

USS Key West returns from deployment



Photo illustration

JOC(SW/AW)
David Rush

Commander Submarine Force U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

Los Angeles-class nuclear-powered attack submarine USS Key West (SSN 722) returned from a six-month Western Pacific deployment to its homeport of Pearl Harbor on Nov. 10.

According to Cmdr. Kenneth Sault, USS Key West's commanding officer, the deployment was successful thanks to his crew. "It was a long deployment, but we got a lot of good things done. We're happy to be home," said Sault.

Sault said his crew worked hard and in return had a chance to visit a few excellent ports. "We went to Australia and participated in Talisman Sabre for about a month. We visited Brisbane which was just wonderful," Sault remarked.

In addition to Australia, the submariners also visited Japan and Guam. According to Capt.

Joseph Tofalo, Commodore, Submarine Squadron Three, the submariners on board USS Key West performed extremely well. "They did a fantastic job. I'm really proud of these guys. They do a lot for our country and they are the heroes today," said Tofalo.

As for coming home the day before Veterans' Day, Tofalo said that it was perfect timing. "It's extremely appropriate. The legacy of Pearl Harbor and the submarine force is renowned. What a great way to kick off a Veterans' Day weekend, having our Sailors come back from deployment and all of the great things they have done," Tofalo concluded.

Key West is the 35th Los Angeles-class submarine and was commissioned Sept. 12, 1987. The Los Angeles-class submarine combines the most desired attack qualities, including speed, silence and powerful weaponry. Key West can be armed with MK-48 and ADCAP torpedoes and the Tomahawk cruise missile.



Thunder bowling
Bowling in a different kind of light. Page B-1.

Veterans' Day
Service members, family members, friends commemorate veterans. Page A-2.

Hawai'i Navy News Briefs

Pearl Harbor Commissary holiday hours

Holiday hours have been announced for the Pearl Harbor Commissary. The commissary will be open from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. on Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve) and closed on Christmas Day. It will be open from 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Dec. 31 (New Year's Eve) and closed on New Year's Day.

Flag officer assignment

Special release from the U.S. Department of Defense Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Mullen announced the following flag officer assignment Nov. 10:

Rear Adm. (lower half) (sel.) Timothy V. Flynn is being assigned as vice commander, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command, San Diego. Flynn is currently serving as special assistant to commander, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command, San Diego.

Honoring our fallen



U.S. Navy photo by J03 Ryan C. McKinley

U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Devon Goodwin sounds a bell honoring fallen Marines during a ceremony Nov. 14 near the Arizona Visitors Center dedicating a new flagstaff and display of bronze plaques commemorating 73 Marines who gave their lives and 15 survivors of the attack on the battleship USS Arizona at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. The memorial features the names of the 88 Marines stationed aboard Arizona during the attack, a piece of steam pipe from the Arizona's original hull, the National Ensign, the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps flags.

JOC(SW/AW) David Rush

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Submarine veterans were honored in a Veterans' Day ceremony held at Naval Station Pearl Harbor on Nov. 11. Among those remembered were the 86 men lost in 1945 aboard USS Lagarto (SS 371), whose wreckage was discovered by divers in the Gulf of Thailand earlier this year.

Rear Adm. James Beebe, deputy commander of Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, spoke about the multiple missions that submarines carried out during World War II, call-

ing submarines "a crucial component of our nation's victory."

"They rescued downed U.S. airmen. They inserted commandos behind enemy lines. They ran supplies to troops and allies when it was impossible to get through by any other means. They gathered intelligence and photographed beaches in advance of major amphibious landings. And they operated in dangerous Japanese-controlled home waters, inflicting a stranglehold on the enemy's industrial machine," said Beebe.

The ceremony was particularly meaningful for family members of crewmen killed aboard USS Lagarto,

Vend Miser – saving energy while having a cool one

Karen S. Spangler

Assistant Editor

Vend Miser – the name may conjure up images of a robotic character from a science fiction movie, some kind of movie special effects, a food preparation device that chops your veggies – maybe even a wizard from a Harry Potter book.

But if you guessed any of those things, you would be totally wrong. Vend Miser is one of the newest technologies that is being used by government agencies, businesses and universities across the country.

Navy Region Hawai'i recently installed 700 Vend Miser units as part of its proactive energy conservation efforts.

The next time you pass a soda vending machine to purchase a cold drink, you will see Vend Miser in action.

When there are no potential customers, Vend Miser powers down the soft drink vending machines. Then when a potential customer approaches, a motion sensor turns on the lights in the vending machine.

At the same time, an integral controller inside the vending machine cycles the compressor. In this way, soft drink cans at the bottom of the dispensing rack, the first cans to be purchased by a customer, are kept cold.

This allows cans near the top of the vending unit to warm slightly. Using the Vend Miser to allow the vending machine to operate in this way results in a significant energy savings, according to information provided by the Region energy team.

The energy savings from the Vend Miser initiative are estimated at about 46 percent in the yearly operation of the vending machines located throughout Navy Region.

Using the Vend Miser units is another of the

many energy-saving projects that have been implemented by Navy Region Hawai'i – not only to save energy, but to save taxpayer dollars.

"Energy efficiency is not just a nice-to-have buzz word; it's the fiscally responsible attitude needed by every federal worker," said Kevin Saito, Navy Region Hawai'i energy manager.

"In the end, energy and water efficiency is not a luxury; it's expected as part of our job," he added.



U.S. Navy photo by J02 Devin Wright

Fireman Aisha Ousley assigned to Naval Station Pearl Harbor buys a soda from a vending machine at Building 150 on Naval Station Pearl Harbor on Nov. 16.

Energy tip:

To operate your air conditioner unit more efficiently, turn on your ceiling fans. These fans create air movement across the skin, lowering skin temperature through evaporation. The homeowner can thus raise the air conditioning thermostat setting up to four degrees Fahrenheit without any decrease in comfort. Each degree you raise the thermostat above 78 degrees Fahrenheit, you save about seven-eighth percent on your electric cooling costs.

USS Lagarto highlighted in Veterans' Day ceremony

JOC(SW/AW) David Rush

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The ceremony was particularly meaningful for family members of crewmen killed aboard USS Lagarto,

one of 52 American submarines lost during World War II. The submarine was last seen off the coast of Thailand on May 4, 1945, where it rendezvoused with another submarine to prepare for an attack on a Japanese convoy.

In May 2005, a British diving team found what they believe is the Lagarto about 200 feet below the surface in the Gulf of Thailand. According to reports from the divers, a torpedo door was open and the torpedo was missing. That, said Beebe, suggests that USS Lagarto "went down fighting."

"I believe that is indicative of all the submarines

▼ See USS LAGARTO, A-7



U.S. Navy photo by JOC(SW/AW) David Rush

Submarine veterans were honored in a Veterans' Day ceremony held on board Naval Station Pearl Harbor at the Parche Memorial on Nov. 11. Among those honored included the 86 men lost aboard the recently discovered USS Lagarto (SS 371). It was discovered in May 2005 off the coast of Thailand where it was sunk on May 4, 1945.

Hawai'i remembers veterans



U.S. Navy photo by PHAN John T. Jackson
Al Frumkin stands by as members from the Korean War Veterans' Association (K.W.V.A.) Aloha Chapter present a wreath in honor of all veterans at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) during the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) 55th Annual Massing of the Colors Veterans' Day Ceremony in honor of all veterans and service members.

In the 11th month of 1918, World War I ended and in 1926, Congress officially recognized Nov. 11 as the end of the first modern global conflict. In 1938, Congress declared Nov. 11 a legal holiday dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be hereafter celebrated and known as Armistice Day. Service members, veterans, family members and friends paid tribute to those who served in the military throughout O'ahu on Nov. 11.



U.S. Navy photo by PH3 Teresa R. Martinez
Children from a local elementary school perform a Hawaiian hula dance at the Veterans' Day ceremony held at the Veteran's Cemetery, Kaneohe, Hawai'i on November 11, 2005.



U.S. Navy photo by PH3 Teresa R. Martinez
Marines stationed at Marine Corps Base Hawai'i Kaneohe perform the "21-gun salute" at the Veterans' Day ceremony held at the Hawai'i State Veteran's Cemetery, Kaneohe.



U.S. Navy photo by PH3 Teresa R. Martinez
A young boy assists his grandfather in presenting a lei to honor fallen service members at the Veterans' Day ceremony held at the Hawai'i State Veteran's Cemetery, Kaneohe.



U.S. Navy photo by PHAN John T. Jackson
Veterans from the World War I and II as well as the Korean and Vietnam Wars were asked to stand and be recognized during the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) 55th Annual Massing of the Colors Veterans' Day Ceremony in honor of all veterans and service members, held at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl).



U.S. Navy photo by PH2 Dennis C. Cantrell
Military members from each branch of service were recognized for outstanding service before the University of Hawai'i vs. Utah State college football game. Plaques were presented to each service member by Rear Adm. William Alford, Jr., chief of staff, U.S. Pacific Command.

Hawai'i Navy News Editorial

Holidays ... be happy, safe and responsible

Pacific Fleet Master Chief(SS/SW) Rick West



FLTCM(SS/SW)
Rick West

Hoo-ya, Warriors. It's that time of year - the holidays. It's time to start gearing up for turkey, ham, pumpkin pies, chestnuts roasting on an open fire, and football.

Even though we don't get too much season change in Hawai'i, there's always something special in the air this time of year no matter where you are mostly because several special holidays are during this time, all celebrating the best that humanity has to offer. Ramadan just recently finished up and we have Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and New Years coming.

All of these major holidays stress the importance of family and faith - something we, as the Navy-Marine Corps team, all stand watch to protect. But too often we forget to protect something else - ourselves.

Now I'm going to go into my "old master chief" (did I really say old) mode and get on the IMC and spell a few things out for those of us who may forget a few common-sense things. Hopefully, this article may make you stop and think.

No matter which holiday you celebrate, the main point is celebrating with family and friends, whether back home or at your duty location.

But to get back home, too many of us don't always plan properly and try driving all night, sometimes

through horrible weather. And sadly, it can result in a holiday tragedy.

Shipmates, trust me on this. Your family would rather you come home later than not at all and your command and Navy leaders want/need you

back safe.

Plan your trip and work your plan. Make sure you get the leave time you need in conjunction with the command mission to ensure your holiday success. I want all of our Sailors and Marines to have the best of the holidays and make it back to work in one piece; you deserve that!

Plane, train or automobile, plan it out so you don't overextend yourselves.

For those on the roads, here are a few tips I want you to take to heart, especially those driving in wintry conditions:

- Absolute number one - don't drink and drive. You will either get caught or you could hurt someone. Call a shipmate, friend or command leadership.
- If you don't have to drive, don't. If you must, drive defensively and smart. Wear seatbelts.
- Be alert for potential driving hazards including downed branch-

es, trees, electric lines and icy areas.

- Leave early to allow extra time to get to your destination.

- Slow down. Triple the usual distance between your car and the one ahead. I know you want to get home, but don't worry; they'll save a drumstick and some pumpkin pie for you.

- Keep an emergency winter driving kit with a blanket and flashlight in the car.

There are more tips at: <http://safetycenter.navy.mil/seasonal/holidayseason.htm>

The worst plan I can think of is the person trying to gut it out and drive cross-country in two days. That is a recipe for disaster. And don't try to grab a few winks at a rest stop all alone. Find yourself a safe place to stay overnight and get some real sleep. Rest is critical.

Talk to leadership about your holiday plans. Make sure you've thought it through and budget the money to get home and back. Then enjoy the warmth of family and friends and report back, ready to turn and burn.

Once you do get home, don't think it's time to let your guard down - far from it. It's where we feel safest that accidents and bad judgment occur. While celebrating, remember the following:

- Take care when using candles or holiday lighting.
- Test tree trimmings. When decorating with lights, be sure to purchase only those labeled by a test-

ing laboratory (UL listing for example).

- Keep Christmas trees fresh, away from heat sources (candles) and exits, and water daily.

- Check out your fireplaces, wood stoves and be cautious with portable and space heaters.

- Cook with care. Always turn pot handles in and those of you frying your turkeys, use care with those deep fryers.

- Always, always designate a driver. This is a no-brainer.

- Again, buckle up. Can I say it any clearer?

Ok, so my point is be safe. I know I went into it a bit, but believe it or not, your safety is important to me, your command and your family. So do us all a favor and make the trip in one piece. 'Nuff said there.

My final note is conduct. It's the holidays, everyone is happy and we're all celebrating. But don't let all the happiness and celebration make you forget you still have responsibilities.

We're all on duty 365 days a year; we are part of the most professional and best organization in the world. We're all ambassadors of the Navy and the U.S. military professional members of our service and country always.

So as professionals and ambassadors, we show respect for the communities we are in, the countries we are visiting and the people whose hospitality we are enjoying.

As good neighbors, we work

with our hosts to improve quality of life for all. But all that good work can be erased by one bad act by our fellows abusing the graciousness and generosity of the community we live in or are visiting.

And it's not a Navy thing. It's being a decent, respectful human being who shows basic courtesy and gratitude.

Sermon over.

So enjoy the holidays and the celebrations. Do it safely, keep those around you safe and never forget you always represent our Navy-Marine Corps team.

As a personal note, my family and I would like to wish you all the happiest of holidays and our very best for a great new year.

We've got some challenges coming in '06 and I need every Warrior ready to tackle any thing that comes along. Remember, any mission, anytime -that's who we are.

Finally, when you sit down with your families and friends, please keep our Warriors deployed overseas or on watch elsewhere around the world in your prayers. See you about the fleet! Hoo-ya!

Fleet Tip: When going on leave, always write the command numbers on your leave papers. Make sure you can contact your Command Master Chief, Chief Petty Officer and Leading Petty Officer at work and by cell so they're informed of your plans. And make sure they can contact you.

Commentary

Fireside Chat

Navy Region Federal Fire Dept.

When frying your turkey, make sure that you don't cook your goose

Inspector Victor Flint

Federal Fire Department

Deep fried turkey is a delicious Thanksgiving holiday alternative. Deep turkey fryers can be purchased from a number of retail outlets. You can purchase complete kits as well. The price you pay will be related to the size and model of fryer that you pick.

When done right, the aroma, the presentation and the taste are an epicurean delight. It also takes way less time to cook. Turkey cooks at three-and-a-half minutes per pound. A 17-pound turkey can be fully cooked and ready to go in about an hour - not bad.

The Federal Fire Department recommends the following guidelines if you are planning to deep fry your next turkey:

- Do not use the fryer inside. Fry outside only.
- Do not attempt to place the deep fat frying pot filled with oil and turkey over a campfire. Use a gas-operated type of burner with a retaining ring.
- Do not use animal fat frying oil. Use only a vegetable, peanut or cottonseed oil.
- Do not attempt to put a big turkey in a little pot. To avoid oil overflow spills, place turkey in the pot, then fill pot with water to four inches from the top. Mark the level of the water on the pot. Then remove the turkey from the water and mark that water level on the pot. Make sure that the pot is big enough for the job. The turkey needs to be completely immersed in the oil.
- Do not attempt to place a frozen or partially thawed turkey in the hot oil. The oil will splatter, pop and spit all over the place.



U.S. Navy photo by JO1 Daniel J. Calderón
Carla Galera inspects her outdoor turkey fryer.

- Do not overheat the oil. Maintain a temperature of 325 degrees, not to exceed 350 degrees. Use a thermometer that clips to the pot.

- Do not attempt to remove the turkey from the hot oil with the burner on. Turn the burner off before removing the turkey.

- Do not use water on the hot oil in case it flashes or catches on fire. Have a five-pound B-C type of extinguisher in the immediate area, just in case.

- To avoid burns, wear gloves, eye protection and shoes (not slippers) when frying. If you get burned, cool burned area immediately with water.

- Have a phone handy to call the fire department (911) if there are any problems (fire, burns, spills).

- Never, ever leave the deep fryer unattended - not even for a minute. Always have someone standing by who knows what to do if you must leave the area.

For more information about deep frying and other fire-related questions, call Inspector Victor M. Flint at 474-7785.

One bad choice changed a Sailor's life

Retired Chief Warrant Officer remaining anonymous

I am a retired Chief Warrant Officer and for 30 years, I was proud to serve my Navy and my country.

One night not very long ago, after a normal day at my command, [I was] in good spirits because my career had been a success. Heck, I was selected for CWO-5 and would continue in the job that I really enjoyed for a few more years. So I decided to drop by the local club, which was close to the base and where I would find retired and active-duty shipmates having a good time, discussing life's events and, of course, there were alcoholic beverages to order as well as food items.

After a few hours of general conversation, enjoyable food and some beverages, I decided to drive my truck the 15 miles home. Of course, I felt at ease and no different than I had when I walked into the club. I drove the familiar road home as I had done countless times before, but this time it was to be different.

Approximately one mile from home, I was traveling at approximately 35 mph hour at the posted speed limit. It had now been roughly 18 hours since I got out of bed that Friday morning and with the normal degree of tiredness, food and not a very significant intake of alcoholic beverages, I found myself failing to see that familiar stop sign that required I always make a complete stop. But this time I didn't stop and



Photo illustration

on the basically clear weather night in tranquil Hawai'i, I slammed on the brakes and then lost control as my vehicle, caught the gravel on the apron of the roadway, causing me to go off the road and into a security fence.

It all happened so fast and as everything quickly came to a deafening halt, I was immediately aware of who I was, where I was at and very happy to realize that with all of those safety messages requiring we "buckle-up," that I had, in fact, always done so. This "good judgment" decision undoubtedly saved me from serious injury. I was immediately relieved that my mishap had been a single-vehicle crash and did not immediately impact others. Upon exiting my truck, I became aware of the severe damage and understood

that it doesn't take a lot of speed to send a vehicle to the junk yard.

Soon to follow were military police, questioning about the events leading to my crash, a trip to the station for a "breathalyzer" test, and charges for driving while intoxicated.

I had to make a call to my commanding officer, one of the most difficult calls of my career, and, of course, he was disappointed in me placing myself in this most difficult position.

Months of hearings passed that included trips to the legal office and significant legal fees before the case was settled, a settlement that ended my career on a very sour note, but as one of my shipmates observed, "You may have the opportunity to reach out and touch other shipmates who may find them-

selves in a similar situation and perhaps save their career or life by considering what the real cost was for your one 'bad choice.' " Although the financial costs are significant, the personal and career costs are much greater.

So the bottom line and the reason for me sharing this most personal and embarrassing event with you is to hopefully impress you with the fact that "bad things" can happen to good people, successful people, career-oriented people and in many of these life-changing events, utilizing operational risk management and simply making the "right choice" really can make a difference in our life.

I wish all of you fair winds and following seas as you continue onward in your Navy careers.

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Love isn't supposed to hurt - getting help if you're a victim

(Domestic Violence series - part 7)

Karen S. Spangler

Assistant Editor

All of the signs of domestic abuse were there – and Mary Ann knew it. Married to a career Navy man and the mother of two children, Mary Ann felt intimidated, controlled and afraid. Her husband didn't go to bars and drink – and everyone who knew him thought that he was a wonderful family man. Little did they know that once he was home and the door closed, his drinking began. As the evening wore on and he consumed more and more alcohol, he became increasingly abusive.

He was extremely jealous of everyone that Mary Ann came in contact with – relatives, co-workers and friends. Tired of dealing with his rages, Mary Ann finally gave up her friends and acquaintances and lived in an isolated situation. Her husband ruled and controlled everything that she did and every place that she went.

Her husband didn't physically abuse her and for awhile, Mary Ann didn't realize that abuse comes in other forms. He constantly demeaned her and insulted her, hurling obscenities at her and calling her vulgar names.

He frequently forced her to engage in sexual activities and became threatening and verbally abusive if she refused. There were other forms of intimidation that he used to control Mary Ann. Her husband made menacing threats – telling her that if she ever tried to leave him, he would kill her. Mary Ann trembled whenever she remembered the night that she had discovered him sound asleep – his gun placed beside him on the bed.

She was afraid to stay with him – and afraid to leave. Even if she could manage to leave safely with her children, there were other concerns. She had no money, no place to go and had no idea how in the world she would be able to support her children.

The situation was further complicated by the fact that Mary Ann



Photo illustration

still loved her husband and remembered the "honeymoon periods" – times when he apologized for his behavior and promised never to do it again.

Although the names and some of the details in this story have been changed to ensure confidentiality, the scenario is a frequent one for women who are victims of domestic abuse. Like Mary Ann, many women feel that they have no options and that there is no way out of an abusive situation.

But help is as close as the telephone and making contact with the Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) at Pearl Harbor. The victim services specialists provide comprehensive assistance to victims of abuse and neglect.

The VSS also addresses safety issues and takes action if danger is imminent. If physical safety of the spouse and/or the children is an

issue, the VSS makes the necessary arrangements to relocate them to a military or local shelter. The victim intervention counselors provide support and guidance as the victim deals with such issues as obtaining a military protection order (MPO) or temporary restraining order (TRO), court appearances, and interviews with police and NCIS.

Financial needs are also addressed, including immediate monetary assistance as well as transitional compensation if needed.

When FFSC becomes involved in a domestic violence situation with a Navy family, the service member who is the batterer is encouraged to attend anger management classes offered at the center. They may also attend a treatment and group therapy session that continues through several weeks. A case

review committee (CRC) evaluates the case and determines if attendance by the service member should be mandatory or on a voluntary basis.

FFSC also offers an eight-week women's (also open to male spouses) education support group. The sessions are open to any individual who desires education on spousal abuse issues and are held from 10 a.m.-noon on Wednesdays.

"We tell them about power control, safety planning, grief, how it [domestic violence and abuse] affects children, empowerment," explained Troy Olson, victim services specialist (VSS) at Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) at Naval Station Pearl Harbor.

"There is grief over the loss – you've been together and there's grief that he isn't the person you married, grief of getting divorced, and trust is out

the window," he said.

The counselors emphasized the effect that domestic violence in the home has on the children and the importance of stopping the cycle of abuse.

"Kids are sponges. Kids learn from what they see us do. We're their models," advised Laura Dinkins Feuz, victim advocate at FFSC.

According to Olson, "It sets the wheels in motion [for the domestic violence cycle]."

Dinkins Feuz explained how the cycle works. "If a little boy sees daddy hitting mommy, he thinks it's okay. If a little girl sees her daddy hitting her mommy, she thinks it's okay for her husband or boyfriend to do to her. They have a warped view of what love is."

Another misconception, noted the victim advocate, is that "sometimes people think their kids are too young to know what is going on."

Olson and Dinkins Feuz stressed the importance of victims of domestic violence seeking help and feeling that there is someone who will support and assist them. "They're not alone. We will believe what they say and listen," Olson said.

The crisis intervention team is available 24/7 to help victims of domestic violence. "I wish there were more resources. Each case needs a little something different – money, food, jobs, housing/shelter, child care – and there's only so much to go around," noted Olson.

The victim advocates help victims of abuse in various ways. "We're their tour guide through the system," explained Dinkins Feuz. "But they're the bus driver," said Olson.

"We're biased for the victims. We work for their good, for their safety," he offered.

"They need to take the first step and ask for help. They don't deserve it [the abuse]," continued Dinkins Feuz. "Love isn't supposed to hurt," she pointed out.

For more information about the services provided by the victim services specialists at FFSC or to obtain help, call 473-4222, ext. 236 and ext. 226.

Newest vets receive priority for VA medical care

Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

The estimated 120,000 veterans of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan receiving medical care through the Department of Veterans Affairs are getting top priority as they access some of the world's best-quality medical treatment, the secretary of Veterans Affairs said.

R. James Nicholson spoke to American Forces Press Service and the Pentagon Channel in anticipation of National Veterans Awareness Week, which began Nov. 6 and continued through Nov. 12.

Although the wounded veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom represent just two percent of the VA's total patient load. "It's a

very important two percent because these are young people who have come back from the combat zone," Nicholson said.

As a result, the VA is "giving them priority and making sure we are taking care of their physical and mental needs" so they can continue to enjoy productive lives, he said.

Seeing the nation's young people return home from combat reinforces the message that freedom comes at a high cost, Nicholson said. "Freedom is not free and they are paying the ultimate price," Nicholson said. "And so, they will be taken care of and given whatever [health care and related assistance] they need...for the rest of their lives."

It's gratifying to watch the recovery these wounded veterans make, particularly when hearing

many of them say they want nothing more than to return to duty with their units, Nicholson said.

But for those unable to do that, Nicholson said, the VA's responsibility is to help them see beyond their wounds and recognize that they can continue to live productive lives. "That's part of our mission, to show them all the things they still can do and not have them focus on the things they can no longer do," he said.

While the nation gave special consideration to its veterans, the VA continues its longstanding commitment to the nation's veterans year-round, Nicholson said. For the past 75 years, the VA has provided health services and other benefits to veterans, living up to the promise made by President Abraham Lincoln dur-

ing his second inaugural speech: "To care for him who has borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan."

Over its history, the VA has created the world's most comprehensive system of assistance for veterans, including what Nicholson described as "world-class health care." Some 237,000 VA professionals provide health care to more than five million veterans through 187 medical centers and 860 outpatient clinics.

A computerized medical record system - one Nicholson said he hopes will serve as a model for the Defense Department and other organizations - helps eliminate hospital mix-ups and ensures more thorough patient care, he said. In addition, VA remains a leader in medical research, from studies involving

Parkinson's disease to a recent breakthrough in immunizations for shingles, he said.

Nicholson said Congress and the Bush administration have demonstrated through increased funding for VA health care that they remain committed to ensuring veterans receive the top-quality services they deserve. VA funding has increased more than 50 percent since 2001, he noted.

"Veterans of every era can rest easy knowing that access to what has been described as the finest integrated health care system in the country will remain undiminished - especially for low-income veterans, those with service-connected disabilities [or] special needs or who have recently returned from combat," Nicholson said.

USS Ronald Reagan, Carrier Strike Group 7 return from COMPTUEX

USS Ronald Reagan Public Affairs

The crew of USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), Commander, Carrier Strike Group (CCSG) 7, and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 14 returned home to San Diego on Nov. 10 following completion of the ship's initial Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX).

Ronald Reagan, CCSG 7 and CVW-14 commenced the 18-day exercise shortly after departing Oct. 17 from their San Diego homeport.

COMPTUEX is an exercise designed to train embarked staffs, ships and air wing that make up the carrier strike group to function as one highly effective fighting force. The exercise consists of two distinct phases and was evaluated by Commander, Strike Force Training, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Phase I included a detailed schedule of events (SOE) designed to provide specific task training and evaluation for the carrier strike group and warfare commanders. Phase II, also known as the final battle problem, consisted of a real-world type exercise with no pre-planned SOE.

Rear Adm. Michael H. Miller, commander, Carrier Strike Group 7, said he was extremely impressed with the way the different components of the strike

group worked together to conduct operations during the exercise.

"Ronald Reagan and CVW-14 proved to be a formidable fighting force," said Miller.

"COMPTUEX proved that we have the speed and agility to quickly execute operations around the world in support of the war on terror. Carrier Strike Group 7 is an example of how the Navy is able to carry out our mission anytime, anywhere in the world," he added.

"I'm extremely proud of the men and women of USS Ronald Reagan and Carrier Strike Group 7," said Capt. James A. Symonds, Ronald Reagan's commanding officer. "We proved that we are a highly capable fighting force ready to perform our mission when called upon," he said.

In addition to Ronald Reagan, other ships participating in the COMPTUEX included USS Lake Champlain (CG 57), USS McCampbell (DDG 85), USS Decatur (DDG 73), USS Rainier (AOE 7) and USS Tucson (SSN 770), as well as five Canadian naval vessels: HMCS Algonquin, HMCS Calgary, HMCS Ottawa, HMCS Protecteur and HMCS Vancouver. The USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) Carrier Strike Group also participated during the final battle problem, integrating their Joint Task Force Exercise into Reagan's COMPTUEX.



Weight board operators stand by to conduct a final check before launching an F/A-18E Super Hornet off the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76). Reagan was in the Pacific Ocean, participating in the ship's initial Composite Unit Training Exercise (COMPTUEX).

U.S. Navy photo by AN Daisy Abonza

USS Jimmy Carter arrives at new home at Naval Base Kitsap, Wash.

J03 Adam Vernon

Naval Base Kitsap Public Affairs

The last of the Seawolf-class submarines, USS Jimmy Carter (SSN 23), arrived at its new home of Naval Base Kitsap, Wash. Nov. 9 from Groton, Conn., to the delight of more than 300 family members and Navy personnel waiting pier-side.

Carter replaced USS Parche (SSN 683), which was decommissioned in October 2004.

"They're finally here," said the wife of Capt. Robert Kelso, commanding officer. "We've been waiting for four months, so this is pretty exciting. I'm just glad we were able to get all the families down here for this and we're all together."

Not only were families and fellow Sailors on hand, but a band from the Bear Creek School played Navy songs as the crowd eagerly awaited the boat's arrival, and members of the Lake Washington Navy League were there to welcome the crew home. Clowns were there as well to entertain the children inside the newly renovated building on the pier. The renovations were done specifically to support the submarine.

For one family member, however, this was something old and something new. Pam Cooley, wife of Chief of the Boat CMDCM (SS) Robert Cooley of Patrol Squadron (VP) 40, based at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, said she was used to waiting for her husband to arrive, but this

time it was her son.

"This is great. It's so different than being here for your husband, because it's a different kind of pride and I am so proud of him," she said of her son, Fire Control Technician (SS) 2nd Class Brandon Cooley.

After Carter's arrival, Capt. Peter Young, commodore, Submarine Development Squadron (SDS) 5, spoke to the families about what they can expect from his command.

"We've been waiting with almost as much anticipation as you have. We [at SDS 5] are here to serve you, the families," Young said. "This is the most technologically advanced ship in the world, and I know you're as proud of this crew as I am."

The boat itself is 100 feet

longer than the other two submarines in its class and is the first to be named after a living ex-president. Carter's Multi-Mission Platform allows the boat to accommodate the advanced technology required to develop and test a new generation of weapons, sensors and undersea vehicles for naval special warfare, tactical surveillance and mine-warfare operations.

"We pride ourselves in the Northwest for having world-class submariners and world-class submarines," said Rear Adm. Frank Drennan, commander, Submarine Group 9, who toured the submarine as it made its approach to Bangor. "I wish you a terrific and well deserved reunion with your husbands and fathers."



The Seawolf-class nuclear-powered attack submarine USS Jimmy Carter (SSN 23).

Photo provided courtesy General Dynamics Electric Boat

Before Kelso released the crew of 160 Sailors to their awaiting families, he spoke of the trials and tribulations the families faced throughout the transition to the Pacific Northwest.

"It seemed like it took forever

to get here, yet it was just 25 days," Kelso said. "To the Jimmy Carter families, I recognize the sacrifices you have made. This crew, through hard work, has kept the schedule on course. It's great to finally be home."

Forward-deployed amphibious ready group arrives in Hong Kong

Task Force 76 Public Affairs

Ships from the forward-deployed amphibious ready group (ARG) arrived in Hong Kong for a scheduled port visit Sunday. The visit is an opportunity for approximately 2,000 Sailors to enjoy world-class shopping and cultural sites and to participate in community service projects.

The three-ship ARG, consisting of USS Essex (LHD 2), USS Juneau (LPD 10) and USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43), is currently on its routine fall deployment. The centerpiece of the ARG, Essex, last visited Hong Kong in November 2003.

"A port visit to this beautiful cosmopolitan city has always been a favorite for our Sailors in the Seventh Fleet and this will be a great opportunity for us to give a little bit back to the community that has opened their hearts and hands to us," said Capt. Mark E. Donahue, commodore, Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 11.

There is a wide range of social,

friendship and community service activities available for Sailors to participate in while in Hong Kong.

"Meals in the Home," hosted by the Hong Kong American Women's Association (AWA), is one particular friendship activity, where residents of Hong Kong open their homes to Sailors for a home-cooked meal in a relaxing family setting.

Essex Sailors will participate in a community service project at the Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children where they will assist the staff in landscaping, painting and making minor repairs to the facility.

Another community service project, facilitated by Juneau Sailors, is a landscaping project for the Tao Fong Shan Christian Centre which sits at the top of a mountain in Shatin, New Territories, about two hours outside of central Hong Kong.

Sailors from Fort McHenry will participate in a community service project at St. Barnabas' Society and Home, an outreach shelter and lodg-

ing for the homeless, located in the western district of Hong Kong.

"We look forward to this great opportunity to help the local community and establishing lasting friendships," said Chaplain (Lt.) Rean F. Enriquez, Essex chaplain. "Sailors of the forward-deployed amphibious ready group are always willing to be ambassadors of goodwill wherever they may be."

The Sasebo-based amphibious ready group left White Beach Naval Facility in Okinawa, Japan on Nov. 9 after unloading Marines and equipment of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). ARG Sailors and 31st MEU Marines had previously participated in Talon Vision and Amphibious Landing Exercise '06 in the Republic of the Philippines Oct. 22-30.

Task Force 76 is the Navy's only forward-deployed amphibious force and is headquartered at White Beach Naval Facility, Okinawa, Japan with an operating detachment in Sasebo, Japan.



U.S. Navy photo by PH3 Nicholas C. Messina

Sailors and Marines from the forward-deployed amphibious ready group and the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), along with military members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), execute a bilateral amphibious landing on Ternate Beach, Philippines during the final operation of Amphibious Landing Exercise '06.

USS Louisville returns from Western Pacific deployment

JOC(SW/AW) David Rush

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

Following a six-month deployment to the Western Pacific, the nuclear-powered attack submarine USS Louisville (SSN 724) returned to its homeport of Pearl Harbor on Nov. 16.

The Los Angeles-class submarine departed Pearl Harbor on May 16. During its deployment, the submarine visited Yokosuka, Japan; Brisbane, Australia; Guam and Saipan. In June, the submarine participated in exercise Talisman Sabre off the coast of Australia.

According to Cmdr. David Kirk, USS Louisville's commanding officer, his submariners performed very well. "We had an exceptional deployment. The crew performed superbly and we accomplished every mission task."

Kirk added that they were involved in various exercises during the deployment. "We participated in several multinational exercises. We were fortunate to go to Australia and participate in Talisman Sabre. We were also involved in the SHAREM (Ship Anti-Submarine Warfare Readiness and Evaluation Measurement) exercises with the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force."

Machinist Mate 1st Class Edward Damasco was glad that the deployment seemed to go by quickly. "It went by quicker than when it started. The port visits to Australia and Saipan were really good."

His wife Kate was delighted to have her submariner



U.S. Navy photo by JOC(SW/AW) David Rush

Following a six-month deployment to the Western Pacific, the nuclear-powered attack submarine USS Louisville (SSN 724) returned to its homeport of Pearl Harbor on Nov. 16. The Los Angeles-class submarine departed Pearl Harbor on May 16. During its deployment, the submarine visited Yokosuka, Japan; Brisbane, Australia; Guam and Saipan. In June, USS Louisville participated in exercise Talisman Sabre off the coast of Australia.

home. "Words cannot describe it. It's good to have him home and I'm happy he's safe. We're looking forward to celebrating the holidays together."

USS Louisville has a crew of 20 officers and 137 enlisted men. It displaces more than 6,900 tons, is 360 feet long, and can reach speeds in

excess of 25 knots and attain depths of more than 800 feet.

Commissioned in 1986, USS Louisville is the 35th Los Angeles-class submarine. It made history in 1991 during Operation Desert Storm when it became the first submarine to launch a Tomahawk cruise missile in war.

"Don't close your eyes" on suicide awareness

JO3 Ryan C. McGinley

Staff Writer

A shipmate makes statements about feeling worthless. He shows a decline in job performance and/or personal appearance. He seems unusually withdrawn, isolated, aggressive or moody. All of these are warning signs of a situation that may require your attention, as a junior enlisted Sailor or a commanding officer.

Suicide awareness and prevention is a campaign run by the Navy and the Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC), not only during the holiday season, but all year round to give the Navy community some watchdog tips for saving lives.

According to the Navy Personnel Command (NPC) for the past 10 years, suicide has been either the second or third leading cause of death among active-duty Sailors.

Some of the suicide risk factors include depression, stress, relationship problems or financial problems.

"Although the rates for the Navy in the 18-24 age range are lower than the civilian population, we have a lot of people who are in the 'at risk age' and have some of the risk factors," said Andrea Hantman, clinical social

worker with the Counseling Advocacy Program. "Some of the risk factors include depression from being away from family or relationship issues due to trying to juggle home and the demands of the Navy."

FFSC has come up with the acronym AID LIFE to help people in the Navy community should they encounter a situation: Ask. Intervene immediately. Don't keep it a secret. Locate help. Inform your chain of command. Find someone, don't leave the person alone. Expedite, get help right away.

"People are afraid to ask because they think it will stigmatize the person to do something. It doesn't work like that," said Hantman. "They're thinking about it and planning it and the more detailed the plan, the greater the risk. Eighty percent of people give some warning, so it's important for us to take it seriously and not minimize it."

Hantman said that while there is no "holiday suicide season," it's important to recognize depression during the season and give help such as reaching out, lending an ear or empathizing with the Sailor.

"It's very good for

Sailors who have families to open their houses and invite people over who they know are alone because it is a difficult time for people who are away from their family," she said.

Hantman said FFSC offers a variety of classes and counseling groups that can help Sailors to cope with their problems.

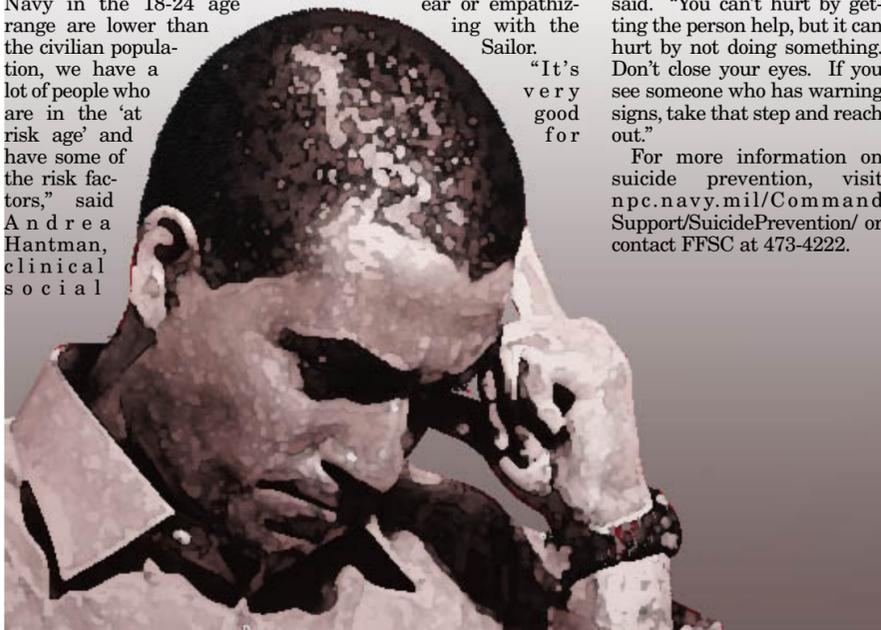
"We have stress management classes, anger management classes, relationship classes, individual counseling, marriage counseling, support groups all of which will reduce the likelihood of risk factors," she said. "There's no shame. It's better to get the help early in the prevention stage. But no time is too late to seek help."

The Navy also has mental health professionals and base chaplains who are available to help.

Hantman said the most important thing to remember is to take action if you recognize the warning signs associated with suicide.

"The important thing is to take action, not to postpone and not to minimize or ignore it and then regret it later," she said. "You can't hurt by getting the person help, but it can hurt by not doing something. Don't close your eyes. If you see someone who has warning signs, take that step and reach out."

For more information on suicide prevention, visit npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/SuicidePrevention/ or contact FFSC at 473-4222.



"War Stories" on Ford Island



U.S. Navy photo by PH1 (AW/SW) James E. Foehl

Retired U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. Oliver North stands in front of the USS Utah Memorial on Ford Island Nov. 15 while filming his Fox News series "War Stories with Oliver North." The episode filmed on Ford Island will highlight the attacks on Pearl Harbor, which occurred Dec. 7, 1941.

STORY IDEAS?

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Hawaii Navy News

USS Lagarto: Submariners honored on Veterans' Day

Continued from A-1

that served in World War II," said Beebe. "Under the most perilous of conditions, they stayed focused on their mission. They were ready to go down fighting if need be... and sadly, many of them did. But our nation is eternally grateful."

For Nancy Mabin Kenney of Lake Leelanau, Mich., the discovery brought a much-needed sense of closure. Her father, Signalman 1st Class William Mabin, was aboard USS Lagarto when it was lost. Learning that they went down engaging the enemy in their final moments gave her a sense of relief and pride.

"It gave me peace because I knew that at the time my father died and all these other men died, they were busy," said Kenney. "They were doing what they were trained to do."

Earlier this year, Kenney's two adult children visited the site where USS Lagarto was lost to pay respects to the grandfather they never knew.

"It was a life changing experience for them," Kenney said. "My daughter brought a U.S. flag and one of the divers tied it to the submarine. They called me to tell me that the flag was on the submarine and that it looked like the submarine went down fighting. I burst into tears. It was so remarkable."

Kenney was only two years old when her father died. She said she is grateful that her father had a chance to be with her, however brief. "I have no memory of this, but I feel glad for him because he got a chance to know his child. So many of them had children

who were born after they died or when they were at sea. I feel that he was one of the lucky ones."

Kelan Spalding of Springfield, Mo. was also touched by the news of USS Lagarto's discovery. The 69-year-old is the brother of Chief Pharmacist Mate Robert Spalding, who also perished on board Lagarto.

"I was only nine years old when Bob's sub was lost," said Spalding. "It did not have the impact on me that it had on my parents and older brother and sisters. However, it being found has had a big impact on me."

Spalding said that for him, Lagarto's discovery will make this Veterans' Day different from any other.

"We are fortunate now that we know exactly where our loved ones are located and we can honor them," Spalding said.

Though no Lagarto families were able to attend the Pearl Harbor ceremony, they did send a wreath that was laid at the World War II Submarine Memorial. On it was a banner that read, "With reverence and respect, from families of the USS Lagarto."

The Veterans' Day ceremony also included music by the Pacific Fleet Band, posting of the 50 state flags by the Radford High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps and a 21-gun salute by the Naval Station Pearl Harbor Honor Guard.

The Pacific Fleet Submarine Memorial Association, Fleet Reserve Association, Ladies Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association, Submarine Officers' Wives Club, U.S. Submarine League, Aloha Chapter and



U.S. Navy photo by JOC(SW/AW) David Rush

Submarine veterans were honored in a Veterans' Day ceremony held on board Naval Station Pearl Harbor at the Parche Memorial on Nov. 11. Among those honored included the 86 men lost aboard the recently discovered USS Lagarto (SS 371). It was discovered in May 2005 off the coast of Thailand where it was sunk on May 4, 1945.

U.S. Submarine Veteran's of World War II made floral presentations.

Submarine veterans also conducted the roll call,

accompanied by the tolling of the bell for each of the 52 submarines lost, putting a flower lei on the marker for each.

USS Lake Erie awarded '04 Spokane Trophy

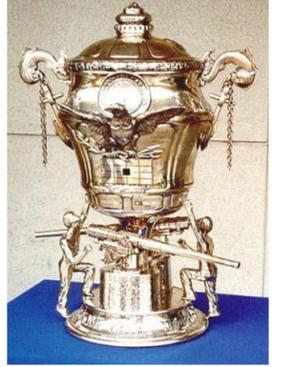
Ensign James DeWitt

USS Lake Erie
Public Affairs

On Oct. 4, the Spokane Trophy for 2004 was presented to USS Lake Erie (CG 70) at a ceremony in Spokane, Wash. During the ceremony conducted at the Naval Reserve Center in Spokane, local Navy League representatives and members of the Spokane Chamber of Commerce presented the trophy to Capt. Joe Horn, Master Chief Jeffrey Nickerson and Electronics Technician 1st class Jason Wiel. In addition, BAE Systems representatives presented a check of \$5,000 in honor of the award to Lake Erie's morale, welfare and recreation fund.

The Spokane Trophy is given to the ship with the highest level of excellence in surface ship combat systems readiness and warfare operations in the Pacific Fleet. First presented by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1908, the trophy, which cost \$1,500 to make, is currently valued at more than \$4 million and is crafted of 400 ounces of silver. It depicts areas of Spokane and the surrounding silver mining community. The trophy also bears the names of the last 96 ships that have won it, including USS New Jersey (BB 62) and USS West Virginia (BB 48). It is displayed in the Headquarters, Commander Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, San Diego, Calif.

A plaque that shows a picture of the trophy is presented to the winner each year by the city of Spokane. In response to Lake Erie win-



U.S. Navy photo

The Spokane Trophy was given to Lake Erie to distinguish the ship and its crew members with the highest level of excellence in surface ship combat systems readiness and warfare operations in the Pacific Fleet.

In presenting the award, Commander Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, Rear Adm. Michael Vitale, sent the following, "Bravo zulu for your selection as the 2004 Spokane Trophy winner...No matter what exercise you participated in, you excelled: During Rim of the Pacific '04 as the bilateral force air defense commander, during C7F operations as the control ship for TASWEX 04 and as SAG B and ballistic missile defense (BMD) SAG Commander for bilateral Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force exercises, events such as Pacific Explorer III, and during numerous live and simulated weapons firing events such as the sinking of the ex-USS Kinkaid and SLAMEX 04-15 where you became the first ship to record a perfect score. You should be justifiably proud of this notable achievement. Keep charging!"

USS Carl Vinson moves to Northrop Grumman Newport News for RCOH

JO1 (AW/SW) Lorin Sawyer

USS Carl Vinson Public Affairs

Sailors from USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) completed the final milestone in the transition of the "Gold Eagle" from the fleet to the shipyard Nov. 11 by moving the "Gold Eagle" from Pier 14 at Naval Station Norfolk to dry dock 11 at Northrop Grumman Newport News shipyard, beginning in earnest the ship's refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH).

"The biggest issue the ship faced was the weather and the current," said Boatswain's Mate 1st Class (SW/AW) James Myles of deck department. "The event took about six hours altogether, with four tug boats pushing the ship and [us] relying on their power for propulsion."

Carl Vinson used rudders for steering the ship during the transit to Newport News which required the crew to not only stay alert, but also be prepared to act at a moment's notice to changes that could take place.

"When we arrived at the Newport

News shipyard, the ship had to be lined up perfectly," said Myles. "This is essential to holding the ship in place when the water is being pumped out of the dry dock - which took about four hours to accomplish."

The move to Newport News, originally scheduled for Nov. 10, was delayed due to high winds.

"The winds were too high for our original move time," said Quartermaster 2nd Class (SW) Keith Emerson of Carl Vinson's navigation department. "When the winds decreased and with a full crew on the bridge, we made the actual transit in about two hours. The main challenges we faced were having good visuals to maintain our bearing and stay on track and keeping good communications [between] the tugs and the crew," said Emerson.

According to Emerson, the transit was flawless, and he credited this success to the dry-runs the crew took part in before the actual move.

Since returning from deployment in July, Carl Vinson Sailors had been preparing for the move to Newport News and the ship's RCOH.



U.S. Navy photo by PHAN Chris Valdez

The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) is towed from pier 14, Naval Station Norfolk, to the Northrop Grumman Newport News Shipyard to begin the ship's refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH). During RCOH, Carl Vinson will have her nuclear fuel replenished and will be upgraded with the latest technology enabling the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier to serve for another 25 years.

ESG-1 conducts maritime security operations in Arabian Sea

Lt. Ron Flanders

*Expeditionary Strike Group 1
Public Affairs*

Members of Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 1 are currently leading a group of six coalition ships conducting maritime security operations (MSO) in the North Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman.

The strike group's flagship, USS Tarawa (LHA 1), and the amphibious transport dock, USS Cleveland (LPD 7), are joined by the guided-missile destroyer, USS Oscar Austin (DDG 79). The French ships, Var (FS 608) and Lafayette (FS 710), and the Pakistani frigate, Badr (PNS 181), round out the coalition task group.

MSO are part of ESG-1's regularly scheduled deployment to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. The ships, currently assigned to Task Force 150 led by French Vice Adm. Jacques Mazars, seek to preserve

the free and secure use of the world's oceans by legitimate mariners and prevent terrorists from attempting to use the maritime environment as a venue for attack or as a medium to transport personnel, weapons or other illicit material.

"The focus is on gathering information that links to the global war on terrorism," said Australian navy Lt. Cmdr. Darren Rushworth, future operations planner for Amphibious Squadron (CPR) 1, the task group commander. "The illegal smuggling means that funds are being created. Where does that money go? That is the link. There is also a link in terms of people smuggling, and we can find out where they are going and what they are doing."

Intercepting illegal smuggling that supports terrorism is only part of the mission, said Capt. Dave Clopp, assistant chief of staff for

operations for ESG-1. The operations and intelligence staffs of ESG-1 and CPR-1 are compiling a comprehensive database, looking for patterns in the maritime traffic in these waters.

"We're developing a baseline on what to expect out here on a given day, and once we have that baseline, we can see what looks out of the ordinary," Clopp said.

Assisted by coalition maritime patrol aircraft, SH-60B Seahawk helicopters staged from Tarawa and the Scan Eagle unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) operated from Cleveland, the ships seek to set the conditions for security and stability in the maritime environment by monitoring maritime traffic, performing routine queries of vessels, and conducting visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) operations when warranted.

"The response to the query can generate suspicion," Rushworth

said. "But mainly we want to spread the word that we're out here for their safety and their security, that we're looking for terrorists."

Rushworth added that the boarding teams distribute bottled water and other essentials to crew members of fishing and cargo boats. If a dhow or other vessel is in distress, the coalition ships provide assistance when possible.

"They've actually been excited to see us," said Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Michael Greene, a member of one of Cleveland's boarding teams. "One of the boats we boarded had a transmission problem. We gave them some lube oil, food and water, and our engineers gave them advice on their problem. All the guys on the team are eager to be doing something hands-on with the effort. Any way we can help, makes a difference."

MSO in the North Arabian Sea

and Gulf of Oman represent just one major effort in which ESG-1 forces are currently engaged in. Rear Adm. Michael A. LeFever, commander of ESG-1, and nearly half his staff are in Islamabad, Pakistan, providing command and control of the U.S. military's disaster assistance center there. USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) and USS Chosin (CG 65) are in the northern Persian Gulf helping to protect the integrity of Iraqi territorial waters as well as helping to defend Iraq's oil terminals, which are significant sources of Iraq's revenue. The guided-missile destroyer USS Gonzalez (DDG 66) and the frigate USS Ingraham (FFG 61) are also assigned to Task Force 150 conducting MSO.

"We're in four different places, doing four different missions at the same time," said Clopp. "It definitely shows the agility of the ESG. We are able to conduct multiple missions at once."

Kitty Hawk commences ANNUALEX '05

PHAN Adam York

*USS Kitty Hawk
Public Affairs*

The USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) Carrier Strike Group began the main event of its fall underway period Nov. 9 when it joined with other components of the U.S. Navy and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) in support of Annual Exercise (ANNUALEX) 2005.

During ANNUALEX, which concludes today, a total of 61 naval vessels will see action, including two U.S. submarines, 10 U.S. Navy ships and 49 JMSDF ships. To help kick off the process, a group of Japanese Sailors embarked aboard Kitty Hawk on Nov. 7 to train with Kitty Hawk's crew in order to prepare for the exercise.

"Because of this exercise, the capabilities of both the U.S. Navy and the JMSDF will be greatly enhanced," said Capt. Ed McNamee, Kitty Hawk's commanding officer.

According to Operations Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW) Thomas McCorkle, one of Kitty Hawk's air intercept controllers, ANNUALEX provides an opportunity to further advance the military partnership between the United States and Japan.

"The purpose of

ANNUALEX is to prepare U.S. and Japanese forces to work together and for us to build our relationship," he said. "It will help us learn to operate together in all warfare areas."

"Japanese officers and enlisted members are fully integrated and live with us aboard our ship," said McCorkle. "They have the same jobs as us [and] so are able to observe and ask questions about how we work."

One of the focus areas for ANNUALEX is anti-submarine warfare, with aircraft operating from air stations in Japan and a small number of U.S. personnel performing liaison functions at various JMSDF headquarters. A small contingent of U.S. Navy reservists also fill liaison billets to facilitate smooth interoperability of U.S. and JMSDF forces.

Throughout ANNUALEX, the Kitty Hawk crew can expect a lot of flight operations to take place, according to McCorkle. Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 performed numerous air warfare exercises, while Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15 ships worked together with Kitty Hawk and the Japanese ships in many maneuvering practices.

ANNUALEX is also a chance for the two navies to enhance military-to-military



U.S. Navy photo by PHAN Jarod Hodge

The aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) underway in the Tsugaru Strait as part of a bilateral Annual Exercise 2005 (ANNUALEX) with Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force. ANNUALEX focuses on improving the military-to-military relationship between the U.S. and Japan. The purpose of ANNUALEX is to improve bilateral interoperability, defend Japan against maritime threats and to improve capability for surface warfare, air defense and undersea warfare.

relationships and is designed to improve both naval forces' capability for coordinated and bilateral operations in defense of Japan. It is one of the largest bilateral exercises held each year.

"This exercise is important because we need to know that our Japanese allies are familiar with how the U.S. performs tactical operations at sea," said Operations Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW) Marlon

Patterson, another of Kitty Hawk's air intercept controllers. "We've spent a lot of time working with the JMSDF already so it should be a great success."

The Kitty Hawk Strike Group is the largest carrier

strike group in the Navy and is composed of the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk, CVW 5, the guided-missile cruisers USS Chancellorsville (CG 62) and USS Cowpens (CG 63), and Destroyer Squadron 15.

Bush praises troops supporting earthquake relief



U.S. Navy photo by PH2 Eric S. Powell

A Pakistani mother holds her month-old infant at the Dewan Tent Village in Muzaffarabad, Pakistan. The United States is participating in a multi-national assistance and support effort led by the Pakistani Government to bring aid to the victims of the devastating earthquake that struck the region on Oct. 8.

Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

Service members supporting earthquake relief efforts in South Asia "represent the best of America [and] the generous spirit of our country," President Bush said Nov. 9 at the White House.

"I'm grateful to the men and women in uniform for the noble work they are doing," Bush said as he described sweeping U.S. government support one month after a devastating earthquake struck Pakistan, India and Afghanistan. Its epicenter was near Muzaffarabad, Pakistan, northeast of Islamabad.

The Oct. 8 earthquake killed 70,000 Pakistanis and injured more than 70,000 others while leaving nearly three million homeless. In India, it killed more than 1,000 people and injured more than 6,000 others.

Bush described the magnitude 7.6 earthquake as the worst natural disaster to strike the region in a century and vowed that the United States will continue to provide help, particularly as winter approaches and many people are homeless.

In addition to a pledge of \$156 million

for relief and reconstruction needs, the United States has provided food, water, blankets, tents and medical care, he said. Disaster response personnel also remain on the ground to assess needs and offer assistance, the president said.

"Our government's response to this tragedy...should say to the people of the world, 'We care when somebody else suffers,'" he said.

The military is playing a key role in the U.S. response, the president noted. A U.S. Navy construction battalion based in Okinawa, Japan is helping to clear roads and solve other engineering challenges. U.S. military helicopters have flown more than 1,000 missions to deliver aid to isolated areas and transport thousands of people to shelter and medical care, he said. In addition, a U.S. military hospital is now operating in Pakistan.

During a Nov. 2 briefing at the State Department, Army Brig. Gen. Carter Ham, the Joint Staff's deputy director for regional operations, said the large-scale military operations are being conducted in close coordination with the Pakistani government.

"This is all an effort to get needed supplies and equipment to the places where they are most needed," Ham said.

Shoppers advised to take precautions

Karen S. Spangler

Assistant Editor

It's the holiday shopping season — and next Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, is the busiest shopping day of the year.

As the Navy Exchange at Pearl Harbor plans for "Black Friday," a day-long sales extravaganza, there are security precautions that shoppers should heed.

CWO2 Mark McCready, security officer for Naval Station Pearl Harbor, advised shoppers not to leave their parcels or other possessions in their cars, unsecured or in plain view. Items that are left unsecured and where they are easily



visible are not only tempting to thieves, but also provide criminals with easier opportunities, he said.

"It doesn't mean you're a target, you're just a target of opportunity," he offered.

"If you leave something in plain view and it's valuable and easy to carry, it may not be there when you come back to your car. Lock your valuables up. And don't leave your \$2,000 laptop [or other valuables] on the front seat of your car — whether it's locked or unlocked," he cautioned.

Another popular practice frequently used by shoppers, especially during the holiday shopping sea-

son, is to lock packages in the trunk of the car, then leave the car to continue shopping. According to McCready, this could easily become a window of opportunity for an observant thief. The security officer explained that thieves will observe shopping center parking lots and wait for unsuspecting shoppers to put their packages in their vehicle's trunk. Thinking that their packages are safe, the shoppers leave and continue shopping. After the shopper leaves his vehicle, the thieves will open the trunk, steal the packages and make their getaway — all in about 30 seconds, McCready explained.

Here are some additional safety pointers to help protect consumers as they head out to the NEX and the shopping malls:

- Lock your car doors.
- Roll up your windows and secure your car as much as possible.
- Secure your vehicle, even if

you're only going to be away for a few seconds.

- Shop during daylight hours whenever possible. If you must shop at night, go with a friend or family member. Be sure to park in a well-lighted area.

- Dress casually and comfortably.

- Avoid wearing expensive jewelry.

- Do not carry a purse or wallet, if possible.

- Always carry your driver license or identification card along with necessary cash, checks and/or a credit card you expect to use.

- Even though you are rushed and thinking about a thousand things, stay alert to your surroundings.

- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.

- Pay for purchases with a check or credit card when possible.

- Keep cash in your front pocket.

- Notify the credit card issuer immediately if your credit card is

lost, stolen or misused.

- Keep a record of all of your credit card numbers in a safe place at home.

- Be extra careful if you do carry a wallet or purse. They are the prime targets of criminals in crowded shopping areas, transportation terminals, bus stops, on buses and other rapid transit.

- Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.

- Always keep your keys in your hand when you approach your car. Avoid having to stop and fumble in your purse to find your keys.

- Beware of strangers approaching you for any reason. At this time of year, "con-artists" may try various methods of distracting you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.

"If you see anything suspicious, call 911. When in doubt, call a cop," emphasized McCready.

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Mids total three weekly swimming and diving awards



Photo by Naval Academy Varsity Athletics

Joe Smutz helped Navy win the 200 free relay in a time of 20.34. Smutz, along with Kevin Teague and Katie Griffin from the Navy men's and women's swimming and diving teams, were awarded weekly honors from the Patriot League.

Naval Academy Varsity Athletics

The Navy men's and women's swimming and diving teams received three weekly honors from the Patriot League, it was announced Tuesday by the league office. Kevin Teague (junior from Lexington, Ky.) and Katie Griffin (sophomore, Ellicott City, Md.) were selected as the league's divers of the week, while Joe Smutz (senior, Marriottsville, Md.) was named as the men's swimmer of the week.

Teague remained undefeated on the season after winning both boards in a double-dual meet against Bucknell and Lafayette last Saturday in Lewisburg, Pa. He recorded a score of 304.72 on the one meter and a score of 359.47 on the three meter to win the two events by a combined 93 points. Teague, who received his third weekly honor from the league, improved his combined record to 12-0 on the season.

Griffin also garnered her third weekly award of the year by sweeping the springboard events against the Bison and the Leopards. She recorded a score of 247.19 to win the one meter by 32 points and a 272.54 to win the three meter by 53 points. Griffin has now posted a combined 12-2 record this season and improved

to 15-3 in career dual meets against Patriot League opponents.

Smutz won a trio of events in a meet for the first time this season when he won the 50, 100 and 200 freestyle events against both Bucknell and Lafayette. He recorded season-best times of 21.26 in the 50 free and 46.95 in the 100 free to win both events, then posted a time of 1:42.58 to win the 200 free. The victories improved his overall record in individual events to 13-1 on the year.

In addition, Smutz swam the third leg of the 200 free relay in a time of 20.34 to help Navy win the event with a clocking of 1:24.76. He completed his portion of the relay in a time of 20.34, recording the fastest leg of any swimmer in the field by six-tenths of a second.

The Navy men's team improved to 6-0 on the season with its victories over Bucknell and Lafayette, while the Navy women now have a 5-3 record on the year after defeating the Leopards and losing to the Bison.

The men will be back in the pool Saturday when Navy plays host to Brown and Dartmouth starting at noon in Lejeune Hall, while the women will next be in competition Dec. 1 when the Mids play host to Army.

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