attended the annual observance.

At the ceremony, National Pearl Harbor Survivors Association President William Muehleib announced that the association will disband on Dec. 31, 2011.

Muehleib said that due to the apparent diminishing health and age of its members, the organization will not be able to continue to operate. He, however, reassured that the remaining Pearl Harbor survivors will continue to keep close ties with the community and attend future Pearl Harbor events whenever possible.

Ninety-one-year-old John Murphy, a Pearl Harbor survivor from the USS Vestal, said he would still try to come back to Hawaii next year for the 71st Pearl Harbor anniversary.

During the ceremony, four F-22 Raptors of the U.S. Air Force and Hawaii Air National Guard conducted a missing man formation flyover. The guided-missile destroyer USS Chung-Hoon (DDG 93) performed a pass-in-review as the crew manned the rails when the ship passed alongside the USS Arizona Memorial. Guests observed a U.S. Marine Corps rifle salute and U.S. Pacific Fleet Band's presentation of echo Taps.

A wreath-laying ceremony and recognition was performed for all the major warships and battle sites. Pearl Harbor survivors stood when the names of their respective locations were called.

After the ceremony, Mabus led the official party and Pearl Harbor survivors, who traveled aboard a Navy biodiesel boat, in a floral tribute aboard the USS Arizona Memorial.

Pearl Harbor Visitor Center hosts Pearl Harbor Day Symposium

Story and photo by MC3 Dustin W. Sisco

Navy Public Affairs Support Element West Det Hawaii

Pearl Harbor survivors, historians and guests gathered for the Pearl Harbor 70th Anniversary Symposium at the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument.

The four-day symposium, held Dec. 2-5, grouped together leading historians and eye witnesses to give accounts of the tragic events that occurred Dec. 7, 1941.

Edward F. Borucki, a retired chief petty officer and Pearl Harbor survivor who was stationed aboard the light cruiser USS Helena (CL-50) during the attack on Pearl Harbor, talked about coming to the symposium and shared his account of what happened during the attack.

"It is a sentimental journey every time I come here," Borucki said. "I remember I lost 33 shipmates. We had to carry out the dead. Bombs and machine guns were going off and there was yelling and screaming, and I saw Soldiers and Sailors in the oil-filled waters."

Peter Borucki, Edward's seventh son, expressed his feelings about coming to the symposium every year with his father.

"It's like a pilgrimage to come here," Peter said. "I am very grateful that my father, at 91 years old, is in good health and can still come out here every year."

"To listen to the other veterans and to hear their stories – for those that can even actually talk about it – it's so moving, and it's an experience that I am so grateful that I am able to take advantage of," Peter said. "There are so many other people I wish could come out here and see exactly where this happened and how important it is to remember it."

Edward F. Borucki (left), a retired chief petty officer and Pearl Harbor survivor who was stationed aboard the light cruiser USS Helena (CL-50) during the attack on Pearl Harbor, talks to a fellow Pearl Harbor survivor at the Pearl Harbor 70th anniversary symposium.

Allen Bodenlos, retired Army Sgt. and survivor of the 1941 attack, described an experience he had while at a previous symposium.

"A little Japanese lady came up to me with tears streaming down her face," Bodenlos aid. "She said 'Sir, may I hug you,' and as we hugged very tightly for a moment, she whispered, 'Sir, I am so sorry. Can you ever forgive my country?'"

Bodenlos replied, "Dear lady, I have forgiven your country many years ago, and now we are friends."

Commentary

Pearl Harbor legacy endures

Rear Adm. Frank W. Ponds

Commander, Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Mark Logico

Rear Adm. Frank Ponds, commander, Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific

Today we honor the men and women and the families of those who made the ultimate sacrifice on the island of Oahu 70 years ago. On that dreadful day, 2,403 American Sailors, Marines, Soldiers and civilians died, and another 1,178 were wounded.

Each decade the number of visitors to Pearl Harbor has grown by hundreds of thousands. Today, Navy biodiesel boats – named after Pearl Harbor Medal of Honor recipients – carry 1.5 million visitors each year, with our Sailors at the helm. Those visitors are now our partners, helping us carry on the meaning of Pearl Harbor. They learn the significance of the 1941 attack on Oahu and the legacy of the victory achieved in the Pacific.

That legacy is represented not only in the history and heritage of our past but also in the strategic economic importance of the Pacific today and the dynamic opportunities of tomorrow. Our Navy in Hawaii is helping to build partnerships in the Pacific, responding to calls for humanitarian assistance, and providing persistent presence in ensuring freedom of the seas to protect those opportunities.

On this day of commemoration, we are duty bound to ensure future generations remember our fallen so that they can carry on the tradition and commitment of defending the freedoms and ideals that our heroes of Pearl Harbor, WWII and the wars and conflicts before and after dedicated their lives to preserve. That is Pearl Harbor's enduring legacy and our sacred responsibility.

Commentary

70th anniversary of attack on Oahu

Gen. Gary North

Pacific Air Forces Commander

U.S. Air Force photo

Gen. Gary L. North is commander, Pacific Air Forces.

Today marks the 70th anniversary of the Dec. 7, 1941, attacks on Oahu. It is important that we take a moment to reflect and remember this seminal event in our nation's history. Dec. 7 is the day that lives in infamy. It is the day we got caught with our guard down. And it was tragic, to be sure.

On that fateful Sunday morning, more than 350 Japanese fighters and bombers took off from their aircraft carriers 200 miles north of Oahu. The Japanese set out to attack not just Pearl Harbor, for which this day is often remembered, but also the Airmen and aircraft of the Hawaiian Air Forces, along with USMC forces at Kaneohe Bay. They set out to destroy our ability to wage war in the Pacific. They also aimed to destroy our morale and, with it, our will to fight back. They underestimated us as individuals and America as a nation.

There were many acts of heroism by Airmen that day. Just as battle stations were manned on the battleships in Pearl Harbor, our Airmen at Hickam Field ran to ammunition storage houses, desperate to fight back. Some risked their lives to move supplies and aircraft out of the line of fire. Some jumped directly into those aircraft and took off to challenge the enemy in the sky. And while the day seemed to be a crippling defeat, the enemy ultimately failed in their objectives. For nestled within the American spirit is strength and resolve. And in short time we recovered, regrouped, and rebuilt. And in due time we won.

Today, all those who work in and visit the Pacific Air Forces headquarters building can see the scars remaining from those attacks. Those scars remind our Airmen, families and all visitors of the ultimate sacrifice paid that day by 238 of our fellow warriors. But they also remind me of how across our country, our service members and our community pulled together, in response to meet the challenges of WWII combat operations.

Fast forward 70 years…Today the U.S. and Japan are strong partners who work tirelessly together to promote peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Pacific Air Forces, along with all components of U.S. Pacific Command, regularly exercise with Japanese forces to ensure interoperability – which we saw so effectively demonstrated by the U.S. response in Operation Tomodachi earlier this year, when more than 6,000 of our PACAF Airmen supported Japanese relief operations after their earthquake, tsunami and nuclear plant issues.

Many of the remaining veterans of the Dec. 7 attacks make their way back to these sites on Oahu for this 70th anniversary. We honor their courage, their service, their sacrifices and their legacy. We are grateful for the example they gave us of perseverance and the American spirit.

We owe it to ourselves to deliberately pause and reflect on moments like this in our history. We owe our veterans nothing less. We honor their memory and continue their proud tradition of service. They showed us how to 'Aim High' and fly, fight and win.

National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, 2011

President Barack Obama

On a serene Sunday morning 70 years ago, the skies above Pearl Harbor were darkened by the bombs of Japanese forces in a surprise attack that tested the resilience of our armed forces and the will of our nation. As explosions sounded and battleships burned, brave service members fought back fiercely with everything they could find. Unbeknownst to these selfless individuals, the sacrifices endured on that infamous day would galvanize America and come to symbolize the mettle of a generation.

In the wake of the bombing of our harbor and the crippling of our Pacific fleet, there were those who declared the United States had been reduced to a third-class power. But rather than break the spirit of our nation, the attack brought Americans together and fortified our resolve. Patriots across our country answered the call to defend our way of life at home and abroad. They crossed oceans and stormed beaches, freeing millions from the grip of tyranny and proving that our military is the greatest force for liberty and security the world has ever known.

On the home front, dedicated civilians supported the war effort by repairing wrecked battleships, working in factories, and joining civilian defense organizations to help with salvage programs and plant victory gardens. At this time of great strife, we reminded the world there is no challenge we cannot meet; there is no challenge we cannot overcome.

On National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, we honor the more than 3,500 Americans killed or wounded during that deadly attack and pay tribute to the heroes whose courage ensured our nation would recover from this vicious blow. Their tenacity helped define the Greatest Generation, and their valor fortified all who served during World War II.

As a nation, we look to Dec. 7, 1941 to draw strength from the example set by these patriots and to honor all who have sacrificed for our freedoms.

The Congress, by Public Law 103-308, as amended, has designated Dec. 7 of each year as "National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day."

Now, therefore, I, Barack Obama, president of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Dec. 7, 2011 as National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

Sailors say 'farewell to thee'

Official U.S. Navy photograph, National Archives collection.

Following Hawaiian tradition, Sailors honor men killed during the Dec. 7, 1941 Japanese attack on Naval Air Station Kaneohe, Oahu. The casualties had been buried on Dec. 8. This ceremony took place sometime during the following months, possibly on Memorial Day, May 31, 1942.

Diverse Views

"What comes to your mind as we remember the 70th anniversary of the Dec. 7, 1941 attack on military installations on Oahu?"

Master Sgt. Kevin Johnson
561st Network Operations Squadron, Det 1

"When I think of the 70th anniversary, I think of the survivors and how much history they've witnessed first-hand at such a young age."

Keith Kenyon
PACAF A4

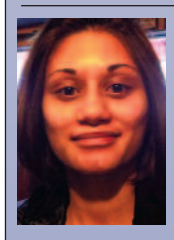
"I think of a great nation that overcomes tragedy, continues on with our heads held high, and lives a life that no other country can live any better...with freedom."

SrA Rachel Ronk
647th Security Forces Squadron

"Remembering the 70th anniversary, I think of all those fallen members of the military and those who shed blood for our freedom. It is my honor to serve here today."

Chaplain Capt Anthony L. Wiggins
647th Air Base Group/HC

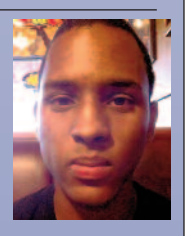
"Thank you! Your sacrifice and service continues to encourage generations of freedom to stand strong in the midst of adversity."



CTN3 Cherie Kramer
NIOC Hawaii

"I think of how awesome the United States military is because of the war. We succeded!"

CTN3 Joseph Steadly
NIOC Hawaii



"Everytime I think of Pearl Harbor, I think of how tragic it was."

CTR Seaman Apprentice Erika Contreras
NIOC Hawaii

"I get angry when I think about Pearl Harbor. I still haven't forgiven the Japanese."

(Provided by David Underwood and MC3 Dustin Sisco)

Want to see your command featured in Diverse Views? Got opinions to share?

Drop us a line at editor@hookelenews.com or karen.spangler@navy.mil

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Pacific Aviation Museum hosts Ford Island Tower dedication

Story and photo by
MC3 Dustin W. Sisco

Navy Public Affairs Support Element West Det Hawaii

The Pacific Aviation Museum hosted the Ford Island Control Tower dedication ceremony on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) on Dec. 7.

The ceremony was held to give thanks to individuals, groups and agencies who made it possible for the Ford Island Control Tower to be restored and ready to become a library to be used by future generations to study aviation.

The Pacific Aviation Museum received a federal grant of more than $3 million.

"This project is especially significant to Gov. Abercrombie," said Lt. Gov. Brian Schatz on behalf of Abercrombie, who could not attend the ceremony. Citing Abercrombie's support of the tower restoration, "He has been working so hard to make this day a reality, and he sends his regards. He sends his gratitude and his congratulations."

Schatz also spoke about the importance of restoring the tower.

"Although it was left vacant for years, abandoned and rusting, the structure is an iconic landmark for the entire Pearl Harbor basin," Schatz said. "By restoring this symbol, we demonstrate the importance of those who lost their lives here on this day 70 years ago, those American service women and men who fought in World War II, and those who carry that memory forward for all generations to understand and learn from."

Capt. Jeffrey James, commander of JBPHH, also spoke about the Ford Island Tower.

"To those of us in the military and, even more so, to those who wore the uniforms in the years past, the restoration of the Ford Island Control Tower marks a new beginning," James said. "It's quite fitting, given that the first message that our nation was at war 70 years ago came from the base of this control tower. Truly, our entrance into the World War II was first broadcast right here, with the words 'Air raid Pearl Harbor. This is not a drill.'"

Capt. Jeffrey James, commander of Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH), offered remarks about the Navy's involvement with the Ford Island Control Tower restoration at the tower's dedication ceremony Dec. 7 on JBPHH. The tower, once used to guide airplanes going to and leaving the airfield on the island, will be used as an aviation.

Although the control tower had its day of dedication, progress on the Ford Island Control Tower is still underway.

If possible, the museum plans on restoring the elevator so patrons may visit the very top to see from the highest point of view on the tower.

USS Oklahoma Memorial ceremony honors survivors and those killed on Dec. 7

Story and photo by
MC3 Sean Furey

Navy Public Affairs Support Element West Det. Hawaii

Survivors, families, friends and service members gathered at the USS Oklahoma Memorial on Ford Island to pay their respects during the USS Oklahoma memorial ceremony Dec. 7.

The USS Oklahoma Memorial honors the Sailors and Marines who lost their lives on Dec. 7, 1941 when the ship was hit with multiple torpedoes and eventually capsized.

Guest speakers included Capt. Jeffrey James, commander of Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam; Ed Vezey, a USS Oklahoma survivor; and Paul DePrey, superintendent of the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, among others.

Vezey recalled a conversation that he was having with a shipmate the morning of the attacks on Pearl Harbor and the events that unfolded throughout the day.

"We were discussing whether we should go swimming first or eat breakfast first, the biggest decision of the day," Vezey said. "About that time the war started, so it made up our minds. He went to his station on a turret and was killed. The chaos was unbelievable. People say, 'were you afraid?' I say, 'no, something quite different, it was seething anger.'"

Harold Johnson, a Pearl Harbor survivor from USS Oklahoma, places a flower on one of the 429 marble columns that make up the USS Oklahoma Memorial.

The USS Oklahoma Memorial is composed of 429 marble columns arranged in a "V" shape, each engraved with the name of a crew member who perished on the ship on Dec. 7, 1941. After the USS Arizona, the USS Oklahoma suffered the second largest loss of life on that day.

"It was really an honor and privilege to speak at a ceremony such as this, commemorating the 70th anniversary with 429 Sailors and Marines that lost their lives this day," James said. "All of the commemorative events that occurred were very well put together, and I think had just the right tone and just the right touch to remember, reflect and honor those who passed and those who survived."

Hickam remembers heroism of Dec. 7, 1941

Continued from A-2

the red dot underneath the plane's wings, identifying it as an attacking Japanese airplane. He watched as it dropped the first bomb on hangar 35, which housed the Hawaiian Air Depot.

With only a .45-caliber pistol on his side, he pulled his weapon and fired, believing it was better to shoot than stand there and watch. Some believe he could possibly be the first to have fired any shots on the attacking force. He immediately ran back to the barracks to wake up and warn his roommates. He then ran back to a hangar, grabbed a rifle and a .50-caliber water-cooled machine gun. After setting up the machine gun near the barracks, he ran to get bullets for it. When he returned, a young boy lay dead over the machine gun and it still had no ammunition.

As chaos erupted around him, high-altitude bombers dropped their payloads on the barracks, and he could hear the bomb's whistling sounds. Taking cover, he quickly hid in the shallow drain along the sidewalk. As bombs ripped through the barracks with a great force, one landed near him and knocked him out for a few minutes. Thinking he was dead, he said his body went numb and he lost his hearing for an hour. With only a slightly injured leg, a higher-ranking NCO told him to go to the hospital. Once he arrived, he quickly realized there were too many others with more life-threatening injuries than his, so he left. Had he sought medical assistance, he might have been awarded a Purple Heart, but said he has no regrets.

"I lost a lot of friends and buddies at the time," said Louis Roffman, who was also still sleeping inside the barracks that morning. "I was in the barracks when it happened. When I came out of the barracks, it was the first time in my life I've ever seen a dead man. It appeared that they were sleeping on the parade grounds, but they were dead. Emotionally it hurts me."

North went on to describe how, on that fateful day, men leaped from their beds, manned machine guns in the parade field, on the flight line and at the base of the flag pole and shot back with whatever they had from .45 caliber pistols to rifles.

"Your families and your fellow Americans did not retreat in fear," he said. "They unleashed both their love and their support throughout America through hugs of a concerned spouse, through the letters of caring families, through the sale of war bonds, and through the commitment of a nation that knew you were fighting for our very freedoms."

To conclude the ceremony, members of Hickam and the local community laid wreaths and lei at the foot of the flag pole. The honor guard's rifle report from a three-volley salute resounded over Atterbury Circle, echoing off the bullet-scarred building nearby.

North praised the men and their families who were present for guiding America from the early dark days of those events and leading by example to becoming well known as the "Greatest Generation."

"We are an Air Force that is strong today because of your strength in World War II," North said. "We strive every day to make sure that what you experienced will never happen again. And just as you took charge in World War II, our Airmen today work diligently around the clock and around the world to ensure the peace and prosperity that you earned us."

The white flag pole everyone gathered near carried a very torn and tattered flag when the day was finished in 1941. From a bird's eye view, the flag dangled in desolation, a witness to wide spread devastation, but stood tall as desperate men rallied. The flag never fell. Today, Taps followed.

oto by MC2 (SW) Mark Logico
their heads during
of the 70th anniver-

The ENDURING LEGACY

Pearl Harbor 1941-2011

(Left) Pearl Harbor survivors, retired Lt. Cmdr. Louis Conter from USS Arizona and retired Capt. Jack Evans from USS Tennessee, talk as they arrive early for the 70th anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day.

U.S. photo by MC2 (SW) Mark Logico

(Left) Pearl Harbor survivor David Shoup watches the wreath laying during the 70th anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day at Pearl Harbor Visitor Center.

U.S. photo by MC2 (SW) Mark Logico

(Left) The Pearl Harbor Submarine Park and Parche Memorial at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam was the setting for a wreath laying ceremony and prayer held by the Japan Religious Committee for World Federation in remembrance of the 70th anniversary of the Dec.7. More than 60 Japanese peace delegates attended, each praying for peace in several religious traditions.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 (SW/AW/SCW) Ronald Gutridge

(Right) Pearl Harbor survivor Mal Middlesworth delivers the keynote address during the 70th anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day at Pearl Harbor Visitor Center.

U.S. photo by MC2 (SW) Mark Logico

(Below) Members of the Navy Region Hawaii Ceremonial Guard participate in a burial service of Pearl Harbor survivor and USS Utah crew member Lee Soucy (1919-2010) at the USS Utah Memorial on Ford Island. *(See story and additional photo on page A-9)*

U.S. Navy photograph by MC2 Daniel Barker

Roy Carter, a USS Oklahoma survivor views the USS Oklahoma memorial on Ford Island. Carter was a Carpenters Mate Second class while aboard the Oklahoma and retired from the Navy as a Lieutenant Commander.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Sean Furey

The U.S. Pacific Comman
Pearl Harbor Day.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 (SW) Mark Logico

Marines from Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe, perform a rifle salute during the 70th anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Daniel Barker

A traditional Hawaiian blessing is offered during a joint memorial ceremony hosted by the U.S. Navy and National Park Service in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Kahu Kauila Clark (right) offered the blessing.

U.S. photo by MC2 (SW) Mark Logico

d Joint Service Color Guard presents the colors during the 70th anniversary of

U.S. photo by MC2 (SW) Mark Logico

(Above) Electrician's Mate 2nd Class (SS) Kyle Wiewiorski is one of several service members offering a wreath during the 70th anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day.

(Above) Pearl Harbor survivor Allen Bodenlos greets visitors at the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center during Kama'aina and Military Appreciation Day.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Daniel Barker

(Left) Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Ray Mabus (center) drops a flower petal over the USS Arizona Memorial during a Navy and National Park Service joint memorial ceremony in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Daniel Barker

U.S. Navy photo by Jazzmin Awa-Williams

Mickey Ganitch (standing) salutes to the crowd as he brings up the rear of the co-grand marshal of the Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade, held Dec. 7, in Waikiki for Pearl Harbor Survivors.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 (SW) Mark Logico

Marines from Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe, perform a rifle salute during the 70th anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day.

U.S. Navy Sailors and National Park Rangers participate in a joint memorial ceremony in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor at the WWII Valor in the Pacific National Monument. The theme of this year's ceremony was "The Enduring Legacy: Pearl Harbor 1941-2011."

U.S. Navy Photograph by MC2 Daniel Barker

Shipmates return – Their final homeport

Pearl Harbor survivor Benjamin D. Stout receives final honors

Story and photo by Don Robbins

Assistant Editor

Sailors honored Pearl Harbor survivor and former Navy Shipfitter 1st Class Benjamin D. Stout during a scattering of ashes ceremony at the USS Utah Memorial on Dec. 5.

Stout, who died Dec. 29, 1990 at the age of 72, served aboard the cruiser USS Honolulu (CL-48) during the Dec. 7, 1941 Pearl Harbor attack.

The ceremony included a short religious service from Navy chaplain Lt. Steven Voris.

"Friends, we're gathered here today to dedicate an earthly resting place for our brother Benjamin D. Stout, who has departed," he said.

A rifle salute was provided by the Navy Region Hawaii ceremonial guard.

Military guests included Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Command Master Chief (SS/AW) Gregg Weber.

A Sailor from the Navy Region Hawaii ceremonial guard presents Barbara Flanagan, daughter of Pearl Harbor survivor Benjamin D. Stout, with a folded American flag in Stout's honor during a scattering of ashes ceremony at the USS Utah Memorial on Dec. 5.

"It's important for us as active duty Sailors to honor our veterans who went before us. They are definitely true heroes. As base command master chief, I'm honored to provide the service to families to honor their loved ones and take care of the veterans who served before us. They are our legacy," Weber said.

A Navy bugler was on hand during the ceremony to sound Taps as a Sailor presented the American flag to Barbara Flanagan, the youngest of Stout's five children. Flanagan also scattered her father's ashes into Pearl Harbor at the USS Utah Memorial.

Flanagan said her father didn't speak much about the Pearl Harbor attack. "Dad didn't talk a lot about it. He was like 44 when I was born," she said.

"After his retirement, he became a teacher and liked his students to call him 'Stout,'" according to retired Command Master Chief Jim Taylor, volunteer Pearl Harbor survivors' liaison at Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs.

"Although it has taken a long time, his loving daughter, Barbara, has brought Stout back to Pearl Harbor so he could be rejoined with his friends and shipmates lost during the attack. He had mentioned to one of his children he would like to have his remains on both the Atlantic and Pacific sides, so Barbara has made it happen," Taylor explained.

Born in St. George, W. Va. on Oct. 22, 1918, Stout joined the Navy in 1938. "Since he was a shipfitter, it's very probable his battle station where he was during the attack would be one of the three repair lockers. He probably didn't see much of the attack, if any, but witnessed the horrible aftermath — ships burning and sinking, bodies in the harbor which was full of flames from the oil, and one thing I know for sure, he was doing repair work on the ship immediately after the attack," Taylor said.

Stout continued on in the Navy and served honorably, finally retiring on May 27, 1960 after 22 years of service to his country. He received the following medals: American Defense Service, American Campaign, European-African Middle Eastern Campaign, Asiatic Pacific Campaign, World War II Victory and the Navy Occupation Service Medal.

After he retired from the Navy, Stout returned to West Virginia where he earned a college degree. He became a teacher of industrial arts and mechanical drawing in Maryland. "He retired from the school system in 1984, where few, if any, knew he had survived Pearl Harbor. Stout never talked about Pearl Harbor to his children or anybody else," Taylor said.

Taylor said Larry Patterson, the principal of the school where Stout was teaching, said so many of the 'Greatest Generation' didn't talk about the attack, and Stout was the same.

"Stout kept the military look throughout his life with a crew cut. Deep inside, I think he really spent most of his life as a Sailor at heart," Taylor said.

"The ceremony was perfect. I couldn't ask for anything better," Stout's daughter tearfully said as she held the American flag given to her by the Navy honor guard.

Her husband, Jeffrey Flanagan, added, "It's unbelievable what the Navy did for us, even after all these years."

Pearl Harbor survivor Jack Franklin finds final resting place at Pearl Harbor

Story and photo by MC2 (SW) Mark Logico

Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs

Two days before the 70th anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day, a memorial ceremony was held for 81-year-old Pearl Harbor survivor Boatswain's Mate 1st Class Jack Gordon Franklin at the USS Utah Memorial on Ford Island.

The Dec. 5 ceremony included a short religious service, the scattering of ashes, and a three-volley rifle salute provided by the Navy Region Hawaii Honor Guard. A bugler from U.S. Pacific Fleet band was also on hand to sound Taps, and at the end of the ceremony a Sailor presented an American flag to Franklin's eldest daughter, Joey Elaine Duncan.

"It was really beautiful," Duncan said. "I haven't stopped crying yet. It was a beautiful day too, and I appreciate the military doing this for us. It just means so much. It's closure for us."

Sailors assigned to Navy Region Hawaii Honor Guard perform facing movements during the burial service of Pearl Harbor survivor Boatswain's Mate 1st Class Jack Gordon Franklin at the USS Utah Memorial on Dec. 5. Franklin passed away July 12, 2005 at 81 years old. He was 17 years old during the attack on Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941.

Franklin, who died July 12, 2005, was a 17-year-old Sailor aboard the USS West Virginia (BB-48) during the Dec. 7, 1941 Pearl Harbor attacks.

Retired Command Master Chief Jim Taylor, volunteer Pearl Harbor liaison at Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs, hosted the ceremony and said Franklin expressed desire to his children to have his remains returned to Pearl Harbor so he could be with his friends and shipmates who were lost during the attack.

"Thanks to his three children — Joey, Tim and Pat — his wish has come true," Taylor said.

Born on Jan. 31, 1924, Franklin joined the Navy a few days after his 17th birthday in January 1941. Franklin was a mess cook aboard West Virginia when the attack started. Duncan said when Franklin went topside, he was wandering around the ship looking for people.

"A chief was the one who signaled him to get to the gun," Duncan said. "I haven't been able to find out why, but they used to call him Chief Smithy."

Franklin reached an anti-aircraft battery and fired the only shots from the battery during the raid. The West Virginia was hit by numerous torpedoes and two bombs. More than 100 crew members, including the ship's commanding officer, were killed that day.

Franklin continued to serve throughout the war effort, participating in major battles such as the Battle of Midway and the Battle of Coral Sea. He saw his last action at Buckner Bay in Okinawa, Japan, ducking Japanese kamikaze planes.

Franklin was such a devout Christian that his shipmates called him "Holy Joe" because he preached to anyone who would listen. After serving in the Navy, he dove into several ventures including ministry, operating a café, doing public relations work for the Southern Pacific Railroad, and managing an art gallery until his death in 2005.

Arizona Sailor joins fellow shipmates

Story and photo by
Randy Dela Cruz

Contributing Writer

Seventy years ago, a horrific explosion catapulted Seaman 1st Class Vernon J. Olsen from the deck of USS Arizona (BB 39) and into the agitated waters of Pearl Harbor, where he was rescued and transported to Ford Island – never again to see the over 1,000 fellow shipmates who went down with their ship on Dec. 7, 1941.

On Wednesday afternoon, near the end of a full day of commemorative events honoring the 70th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack, the ashes of Olsen, who passed away earlier this year on April 22, completed the journey back to the hallowed ship. His ashes were interred with comrades already in the Arizona. Memorial ceremonies held at USS Arizona Memorial, on Dec. 7.

Olsen became the 34th shipmate to return to the Arizona for interment since 1982 when retired Navy Chief Petty Officer Stanley M. Teslow became the ship's first survivor to return and make the Arizona his final resting place.

Prior to Olsen, Anthony Robert Schubert, who was an ensign at the time of the attack, was the last Sailor to be interred at the memorial.

Rear Adm. Frank Ponds, commander of Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Middle Pacific, lends support to Jo Ann Olsen, widow of Vernon J. Olsen, as he escorts her to the pier where her husband's remains were handed off to Navy divers for interment aboard USS Arizona (BB 39). The memorial was held at USS Arizona Memorial, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) on Dec. 7.

Schubert's remains, like Olsen's, were placed in a well at the ship's gun turret number four.

"This was something that he had wanted for years," said Olsen's grandniece, Maria Andreoulas, who made the trip from Florida along with Olsen's widow Jo Ann and several other family members. "My aunt wasn't so crazy about the idea, but she wanted to honor his wishes," Andreoulas said.

The ceremony was moderated by Daniel Martinez, National Park Service chief historian, and was also attended by Rear Adm. Frank Ponds, commander, Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific; Capt. Larry Scruggs, chief staff officer for JBPHH; Paul DePrey, National Park Service superintendent; and Chaplain Lt. Steven Voris.

As Navy divers descended with the remains of Olsen, Taps was played by Musician 1st Class John Wheeler and Musician 3rd Class Ann Franek.

Later, Sailors from Navy Region Hawaii Ceremonial Guard honored Olsen with a rifle salute and performed the flag ceremony before presenting Jo Ann with the colors.

Ponds, who personally escorted Olsen's widow down to the pier to hand off her husband's remains to waiting divers, and later into the shrine room, said he was humbled to be part of the memorial service.

"This is the way to immortalize those that gave their lives and sacrificed on that day of Dec. 7, 1941," Ponds said. "Being with the family of this fallen hero is very special to me. For them to ask me to be a part of this is just an honor. To be a part of this ceremony brings it home deep to your core. It's personal and reflects the ohana spirit that I felt the day that I got here to the islands of Hawaii."

Ponds added that the ceremony also confirms that, although the years may pass, once a part of the Navy, you are always a member of its community and family.

"The Navy's motto today is, 'A global force for good,' and that's not all about war," he stated. "It's about the spirit of cooperation, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, coming to aid of our partners, allies, friends and families. This is family. It doesn't matter how long you've been out of uniform, you will always be family, and an extension of your family will always be family."

"We extend this not just as a courtesy but as an honor and a privilege from us to them on behalf of what they've done and how they've served our country," Ponds said.

Andreoulas said that her granduncle would have been extremely pleased by the day's ceremonies and would have enjoyed spending time with all of those who attended the memorial.

"He loved to see people happy, having a good time, and he enjoyed people," she said. "He was always very gentle and kind and had a smile on his face."

While Andreoulas was sad to see her granduncle laid to rest, she said that she was happy that he got his wish.

"This was a once-in-a-lifetime thing and because it was for uncle Vern," she said.

Pearl Harbor survivor interred with USS Utah shipmates

Story and photo by
MC2 Daniel Barker

Navy Public Affairs
Support Element West,
Detachment Hawaii

Lee Soucy, a Pearl Harbor survivor and USS Utah crew member, was honored during an interment and sunset ceremony at the USS Utah Memorial on Dec. 6.

National Park Service and Navy divers placed a small urn containing Soucy's ashes in the sunken ship, joining the members of the Utah crew who died during the attack on Pearl Harbor 70 years ago.

ND2 (DSW/SW) Jason Pelle, of Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One, accompanied by National Park Service divers, conducts an interment at the USS Utah Memorial during which Pearl Harbor survivor and USS Utah crew member Lee Soucy (1919-2010) was interred within the ship's remains.

The ceremony included guest speakers, a presentation of wreaths, a floral tribute and military honors with a U.S. Navy burial detail including a rifle salute, Taps and a ceremonial flag presentation.

The ceremony was attended by nearly 200 people, with some of Soucy's children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren in attendance. Margaret Soucy, his daughter, spoke about his decision to be interred with his shipmates.

"He announced that he wanted to be interred on the Utah," Margaret Soucy said. "I said, 'Don't worry Daddy, I'll take that part of your ashes that was your mouth and I'll have those interred on the Utah, and you can tell those that have preceded you, including those that were entombed, what's been going on in the world."

Lee Soucy, who joined the Navy when he was 17, was a pharmacist's mate aboard USS Utah when it was struck by torpedoes during the attack. He was able to survive by sliding down the barnacle-laden hull and swimming to Ford Island where today the Utah's metal hull remains in the water just off shore and can still be seen.

"Thanks to the efforts of the United States Navy and the National Park Service, the Utah is getting a lot more attention than it ever did before," said retired Navy Command Master Chief Jim Taylor, volunteer Pearl Harbor survivor liaison, who led the memorial service and a Utah memorial ceremony which followed

"God bless all who have come here to honor Lee and also to honor the once forgotten ship. She is no longer called 'the forgotten ship,'" Taylor said. "This ship and the memorial are now part of a national monument, and now she will be getting the attention she should have received a long time ago."

Pilot's wife on Pearl Harbor: 'I never thought it would happen where I was'

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Carolyn Herrick

Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Public Affairs

Nineteen-year-old Bea Sullivan hid under the bed when Japanese airplanes attacked Hickam Field on Dec. 7, 1941. Her newlywed husband, U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Robert Sullivan, a B-18 pilot, was off island in Sacramento, Calif. with two flying squadrons from Hickam and she was scared.

"Of all the silly things," Bea, now approaching age 90, said with a laugh. "We're under attack. What's it gonna' help that I'm under the bed?"

She recalled how surprised she was when she woke up to the sound of low-flying aircraft.

Bea Sullivan

"The noise woke me," Bea said. "It was five minutes to eight on a Sunday, so at first I thought it was the fighters practicing."

When she realized the planes were strafing and heard bullets bouncing off of tile roofs, it began to sink in that they were under attack.

"It takes time for your brain to realize what's going on," she said. "Realizing what was going on was the hardest part."

When the first wave of planes disappeared into the red, rising sun, she and 20 other Air Force wives whose husbands were on temporary duty in California gathered at the home of one of Sullivan's lieutenant colonels, where they waited out the second wave of attacks before packing a bag and taking shelter at the Oahu Country Club.

As the daughter of a Navy man, Bea was accustomed to the military lifestyle. She knew that World War II was in progress when she married an Airman in July 1940 and had heard all the stories of the fighting in Germany and England.

"But I never thought it would happen where I was," said Bea, who graduated from Roosevelt High School here while her father was stationed at Pearl Harbor. She met Sullivan, now 96, on the beach in Hale'iwa, Hawaii.

"It was so surprising. It was so unreal. You just never dreamed it would happen to you. Japan felt so remote, so far away – I just kept wondering how they'd gotten here without us noticing. It's such a long way."

They evacuated Bea and her mother – one of many military spouses in Hawaii – to San Francisco on Christmas Day. Bea's father was out to sea at the time, on a tender named the U.S.S. Wright, near Midway. He was supposed to have docked already, but they couldn't get in "because of weather," she said.

Her father and her husband were both far away from the attacks. Two of her uncles were also stationed here at the time, serving on ships in Pearl Harbor. Although their ships were badly damaged, neither uncle was killed. Her brother-in-law, a young Navy ensign, was on the U.S.S. Arizona but swam away from the ship and went on to save many peoples' lives.

Bea was lucky, that day. Although she said it was terrifying to live through, her family escaped with their lives, unlike many of those who were here on the "day that will live in infamy."

Legends of the Pacific: Remembering those who fought (and died) in attack on Oahu

Pacific Air Forces Public Affairs

15th Wing and Pacific Air Forces was honored to have many veterans of the Pacific campaign of World War II — along with some Dec. 7, 1941, survivors — here on Oahu to commemorate the 70th anniversary.

In addition to the more than 2,000 brave Americans lost in the attack on Pearl Harbor, 238 Airmen and civilians assigned on Oahu — at Hickam Field, Wheeler Field and Bellows Field, as well as defense and radar sites on island—were killed in the Dec. 7, 1941 attacks.

Here are the stories of some of our veterans:

"Big Joe" and "Little Joe."

The present-day Hickam chapel, located on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, is named after Pvt. 1st Class Joseph "Big Joe" Nelles, the Catholic chaplain's assistant. Nelles is known to have died when a bomb completely destroyed the base chapel Dec. 7, 1941, while he was preparing the altar for Catholic Mass that Sunday morning.

In a letter to his parents, the base chaplain noted that Nelles had attended First Mass just hours earlier, saying, "All I can tell you at this time is that he died at the alter (Sic) itself as he was preparing it for the second Mass... So the poor lad was ready to meet his Maker, and receive his reward for his death, though indeed most sudden, was not an unproved one ... Joe was a splendid boy who did much for the Holy Mother church while here, being untiring in his efforts to lead his fellow soldiers to God."

A lesser known story is that of "Little Joe." On that fateful day, Hickam had two chaplain assistants: one for the Catholic chaplain and one for the Protestant chaplain. Pvt. Joe "Little Joe" Jedrysik was not in the chapel when it was destroyed and Nelles was killed.

As the attack began, Jedrysik was leaving breakfast on his way to the base chapel when it was bombed. Seeing that the chapel was bombed, Jedrysik manned a machine gun, where other brave Airmen lay dead, in an open field near the base flag pole. He fired on the Japanese planes before being killed by a bomb.

"Big Joe" and "Little Joe" were just doing their jobs—and then some—as they joined the 189 Army Air Force Airmen (including five civilians) killed on Hickam Field that day.

Photos courtesy of PACAF History Office

(Left) The old Hickam Chapel had originally been constructed on Luke Field (Ford Island). During Hickam's construction, this chapel, along with many other facilities, was disassembled on Ford Island and ferried across Pearl Harbor to Hickam Field for reconstruction. (Right) Pvt. 1st Class Joseph Nelles, 17th Air Base Group chaplain assistant, was killed Dec. 7, 1941 while preparing the altar for Catholic Mass.

Brave civilians

August Akina, the Hickam Field base plumber, was killed that morning (along with three Honolulu firemen) in front of the fire station, the present day security forces station.

Akina was repairing a severed water main in a 15-foot crater created by a 500-pound bomb during the first wave of the attack. This damage knocked out the water pressure from the 500,000 gallon water tower (now known as the Freedom Tower). The firemen, John Carreira, Thomas Macy and Harry Tuck Lee Pang, were siphoning out the water to put out fires in the big barracks building (now Pacific Air Forces Headquarters) and the flightline hangars. They were all killed when the second wave of Japanese planes arrived and attacked. All were posthumously awarded Purple Hearts by the 7th Air Force in 1947.

The first wave of enemy planes to attack Hickam Field scored direct hits on the Hawaiian Air Depot's engineering building. After the first raid, all Hawaiian Air Depot officers came in to help with firefighting, salvaging material and other work. Approximately 100 civilian employees also reported for duty, including Phillip Ward Eldred, a purchasing clerk.

Eldred had helped create the Hawaiian Air Depot credit union and was rushing to save the bank records when he was strafed by enemy fire and killed near his office. Eldred's second job was treasurer and that credit union is what is now the Hickam Federal Credit Union at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

Proudly, over the many years since the "day that will live in infamy," the U.S. and Japan have gone from bitter enemies to valued partners in the Pacific region. We keep that firmly in mind, even as we honor and commemorate the sacrifices of World War II.

(Information courtesy of the PACAF History Office and Jessie Higa. Some information on Jedrysik is courtesy of the New Hampshire Union Leader.)

VP-9 hosts WWII veterans

Story and photo by
Lt. j. g. Jacob Clark

Patrol Squadron Nine

Patrol Squadron Nine at Marine Corps Base Hawaii hosted five World War II veterans who were in Hawaii for the 70th anniversary of Dec. 7, 1941.

The Golden Eagles of Patrol Squadron Nine (VP-9) recently hosted five WWII veterans at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe. The veterans were traveling with the College of the Ozark's Patriotic Education Travel Program.

The Patriotic Education Travel Program pairs College of the Ozarks students with WWII veterans, taking them back to the locations where many of them fought. The program is designed to honor the veterans and to help educate the younger generation about the sacrifices of American Sailors and Soldiers.

Students are selected from a pool of applicants who submit essays defining their desire to learn from the veterans. The highly competitive process has produced student-veteran pairings who share not only experiences, but more importantly, a bond between two very different generations that is cherished by both.

The veterans observed a survival equipment demonstration and toured the P-3C Orion during their visit to VP-9. They said they were thankful for the opportunity to come back to Hawaii.

"I enjoy talking to the youngsters, and I will answer their questions truthfully," said Guy Piper who served in the Navy for nearly 21 years.

The veterans were in Hawaii to observe the 70th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7 and then will continue to Japan before returning home later this month.

Logistics Specialist 1st Class Jonathan T. Peace kisses his wife during the first kiss after the guided-missile destroyer USS Chung-Hoon (DDG-93) pulled into its home port at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH).

Families and friends welcome USS Chung-Hoon

Story and photo by
MC3 Dustin W. Sisco

Navy Public Affairs Support Element West Det Hawaii

The Arleigh-Burke class guided-missile destroyer USS Chung-Hoon (DDG-93) returned home to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) from a six-month independent deployment Dec. 1.

Families, friends and co-workers of Sailors aboard Chung-Hoon waited anxiously pier-side for their loved ones to cross the brow as the ship pulled in.

Relonda Begay, a girlfriend of one of the Sailors aboard Chung-Hoon, expressed how she feels about the ship's return. "It was a really tough six months, but I really appreciate how he called me and we kept in contact," Begay said. "I supported him. H e supported me while I was in school, so I'm finally glad that our six months is up and he's coming back."

While on deployment, Chung-Hoon participated in several missions including Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Philippines, Naval Engagement Activity Vietnam and CARAT Singapore.

CARAT is a series of bilateral military exercises between the U.S. Navy and the armed forces of Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

Lt. Harry Bednarczyk talked about coming back from a long and successful deployment.

"It feels overwhelming," Bednarczyk said. "I am glad to be back. I was really looking forward to coming around the bend with the blind signals and all the whistles going. It brought a tear to my eye knowing that I was finally home again.

The crew of more than 275 Sailors conducted ballistic missile defense operations as well as maritime interdiction operations and theater security cooperation, supporting the nation's maritime strategy.

Joint base welcomes area Special Olympics athletes

Capt. Lawrence Scruggs, chief staff officer at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, greets participants in the Special Olympics Hawaii Holiday Classic (SOHI) opening ceremony in the base hangars Dec. 3. The holiday classic was one of two statewide events on the annual calendar held at various military bases.

U.S. Navy photo by David D. Underwood Jr.

KHON (FOX) TV 2 Hawaii Navy News upcoming segments

Dec. 15 – Toys for Tots
Dec. 22 – Boot Camp for New Dads

(The segments currently air between 6:20 and 6:30 a.m. each Thursday. Previous segments can be viewed at http://www.bit.ly/KHONNavy)

Got a story for KHON Hawaii Navy News?
Email editor@hookelenews.com or call Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs at 473-2875.
Stories must have a Navy tie and be of interest to the general public.