

## Honolulu Navy League honors IAs

MC1 (SW/AW) Shane Tuck

U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

More than 150 Sailors and Marines were honored for their service as individual augmentees (IAs) on March 17 during an awards luncheon hosted by the Honolulu Council Navy League at the Hickam Air Force Base Officers' Club.

IAs are active-duty and reserve Sailors and Marines who leave their assigned commands to fill individual billet requirements for various combatant commanders around the world. They serve in diverse capacities and usually in hostile conditions, making significant impacts in places such as Iraq, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa and the Republic of the Philippines, providing commanders with mission-tailored, globally distributed forces.

Adm. Robert F. Willard, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, was the keynote speaker. He addressed the IAs and more than 250 others in attendance, explaining the importance of the IAs' role in today's fighting force and thanking them for their unique service.

"In early 2005, Navy leadership was beginning to witness the stresses the rotations in and out of Iraq and Afghanistan were placing on our Army and our Marine Corps," Willard said. "What you've done in service as IAs



U.S. Navy photo by MC1 (SW/AW) Shane Tuck

Adm. Robert F. Willard, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, thanks Lt. Heather Beal, an information warfare officer assigned to Navy Information Operations Command, Hawai'i, during an Individual Augmentee (IA) awards luncheon March 17 for her service as an IA in Afghanistan. The event, held at Hickam Air Force Base Officers' Club, was hosted by the Honolulu Council Navy League and recognized more than 150 Sailors and Marines for their service as IAs.

has been a blessing for both a war and for our Army and Marine Corps rotational forces in particular. God bless you for all of the good work you've done and for all of the stresses you've relieved -

thank you very much."

Sailors who serve as IAs not only fill critical joint jobs throughout the world, but also serve as ambassadors for the Navy and gain invaluable joint coalition and inter-

agency experience.

"Today, more than 14,000 Sailors are serving in IA billets around the world and you've all come back with experiences that are unique in our history," Willard said.

"Many of you have stories to share and views of the joint force that are different from when this war began and I would ask you to share those views. I think those experiences will be valuable to you

in your careers and valuable to the rest of us as you share them."

One IA from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 17, homeported at Fort Carson, Colo., shared Willard's sentiment on the experience of working with joint forces.

"I worked with Task Force Sierra while deployed to Balad, Iraq and working alongside other services in a joint environment ... experiencing a diverse team come together toward mission success is something I'll always be proud of," said Construction Mechanic 1st Class (SCWS/FMF) Kamuela Kupihea, a Honolulu native. "I wouldn't trade the experience for anything in the world and it's something that should serve me well during the rest of my career."

Donald Morrison, Honolulu Council Navy League president, said it was important to recognize these IA Sailors and Marines.

"When units come back as a group, there's often a celebration welcoming them home, but these IAs don't receive the same courtesy," said Morrison, who is also chief financial officer for Pacific AquaScapes. "This was our chance to do something for those Sailors and Marines to show how appreciative we are of their service."

Hawai'i businesses also were instrumental in the

See IAs, A-9



### Dignitaries pay their respects

Rear Adm. Dixon Smith, commander Navy Region Hawai'i and commander, Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific; Dr. Emese Komjathy, Hungarian Consul General; and Ferenc Somogyi, Hungarian ambassador to the United States, drop flower petals into the USS Arizona Memorial well. While at the memorial, Ambassador Somogyi participated in a wreath laying ceremony to honor the Sailors and Marines who perished during the Dec. 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Robert Stirrup



Guided-missile destroyers USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60), USS Hopper (DDG 70) and USS Russell (DDG 59) sail in formation during the Commander, Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific Surface Combatant Group Sail.

## Three Pearl Harbor ships earn coveted Battle "E"

Story and photo by MC2 Michael A. Lantron

Navy Region Hawai'i Public Affairs

Commander, Naval Surface Forces announced three Pearl Harbor-based ships, USS Russell (DDG 59), USS Hopper (DDG 70) and USS Lake Erie (CG 70), as winners of the Battle Effectiveness (Battle "E") award.

The Battle "E" is awarded annually to ships, submarines, aviation and other units that present the maximum condition of departmental readiness in their group and outstanding capability to perform their wartime tasks.

"It is an honor and very humbling to have our Sailors recognized with the Battle 'E' in the midst of such high cal-

iber, battle-ready ships in Destroyer Squadron 31, any of whom are just as worthy as we are," said Lt. Cmdr. Jana Vavasseur, Hopper's executive officer, whose ship has received the Battle "E" two years in a row.

Cmdr. Jeff Weston, commanding officer of Russell, praised his crew for the efforts put in to earn the ship her third consecutive Battle "E".

"I couldn't be prouder of the crew. They are an incredible team that has worked very hard to earn this recognition for the third consecutive year," said Weston. "My hat is off to this crew for their dedication and hard work over the last year operating in [U.S.] 3rd, 7th, 5th and 6th Fleet areas of operations."

For the past five years, Lake Erie has acted as one of

the top standards of Pearl Harbor-based ships, winning the Battle "E" each year since 2005.

"The morale of our Sailor entices our abilities to be the ship that never says no to any task. By earning the Battle 'E', it proves that we have had mission success by every Sailor aboard through team effort on a daily basis year in and year out," said Command Master Chief (CMDM) (SW/AW) Herbert Ellis.

The Battle "E" award recognizes sustained superior performance in the following six excellence categories: maritime warfare; engineering and survivability; command, control, communications and information warfare; logistics management; Commander Naval Surface Forces Safety Award; and the Efficiency Excellence Award.



Bureau of Navy Medicine hosts tour of MDSU-1 for S2M2 See page A-2



Pearl Harbor survivor returns to shipmates See page A-6



Sailors tell elementary students about Navy life See page A-9



Small aircraft provides 'big show' See page B-1

## Bureau of Navy Medicine hosts tour of MDSU-1 for S2M2

Story and photo by  
MC2 Michael A. Lantron

Navy Region Hawai'i Public  
Affairs

The Bureau of Navy Medicine (BUMED) hosted an outreach/recruiting event at the Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One (MDSU-1) compound on Hickam Air Force Base (AFB) on March 24 as part of the Science, Service, Medicine & Mentoring (S2M2) program taking place on Oahu from March 21-26.

The purpose of the program, which started in 2004, is for members of BUMED to promote awareness for Navy medicine communities to untapped populations of under represented college and high school students on Hawai'i and the mainland.

"We find out that many student populations think that we don't have Navy medicine communities so this is our way to generate awareness for that," said Cmdr.



Navy Diver 1st Class (DSW/EXW) Jason Mette shows the proper breathing technique in a hyperbaric chamber to college and high school students during a tour of Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One (MDSU-1) medical spaces on March 24.

Victoria Wooden, BUMED's chief diversity officer. "We want the ones who don't know about our medical community to learn about it and make it part of their tool kit when they decide their future."

During their visit to MDSU-1, 28 students received dive and human-

itarian medicine briefs and a tour of the hyperbaric chamber and clinic along with a vital signs workshop.

"I love the opportunity to experience all these different things," said Ana-Melissa Kea, a senior at Kamehameha High School in

Honolulu. "The most impressive thing I saw was the hyperbaric chamber and how it helps with the medical problems that come from being underwater for a long time."

MDSU-1's medical staff was proud to show their spaces to some of the top future doctors and nurses in the country.

"I think that the chance to show these students what we do presents a different side of Navy medicine and gives them a sense of excitement for what our job can entail," said Lt. Jennifer Hall, MDSU-1's diving/undersea medical officer. "There's a lot out there as it pertains to medicine in the military and I think we opened their eyes to something they've never seen before."

Those same future doctors were proud to have the opportunity to tour military medical spaces throughout the week and hope that the program will expand further to allow more students to have the same experience.

"This program should be broad-

ened out to get more people involved about the program," said Mariannette Jose, a senior at Sacred Hearts Academy in Honolulu. "To hear about all the benefits and explore the island as a civilian is fantastic. When I signed up for this, I didn't expect it to be this great."

Throughout the week, events were also held at Chaminade University, Kamehameha Schools, Tripler Army Medical Center and Marine Corps Base Hawai'i - Kaneohe.

The mission of S2M2 is to encourage, nurture and enhance the commitment to science and medicine in a welcoming and intellectually stimulating environment for groups of diverse high school students. The program also develops leadership, teaching and mentoring skills among USU medical students and prospective students to provide long term mentoring and learning opportunities to students interested in pursuing a career in science and service in the context of military medicine.

## Shipyards deploy to Persian Gulf to support damaged submarine

Kerry Gershaneck

Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard Public  
Affairs

A team of Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard engineers and mechanics flew to the Persian Gulf on March 22 to support a U.S. Navy submarine involved in a collision there on March 20.

"Our shipyard team excels at rapid response in situations such as this," said Capt. Greg R. Thomas, shipyard commander. "True to our legacy, whether flying to Guam or Bahrain to repair stricken submarines or responding to a mishap right off our coast, Pearl Harbor workers consistently adapt and succeed in any adverse situation."

USS Hartford (SSN 768) collided with the amphibious transport dock ship USS New Orleans (LPD 18) in the Strait of Hormuz early on the morning of March 20. The 12 shipyard personnel will assess the damage to Hartford and begin "in theater" repairs.

Additional shipyard personnel will fly to the region and will return upon com-

pletion of their mission.

Fifteen Sailors aboard Hartford were slightly injured and returned to duty. No personnel aboard New Orleans were injured. The propulsion plant of the submarine was unaffected by the collision.

The circumstances surrounding the collision are currently under investigation.

Shipyard personnel routinely deploy throughout the Asia-Pacific Region for engineering, maintenance and repair missions. In addition, rapid deployment teams respond to incidents such as the Hartford collision. For example, a shipyard team deployed to Bahrain on short notice after a Japanese oil tanker and the submarine USS Newport News (SSN 750) collided in early January 2007.

Recently, Vice Adm. Kevin McCoy, Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command, presented medals and certificates to nearly 200 shipyard personnel for their success in freeing USS Port Royal (CG 73) from a reef off south Oahu.

## Community leaders embark USS Bremerton



U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Cmdr. Dave Benham

A group of 17 distinguished visitors, including 10 members of the Pacific Century Fellows Group, were given the opportunity to observe submarine operations in the waters off Oahu during a special tour aboard USS Bremerton (SSN 698) on March 21. Founded by Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann, the Pacific Century Fellows program annually gathers up to 32 of Hawai'i's most promising individuals from numerous professions and communities to gain a broader view of civic duty through direct contact with senior community, social and government leaders.

# Hawaii Navy News Editorial

## Chiefs charged to lead the way in motorcycle safety

MCCS (SW/AW) Bill Houlihan

MCPON Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- The master chief petty officer of the Navy (MCPON) outlined his expectations regarding motorcycle safety and training in a "P4," or "personal for," Navy administrative message to the Navy's chief petty officer mess on March 16.

The message, intended for all command master chiefs, chiefs of the boat, command senior chiefs and senior enlisted leaders, lays out Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) (SS/SW) Rick West's concerns and expectations of senior enlisted leadership.

"Our highways are a battle zone that unnecessarily accounted for 33 motorcycle casualties last year, while many others suffered life-long injuries. I'm calling on the CPO mess and the first class petty officers to engage the deckplate and ensure our Sailors get the proper required training," West wrote in his message.

"Having been a motorcycle rider, I'm concerned for all riders, but we need to focus immediately on those who are in the highest risk group," said West.

MCPON stated in his message that the groups he is most



U.S. Navy photo by MC1 (AW/SW) James E. Foehl

Air Force Master Sgt. Dishon Gregory, assigned to Hickam Air Force Base Hawaii, participates in a range exercise during a Military Sport Bike Rider Course (MSRC) for Commander, Navy Region Hawaii (CNRH) Safety at Ford Island. The one-day MSRC provides specialized training tailored to military sport bike riders and focuses on the critical skill sets and decision making incumbent with riding high-powered sport motorcycles.

concerned with are sport bike riders, Sailors E-5 and below, and those with little to no experience

as many mishaps occur soon after the purchase of the motorcycle.

"Most of the casualties," said West, "have been on sport bikes operated by untrained riders."

West said that he hopes his use of a P4 will emphasize the importance of sport bike safety, especially with the summer months approaching.

"I'm going to use every means at my disposal to get this word out. We have young men and women dying on our freeways and less than half of the Sailors who should have attended the mandatory training have showed up.

"Our concern as senior enlisted leaders should be to give our Sailors the training and tools that could help them survive on the highways," West said.

P4s have traditionally been reserved for the flag community, a method of communication that admirals have used for decades to get word quickly and privately to other senior and commanding officers.

West said it's not an approach he intends to use frequently, but he felt the gravity of this particular subject warranted it.

"We have more than 7,500 Sailors who still haven't attended the sport bike rider course. We've got to do better than that. It's a matter of life and death."

The unprecedented P4 specifically directs chief petty officers to "personally involve yourself in obtaining a [class] quota and ensuring your Sailors attend."

### Navy, Army to host Easter Sunrise Service aboard 'Mighty Mo'

**Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel**

Navy Region Hawaii and the U.S. Army at Schofield Barracks will host the annual Easter Sunrise Service at 6:30 a.m. April 12 aboard the Battleship Missouri Memorial.

The service is open to all active duty and retired military members and their families, Department of Defense civilian employees, and sponsored guests.

Parking will be available near Fox five pier on Ford Island. The Missouri's trolley service will not be used.

For safety purposes, guests should wear comfortable shoes and dress appropriately for climbing onboard the Missouri.

The inter-denominational service, conducted by Navy Region Hawaii, will include inspirational worship, music from Pacific Fleet Band, and a continental breakfast, compliments of the U.S. Army.

For more information, call the Naval Station Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel at 473-3971.

## Women's history in the Navy

Nurses with their patients, aboard USS Relief (AH 1) in March 1921.

U.S. Navy historical Center photo

### Letter to the Editor policy

Hawaii Navy News welcomes letters to the editor for the editorial page on any subject as long as they are in good taste.

All letters must be accompanied by the writer's name, E-mail address and daytime telephone number. Letters are subject to editing to meet space constraints.

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E-mail letters to: [hnn@honoluluadvertiser.com](mailto:hnn@honoluluadvertiser.com).

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# Pearl Harbor survivor returns to shipmates

Story and photos by  
Blair Martin

Contributing Writer

According to his two daughters, Pearl Harbor Survivor Woodland "Woody" Cover always longed to return to Hawai'i for one last visit to Pearl Harbor.

On March 23, Cover received his final wish when his ashes were scattered near the USS Utah Memorial in a private ceremony with full military honors. Shirley Muss, Cover's daughter, described the ceremony as a poignant tribute for her father's life.

"He was the ultimate patriot," said Muss. "This [ceremony] is what he would have wanted. We grew up as a military family and dad gave us our love for our country and [compassion] for military families," she added.

Shortly after graduating from high school, Cover decided to join the U.S. Navy in 1940 and was serving as a third class ship's cook aboard the USS Nevada (BB-36) when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941.

On Dec. 7, 1941, the 20-year-old seaman was enjoying his breakfast when the first wave of Japanese attacks hit. In an attempt to ward off low-flying Japanese Zeros, all Sailors were ordered to man the starboard-side guns while the ship tried to escape through the channel.

As an effort to sink her and block the entrance to the canal, the Japanese planes focused many of their bombs and torpedoes on the USS Nevada, damaging her significantly.

Before his death, Cover gave detailed personal accounts of his Pearl Harbor experience in an



interview with his hometown paper, "The Southern Illinoisian."

"I didn't know how bad I was hurt," Cover said in the interview. "With the explosion of the bomb, my clothes caught fire and I got burned all along my arms and chest."

Luckily, the commanding officer ordered the ship to be beached near Hospital Point, while all Sailors were ordered to abandon the ship. Cover, who had been a competitive swimmer in school, had no idea he would now have to swim for his life across the fiery waters of the canal.

Disoriented by heavy smoke from battle, Cover said he quickly flung off his helmet and gas mask and leapt for the water, only swimming for land he could

see, which he later discovered was Ford Island, located nearly a quarter mile away.

"Had I known where we were, I could have just swam around [the ship] and I only would have had to swim about 50 feet," he recalled. "As I kept swimming [toward Ford Island], I kept getting weaker and weaker. It seemed like the land was fading away from me. [But] I [told myself] 'I gotta' make it.' When I got there I dropped, I guess," he added.

Bleeding heavily due to the shrapnel that had sliced through his right wrist and left ankle, Cover became weaker and weaker as he swam, but eventually made it to Ford Island where he later collapsed from exhaustion.

Cover told the reporter he didn't remember what happened next, but that he later regained consciousness in a hospital bed. The doctor later told him someone had carried him there and applied a tourniquet to his arm.

"He said whoever it was, that was the one who saved my life," Cover said.

Cover was later transferred to a hospital in San Francisco and spent the next eight months in the hospital receiving treatment for his burns and shrapnel wounds. According to his daughter, Geri Lyons, due to some of the shrapnel being lodged in his neck, doctors gave Cover the grim diagnosis that he would never walk again.

"Pearl Harbor had a

huge impact on our father's life," Lyons said. "They took a piece of shrapnel out of his neck that was two to three inches long. They didn't expect him to walk again, but he did and [carried] the scars with him the rest of his whole life," she added.

After Cover healed, he was assigned to an oil supply ship before being transferred to Naval Air Station in California. Although Cover left the Navy after WWII, he was eventually called back to active duty for the Korean War and spent the next 19 years in the U.S. Air Force, even serving in Vietnam.

Cover received the Purple Heart for injuries he sustained during WWII and eventually retired after more than 24 years of

honorable service in both Navy and Air Force military branches.

Shortly after WWII, Cover met and married Aileen Mattox, who would be his wife for more than 60 years. Later on, following his final retirement from the military, Cover worked at U.S. Penitentiary, the first federal super-maximum security prison in the country, located in Marion, Ill.

In 2005, 83-year-old Cover died in his home, surrounded by his family. Cover's daughters said his last wish was to be laid to rest in Pearl Harbor with fellow comrades.

Lt. Cmdr. Timothy Moore, chaplain at Naval Submarine Support Command who spoke at Cover's scattering of ashes ceremony, said it was an honor to pay homage to veterans, such as Cover and other Pearl Harbor survivors.

"Men like Woody forged an indelible mark on our country and our naval service," he said. "These men (such as Pearl Harbor survivors and veterans of every generation) left a legacy of pride and service to country that this generation still remembers, honors and strives to attain. It was an honor for me and other participants to be a part of this special service to remember this great man," he added.

According to his daughters, it is fitting that the peaceful harbor waters are their patriotic father's final resting place.

"It is a good feeling that this is the end that he wanted," said Lyons, after scattering her father's ashes. "This is what he spoke of when he was living and I have the feeling he is up there taking [in] the whole thing."

# Pearl Harbor Highlights

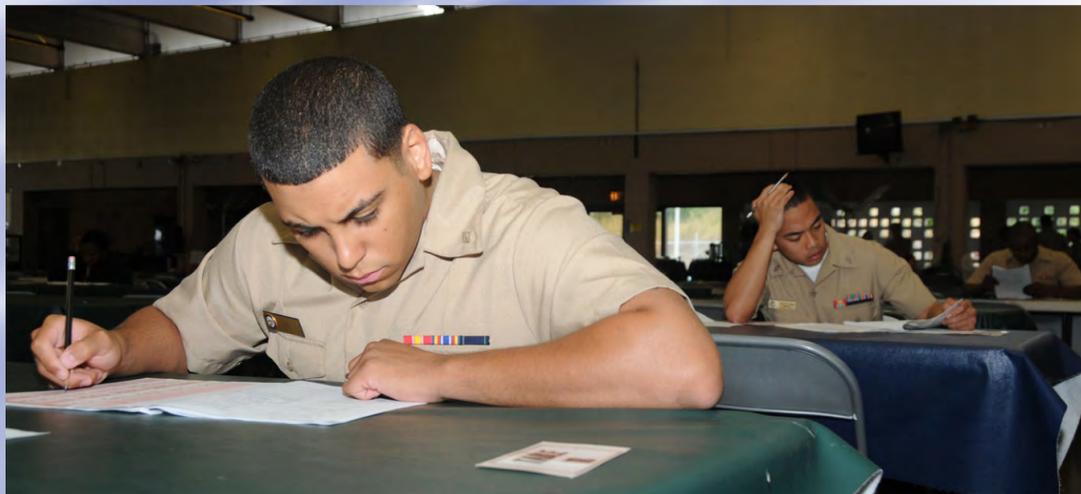


The USCG Maritime Safety and Security Team (MSST) from Coast Guard District 14 and Coast Guard Sector Honolulu flew on a Marine Corps Air Group 24 MH-53 helicopter and boarded USS Russell (DDG 59), acting as a possible suspect merchant awaiting entry into Honolulu, on March 11. Russell (DDG 59), an aegis ballistic missile defense destroyer assigned to Destroyer Squadron 31 at Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i, participated in a Homeland Defense visit, board, search and seizure exercise with the U.S. Coast Guard and Marine Corps.

U.S. Navy photo

Personnel Specialist Seaman Anthony Glenn, assigned to Personnel Support Detachment Pearl Harbor, takes the Navy-wide E-4 advancement exam at Club Pearl onboard Naval Station Pearl Harbor on March 19. More than 100 Sailors from various commands throughout the Pearl Harbor area participated in the exam.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Robert Stirrup



Cryptological Technician (Collection) 2nd Class Michael Sindelar (left), Cryptological Technician (Collection) 1st Class (SG) Nathan Jones (middle), and Cryptological Technician - Collection 2nd Class Michael Little (right), are served an entrée during an individual augmentee (IA) awards luncheon March 17 at Hickam Air Force Base Officers' Club. The three Navy Information Operations Command, Hawai'i Sailors, and more than 150 other Sailors and Marines, were recognized during the event hosted by the Honolulu Council Navy League for their service as IAs.

U.S. Navy photo by MC1 (SW/AW) Shane Tuck



Motorized-flyable aircraft models dazzled the skies for spectators during "The Biggest Little Airshow" held at the Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor on historic Ford Island on March 21. The airshow featured more than 25 pilots flying their one-to-five scale models of military aircraft, dating from World War II to the present, for a crowd of more than 500 people.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Robert Stirrup

A student at Kamehameha High School in Honolulu examines the hyperbaric chamber during a tour of Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One (MDSU-1) medical spaces. The tour was part of the Bureau of Navy Medicine's (BUMED) Science, Service, Medicine, & Mentoring program, taking place on Oahu from March 21-26. The purpose of the program, which started in 2004, is for members of BUMED to promote awareness for Navy medicine communities to untapped populations of under-represented college and high school students on Hawai'i and the mainland. Throughout the week, 28 students also participated in events held at Chaminade University, Kamehameha Schools, Tripler Army Medical Center and Marine Corps Base Hawaii - Kaneohe.

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





# Sailors raise funds for NMCRS



Gas Turbine System Technician (Electrical) 1st Class Arken Sarkisian, Electronics Technician 1st Class John Garcia and Machinist's Mate 1st Class Adam Smith man the grill for a fundraiser for the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society on March 18.

## Shipyard Sailors 'man the grills' for NMCRS

Story and photo by Marshall Fukuki

Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard Public Affairs

Sailors from Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard's First Class Petty Officers Association (FCPOA) raised \$610 for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) by selling hot-off-the-grill hamburger and hot dog combo lunches at building 167

onboard Naval Station Pearl Harbor March 18.

The shipyard's NMCRS fund drive began March 2 and is scheduled to end April 3, but may be extended, according to Machinist's Mate 1st Class Alexander Bilibin, command coordinator.

The goal is 100 percent contact of all the Sailors assigned to the shipyard. Last year's campaign raised about \$15,000. He said, "We're trying for five per-

cent over that this year."

NMCRS is a non-profit charity that provides financial, educational and other assistance to Sailors, Marines and their families.

Bilibin said this year the charity is highlighting its Quick Assist loans to help Sailors avoid being victims of predatory lenders charging exorbitant interest rates. The one-time emergency loans of up to \$300 are interest-free and issued with minimal paperwork.

## FISC Sailors hold 'gas and glass' fundraiser for NMCRS

Story and photo by Jim Murray

Fleet and Industrial Supply Center, Pearl Harbor

Sailors hear a strange assortment of sea stories during their years with the fleet, but one that was told to Sailors at the Fleet and Industrial Supply Center, Pearl Harbor, was so amazing they decided to re-enact it as a Navy-Marine Corps Relief fund-raiser.

A grizzled old master chief claimed that if you drove into a gas station 40 years ago, the gas cost 30 cents a gallon and two guys came running out of the office to check your tire pressure, clean your windshield, and pump your gas. That sounded even more far-fetched than the tale about sailing off the edge of the world, but the FISC Sailors decided it could make a great fund-raiser for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.

So, on March 20, the FISC Sailors mustered at the Naval Station (NAVSTA) Pearl Harbor service station on North Road to re-enact that strange old fable. Unfortunately for motorists, it was not a total re-enactment



Storekeeper 1st Class (AW) Baby Marcos was one of a handful of FISC Sailors who pumped gas and cleaned windshields as part of a fundraiser for Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. Marcos was FISC Pearl Harbor's Senior Sailor of the Year for 2008. She is originally from Ilocos Norte in the Philippines and is a logistics support representative with FISC Pearl Harbor.

because the Sailors couldn't very well charge 30 cents for a gallon of gas. The group called their fund-raiser "gas & glass" and every time a vehicle drove up, the Sailors offered to clean the windshields and pump gas for a donation of any amount to Navy-Marine Corps Relief.

With the price of gas these days, it would probably be safe to assume the Sailors did not raise much money. Some of the drivers were paying close to \$50 just to fill their

tanks so it's easy to understand why they might not have been receptive to a donation pitch by Sailors they had never seen before. But that was not the case on this day. When drivers heard the fund-raiser was for Navy-Marine Corps Relief, they quickly opened their wallets and, on average, gave \$8 apiece, earning the FISC Sailors \$522.

The 2009 Navy-Marine Corps Relief Drive began on March 2 and will run through April 3.

# NAVFAC Hawai'i finishes mangrove trimming

Story and photo by James Johnson

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Hawai'i Public Affairs

The Navy's mangrove trimming project at Pearl Harbor to improve security has been completed by Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Hawai'i and local contractors.

"Having these mangroves trimmed has added greatly to the safety and security of the fleet here at Pearl Harbor," said Capt. Bret Muilenburg, commanding officer, NAVFAC Hawai'i and regional engineer. "Just as importantly, this effort has uncovered the beauty and visibility of the Pearl Harbor shoreline for Navy personnel and the general public."

A four-phased trimming effort began in 2006 with the final phase completed in February 2009. Areas identified for clipping along the Pearl Harbor's waterfront started at Commander, Pacific Fleet's boat house



A chainsaw crew contracted by Naval Facilities Engineering Command Hawai'i completes trimming a section of mangrove near Aiea State Park, providing better visibility to the Ford Island Bridge.

near the USS Bowfin Museum in East Loch, all the way to Middle Loch where the Navy houses its mothball fleet. A total of approximately 65 acres was trimmed during the multi-phased project.

While the primary goal was to improve security for Pearl Harbor, the public also benefited from this action. "Before we started trimming the mangroves, these areas were a mess and a haven for illegal activities," said Scott Bonn, facilities operations

specialist at NAVFAC Hawai'i.

The work initially met resistance from a few bike path users who were temporarily rerouted to avoid the trimming operation which impacted portions of the bike path that starts at the Navy's boat house and ends near Waipahu High School. After the project was underway and bike path users saw

the results, they became supportive.

"The community was very encouraging because it made the bike path a more secure place to transit, said Bonn. "Passersby were constantly communicating their thanks to the on-site NAVFAC and contractor work crews."

The endeavor, that Bonn described as the partnering of various government agen-

cies and civilian contractors, included NAVFAC Hawai'i shops personnel, Sailors and Seabees, environmental consultants, the Honolulu City and County Parks Department, the Hawai'i State Parks Division and the Army Corp of Engineers.

Most of the physical labor required to remove the mangroves was split between NAVFAC employees and contractors. Excavators and chain saws were used to trim the mangroves.

The Navy was not permitted to pull the mangroves out by their roots due to directives found in the Clean Water Act of 1977 since doing so would stir up sediments in the harbor and disturb the surrounding land.

NAVFAC workers and contractors were allowed by the Army Corps of Engineers to drive their equipment on top of the mangroves and then pick up the debris as they backed out of a work site. This enabled them to work without disturbing the

harbor shoreline or underwater sediment.

The mangrove debris, removed from the shoreline, was converted to mulch. Most of the material was matted and left in place to help fertilize the area.

Mangrove trees are a non-native plant species in Hawai'i. They were brought to the islands in the early 1900s because it was believed their root systems made them ideal for controlling sediment problems.

In Hawai'i, mangroves have no natural threats that limit their growth. For this reason, the mangroves grow uncontrollably and crowd out native species.

Trimming mangroves is an effective way to limit its growth and reduce its impact on native plant species. If no more work is done along Pearl Harbor, it is expected to take approximately 40 years for the mangroves to grow back to the levels they were before the project began.

# USS Russell flexes as a 'joint destroyer'

Lt. j.g. Crystal Soucek

USS Russell (DDG 59)

March has been a busy month for USS Russell (DDG 59), an aegis ballistic missile defense destroyer assigned to Destroyer Squadron 31 at Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i.

While completing the Navy's unit level training readiness assessments for engineering and combat systems, Russell participated in two joint exercises: a Homeland Defense visit, board, search and seizure exercise with the U.S. Coast Guard and Marine Corps, and a ballistic missile defense targeting acquisition, tracking and hand-over exercise with the U.S. Army and the



U.S. Navy photo

USS Russell (DDG 59) participated in a Homeland Defense visit, board, search and seizure exercise with the U.S. Coast Guard and Marine Corps.

Missile Defense Agency. Security Team (MSST) Sector Honolulu flew out from Coast Guard District 14 and Coast Guard Group 24 MH-53 helicopter and boarded Russell, who was acting as a possible suspect merchant awaiting entry into Honolulu.

The MSST was inserted via fast-rope from the helicopter onto Russell's flight deck and searched the ship for contraband. Russell crew members dressed in civilian clothes acted as the merchant vessel's master and crew. This exercise helped build training relationships across all forces and exposed Russell's crew to the advanced boarding operations in use by the USCG.

On March 17, after months of preparation and rehearsals, Russell successfully acquired, tracked and transmitted a ballistic missile target during a

successful test of the Army's terminal high altitude air defense (THAAD).

This joint test furthered the evolution of the ballistic missile defense system and according to Rear Adm. Alan B. "Brad" Hicks, the commander of the Aegis BMD program, "This test [was] a significant milestone for the assessment of Aegis and THAAD operability within a tactical environment."

The ability to participate in joint operations helps Russell continue to evolve as a valuable BMD and maritime security asset and be able to act whenever called upon. Russell and her crew look forward to working and building new relationships across all services in the future.

# Unmovable Force chops down Tomahawks

Story and photo by Randy Dela Cruz

Contributing Writer

The Morale, Welfare and Recreation 2009 Ashore Intramural Softball year may have just begun, but the Force, representing Commander Submarine Force U.S. Pacific (COMSUBPAC), already appears to be in mid-season form.

The Force improved its record to 2-0 after it blew past the Tomahawks, 15-4, in a five-inning, mercy-rule-shortened game at Millican Field at Naval Station Pearl Harbor on March 24.

Players from the Tomahawks are stationed at Cruise Missile Support Activity Pacific (CMSA PAC) and saw their record drop to 0-2 after falling to the Force.

In gaining the lopsided victory, the Force scored at least two runs in each of the game's five innings, with back-to-back tallies of four runs in the top of the fourth and fifth.

The Tomahawks, which



Lt. Cmdr. Dave Anderson of the Force softball squad delivers a pitch against the Tomahawks during a Morale; Welfare and Recreation (MWR) intramural game at Millican Field at Naval Station Pearl Harbor on March 24.

quickly fell behind, 3-0, after the first half inning of play, stormed back to cross home four times in the bottom of the first.

However, the team's bats were silenced the rest of the way by Force hurler Lt. Cmdr. Dave Anderson, who

used an unorthodox no-step delivery that seemed to befuddle Tomahawk batters.

After giving up six hits to the Tomahawks in the first, Anderson settled down to face 13 hitters over the next four innings

— only one batter above the minimum — in posting goose eggs the rest of the way.

"When I came out and walked a guy in the first inning, I hadn't warmed up," said Anderson. "After a while, I started feeling confident, especially after I had already been through the order."

Anderson noted he believes that his unusual pitching style had a lot to do with keeping Tomahawk hitters off-balance.

"I used to hate batting against guys that threw like that," stated Anderson. "When I started pitching, I got used to throwing like that."

In addition, Anderson pointed out that even though the team fell behind by a single run after the first inning, he knew that if he just focused on making his pitches, Force batters would supply enough firepower to come back and win.

"It's a lot easier to relax when you know that you

got guys behind you," said Anderson. "We got quite a few players that also play in another league in town."

Electronic Technician 1st Class Nick Russell was one of the Force players that supported Anderson by swinging some heavy lumber against the Tomahawks.

With one out and the bases loaded in the top of the fifth, Russell jacked a screaming line drive that went through the gap in right field and rolled all the way to fence.

The shot cleared the bases and credited Russell with a grand slam that gave the Force its 15-4 margin of victory.

"That was awesome," said Russell. "I'm used to doing that in the streets, but I'll take it anyway it comes."

While the win over the Tomahawks was impressive, Russell maintained that he is expecting more good things from the Force for the rest of 2009.

Last year, Russell said that Force, which compet-

ed under the name of Twin Pac, rolled through the regular season undefeated before a lack of players short-circuited its run in the playoffs.

"When we got to the playoffs, a lot of people went on leave so we didn't have enough players," recalled Russell. "This year we got more people on our roster. We're also lucky to have around six players from the All-Navy Hawai-i team. So when we put this team together, we knew that we're going to be a 'Force' to be reckoned with."

As for the Tomahawks, who have now given up 15 runs in consecutive games, the players are confident that the team will bounce back and play much better in the future.

"We're progressing and slowly getting warmed up as a team," said Intelligence Specialist 2nd Class Aaron Kennedy of the Tomahawks. "We always start slow. Come back and watch us later. We'll put on a better display."

**STORY IDEAS?**

Contact the HNN editor for guidelines and story/photo submission requirements:  
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**Hawaii Navy News**

# Sailors tell elementary students about Navy life

Story and photo by  
MC3 Robert Stirrup

Navy Region Hawai'i  
Public Affairs

Four Sailors assigned to Afloat Training Group Middle Pacific (ATG MIDPAC) visited Iroquois Point Elementary School for the school's career day on March 20.

Sailors spoke to more than 60 students in fourth through sixth grades about their careers and the experiences they have had while serving in the Navy.

"This was a great opportunity to tell the students about what we do in the Navy and why it's important," said Capt. Ricks Polk, commanding officer, ATG MIDPAC. "It's important for the students to know what our nation's Navy is involved with."

The Sailors enjoyed telling the students about their Navy careers just as much as the students enjoyed listening.

"It's great to see the stu-



Capt. Ricks Polk, commanding officer of Afloat Training Group Middle Pacific (ATG MIDPAC), talks with students during a career day at Iroquois Point Elementary School. Four ATG MIDPAC Sailors spoke with more than 60 students about their Navy careers throughout the day.

dents have excited reactions when we tell them about some of the things that we do in the Navy," said Senior

Chief Fire Controlman Craig Hohnstein. "We really enjoy having the opportunity to help out in the commu-

nity and work with the students."

"I enjoyed answering the students' questions the

most. They always are intrigued to find out more about what we do and where we've

been," said Polk.

Heidi Armstrong, principal of the school, noted that the Navy was one of the most popular groups for the students to sign up for on career day.

"A lot of the students are familiar with the Navy and were very excited for the opportunity to listen and talk with the Sailors about their careers," said Armstrong.

Armstrong expressed her gratitude for having the Sailors speak with the students during the school's career day.

"I would like to thank the Sailors for coming out and talking with the students here today," said Armstrong. "They did an excellent job in preparing for the event and they gave the students pertinent information about the Navy."

ATG MIDPAC has a personal excellence partnership with the school and is involved with more than five events throughout the school year.

# USS Lake Erie junior officers jump together

Story and photo by  
Ensign Mark Rittenhouse

USS Lake Erie (CG 70)

Six junior officers aboard USS Lake Erie (CG 70), Ensign Jenean Beers, Ensign Blair Suzuki, Ensign Lauren Burmiester, Ensign Mark Rittenhouse, Ensign Aimee Lindner and Ensign John Briggs, enjoyed an adventure on March 7 that would leave them high on life. For much of the month of February and beginning days of March, the Hawai'i island of Oahu was lacking the glimmer of having a sunny day and March 7 was no different. Another cloudy and rainy day was not going to stop these six extreme sport seekers. The six of them went skydiving above the beautiful North Shore of Oahu, giving them the opportunity to live on the wild side from the Dillingham Airfield near Mokuleia Beach Park.

The brave six ensigns jumped out of a Caravan,



Photo by Kara Rittenhouse

Ensign Blair Suzuki of USS Lake Erie (CG 70) tries a tandem jump at Dillingham Airfield on Oahu's North Shore.

N9454F single propeller plane very comparable to a twin engine Cessna. They free fell jumped from about 15,000 feet from the sky and never looked back, leaving their lives in the hands of an instructor traveling up to the speeds of 120 mph.

This was the first skydive tandem jump for

Suzuki, Burmiester and Briggs and they were glad they took this risk. The other three skilled tandem skydivers, Beers, Rittenhouse and Lindner, were jumping for the second time.

Beers noted, "If I go down, at least I am in good company."

"I live for the adventure," said Suzuki.

Burmiester added, "Ahhh!" and Lindner echoed, "It was amazing."

Briggs added, "It was definitely an experience. Everyone should try skydiving at least once."

This was a special and adventurous occasion for the junior officers of Lake Erie, showing that even though they are U.S. naval officers they can still have fun. Onboard the Lake Erie there is a very close knit JOPA and they are proud to say they do participate in JOPA functions. This is only one of many functions they have had together and many more to come.

# NIOC sends 'taste of home' halfway around the world

CTII (AW/NAC)  
Jennifer Schooley

Navy Information  
Operations Command  
Hawai'i

In an effort to give Sailors assigned to Navy Information Operations Command (NIOC) Hawai'i who are deployed in support of the global war on terrorism a sense of normalcy and a bit of aloha, NIOC Hawai'i's Junior Enlisted Organization (JEO) recently coordinated the preparation and sending of care packages to shipmates on deployment.

The items in the care packages ranged from home-baked goods to magazines and books, but it isn't the content that is most important.

NIOC Hawai'i Command Master Chief Hayden Jones (SW/AW) offered, "The number one thing you can do to support our Sailors on individual augmentation is to keep in contact with them and their families."

The JEO IA support team has a goal to send out care packages at least once a quarter. This quarter they were able to send care packages to 10 NIOC Hawai'i Sailors. The impact will certainly spread to whomever the recipient Sailor shares the goods with and will directly impact more people.

The recent care package effort was led by



U.S. Navy photo by IT3 Jai Pellerin

Cryptologic Technician (Collection) 2nd Class (SW) David L. Ripski, a NIOC Hawai'i Sailor, makes purchases from the Kunia Mini Mart. Items purchased from the mini-mart, including magazines and clothing, have been shipped to Iraq and Afghanistan in support of the command's IA Sailors.

Cryptologic Technician (Interpretive) 1st Class (SW) Diana Oquendo who remembered her experience while on deployment. "It meant so much just to

get a card from the command. I want to make sure every Sailor is remembered. It brightens their day, one cookie at a time," she said.

# IAs honored for service

Continued from A-1

event's success.

"As long as IAs continue to deploy, we'll continue to support functions such as this," said Ron Addington, a marketing director for Geico, one of the event's sponsors. "It's a win-win for the military and community and this little piece can't possibly thank them for all of the time they've spent away serving our country, but it's just something to let them know how much we appreciate them and all they do for us."

IAs in attendance were thankful to the Navy League for hosting the event and for receiving personal recognition from the Pacific Fleet commander.

"I would like to thank the Navy League on a personal level for their recognition by putting on an event such as this. They truly care about us and it shows," said Cryptologic Technician (Collection) 1st Class (SG) Nathan Jones, a Navy Information Operations Command Sailor who returned from IA duty in Afghanistan. "Also, for someone as busy as Adm. Willard to personally shake the hand of each and every IA Sailor in attendance really shows me that we're appreciated for the efforts we put in as IAs."

In addition to the Sailors and Marines, their spouses who attended also were recognized.

"These spouses are the

ones who stayed back and kept the families safe and strong through difficult times without a loved one," Addington said, "and I think that bravery in the face of adversity can be just as important as any war we face."