

Hawai'i **Navy News**

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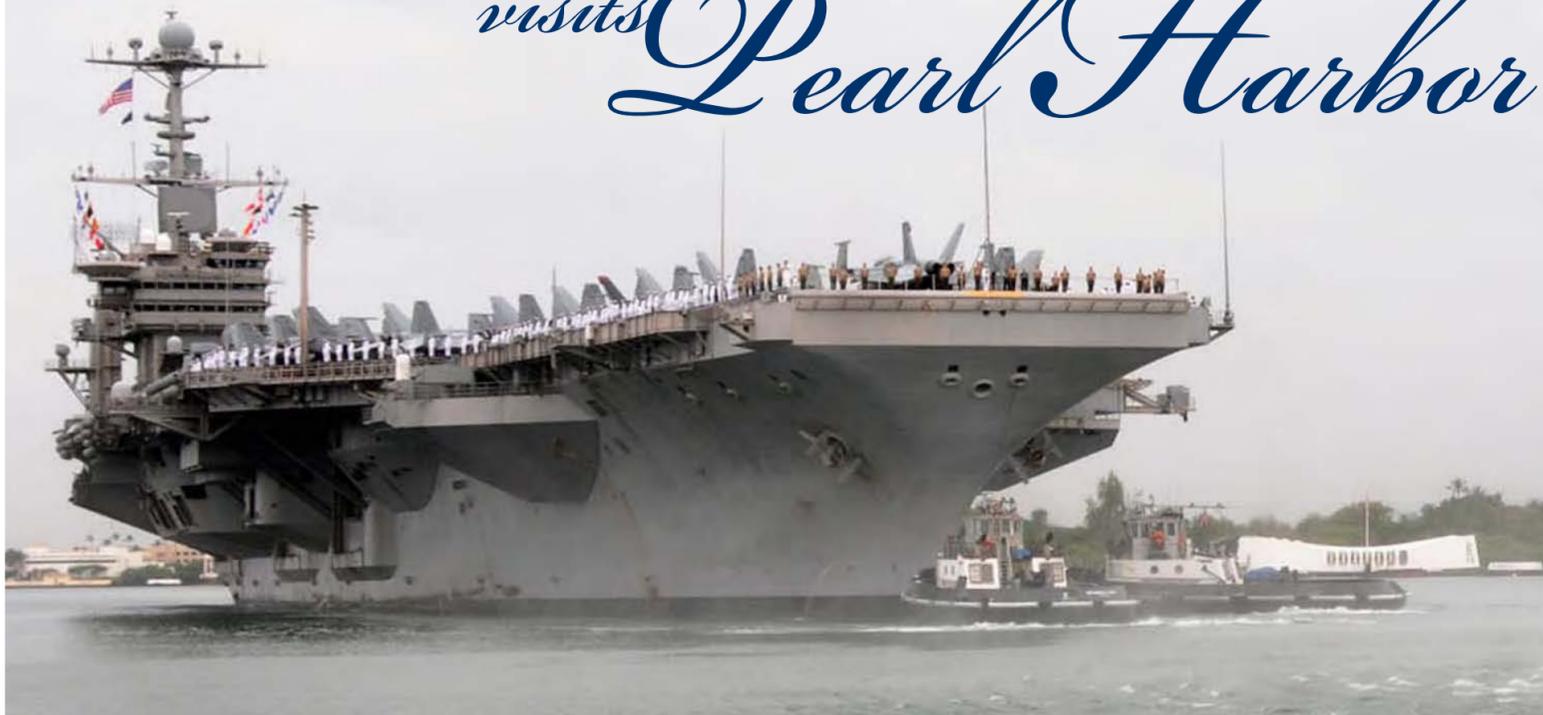
May 29, 2009

www.cnic.navy.mil/hawaii

Volume 34 Issue 21

USS JOHN C. STENNIS

visits Pearl Harbor



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Robert Stirrup

The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) arrives at Naval Station Pearl Harbor for a routine port visit on May 28. John C. Stennis is currently on a scheduled six-month deployment in the western Pacific Ocean supporting global maritime security.



West Loch survivors stand holding onto American flags they received during the West Loch Disaster 65th Anniversary Commemoration ceremony on May 21. The West Loch Disaster was a series of explosions that occurred while attempting to load Navy ships with ammunition and ordnance. The explosions left 163 men dead, and 396 wounded.

Navy commemorates West Loch Disaster 65th Anniversary

Story and photo by MC3 (AW) Eric J. Cutright

Naval Public Affairs Support Element Detachment Hawai'i

Sailors, Marines and guests commemorated the 65th anniversary of the West Loch Disaster which occurred May 21, 1944 at Naval Station Pearl Harbor.

The lesser known disaster took place while 34 ships were gathered in Pearl Harbor's West Loch to load ammunition and supplies in preparation for the invasion of Saipan. At approximately 3:08 p.m., an explosion rocked the deck of Landing Ship, Tank (LST) 353. A chain reaction of explosions followed thereafter, sinking six LSTs and severely damaging several more. The casualties from the explosion were 163 men killed and 396 men wounded.

"We heard the explosion and we felt the explosion as the ship lifted up and banged down," said Harry Horn, a former gunner's mate second class assigned to LST 242 at the time of the incident. "I remember hearing 'Cut the lines, cut the lines. Just get the hell out of here. Get out of here,'" reminisced

Horn. LST 242's crew members were able to get the engines started in time to move the ship out of harms way.

Four survivors of the West Loch Disaster, Wood Beeghly, Alex Bernal, Roy Sannella and Horn were present during the commemoration ceremony and were honored with individual flag presentations. During the ceremony, Marines from Command Logistics Battalion (CLB) Three performed a rifle salute in honor of those who lost their lives and a wreath was placed at the West Loch Wayside Exhibit.

"Always remember this day. Let everyone know what happened on this day because it was a secret all these years," said Sannella, addressing the fact that the Navy initially classified the incident Top Secret as further investigation continued.

All that is left as a reminder of the West Loch Disaster today is the rusted hulk of LST 480, which rests isolated off the Waipio Peninsula. Guests heading back aboard a white boat after the commemoration offered a floral tribute at the site.

The West Loch Disaster is considered Pearl Harbor's second greatest disaster in terms of casualties.



Service members participating in Hawai'i's 1st Armed Services "Ride for Safety" take off after a brief stop during a morning ride event held May 22. Hundreds of military riders stationed on the island of Oahu departed from their respective bases for a three-hour ride followed by a motorcycle rodeo and stunt show at Hickam Air Force Base to promote safe riding practices.

Service members across Hawai'i 'Ride For Safety'

Story and photo by MC2 Paul D. Honnick

Naval Public Affairs Support Element West Det. Hawai'i

Hawai'i-based Sailors joined hundreds of military riders from across the island of Oahu on the open road for the 1st Armed Services "Ride for Safety" event held May 22.

Approximately 400 service members from each branch of the military participated in a morning safety ride followed by a motorcycle rodeo and stunt show held at Hickam Air Force Base to promote safe riding practices.

"We're not out here to hot-gun it and to be reckless. A lot of us are doing what the DoD [Department of Defense] requires of us in wearing our protective gear and participating in all the training exercises that they need us to do," said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Benjamin Howard, assigned to the Naval Health Clinic Hawai'i at Pearl Harbor.

Military riders from each branch of service met at their respective bases for the morning safety ride. Before departing, the riders performed pre-ride safety inspections on their motorcycles and donned full riding gear.

"Someone can hit you, someone can

make you fall, or you can hit a bad spot and have a bad day and you can go down. There's no exception to anybody out there that rides and when you're wearing the proper safety gear, that's going to be the difference between whether you walk away or whether you get transported away in an ambulance," said Chief Machinist's Mate (SS) Jonathan Bailor, assigned to the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility.

The participants rode to pre-determined stops around the island where they were asked a series of questions pertaining to motorcycle safety. The safety ride provided an opportunity for beginner riders to interact with more experienced riders.

"It's a good thing to get these junior guys out there with some of these more experienced guys and the high-ups need to see that there are senior guys that are trying to help along these junior guys," said Bailor.

After the morning ride, all military riders participating in the event met at Hickam for the rodeo.

At the rodeo, riders attempted to cross obstacles derived from various Motorcycle Safety Foundation exercises, which involved 90 degree turns, weav-

See RIDE FOR SAFETY, A-2



It's hurricane season - be prepared and aware See page A-4 and A-5



Pearl Harbor survivor returns to shipmates See page A-6



Free Agents slug their way to championship See page B-2



Health fair promotes fitness and fun See page B-1

Memorial Day ceremony honors those on *'eternal patrol'*



A lei is placed on the plaque of each World War II submarine on 'eternal patrol' during a Memorial Day ceremony held at Pearl Harbor Submarine Memorial Park on May 25. Capt. Richard Kitchens, commanding officer, Naval Station Pearl Harbor served as the keynote speaker.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Luciano Marano

Ride for Safety

Continued from A-1

ing through heavily offset cones, and stopping the bike's rear tire within a box.

One obstacle required the riders to get from start to finish traveling as slow as possible without stopping. Riders lost points for running over cones, stopping, or placing one or both feet on the ground.

"We came up with some different obstacles using some of the techniques from several of the classes that we teach. We have a slow ride that you do clutch control. Clutch control helps you develop comfort and control of your motorcycle, so what we did with that is we added some turns into them; one of them we shrunk to half its size," said Jack Hughes, event coordinator and Motorcycle Safety Foundation instructor.

The winner of the rodeo, Howard, was presented with a \$1,000 gift certificate from a local motorcycle shop to buy a full set of brand new safety gear.

"I really think it shows how it's not just some joy

ride thing that we do on the weekends. This is a way of life and we try hard to be safe," said Howard.

The event concluded with a motorcycle stunt show performed by local professional riders.

"We want to show that these guys are real professionals, they do this for a living, they do this all the time, and they wear all their safety gear all the time and they only do it in places like this," said Hughes.

Hughes attributed the success of the event to the hundreds of riders who participated in the event wearing full safety gear and practicing safe riding.

"The message that was supposed to be put out was safety, being safe, and being those riders that are safe. The biggest push that we were looking for is that so many of the accidents get pushed out in the news because it's big news, so everybody hears about the bad stuff. What we wanted to do was to put up something big in a good way. We had this entire event go through without one injury and nobody dropped their bike," he explained.

Hawai'i Navy News Editorial

Pacific Partnership 09 to continue on USNS Richard E. Byrd

Lt. Cmdr. Nancy Harrity

Pacific Partnership Public Affairs

The Pacific Partnership mission will now deploy on aboard USNS Richard E. Byrd (T-AKE 4), a Military Sealift Command (MSC) underway replenishment ship assigned to Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet, it was announced.

Due to an abundance of caution, USS Dubuque (LPD-8) was pulled from the

mission May 5 after a number of crew members were confirmed to have H1N1 influenza.

"We are pleased to be able to continue on with Pacific Partnership and meet our commitments to the host nations," said Capt. Andrew Cully, the Pacific Partnership 2009 mission commander.

"After reviewing the available Navy assets and their capabilities, USNS Richard E. Byrd proved to have more than enough

storage space for equipment and supplies necessary to support the mission."

"Partner nations and NGOs (non-governmental organizations) remain a part of the mission team, and we expect to execute a significant portion of the projects planned for in our initial

concept of operations," said Cully.

The Pacific Partnership mission team and much of its equipment and supplies are scheduled to depart San Diego in early June on board USNS Amelia Earhart (T-AKE 6), which will be making its first deployment to [U.S.] 7th Fleet.

The mission team, along with its

equipment and supplies, will be transferred at sea to USNS Richard E. Byrd during the transit to Oceania, allowing the Earhart to meet follow on commitments.

Pacific Partnership will visit all five nations originally announced – Samoa, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Marshall Islands.

Byrd has a crew of 124 civil service mariners working for MSC as well as a military detachment of 11

Sailors who provide operational support and supply coordination. When needed, Byrd can also carry a supply detachment.

MSC operates approximately 110 non-combatant, merchant marine-crewed ships that replenish U.S. Navy ships, conduct specialized missions, strategically preposition combat cargo at sea around the world, and move military cargo and supplies used by deployed U.S. forces and coalition partners.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Mark R. Alvarez
The Military Sealift Command dry cargo ship USNS Richard E. Byrd (T-AKE-4) makes its approach alongside the forward-deployed amphibious assault ship USS Essex (LHD 2) for an underway replenishment. Essex is the lead ship of the only forward-deployed U.S. Expeditionary Strike Group and serves as the flagship for CTF 76, the Navy's only forward-deployed amphibious force commander.

Pacific Fleet commander salutes USNA grads, lauds diversity

Bill Doughty

U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

In his May 20 podcast, the U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander congratulated the U.S. Naval Academy Class of 2009 and lauded the academy's achievements in expanding diversity.

"The Naval Academy today is a far cry from the Naval Academy that I graduated from in 1973, when it was filled with men, no women at the time, and – while exceedingly professional – was not nearly as diverse," said Adm. Robert F. Willard.

The Class of 2012 is projected to be even more diverse, with more women and more than 28 percent minorities.

Willard noted that the academy, which opened its doors in 1845, is renowned today for its undergraduate education program that

emphasizes leadership and moral, mental and physical development.

"It is a leading college in our nation, a leading institution in many professional areas and an international institution that affords an education to many of our like-minded partners around the world," Willard said.

"And more, it puts out young officers that are leading the Navy today and will continue to do so, along the likes of Nimitz and Spruance and Halsey and Rickover and many other names that the academy can lay claim to."

"We're all extremely proud of the soon-to-be graduates of the Naval Academy, and we look forward to serving with you in the fleet," said Willard in his podcast.

To listen to the podcast and learn more about the Pacific Fleet, visit at www.cpf.navy.mil.

BATTLE OF MIDWAY June 1942 aboard USS Yorktown



U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command photograph
A Douglas SBD-3 "Dauntless" scout bomber (Bureau # 4542), of USS Enterprise's Bombing Squadron Six (VB-6), on USS Yorktown (CV-5) after landing at about 11:40 a.m. on June 4, 1942. This plane, damaged during the attack on the Japanese aircraft carrier Kaga that morning, landed on Yorktown as it was low on fuel. It was later lost with the carrier. Its crew, Ensign George H. Goldsmith, pilot, and Radioman 1st Class James W. Patterson, Jr., are still in the cockpit. Note damage to the horizontal tail.

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Visit <https://www.cnicy.navy.mil/hawaii> to access PDF versions of HNN. The site includes HNN archive issues back to 2004.
Visit www.hawaiinavynews.com to access complete HNN stories and related photos. This site is managed by the Honolulu Advertiser, the publisher for HNN.

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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.
Letters and articles that are submitted to Hawai'i Navy News may be published and/or distributed in print and electronic form.
E-mail letters to: hnn@honoluluadvertiser.com.

Hawai'i Navy News

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All editorial content is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the staff of the Commander, Navy Region Hawai'i Public Affairs Office: 850 Ticonderoga, Suite 110, Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i, 96860-4884. Telephone: (808) 473-2888; fax (808) 473-2876; e-mail address: hnn@honoluluadvertiser.com World Wide Web address: <https://www.cnicy.navy.mil/Hawaii/>

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Hawai'i Navy News is delivered weekly to Navy installations and Navy housing units throughout Oahu. Housing residents may contact the publisher directly at (808) 538-NEWS (538-6397) if they wish to discontinue home delivery.

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Hurricane Categories

Tropical Storm

Winds 39-73 mph

Category 1 Hurricane — winds 74-95 mph (64-82 kt)

No real damage to buildings. Damage to unanchored mobile homes. Some damage to poorly constructed signs. Also, some coastal flooding and minor pier damage.

Category 2 Hurricane — winds 96-110 mph (83-95 kt)

Some damage to building roofs, doors and windows. Considerable damage to mobile homes. Flooding damages piers and small craft in unprotected moorings may break their moorings. Some trees blown down.

Category 3 Hurricane — winds 111-130 mph (96-113 kt)

Some structural damage to small residences and utility buildings. Large trees blown down. Mobile homes and poorly built signs destroyed. Flooding near the coast destroys smaller structures with larger structures damaged by floating debris. Terrain may be flooded well inland.

Category 4 Hurricane — winds 131-155 mph (114-135 kt)

More extensive curtainwall failures with some complete roof structure failure on small residences. Major erosion of beach areas. Terrain may be flooded well inland.

Category 5 Hurricane — winds 156 mph and up (135+ kt)

Complete roof failure on many residences and industrial buildings. Some complete building failures with small utility buildings blown over or away. Flooding causes major damage to lower floors of all structures near the shoreline. Massive evacuation of residential areas may be required.

After the Storm

- Don't leave your home or shelter until emergency officials tell you it's safe.
- Don't go out on the roads until you get the all-clear.
- Watch and listen for reports on flooding or other storm-related activities.
- Don't call the police or other officials unless there is a life-threatening situation or emergency.
- Watch for and don't touch downed power lines.
- Watch your step. There may be broken glass and other debris lying about.
- Report dangling or downed power lines, broken water or sewer lines or broken or downed telephone lines to the proper authorities.

The Day After the Storm

- Don't sightsee. Authorities may be out repairing downed power poles, lines, sewer lines, etc.
- Use batteries and cell phones sparingly; you may not be able to replace them so easily

Important Telephone Numbers:

Emergency police, fire, ambulance - 911

Department of Emergency Management (DEM) – 723-8960

State Civil Defense – 733-4300

National Weather Service (weather advisories) - 973-5286

American Red Cross – 734-2101

HECO Service Center – 548-7961
(to report power outages, downed power lines, trees on power lines)

Board of Water supply troubleline
normal hours – 748-5000
after hours - 748-5010

Hawaiian Telecom telephone repair service – 611

The Gas Company emergency service – 526-0066

Streetlights out City - 768-5300
State - 831-6714

Where to find hurricane preparedness information

Hawaii Navy News archives: <http://www.cnic.navy.mil/hawaii/index.html> (Under "news room") Ongoing hurricane articles will be included.

Navy TV Hawaii (Channel 2): Hurricane information on Navy TV Hawaii will be aired about five minutes before the hour seven days a week.

Department of Emergency Management (DEM): Information is available on the Oahu Civil Defense Web site at www.oahudem.org or by calling 723-8960. Residents can also call the DEM office and request a free packet of hurricane readiness information.

Hawaiian Humane Society: For information on how to prepare for your pets in a disaster, contact the Hawaiian Humane Society at 946-2187.

Telephone directory: Disaster preparedness information is available at the beginning of the white pages section in your local telephone directory.

Your Survival Kit

(If you remain at home)

- Flashlights
- Portable radios
- Extra batteries
- Extra cash
- Prescription drugs (10 days' to two weeks' supply)
- First aid kit
- Candles
- Matches
- Ice/coolers for medications that require refrigeration
- Fuel for camping stoves/lanterns
- Pet foods/supplies
- Non-perishable foods – five-day supply
- Bottled water for drinking
- Other water for flushing toilet, washing, etc.

Hurricane Disaster Kit

(These items are not provided at evacuation shelters.)

- A three to seven-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil. (Canned food/juices, non-electric can opener, cooking tools/fuel).
- One change of clothing and footwear and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- A first aid kit that includes your family's prescription medicines.
- Emergency tools including a battery-powered, radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries. (fully charged cell phone w/extra batteries)
- An extra set of car keys and a credit card, cash or travelers' checks.
- Sanitation supplies.
- Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members. (Toys, books, games)
- An extra pair of glasses.
- Important family documents in a waterproof container.
- Pet care items if necessary (food/water, carrier cage, muzzle/leash).

Hurricane Shelters on Oahu

Shelters will be opened selectively depending on the severity of the incident.

Listen to radio and television for shelter designations and opening schedule.

If it is necessary to evacuate, emergency shelters may be located on military installations or in the civilian community. When shelters have been ordered to open in the Navy community, personnel who will be sheltered must report to the Navy Exchange Mall for assignment and transportation to a designated location. Evacuees to Navy shelters should not report directly to shelters.

North Shore (Kaena Point - Kahuku)
Kahuku High
Kahuku Intermediate
Waialua High
Waialua Intermediate

Leeward coast (Makua - Waipahu and vicinity)
August Ahrens Elementary
Campbell High
Ewa Elementary
Honowai Elementary
Ilima Intermediate
Kaimiloa Elementary
Kaleiopuu Elementary
Kamaile Elementary
Kaneolani Elementary
Kapolei Elementary
Leihoku Elementary
Maile Elementary
Makaha Elementary
Makakilo Elementary
Maukalani Elementary
Nanakuli Elementary
Nanakuli Intermediate
Nanakuli High
Pohakea Elementary
Waianae Elementary
Waianae Intermediate
Waipahu Elementary
Waipahu High
Waipahu Intermediate

Pearl City - Salt Lake (and vicinity)
Aiea District Park
Aiea Elementary
Aiea Intermediate
Aiea High
Aliamanu Intermediate
Halawa District Park
Highlands Elementary
Lehua Elementary
Makalapa Elementary
Moanalua Elementary
Moanalua Intermediate
Moanalua High
Palisades Elementary
Pearl City District Park
Pearl City High
Pearl City Highlands Intermediate
Pearl Harbor Kai Elementary
Pearlridge Elementary
Radford High
Red Hill Elementary
Salt Lake Elementary

Plan ahead to make arrangements for your pet

- (1) Residence at local boarding facility.
 - Check with veterinary clinics or the local humane society to locate boarding facilities. When selecting a facility, you should be sure that it is out of the hazard area and ask if the kennel has an emergency evacuation plan. Visit the facility to determine their requirements and make sure that it meets your standards.
 - Be sure to keep your pet's vaccinations up-to-date. You should also keep a pet carrier on hand for each pet. The carrier should be large enough so that the animal can stand up and walk around inside it. Make sure that your pet has an opportunity to become familiar with the carrier ahead of time so that he feels comfortable when he has to be placed in it.
 - Keep a current photo of your pet to help ensure identification if you are separated from him during the emergency.
- (2) Stay with dependable friend or relative.
 - Make advance arrangements for care of your pet. It should



Kaala Elementary
Kipapa Elementary
Leilehua High
Mililani High
Mililani Mauka Elementary
Mililani Middle
Mililani-Uka Elementary
Wahiawa Elementary
Wahiawa Middle

Waiau Elementary
Waimalu Elementary
Webbing Elementary
Salt Lake - Punchbowl (and vicinity)
Dole Middle
Farrington High
Kaahumanu Elementary
Kaewai Elementary
Kaiulani Elementary
Kalakaua Middle
Kalihi-Kai Elementary
Kalihi-Uka Elementary
Kalihi Valley District Park
Kalihi-Waena Elementary
Kapalama Elementary
Kauluwela Elementary
Kawanakoa Middle
Lanakila District Park
Lanakila Elementary
Likelike Elementary
Linapuni Elementary
Maemae Elementary
Makiki District Park
Neal Blaisdell Center
Nuuanu Elementary
Pauoa Elementary
Puhale Elementary
Roosevelt High
Royal Elementary
Stevenson Middle

Punchbowl - Waialae (and vicinity)

Aliiolani Elementary
Anuenue Complex
Hokulani Elementary
Jefferson Elementary
Kaahumanu Elementary
Kaimuki High
Kaimuki Middle
Kuhio Elementary
Lilihoi Elementary
Liliuokalani Elementary
Lunalilo Elementary
Manoa Elementary
McKinley High
Neal Blaisdell Center
Noelani Elementary
Palolo Elementary
Roosevelt High
Stevenson Middle
Waialae Elementary
Waikiki Elementary
Washington Middle
Wilson Elementary

Aina Haina - Hawaii Kai (and vicinity)
Hahaione Elementary
Kaiser High
Kalani High
Kamiloiki Elementary
Koko Head Elementary
Niu Valley Middle

Windward coast (Kahuku - Makapuu Point)
Ahuimanu Elementary
Castle High
Enchanted Lake Elementary
Heeia Elementary
Kahalua Elementary
Kahuku High
Kahuku Intermediate
Kailua Elementary
Kailua High
Kailua Intermediate
Kainalu Elementary
Kalaeo High
Kaneohe Elementary
Kapunahala Elementary
King Intermediate
Lanikai Elementary
Maunawili Elementary
Parker Elementary
Pope Elementary
Puohala Elementary
Waiahole Elementary
Waimanalo Elementary and Intermediate



- be a safe place that is away from coastal or low-lying areas.
- (3) Pet stays at home.
 - Be sure to stock up on pet food and cat litter for family pets.
 - If they require special diets or medications, make certain to have a two weeks' supply on hand.
 - You should also stock up on newspaper, plastic bags and cleaners/disinfectants to handle pet wastes.
 - Once storm conditions are approaching, make sure to bring your pets indoors well ahead of any disaster conditions.

Never leave pets outside or tied up.

- If you need to evacuate your home, you should prepare an indoor area where your pet can stay. Such an area should be a place that is safe for your pet and is easy to clean. Be certain that there is protection from breaking glass, wind and noise. Use an area that is easy to clean, such as a tiled area or garage. Be sure that your pet has access to a high place, such as a counter top, in the event that flooding occurs.

Follow safety guidelines if you have more than one pet that you must leave behind.

- Do not confine a dog and cat together, even if they are normally friendly.
 - Keep small pets, such as rabbits, mice and birds, away from dogs and cats.
 - Leave difficult or aggressive animals in cages to ensure that they can't get loose.
- Prepare and be sure that your pet's basic needs are provided for:
- Leave water for your pets in bathtubs or sturdy containers that will not spill. You should provide at least a three-day supply of water.
 - Leave only dry-type foods to

prevent the animals from overeating.

- Use special food dispensers for birds and fish. They must eat daily to survive.
- Put down newspapers to cover the floor and/or have cat litter containers available.

Additional precautions: You should be sure that your pet has a properly fitted collar and an identification tag on at all times. This is particularly important during hurricane conditions. Also keep a hand in order to maintain control of your pet in the event that you need to take the animal to another location.

After returning home:

After the hurricane is over and it is safe for you to return home, be careful when letting your pet loose outdoors and make sure that it is wearing an identification tag. Scents and landmarks that are familiar to your pet may have changed during the storm and could cause it to get confused and lost. If your pet should become lost, call and visit the Humane Society as soon as possible.

For more information on how to prepare for your pets in a disaster, contact the Hawaiian Humane Society at 946-2187 or the Oahu Civil Defense Agency at 523-4121.



Hurricane Watches

Weather/marine advisories:

Issued when storms are within 1,000 miles of Honolulu, Hawaii.

Hurricane watch:

Issued when there is a strong possibility that the storm could threaten coastal or inland communities within 36 hours or less.

Hurricane warning:

Issued when there is a high possibility that hurricane force winds will arrive within 24 hours or less.

Hurricane Condition Readiness

Condition Readiness IV

- Maintain areas around the house and keep them clear of debris and loose material.
- Prune dead branches from trees.
- Maintain storm shutters in good repair and keep them easily available.
- Determine location of official shelters.
- Stock and maintain your typhoon supply locker.

Condition Readiness III

- Start monitoring the news.
- Review emergency plans with your family.
- Practice where to go in the house as the hurricane intensifies.
- Get needed supplies.
- Expectant mothers, beyond 37th week of pregnancy should make hospital arrangements.
- Knock down coconuts and secure outside potted plants.
- Ensure loose debris is picked up around the house.
- Refill any special medications.
- Ensure gas tank is full and check your battery, water and oil.
- Move small boats to secure and safe havens.
- Check flashlight and radio batteries and make sure you have extras.
- Charge cellular phones.
- Get cash.
- Prepare to put up hurricane shutters.
- Put important documents in safe deposit box, a home safe, or another safe and dry place.

Condition Readiness II

- Install typhoon shutters, siding or plywood on windows.
- Move vehicles out of flood-prone areas and away from trees.
- Move grills, patio furniture, potted plant and other loose objects inside.
- Tie down anything that you can't bring inside.
- Turn refrigerator and freezer to coldest setting and pack your freezer with newspaper to keep the food colder longer.
- Move furniture away from windows or cover with plastic.

Condition Readiness I

- Fill your tub and bottles with water.
- Secure and brace external doors.
- Move as many valuables off the floor as possible.
- Continue to listen to the radio or television for weather advisories.
- Stay inside and off the roads.

During the Storm

- Stay inside.
- Stay away from windows and doors.
- If the storm becomes intense, retreat to a designated interior safe room.

Pearl Harbor survivor returns to shipmates

Story and photos by
Blair Martin

Contributing Writer

A scattering of ashes ceremony was held for 91-year-old Pearl Harbor survivor Chief Nicolas "Nick" Maersbbecker Jr. on May 26 at the USS Utah Memorial on Ford Island.

Maersbbecker, who died March 15, 2009, was a 24-year-old boiler operator aboard the USS Perry (DMS 17) during the 1941 Pearl Harbor attacks.

The ceremony included a short religious service, the scattering of ashes, and a three-volley rifle salute provided by a Navy Region Hawai'i ceremonial guard. A Navy bugler was also on hand to sound "Taps" as a Sailor presented the American flag to Maersbbecker's wife of 36 years, Reta.

Born in North Dakota in July 1917, 20-year-old Maersbbecker joined the U.S. Navy in December 1937 and was assigned to the USS Perry, homeported at Pearl Harbor.

With his enlistment up on Dec. 13, 1941, Maersbbecker was planning on getting out of the Navy, but on Dec. 7, Pearl Harbor was hit with a surprise attack by Japan which would change Maersbbecker's plans forever.

With less than a week shy of his enlistment contract expiring, Maersbbecker was aboard the USS Perry packing up his things in preparation to return home when the first round of Japanese zeroes hit the harbor.

In a 1959 "Galveston Daily News" article he gave shortly before retiring from the Navy, Maersbbecker recalled the Pearl Harbor attack as "one of the most frightening experiences" in



his Navy career.

"[At first], I could not comprehend what was happening," the chief recalled. "Then I saw the Japanese insignia on the wings of the planes and I realized this was it and that we had a war on our hands."

At the time of the attacks, Maersbbecker said there was only one-third of the crew on board the USS Perry.

"A [boiler] engineer, it was my duty to get the boilers started and the engines underway," he recounted in

the article. "Normally, it takes about an hour and a half to get underway, but [that day] we got our ship out of the harbor in 12 minutes."

Maersbbecker's wife, Reta, also shared heroic accounts on the part of her husband and his crew on that fateful day.

"[As a boiler technician], he knew it was up to him to get the ship out of the harbor if they could," she said. "So he ran through the gallery and picked up a boning knife and climbed up the

ladder and cut the smoke stack covers off. The [planes] were flying down really low and tattooing [bullets] right across the stack covers, barely missing his feet. It was just amazing that he never got injured on that day or during the whole war," she added.

After Pearl Harbor, Maersbbecker re-enlisted with the Navy and accompanied his ship to the Battle of Midway.

In 1943, the USS Perry was reconverted into a

minesweeper and joined the Fifth Fleet in preparation for the Marshall Islands campaign. In January 1944, the Perry began anti-submarine duties off Kwajalein. For the next eight months, she escorted troop ships, conducted sweeping operations, performed shore bombardment duties, and screened for submarines in Noumea, the Solomons and New Guinea.

Maersbbecker said that despite all of his combat experience with the USS

Perry, his saddest day came in 1944 when the ship hit a mine and sank off Pelalau Island, near the Philippines.

"She was one of the few ships that got out of Pearl Harbor and it was sickening to see her go down during the Pelalau invasion," he later recalled to the newspaper. "Many of my friends were still aboard the ship and most of them were lost. I had been transferred some months before to the aircraft carrier the USS Savo Island (CVE-78)."

A Navy Sailor for more than 22 years, Maersbbecker served aboard 10 different ships as well as serving as a Navy recruiter for the final two years of his naval career. Upon retiring from the Navy in 1959, he worked another 22 years in civil service at the U.S. Public Health Service Hospital in Galveston, Texas, eventually retiring in 1981. For the next seven years, Maersbbecker pursued his interests in antique railroad cars and participated in the construction and restoration of the Railroad Museum in the Shearn Moody Plaza Building in Galveston.

During his final retirement days, Maersbbecker enjoyed working in his woodworking shop making clocks and music boxes. He also showed his patriotic support while serving as president for the San Jacinto Chapter of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, his wife added.

"He always had great faith in our government and always supported the military, especially the United States Service Organization (USO)," his wife recalled. "The ceremony was such a touching tribute and I know Nick would have loved it."

Pearl Harbor Highlights



U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Brett A. Custer
Cmdr. Lance G. Scott salutes the side boys after being piped aboard as the new commanding officer of Patrol Squadron Nine following a change of command ceremony May 14. (Story for Patrol Squadron Nine in May 22, 2009 issue of Hawai'i Navy News.)



U.S. Navy photo by MC3 (AW) Eric J. Cutright
Capt. Richard Kitchens, commanding officer of Naval Station Pearl Harbor, delivers a speech at the West Loch Disaster 65th Anniversary Commemoration ceremony with LST 480 (Landing ship, tank) seen in the distant background. The West Loch disaster occurred while loading ammo and ordnance aboard Navy vessels in preparation to invade Saipan. The explosions resulted in the deaths of 163 men, and wounded 396 more. LST 408 was left as a reminder of that fateful day.

(Below) Ronald McDonald entertains a young boy and his family at the MWR Fitness and Wellness Fair. McDonald's provided healthy snacks for people at the fair while Ronald McDonald performed a demonstration on stage to teach kids to stay active. The fair featured more than 20 vendors and was used to promote fun and healthy activities to Sailors and their families.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 (AW) Eric J. Cutright



U.S. Navy photo by Randy Dela Cruz
A youth reaches the top of a rock-climbing wall during the Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Fitness and Wellness Fair, which was held at Ward Field at Naval Station Pearl Harbor on May 20. The annual health fair offered tips and instruction on how to live a fit lifestyle, and also included activities, such as, Zumba demonstration, baseball hitting and a basketball shooting station.



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Paul D. Honnick

Machinist Mate 1st Class (SS) Preston Garner, assigned to Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility, completes an obstacle course during Hawai'i's 1st Armed Services "Ride for Safety" motorcycle rodeo event on Hickam Air Force Base. Hundreds of military riders stationed on the island of Oahu departed from their respective bases for a three-hour ride followed by a motorcycle rodeo and stunt show to promote safe riding practices.

PMRF Sailor wins Navy Region Hawai'i JSOQ

MC2 Jay C. Pugh

Pacific Missile Range Facility Public Affairs

Naval Aircrewman 2nd Class James Root of the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF), Barking Sands, Kauai, was recently selected Navy Region Hawai'i's Junior Sailor of the Quarter (JSOQ) for the first quarter of fiscal year 2009.

Sailors like Root are nominated for the honor by their supervisors and are quizzed by a board of first class petty officers on various topics, such as general military knowledge, current events, Navy regulations and policies.

According to Root, the competition for SOQ is extremely fierce at PMRF. Each Sailor who is nominated must perform above and beyond what's expected of him/her in a normal day's work.

"Ever since I've been here, I've strived to be a hard-charger. I take on a lot of collateral duties, participate in



U.S. Navy photo

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community service projects, and started getting all of my [qualifications] early," said Root.

Indeed, Root keeps himself extremely busy with the

extra hours he invests in the community and within the command. He works at the air operations hangar as the airfield operators course manager, holds the position

of vice president within PMRF's military support organization, attends college classes after work, and recently put in a package for the Navy's Seaman-to-

Admiral program.

"I'm completely grateful," stated Root. "I really didn't see this coming."

According to Naval Aircrewman 1st Class Shawn Alexander, leading petty officer of air operations, Root's initiative and hard work helped him stand out from the other candidates.

"He's still a junior second class, but he performs above his current level. He takes on responsibilities and collateral duties and he is very proactive with them, all the while trying to make things better. He puts a lot of time and effort into everything he does. He's a very knowledgeable crewman," said Alexander.

Root doesn't plan on taking it easy after this award.

"I'm going to keep chasing my goals. Anybody can get this award. Just get involved in as much as you can. Don't concentrate just on work. Branch out. Get involved with the command and the community," said Root.



Spc. Min An (left) and Sgt. Lashawn Adams monitor their mobile treatment pumps at Kinikini Ditch at Pacific Missile Range Facility, Kauai.

Water specialists quench Soldiers' thirst

Story and photo by
MC2 Jay C. Pugh

Pacific Missile Range Facility Public Affairs

Life simply cannot exist without water. This statement has been the mantra of the water specialists of the 209th Alpha Company, stationed at Schofield Barracks on Oahu.

From April 27 to May 4, motorists at the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF), Kauai may have noticed the Army presence at Kinikini Ditch. The Humvees, pumps, 500-gallon bladders and Chinook helicopter activities were in support of a simulated training mission for an upcoming deployment for these Soldiers to Iraq and Afghanistan.

According to Sgt. Lashawn Adams, the non-commissioned officer in charge, the health and well-being of Army communities is a major concern. Maintaining Army work places and living areas in a sanitary and safe fashion helps to prevent illness. As an important member of the environmental health and safety team, water treatment specialists inspect facilities and food supplies for the presence of disease, germs or other conditions hazardous to health and the environment.

The water at Kinikini Ditch simulated similar conditions to the desert regions of

the Middle East. Indeed, the brackish water of Kinikini not only looks unsanitary, the odor reeks of stagnant sea life.

"Through a series of three separate pumps and four filters, we're able to clean out any salt, odors and waste from sea life," said Adams. "We make about 125 potable gallons of water an hour and purify 1,000 gallons in one day."

The Army chose PMRF as the training site because of its isolation and its ability to support training missions of almost any type.

"The training evolution went well," said Spc. Vinay Kumar. "We had the opportunity to focus on our mission out here. The guys learned a lot. This is the first time a lot of these guys put what they learned in school into practice."

Water treatment specialists are primarily responsible for supervising and performing the installation and operation of water purification equipment, as well as dealing with water storage and distribution operations and activities. Their job training consists of nine weeks of basic training and approximately 10 weeks of advanced individual training, including practice in testing different products. Part of this time is spent in the classroom and part in the field.

The water produced by the Soldiers was flown back to Oahu by Chinook helicopter and will be used for the Soldiers of the 209th.

Commander U.S. Pacific Fleet celebrates Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

Story and photo by
MC3 Jeremy S. Brandt

Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet Sailors and civilians participated in an Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month celebration May 15 at the Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet boat-house in Pearl Harbor.

During the month of May, the United States celebrates contributions by Americans of Asian and Pacific Islands descent to the nation. Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month coincides with the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants May 7, 1843.

Retired Capt. Dean Kiyohara, the event's keynote speaker and Pacific Fleet deputy director for fleet and joint exercises, spoke about the importance of this diverse event.

"Celebrating Asian/Pacific Heritage Month is meaningful to me ... not only because of my family's descent, but because it recognizes the diversity of our great nation," said Kiyohara. "Diversity is what makes us all that we are; it shapes us and keeps us moving and changing."

To ensure the celebration was more than just a gathering, coordinators planned interactive events, such as a traditional fashion show and lunch, allowing attendees to truly experience the Asian/Pacific culture.

"The event's festivities gave people the chance to feel more a part of the celebration," said Operations Specialist 2nd Class Melisa Johnson,



Operations Specialist 2nd Class Melisa Johnson models traditional Korean clothing called a hanbok during an Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month celebration May 15 at the Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet boathouse.

event coordinator. "Instead of just listening to a speech, they were able to see traditional clothing, such as the Korean hanbok dress and Filipino formal wear known as barong Tagalog. They also had a chance to eat traditional foods, such as lumpia, bulgogi and chicken curry."

The celebration provided a venue for Sailors to

share and learn about diverse cultural backgrounds.

"Since the Navy is a diverse community, it is good to know the different cultures and the different histories of each country," said Personnel Specialist 1st Class Leah Arboleda. "Not only was this event fun, but I learned a lot from it as well."