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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **USS Crommelin to visit Hilo for Merrie Monarch Festival**

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM - The Pearl Harbor-based guided missile frigate USS Crommelin (FFG-37) will visit Hilo April 12-15 to participate in the 49<sup>th</sup> annual Merrie Monarch Festival. Rear Admiral Fernandez "Frank" Ponds, Commander, Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, will also attend the festivities at the invitation of The Merrie Monarch Festival director.

USS Crommelin will greet the Merrie Monarch Royal Court during a pierside welcome ceremony at Hilo Harbor Pier 1 on Friday, April 13 at 11 a.m. (Media will be invited aboard for a tour and interviews, as desired.) USS Crommelin Sailors, along with Rear Adm. Ponds, will attend the hula competitions and participate in the Merrie Monarch Royal Parade on Saturday, April 14 at 10:30 a.m. along downtown Hilo. The Navy's Pacific Fleet Band will also participate in the parade.

A select group of Waiakea High School Navy JROTC cadets will have the rare opportunity to embark the ship on its return trip from the Big Island to Pearl Harbor.

USS Crommelin is a 453-foot long Oliver Hazard Perry-class guided-missile frigate with a mission to escort and protect carrier battle groups, amphibious landing groups, underway replenishment groups and convoys. Commanding officer Cmdr. Michael Johns leads a crew of about 200 Hawaii-based Sailors.

***Media representatives interested in covering the pierside welcome ceremony on Friday, April 13 should contact the Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs Office by noon, Thursday, April 12, by calling (808) 473-2875.***

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