

November 12, 2010

Pearl Harbor-Hickam hosts makahiki festival

Story by MC2 Jon Dasbach

Navy Public Affairs Support Element West Det. Hawaii



PEARL HARBOR (NNS) -- Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam hosted the 2010 Makahiki Festival at Hickam Harbor Beach Nov. 6.

The celebration provided an opportunity for military families to understand the culture and history of Hawaii.

"Today were celebrating a thanksgiving," said Capt. Larry Scruggs, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam chief staff officer. "This is a time where the tribes in Hawaii would get together, declare peace and meet, and have a plentiful bounty from the sea and the land."

Makahiki is an ancient Hawaiian festival dedicated to "Lono", the defied guardian of agriculture, rain, health and peace.

For more than 2,000 years, the significance of Lono and his contributions to the beliefs and practices of the early Hawaiian people influenced the celebration of events held during Makahiki festivals throughout the Hawaiian Islands.

Makahiki starts in October and lasts until the end of January. During this time, all warfare between tribes was strictly forbidden.

The festival included native Hawaiian chants and an exhibition of games which are important aspects of Makahiki.

Service members and their families were able to play traditional games such as stone rolling, dart tossing, one-leg wrestling and spear throwing.

"I think it's very important for us to understand the Hawaiian culture living here on the island," said Lt. Cmdr. Jon Ward, assigned to Commander, Submarine Force U.S. Pacific Fleet, who attended the festival with his sons. "I think it's very important for us to have an understanding of their culture and an appreciation for the ancient rituals here on the island."

The festival was held to help improve relations between the military, Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian communities, as well as establish an awareness of the Hawaiian tradition and history of the land.

"It brings different cultures and different individuals, it brings diversity, it helps us understand each other, makes us better neighbors, better friends and ultimately it helps the community, and it helps us understand what issues we have, so that in the long run we can work better together," said Scruggs. (Photo by David D. Underwood, Jr.)
