

USS Hopper hosts 'Friends and Family Day'

Story and photo by
MC3 John W. Ciccarelli Jr.

Fleet Public Affairs Center
Detachment Hawai'i

Sailors from USS Hopper (DDG 70) had the opportunity to show friends and family what they do day-to-day when the ship hosted a "Friends and Family Day Cruise" on June 29.

"Friends and Family Day Cruise" is a Navy special program which permits ships to embark relatives and friends of crew members for a day at sea and provides them with the opportunity to see and participate in daily shipboard routine.

"Friends and Family Day" cruise is a great experience for everyone if you've ever wanted to get a real taste of Navy life and today we have given them this chance," said Cmdr. Jeffrey W. James, commanding officer of Hopper.

This is Hopper's first family day cruise since March 2005. This year, 400 visitors boarded the ship to experience the underway life of a Navy Sailor.

The guests had several options for activities aboard the ship to keep them busy. Some activities included a "steel beach" picnic, static displays, ship tours, a man-over-board drill and weapons simulation.

"The purpose of this event is to not only help build morale of the crew, but really the morale of the family, to enjoy being with Sailors, experience what goes into manning a ship and what it takes to run one while at sea," said Lt. Cmdr. Michael D. Johns, executive officer of Hopper. "We want the family and friends of our Sailors to understand and appreciate what we do."

Ron Artise, a North Shore artist, brought eight of his 11 children aboard for the cruise. Artise not only participated in the ship's activities, but also painted murals inside the Hopper to help build morale.

"Today I want my children to understand all the hard work the Sailors of the Hopper do to protect us," said Artise. "This is an opportunity for my children to learn and participate in activities you can only do in the Navy."

Sailors in different departments were standing by to show guests the jobs they performed. This gave Sailors the opportunity to show off all parts of the ship.

"There are a lot of departments, places you wouldn't even think are on a ship. I didn't know they even worked with some of the technology I saw on this ship. It was interesting, too, because you can see how everyone works hand in hand, how they all blend in together to make up the ship," said Timothy Conkling, a Navy League member.

Seaman Christopher Young explained the difference between his perspectives of ship life versus his family's life.

"Being on a ship with my shipmates at sea helps me learn about how different people from different parts of the world can co-exist," said Young. "With my family, being both from Guam and having similar values, it's important to maintain those values."

At the end of the cruise, guests watched as Information Systems Technician 1st Class (SW/AW) Carrell Jackson was named Sailor of the Quarter.

The ship pulled back into Pearl Harbor in the afternoon after a successful cruise.



Chief Gunner's Mate (SW/AW) Adam Harlon demonstrates weaponry to onlookers during the "Family and Friends Day Cruise" aboard USS Hopper (DDG 70) on June 29. The cruise is a Navy special program which permits ships to embark relatives and friends of crew members for a day at sea and provide them the opportunity to see and participate in daily shipboard routine.



Rear Adm. T. G. Alexander, Commander, Navy Region Hawai'i, and Commander Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, hosts American country music singer and songwriter Alan Jackson and his family for a visit at the USS Arizona Memorial before the group heads to Bay Fest. Bay Fest is an annual event organized by Marine Corps Community Services that is open to the general public. Proceeds from this event directly benefit the quality of life for the Marines, Sailors and their family members stationed in Hawai'i.

Alan Jackson tours Pearl Harbor

Story and photo by
MC3 John W. Ciccarelli Jr.

Fleet Public Affairs Center
Detachment, Hawai'i

American country music artist Alan Jackson toured Naval Station Pearl Harbor by barge on July 1 with Rear Adm. T. G. Alexander, Commander, Navy Region (COMNAVREG) Hawai'i and Commander, Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific. He paid his respects at the USS Arizona Memorial before heading to Marine Corps Base Hawai'i - Kaneohe Bay to perform at Bay Fest 2007.

Sailors had the opportunity to meet with Jackson and

pose for pictures and receive autographs. "It's a real honor and privilege to meet Alan Jackson. I've been a big fan for years," said Culinary Specialist 1st Class (AW) Jack A. Brown, assigned to Navy Region Hawai'i. "For him to come out here to Pearl Harbor helps build morale among the Sailors and we really appreciate him for doing so."

"I'm a big supporter of the U.S. Armed Forces and I feel privileged to have the opportunity to meet with Sailors and Marines," said Jackson.

At the memorial, Jackson and his family admired the wall in the Shrine Room where the names of the

Sailors and Marines who lost their lives aboard USS Arizona on Dec. 7, 1941, during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, are engraved.

"I've always been into American history," said Jackson. "Hawai'i is the only state I've never been to and getting a chance to see the Arizona Memorial is amazing."

The family was also amazed that the Arizona still had oil slowly leaking from its interior, known as "the tears of the Arizona."

"After all this time, the ship is still leaking oil," said Jackson's daughter Mattie. "I wonder how long it will take to stop."

CNO statement on passing of retired Rear Adm. Eugene Fluckey

Special from Chief of Naval Operations
Adm. Mike Mullen

Every man and woman serving our Navy today joins me in mourning the death of retired Rear Adm. Eugene Fluckey, recipient of the Medal of Honor and a true naval hero. We extend humbly to his family our thoughts, prayers and deepest sympathies in this, their time of great grief and sorrow.

Fluckey passed away on June 29. He was one of the most daring and successful submarine skippers of World War II - he was credited with sinking 29.3 enemy ships totaling more than 146,000 tons - Eugene Fluckey helped lead and inspire our Navy to victory. He inspires us still today. We will miss him sorely.

In addition to the Medal of Honor, they pinned upon his chest four Navy Crosses, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit and a host of other unit and campaign awards. He was known for his audacity and courage, on more than one occasion running his boat in close to shore to attack enemy shipping and bases.

He even helped pioneer the idea of submarine support to special operations. In the summer of 1945, he launched a group of his own commandos ashore to set demolition charges on a coastal railway line, destroying a 16-car train. It was the sole landing by U.S. military forces on the Japanese Home Islands during the war.

Fluckey was also a loyal and devoted leader, for whom his people had the greatest respect and in whom they entrusted their lives and their honor. He knew all too well how much they depended on his steady hand and how much he, in turn, depended on them.

In his final war patrol report as commanding officer of USS Barb, he had this to say about his crew: "What wordy praise can one give such men as these; men who ... fol-



Rear Adm. Eugene Fluckey

low unhesitatingly when in the vicinity of minefields so long as there is the possibility of targets ... Men who flinch not with the fathometer ticking off two f a t h o m s beneath the keel ... Men who will fight to the last bullet and then start throwing the empty shell

cases. These are submariners." As we mourn his passing, so too should we pause and reflect on the contributions of this great man to our Navy and to our nation ... and of the thousands of lives he guided, the careers he mentored, the difference he made simply by virtue of his leadership.

We ought never forget his own words of wisdom: "Put more into life than you expect to get out of it. Drive yourself and lead others. Make others feel good about themselves. They will outperform your expectations, and you will never lack for friends."

Fluckey certainly never lacked for friends. And on behalf of those of us - his friends and shipmates - still serving in the Navy, I wish for his soul fair winds and following seas and for his family and loved ones our deepest respect and sympathies.

(Left) Eugene Fluckey as commanding officer of USS Barb

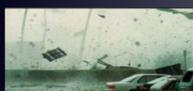


USS Port Royal chief earns ESWS

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U.S.-Australian fire support ships demonstrate combined capabilities See page A-6



Chief's teenage son conquers Hawai'i

golf courses See page A-4



Fourth of July at Pearl Harbor

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OSHA presents shipyard with VPP Star certification

Story and photo by Marshall Fukuki

Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard Public Affairs

The Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) "Star" flag flew over Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard (PHNSY) for the first time on June 22, proclaiming the shipyard as a national workplace of excellence in employee health and safety.

The shipyard is the only Department of Defense (DoD) facility in the state of Hawai'i - and the 10th DoD site in the nation - to hold that honor.

The flag-raising, held in conjunction with the change of command ceremony in front of historic building 1, commemorated the shipyard's approval in May by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) as a VPP "Star" site.

At the start of the change of command ceremony, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor C. Bryan Little came up on stage to present the Star certification and a folded flag to Capt. Frank Camelio during his final hour as commander of the naval shipyard.

Camelio had made employee safety and Star-level recognition among his top objectives during his term as shipyard commander.

"VPP Star status is the highest rating attainable in our workplace safety and health programs," said



The Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) Star flag was unfurled for the first time at the change of command held June 22 at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. (From left) Jerrell Tate, waterfront safety advocate; Richard Anderson, director of the occupational safety, health and environmental office; Kaipō Crowell, production resources manager; Capt. Frank Camelio, then commander of Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard; C. Bryan Little, U.S. Department of Labor deputy assistant secretary of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA); Matt Hamilton, president of the Metal Trades Council; and Geordieann Akuna, safety and occupational health specialist.

Little.

"You have reached the elite level - the best of the

best. Here at Pearl Harbor, the naval shipyard's rate for injuries and illnesses has

reached a seaworthy 44 percent below the national shipbuilding and repair indus-

try's rate," he noted.

Little concluded, "Capt. Camelio and the men and

women of Pearl Harbor, you reached for the stars and today you have one - a VPP Star to call your own! Congratulations and well done!"

Camelio said, "Credit and recognition for this award go to all employees of this shipyard and came through their hard work, dedication and commitment to make safety top priority every day."

He then directed the VPP flag to be raised. At the same time, another flag was unfurled in front of the stage in front of building 1.

The shipyard first learned it had received Star approval on May 31 in a letter from OSHA.

There are six other Star-level workplaces in Hawai'i, all of which are in the private sector except for the federal post office in Kula.

Nationally, more than 1,700 workplaces have earned entry into VPP at one of three levels.

Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard is the largest industrial employer in the state of Hawai'i with a workforce of about 4,700. In fiscal year 2006, it had an operating budget of \$505 million, of which \$397 million was payroll for civilian employees. Strategically located in the Pacific Ocean, PHNSY is a full-service naval shipyard and regional maintenance center for the U.S. Navy's surface ships and submarines.

For more information on Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, visit <http://www.phnsy.navy.mil>.

USS Port Royal chief earns enlisted surface warfare specialist pin

Story and photo by Lt. j.g. Rachael Pitchford

USS Port Royal (CG 73) Public Affairs

Chief Cryptologic Technician (administration) Christi Ahnemiller of the Pearl Harbor-based, guided missile cruiser USS Port Royal (CG 73) recently added another achievement to her accomplished career in the Navy.

The Cincinnati, Ohio native has 16 years in the Navy; her assignments have taken her around the world, but never to a ship.

The articulate and well-organized Sailor quickly jumped at the opportunity to serve aboard Port Royal when she advanced to chief petty officer last fall. In the short months that she has been aboard, Ahnemiller earned her enlisted

surface warfare specialist (ESWS) pin, an accolade that takes many Sailors more than a year to accomplish.

"It is honestly the second best feeling I have had in the Navy, first one being my selection to CPO," said Ahnemiller after being pinned by Port Royal's commanding officer, Capt. David Adler.

Earning an ESWS pin does not come without hard work and dedication. Ahnemiller spent a great deal of time talking to the experts, taking notes and studying.

The silver pin that Ahnemiller is now entitled to wear acknowledges her expertise as a seagoing Sailor. She possesses the knowledge and skills needed to serve on a U.S. Navy ship. "As a CTAC coming to sea for the first time, this is a tremendous accomplishment and a very proud day for me," Ahnemiller concluded.



Chief Cryptologic Technician Administration Christi Ahnemiller of the Pearl Harbor-based, guided missile cruiser USS Port Royal (CG 73) recently added another achievement to her accomplished career in the Navy. The Cincinnati, Ohio native has 16 years in the Navy. In a few months Ahnemiller earned her enlisted surface warfare specialist pin, an accomplishment that takes most Sailors more than a year to accomplish.

Hawai'i Navy News Editorial

Navy leadership works together to address life/work integration issues

Lt. Cmdr. Kim Dixon

Chief of Naval Personnel Diversity Directorate Public Affairs

The Navy announced on June 19 the development of Task Force Life/Work (TFLW) to address the emerging challenges faced in recruiting and retaining the next generation of 21st century Navy leaders.

The announcement of TFLW in NAVADMIN 159/07 was based on ideas exchanged at an Executive Life/Work Integration Summit that was hosted by Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP) Vice Adm. John Harvey Jr. at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif. from May 31 to June 1.

More than 20 Navy flag officers, senior enlisted leadership and senior civilians from nearly all Navy enterprises attended the education and discussion forum. The participants addressed the challenges in developing strategies to expand and to strengthen current life/work integration measures that will meet the needs of the Navy work force.

"Retention statistics and survey feedback tell us that meeting the professional and personal develop-

ment needs of our Sailors, particularly women, plays an increasing role in their ability to continue to serve," said Harvey. "While we expect dedication to duty and country to prevail when it comes to staying Navy, I believe that the challenges our newest work force generation face are more pronounced and call for measures to change course directly to address how best to attract and retain talent."

Harvey opened the two-day summit by clearly outlining to the Navy leaders his three-phased plan for establishing and integrating life/work balance measures in the fleet. The first phase is to send a signal to the men and women of the fleet, including new recruits, that Navy leadership is committed to this issue.

"This (summit) is a very big signal," said Harvey. "I want it to be a signal to our Navy, our women, the 'millennials' [members of the millennial generation] that will come in ... this is the starting point on how we will organize our thinking."

The second phase will be to start a pattern of activity that demonstrates Navy leadership's level of commitment in influencing positive cultural

change.

"How do we keep this going?" asked Harvey. "We're going to take this message on the road. What we do here; what we learn here; we're going to tell everyone who's got a stake in this. I want to send this signal and have it received by the fleet."

The third phase will be to sustain the effort that was begun at the summit.

"I want to maintain a drumbeat, not just episodic get-togethers," said Harvey. "I'm looking for your help there. There's so much focus on why it's (life/work balance) difficult. My goal in bringing your wisdom here was to change that focus."

While the topic of the summit was the creation and integration of life/work balance measures throughout the Navy, the participants never lost sight of the operational mission and commitments of the Navy.

"I'm not trying to change 231 years of what makes our Navy 'our' Navy," said Harvey. "We can't change the Navy's deployment schedule with an 'easy' button, but we can improve your quality of life by making our own 'better' button."

The Navy leaders at the summit were educated on the challenges faced in recruiting the millennial generation, often noted for valuing life/work balance more than financial success. Arthur Mitchell, director of strategic planning for Campbell-Ewald, the advertising agency that holds the Navy's recruiting account, provided the results of research into the millennials, affirming that "their life isn't defined by work; they will demand flexibility."

Many public and private organizations have already incorporated flexibility into managing their work force. Barbara Adachi, from Deloitte, described the process of changing the culture of Deloitte to one that encouraged flexibility in the work force. She discussed their pilot program of mass career customization, which makes career building a shared responsibility between the enterprise and the individual employee.

After hearing additional briefs on the retention of women in the Navy, particularly in the unrestricted line officer communities, and on the status of life/work integration efforts currently being explored by the

Chief of Naval Personnel Military Personnel Plans and Policy Division, the summit participants had the opportunity to hear from a panel of enlisted and officer members.

"My experience with the panel was very rewarding," said Lt. Josh Rupert, an EA-6B naval aviator who is presently attending a master's degree program at NPS. "It is apparent the leadership of the Navy is taking work/life issues very seriously and I expect that some of our recommendations may be implemented in the future."

"I felt I couldn't let the opportunity to speak on this panel pass. I realized I was speaking not only for myself, but for all of my peers and Sailors I have had the pleasure to work with in my time in the Navy," said Rupert. "I feel we got all of our goals accomplished, and hopefully provided some useful suggestions."

With CNP having sent this initial signal to the men and women of the fleet that he is dedicated to creating and implementing life/work balance measures that will enhance their personal and professional lives, TFLW will actively seek input from them through a series of waterfront summits in the next few months.



This week in History at PEARL HARBOR

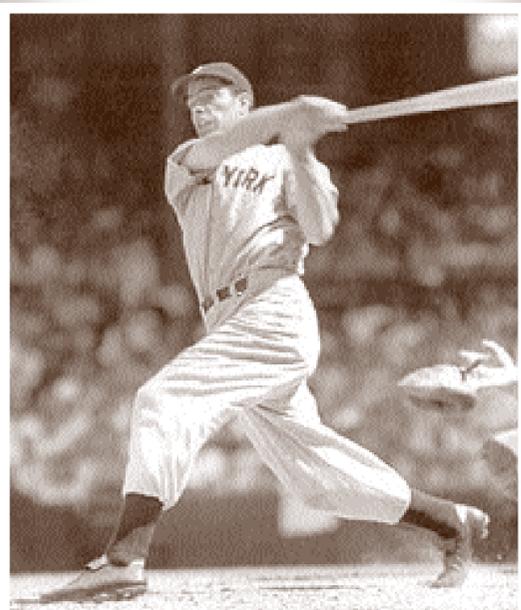
From the Pearl Harbor Banner - July 7, 1944:

• (Excerpted from 'Plenty of Fireworks, Nimitz Says') "There are plenty of fireworks today but we are not importing them from Japan; we are exporting them and we take pleasure in their delivery," Adm. Chester W. Nimitz, commander in chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean areas, told workers of the Navy Yard at a Fourth of July bond rally in front of the administration building last Tuesday. The Pacific commander, in making the address before Yard workers, told of the capture of Garapan, one of the most hotly contested spots on Saipan and went on to reveal further American gains on that Marianas Island."

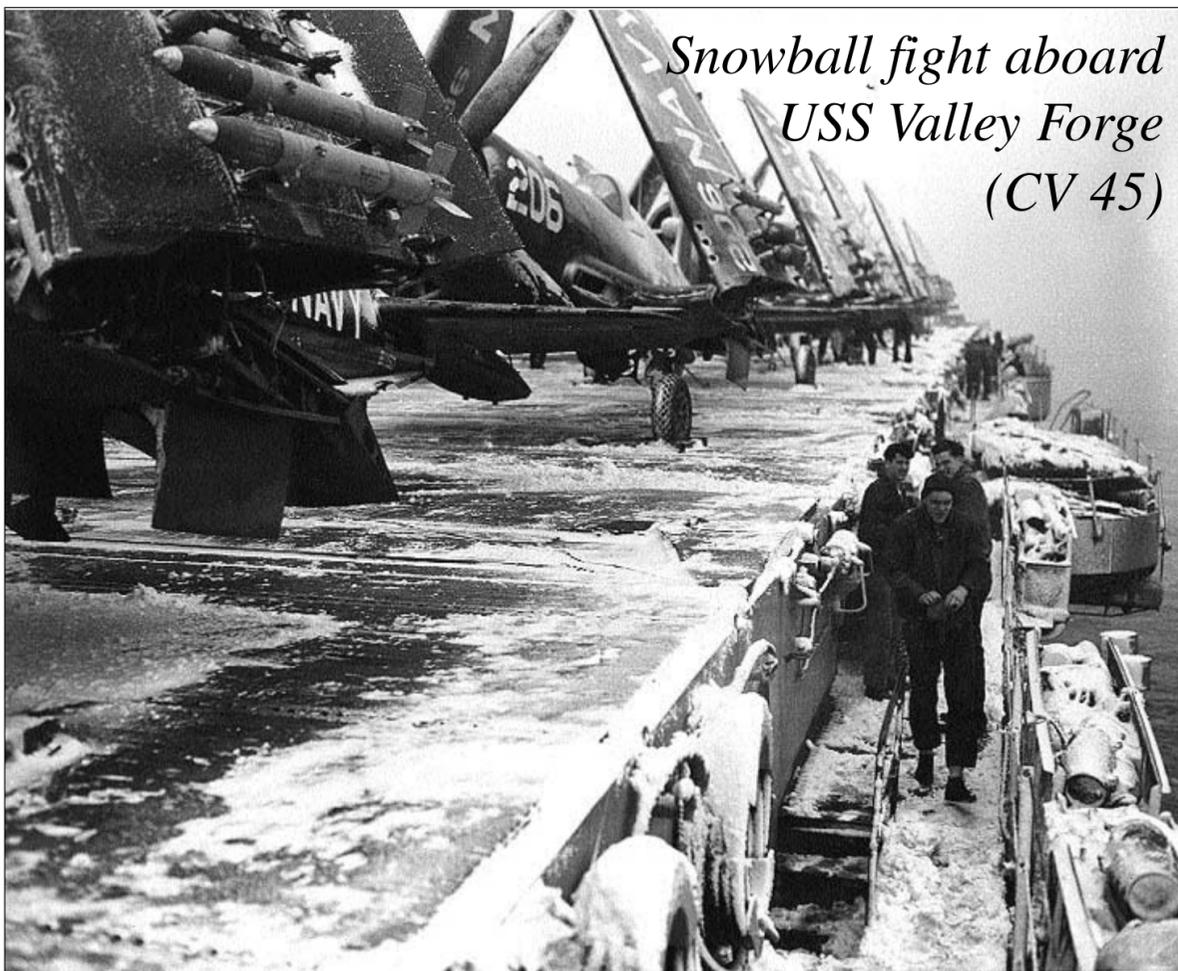
• "Take a Letter Darling," starring Rosalind Russell and Fred MacMurray, was showing at the outdoor theater this week. The comedy was nominated for three Oscars. Quotes from the film: A.M. MacGregor (Russell): "Where did you learn about women, Verney?" Tom Verney (MacMurray): "It isn't a matter of learning. It's instinct." Fred MacMurray Rosalind Russell



• Joe DiMaggio, 7th AAF slugger and erstwhile New York Yankees star, took time out during his visit to Furlong Field last week to discuss a few topics of interest with the residents of CHA3. DiMaggio said, "Baseball here is very good and I was amazed at the style displayed. There are many good performers here who should attract the attention of major league owners when this war is over."



Joe DiMaggio



Snowball fight aboard USS Valley Forge (CV 45)

Crewmen participate in a snowball fight on USS Valley Forge (CV 45) while clearing snow from the carrier's flight deck during operations off Korea, circa early 1951. Photo is dated May 8, 1951, but Valley Forge ended her second Korean War deployment in late March of that year. Planes parked on deck are F4U-4 "Corsair" fighters.

Hawai'i Navy News

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Hawai'i Navy News is a free unofficial paper published every Thursday by The Honolulu Advertiser, 605 Kapiolani Blvd., Honolulu, Hawai'i, 96813, a private firm in no way connected with DoD, the U. S. Navy or Marine Corps, under exclusive contract with Commander, Navy Region Hawai'i.

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: www.hawaii.navy.mil.

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California Boy Scouts tour Pearl Harbor

MC3 Michael A. Lantron

Navy Region Hawai'i Public Affairs

Seventy-five Boy Scouts and scout leaders of Troop 223 from Pacific Palisades, Calif. were treated to a tour of some of Pearl Harbor's significant historical sites by Commander, Navy Region Hawai'i, on June 28.

During the tour, the scouts and scout masters visited the USS Arizona Memorial, USS Utah Memorial and Battleship Missouri Memorial, along with the Pacific Aviation Museum located on Ford Island.

"After arranging to go to Hawai'i, we felt that it was necessary to visit Pearl Harbor and visit a naval installation and see Hawai'i from a historical perspective rather than just the tourist perspective," said Paul Notaras, lead scout master for troop 223.

The scouts seemed to favor their first stop of

the day, the Arizona Memorial.

"Going there and seeing that oil was still leaking over 65 years later was amazing," said Isaac Marguiles, age 13. "Just seeing all the places was an excellent experience."

The boy scouts and scout leaders enjoyed the half-day tour and took with them a greater understanding of the significance of the sites.

"It's great to see the boys learn these sort of things in a different setting," said Notaras. "We've been to these types of places around our home, but nothing compared to this."

"Visiting these places is a really important thing to do," said Ander Sanborn, age 13. "Everyone should learn what happened and give the respect it deserves."

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices during their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Boy Scout Oath and Law.

JPAC recovery teams head to Europe and Laos

Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command Public Affairs

Six Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) recovery teams, consisting of approximately 72 personnel, departed Hickam Air Force Base last week to conduct recovery operations in Europe and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Two recovery teams will conduct operations associated with missing Americans from World War II. The first team will be searching for information associated with a B-24 airplane crash in Hungary, while the other recovery team will gather information on a B-17 airplane crash in Austria. This is the 07-1EU mission in Europe.

Four recovery teams con-

sisting of 53 JPAC personnel will conduct recovery operations for multiple ground and airplane crashes associated with losses from the Vietnam War. This is the 100th joint field activity for Laos.

Evidence gathered from both missions will be transferred to the JPAC Central Identification Laboratory [in Hawai'i] for further analysis and identification.

Construction projects around Pearl Harbor

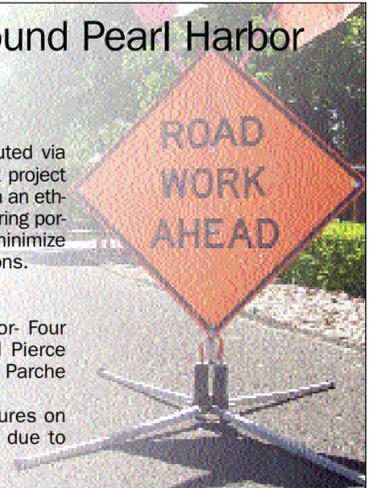
Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Hawai'i

Club Pearl roof replacement completed

The \$993K Club Pearl roof replacement project, executed via contract, has been completed. The 67,000 square foot project saw a hot mop applied, built-up roof system replaced with an ethylene propylene diene monomer (EPDM) roof system. During portions of the project, the contractor worked at night to minimize disruptions to the Club Pearl businesses and their patrons.

Scheduled road closures:

- Submarine base area of Naval Station Pearl Harbor - Four stalls in the parking lot at the corner of Nimitz and Pierce Streets will be unavailable due to repairs to the USS Parche Memorial from July 9-Sept. 28.
- Naval Station Pearl Harbor - There will be lane closures on North Road at Battleship Drive (Merry Point Landing) due to paving work from July 16-20.



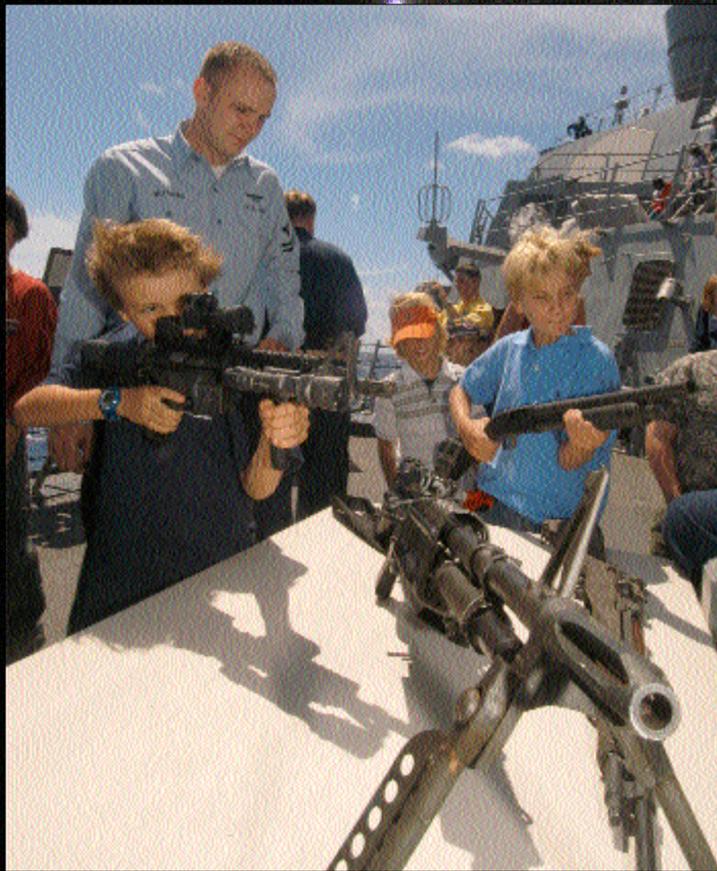
Pearl Harbor Highlights



U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Michael A. Lantron (Right) Adm. Timothy J. Keating, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command; Rear Adm. T.G. Alexander, Commander, Navy Region Hawai'i; and Capt. David Adler, commanding officer, USS Port Royal (CG 73), pose for a picture during a cake-cutting onboard Port Royal to celebrate the 4th of July festivities.

(Right) Damage Controlman 2nd Class (SW) Aarron Solomona explains the process of ship board fire control to a rider during a "Family and Friends Day Cruise" aboard USS Hopper (DDG 70) on June 29. The cruise is a Navy special program which permits ships to embark relatives and friends of crew members for a day at sea and provide them the opportunity to see and participate in daily ship-board routine.

U.S. Navy photos by MC3 John W. Ciccarelli Jr.



U.S. Navy photos by MC3 John W. Ciccarelli Jr. Gunner's Mate 2nd Class (AW) Michael Matthews, aboard Hopper demonstrates weaponry to children during the "Family and Friends Day Cruise" on May 29.



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Mark Logico Seaman Carlos Cano stands aft lookout on the fantail aboard guided-missile destroyer USS O'Kane (DDG 77). Lookout watches are used to identify surface contacts near the ship as well as monitor possible nearby threats. O'Kane, as part of the John C. Stennis Carrier Strike Group, is on a scheduled deployment in support of maritime operations.

(Below) A family enjoys the fireworks show put on by Hawaii Explosives & Pyrotechnics on July 3 at Pacific Missile Range Facility Kauai (PMRF). More than 3,200 visitors attended the 2007 Stars & Stripes Freedom Celebration at PMRF which featured food, vendors, games, live music and a fireworks display.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Johnny Michael



CNO expects GW to call Yokosuka home in summer 2008

Chief of Naval Operations Public Affairs

USS George Washington (CVN 73) "GW" is on track to head to Yokosuka in summer 2008, according to Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Mullen.

In his weekly podcast to the fleet - now available at www.navy.mil - Mullen said the "GW" will relieve USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), marking the first time a U.S. Navy nuclear-powered vessel will be permanently forward deployed in Japan. Mullen called it a "historic move."

"I find the city very supportive of this move for George Washington," Mullen said of his recent visit to Yokosuka and meeting with the city's mayor, Ryoichi Kabaya. "Many, many people have worked hard. For everybody involved in that, it's important we focus on that and stay with that -



U.S. Navy photo by MCI Chad J. McNeeley
Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Mike Mullen greets Yokosuka Mayor Ryoichi Kabaya during a visit to the mayor's office.

as I like to say - until all lines are doubled and she's in port over there."

The plan to forward deploy George Washington to Yokosuka was not related to the balance of carriers

between U.S. East and West coasts. Assigning a Nimitz-class carrier to replace Kitty Hawk is the Navy's ongoing effort to replace older, less capable ships assigned to the forward-deployed naval Forces with more capable platforms. The decision also reflects the planned decommissioning of Kitty Hawk in 2008.

Mullen emphasized the continuing importance of the U.S. Navy's relationship with Japan and expressed his gratitude for the local support the Navy continues to enjoy.

"Japan is a vital ally in the Pacific and is very supportive of our forward-deployed presence over there," he said. "We've got thousands of Sailors and families who are standing us in great stead. We continue to support the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. Stability in that part of the world, security in that part of the world continues to be vital."

During his trip, Mullen conducted several all-hands calls with Sailors in Misawa and Yokosuka. He said he found them engaged and proud of their role in contributing to regional security.

"Great Sailors," he said, are "doing absolutely spectacular work, great ambassadors for our country."

One dramatic change Mullen noted since his last visit to Yokosuka and Misawa is the impact the Homeport Ashore program has made on the quality of life of many Sailors.

"We have almost 1,700 Sailors who have moved ashore. It's about 40 percent of our requirement. We're committed long-term to get all the Sailors E-4 and below under four ashore."

Currently, the program allows two Sailors on sea duty to share a bedroom while their ship is in port, but eventually the aim is to afford each Sailor his or her own private room.

Mullen also touched briefly on his visit to Vietnam, explaining the trip represents "the growing, as well as emerging, partnership with not just Vietnam, but maritime nations around the world." He added that the Vietnamese are looking at strengthening their navy and "we might be able to assist them, where they ask us to do that."

"Our relationship is clearly improving," Mullen continued. "All of those kinds of things are headed in a very positive direction. We face - as we do with maritime nations around the world - common challenges at sea, whether it's weapons of mass destruction, piracy, fisheries violations, protection of our economic searoutes, which are so vital to all of us. It's all part of this '1,000-ship navy,' which is taking root in the Pacific as it is in other places around the world."

U.S.-Australian fire support ships demonstrate combined capabilities

Amphibious Force, U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs

Australian and U.S. Navy escort ships demonstrated combined fire support in defense of an expeditionary strike group and ground forces ashore during Talisman Saber 2007 (TS07), which was conducted from June 18 through July 3.

Two U.S. Navy destroyers, a cruiser, and three Royal Australian Navy frigates completed anti-submarine, surface and air defense exercises followed by simulated fire-support when U.S. Marines and Australian soldiers launched from the ships to the training area to engage a simulated enemy.

Talisman Saber 2007 is a joint and combined biennial exercise between Australia and the United States designed to prepare both nations in crisis action planning and the execution of contingency operations, thus improving interoperability and combat readiness.

"Fire support is an important component to ensuring that our assets are protected and ultimately can achieve the mission," said Cmdr. James J. Housinger, USS John Paul Jones (DDG 53) commanding officer. "The FIT [force integration training] and Talisman Saber FTX [field training exercise] have provided a superb opportunity for us to apply our advanced warfighting skills in a combined setting. We feel privileged to have been able to work in a combined battle space with



U.S. Navy photo by MCC (SW/AW) David Rush
Guided missile destroyer USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60) departs Pearl Harbor on Feb. 3 as part of USS Ronald Reagan Strike Group. Paul Hamilton and USS Lake Erie (CG 70), homeported at Pearl Harbor, participated in Talisman Saber 2007, conducted from June 18 - July 3 on waters off Australia.

our Australian counterparts."

Involved U.S. ships included USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60) and USS Lake Erie (CG 70), homeported at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, John Paul Jones, and for the Australians, HMAS Newcastle (FFG 06), HMAS Ballarat (FFG 155) and HMAS Parramatta (FFH 154).

The success of the defense and fire support

came in the coordination of sea echelon assets, primarily conducted from the watch floor of John Paul Jones, which acted as the sea combat commander and screen commander throughout the exercise - an assignment usually accomplished by a destroyer squadron (DESRON) staff.

Though much coordination was going on inside John Paul Jones, the watchstanders there credit other escort assets for being responsive in reporting and engaging simulated air, surface and sub-surface contacts.

Overall, as the sea combat commander, Housinger was thankful for the extra detection capabilities of a combined escort screen, which allowed the central defense command to more quickly take decisive action.

All involved credited the U.S.-Australian teamwork to providing the simulated defensive shield and fire power for mission accomplishment.

"It was amazing to see how well all the pieces came together between Australian ships and U.S. ships," said Lt. Dana Beery, Paul Hamilton weapons officer. "Despite training independently, when the time came to execution, both navies functioned together as if they had always been working as one."

U.S. Navy personnel have enjoyed working with the Australian forces thus far and say it has been great training.

"It is always a pleasure and very rewarding to work with the Royal Australian military forces. They are an important ally of the USA

and their professionalism and execution are an example for all to follow," said Operations Specialist 1st Class Jeff Davis (SW), a watchstander in his fourth major exercise with the Royal Australian Forces.

"I have enjoyed the time and experience coordinating the planning and defense of the combined amphibious task force. Nothing is more rewarding than making a plan and then seeing it executed flawlessly with professionalism and determination," said Davis.

Both sides know they will take the lessons learned going into the future.

"The training value of Talisman Saber cannot be overstated; we have learned a lot as a force and as a ship," said Housinger. "Additionally, individuals have learned how to apply their craft better in a very dynamic environment ... I know I'm personally smarter now and a better warfighter than I was two weeks ago."

The San Diego-based John Paul Jones and Pearl Harbor-based Paul Hamilton, both part of DESRON 15, have been working with a number of carrier strike groups in support of operations in both U.S. Central Command and 7th Fleet. For TS07, the ships were assigned to Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 7 /Task Force 76 in the 7th fleet are of responsibility. ESG 7 is the Navy's only forward-deployed amphibious force and is headquartered at White Beach Naval Facility, Okinawa, Japan, with an operating detachment at Sasebo, Japan.