

O'Kane, Reuben James join Nimitz CSG

MC2 Michael A. Lantron

Navy Region Hawai'i Public Affairs

Sailors aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS O'Kane (DDG 77) and the Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate USS Reuben James (FFG 57) departed their homeport of Naval Station (NAVSTA) Pearl Harbor on April 18 to join the USS Nimitz (CVN 68) Carrier Strike Group (CSG).

Friends and families waved goodbye as the ships left the pier for a surge deployment with the strike group in support of the global war on terrorism.

"I know it's part of the job, but I'm going to miss him like crazy and at the same time I'm more proud of him than ever," said the spouse of a Reuben James Sailor.

"Our leaving today is part of the whole new concept of being ready

at any time we're asked to deploy and I think the crew understands that and everyone's ready and looking forward to it," said Cmdr. Joseph Naman, commanding officer of Reuben James.

Reuben James returned Feb. 22 from a six-month deployment in support of the global war on terrorism, where it also conducted community relation projects in Guadalcanal, Tonga and Samoa.

Having to leave their friends and families behind as they return to sea two months after a major deployment is strenuous on the crew of Reuben James, but the crew is still upbeat about another underway period.

"I'm pretty excited to get out there, go underway and do whatever it is we may have to do," said Electronics Technician 3rd Class Stephen Coffmann, assigned to Reuben James.

Although Reuben James departed just two

months after returning to its homeport, O'Kane has been in Pearl Harbor since returning from a seven-month deployment in the Persian Gulf with the USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) CSG on Aug. 20, 2007.

Cmdr. Tom Druggan, commanding officer of O'Kane, believes that despite the long wait between deployments, the crew is up to the task and ready for their deployment.

"In the end, this is what we're hired to do," said Druggan. "This is why the Navy maintains a ready posture throughout the fleet and we are answering the call."

O n e O ' K a n e Sailor looks forward to get-



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

The Oliver Hazard Perry-class guided-missile frigate USS Reuben James (FFG 57) passes the USS Arizona Memorial as she departs Naval Station Pearl Harbor on April 28. Reuben James and the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS O'Kane (DDG 77) departed from their homeport of Pearl Harbor to join USS Nimitz (CVN 68) Carrier Strike Group (CSG).

ting back underway and supporting the nation while at sea. "I think all of us are

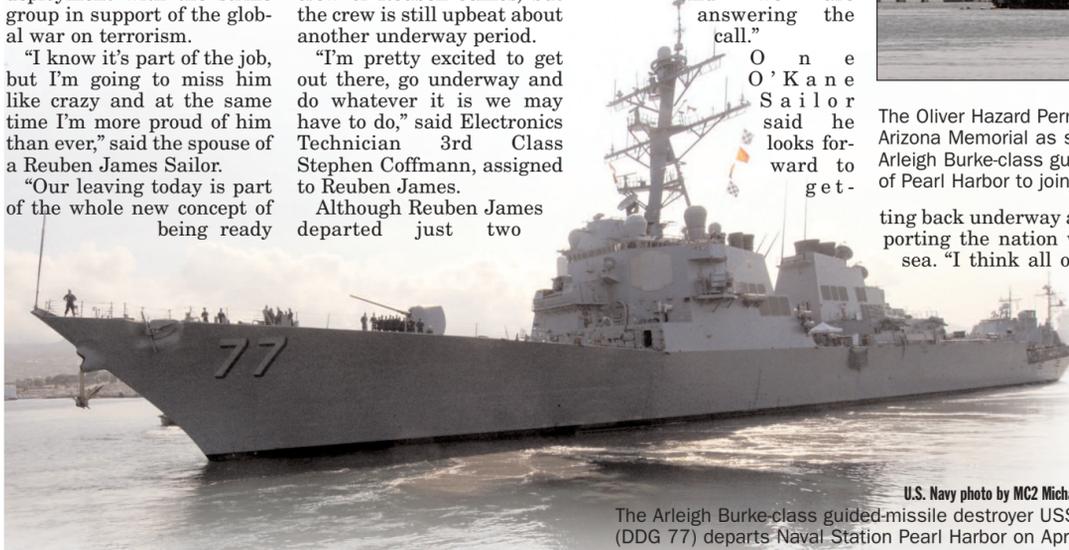
ready to go out and do what we're meant to do, which is go underway and defend our country," said Interior Communications Electrician 1st Class (SW) John Grunnels.

The two ships are deploying under the Navy's Fleet Response Plan, which provides the U.S. with the ability to respond on short notice to any global responsibility with flexible and sustainable forces.

Guided missile destroyers

provide multi-mission offensive and defensive capabilities and can operate independently or as part of carrier battle groups, surface action groups, amphibious ready groups and underway replenishment groups.

Frigates fulfill a protection of shipping (POS) mission as anti-submarine warfare (ASW) combatants for amphibious expeditionary forces, underway replenishment groups and merchant convoys.



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

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS O'Kane (DDG 77) departs Naval Station Pearl Harbor on April 28.

Fallon says final farewell

MC2 Brandon Shelander

Fleet Public Affairs Center Atlantic

Adm. William J. Fallon said his final goodbyes to his fellow Sailors and friends during a retirement ceremony aboard USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) at Naval Station Norfolk on April 18.

More than 600 service members and civilians attended the ceremony to celebrate Fallon's 41 years of service.

Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen attended the event and spoke about Fallon's dedication to his country, family and friends.

"Our country is stronger and safer because of Fallon's service," said Gates. "Adm. Fallon has been a valued voice when he has advised me and the president."

Mullen also spoke about Fallon's skill as a leader saying in war and in peace, Fallon has innovation and skill as well as grace and grit.

"He is dependable and honest, steadfast and sincere, and I'm going to miss him," said Mullen.

At the end of the ceremony, Fallon expressed his gratitude to the men and women who serve their country.

"I'm retiring, but only from the Navy. I'm excited. I'm very confident about the future," Fallon said. "We have a lot of people who are on the job that work very hard every day and it's been a great ride. I'm turning a page in my life."

Fallon's final assignment was commander of U.S. Central Command from March 16, 2007 to March 11,



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Matthew D. Leistikow

Adm. William J. Fallon salutes the U.S. flag during his retirement ceremony on the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) in Norfolk on April 18.

2008 and was the first naval officer to hold the position, which commands all U.S. forces in the Middle East.

A native of Merchantville, N.J., Fallon graduated from Villanova University in 1967 where he received his commission through the Navy ROTC Program and was designated a naval flight officer

upon completion of flight training in December 1967.

Fallon began his naval aviation service flying in the RA-5C Vigilante with a combat deployment to Vietnam. He served in flying assignments with attack squadrons and carrier air wings for 24 years,

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Rear Adm. T.G. Alexander, commander of Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, receives a plaque from Deputy Secretary of the Interior Lynn Scarlett on behalf of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit THREE (EODMU-3) during a ceremony held April 23.

EODMU-3 recognized for ordnance removal at Molokini Island

Story and photo by MC2 Michael A. Lantron

Commander, Navy Region Hawai'i Public Affairs

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit Three (EODMU-3) was formally recognized by Deputy Secretary of the Interior Lynn Scarlett and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for its removal of unexploded ordnance from the waters of Molokini Island during a ceremony April 23 on board Naval Station Pearl Harbor.

From March 11-16, EODMU-3 Sailors disposed of three pieces of ordnance,

helping make Molokini Island, located 2.5 miles off Maui's south coast, a safer place for people and wildlife in the process. The ordnance was discovered during surface inspection surveys completed in December 2006 and March 2007 by the U.S. Navy, at the request of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"The work these men did was dangerous and I thank them for their outstanding work," said Scarlett. "This is not only about service to keep the nation secure, but service in making sure it is a nation worth securing and conser-

vation is a key part of that."

Four Sailors assigned to EODMU-3 were individually recognized for their efforts during the ceremony, as was Rear Adm. T.G. Alexander, commander of Navy Region Hawai'i and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific for his leadership during the event.

"Being part of Hawai'i and learning to love the island, it felt great to be part of something that protects the environment and makes sure our future generations can enjoy this as well," said Chief Explosive Ordnance Disposal Christopher Garcia, assigned to EODMU-3.



Pearl Harbor Sailors watch "Carrier" screening See page A-2



Navy Region Hawai'i hosts 5th Annual Earth Day Fair See page A-4



Pacific Fleet sea, shore SOYs announced See page A-7



Sailors clean up Pearl Harbor Bike Path in observance of Earth Month See page B-1

Pearl Harbor Sailors watch 'Carrier' screening

Karen S. Spangler

Editor

Sailors at Naval Station Pearl Harbor had an opportunity to view a special screening of the Public Broadcast System (PBS) broadcast "Carrier" on April 19 at the USS Arizona Memorial Visitors Center.

"Carrier" is a character-driven 10-part series filmed aboard USS Nimitz (CVN 68) during a six-month deployment to the Persian Gulf from May to November 2005.

The Navy approved support of the production in April 2005. Filming was conducted during Nimitz's deployment in support of the global war in terrorism. Filmmakers from Carrier Project Inc. and Icon Productions were embedded aboard the Nimitz and had the opportunity to record the entire deployment, as seen through the eyes of the crew.

"Carrier" focuses primarily on Sailors and their daily lives aboard ship, providing a glimpse into the difficulties of being away from home and loved ones, the challenges of living in close quarters with 5,000 other people and the great sacrifices that Sailors make to protect the American people and their way of life.

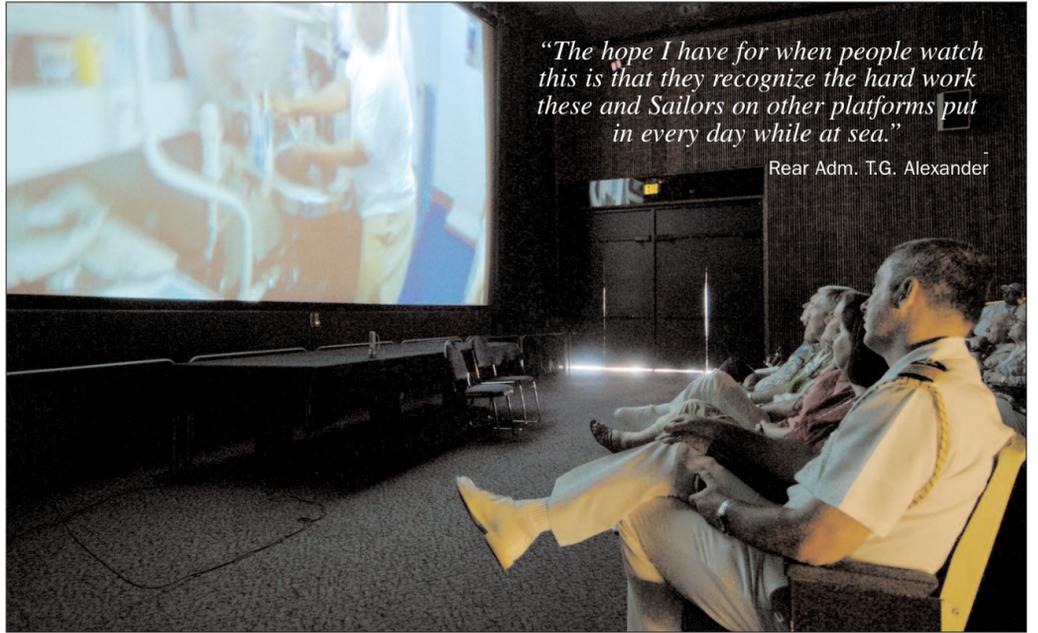
The documentary follows a core group of participants from fighter pilots to the youngest Sailors and everyone in between as they deal with personal conflicts about their jobs, families, faith, patriotism, love, the rites of passage and the war on terrorism.

It tells the story of the crew of 5,000-plus Sailors and Marines, with an average age of 19, who serve aboard the "floating city" and keep the ship functioning and battle-ready.

Rear Adm. Ted "Twig" Branch, former commanding officer of Nimitz, said, "The USS Nimitz is a fine ship... a great one, but the heart and soul is not the steel, it's the crew."

The character-driven immersion in the world of a nuclear aircraft carrier was filmed as the ship transited from San Diego to the Persian Gulf and back with stops at Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i; Hong Kong, China; Guam; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Bahrain; and Australia. Families of some of the crew members embarked the ship in Hawai'i for a "tiger cruise" on the final leg of the journey to California.

"Carrier" will be featured on PBS in five two-hour segments beginning April 27 and airing through May 1.



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Michael A. Lantron
Capt. Donald Hodge, chief of staff for Commander, Navy Region Hawai'i and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, watches a special screening of the Public Broadcast System documentary "Carrier" on April 19 at the USS Arizona Memorial Visitors Center. "Carrier" is a character-driven 10-part series filmed aboard USS Nimitz (CVN 68) during a six-month deployment to the Persian Gulf from May to November 2005.

Hawaii Navy News Editorial

Million Dollar Sailors train for financial fitness

MC1 James E. Foehl

Navy Region Hawaii

Sixty Sailors from various commands throughout the Hawaii region attended the Million Dollar Sailor course April 14-15 at Navy Region Hawaii's Fleet and Family Service Center (FFSC).

In addition to the daily duties and responsibilities at work, a Sailor's finances can quickly become a source of stress if personal financial management is neglected.

When personal financial readiness is not met and the stress becomes too great, it can lead to destructive behavior and impact unit readiness and the Navy's ability to accomplish its mission.

Command financial specialists (CFS) and Navy leaders work together with Sailors to help educate, train and counsel Sailors on becoming financially fit through development of reliable financial habits.

Certified financial educators and counselors at Navy Region Hawaii's FFSC assist local commands and area CFSs by serving as the primary resource and subject matter experts and tailoring personal financial management (PFM) information, materials and educational programs to Sailors in the local area.

According to Debbie Blunt, a

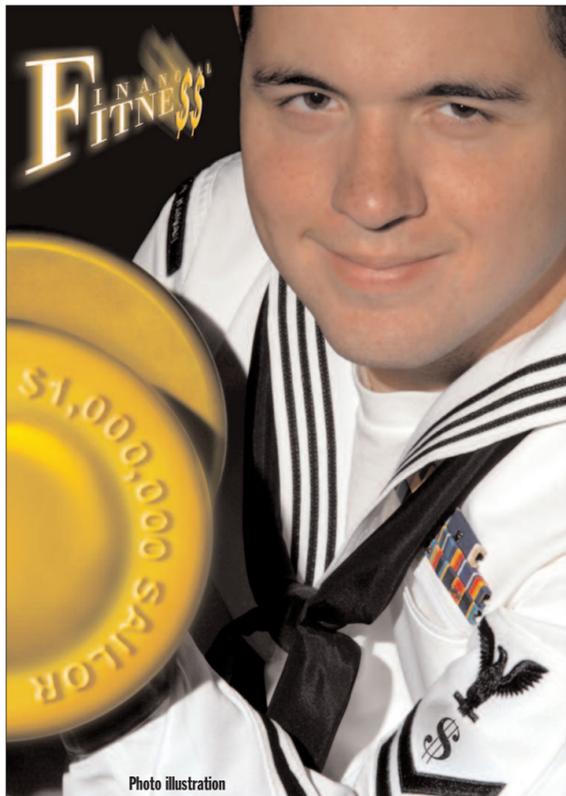


Photo illustration

financial counselor and educator for Navy Region Hawaii's FFSC, security clearances issues, horrible credit scores and just not knowing about

PFM were exactly what prompted the development of the Million Dollar Sailor course.

The two-day course focuses

on an array of personal financial management topics which are tailored to help keep Hawaii Sailors financially fit.

"This class teaches us to properly organize our finances, budget and the purchasing and selling of new and used vehicles," said Electronics Technician 3rd Class Scott Carvalho, assigned to the Pearl Harbor-based attack submarine USS Columbia (SSN 771).

Sailors are responsible for their personal finance, but by being proactive and using the knowledge, tools and resources available, they become better equipped to build future wealth, emergency savings, lower personal debt and ensure mission readiness.

"This class is a way to keep my finances in order and not get into any debt," said Electronics Technician Seaman Apprentice Richard Camacho, assigned to the Pearl Harbor-based USS Tucson (SSN 770). "It's definitely important to stay out of debt for me because I have a security clearance and if I did get into any debt or problems financially, it could affect my clearance and my job."

During the class, Sailors learned about key topics such as: military pay and allowances, creating a budget, savings and investment, establishing and maintaining credit, car buying, checking account

management, buying insurance and how to be a smart consumer.

"I plan on buying a car so I'll definitely use the skills they're teaching us here. I'm going to do my homework - that's what they've taught me to do. When I go to the automobile dealership, I can be educated and not get cheated," said Camacho.

While poor financial management can impact the granting of security clearances and careers, a secure financial future starts with a commitment to save and set achievable goals.

"The budget we give them for living expenses is probably one of the best I've ever seen. It covers everything from haircuts to beer money to pet food. You name it, it's included in that budget," said Blunt.

According to Blunt, most people that come to see her claim to be, "struggling paycheck to paycheck."

"We do that budget up and they have a surplus of 500 to 600 dollars a month that they can't account for. It's a real eye-opener for them."

Yeoman 2nd Class (SW) Maxine Turner, assigned to Commander Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, noted that she wished that she had come to the class a lot sooner.

"I became more aware of how to build credit, fix credit, and available resources.

Before the class I knew it was important, but I didn't know the ins-and-outs as well as I do now."

Many Sailors are assigned to areas with an above average cost of living and understanding allowances such as cost of living allowance (COLA) make financial management even more critical.

"COLA is not to be spent on a car payment. COLA is given for the extra cost of [living expenses]. When they permanently change stations, they're not going to have that COLA," said Blunt.

By using pay and allowances wisely, having a spending plan, and adequately preparing for financial responsibilities prior to deployments and during one's career lifecycle, Sailors can improve their personal financial readiness.

Members who complete the two-day Million Dollar Sailor course fulfill education and training needs that will provide them and their families with information necessary to increase financial awareness, develop skills in managing their personal finances, and enhance their quality of life.

For more information about financial fitness, contact your command financial specialist or visit <http://www.npc.navy.mil/AboutUs/MPTE/FinancialFitness.html>.



Save resources and dollars - be conservation conscious

Karen S. Spangler

Editor

Is the thermostat on your air conditioning system turned so low that you have to wear a sweater inside your house or put a blanket on the bed to keep warm? Have you noticed that exterior lights are left on even after the sun rises? Do you water your lawn for so long that it leaves pools and puddles in the grass or runs down the street in rivulets? Do you wash your car every day?

For those who answered yes to any of these questions, it's time to be more "conservation conscious" and use resources more wisely. These examples are a bit on the extreme side, but even if you aren't guilty of these practices, you can still take a proactive role in saving energy and water.

For one thing, it's the right thing to do. But ensuring that utilities conservation becomes an essential part of our daily routine is also the goal of utilities conservation standards that have been established within Navy Region Hawaii.

A Regional Energy Management Team is asking everyone to "pledge your personal commitment to saving Navy energy." The utilities conservation standards direct that all air conditioning unit thermostats in offices and Navy housing areas should be set at 78 degrees or higher.

Conserving energy and using resources wisely is everyone's responsibility. By

being conservation conscious, all of us can serve a vital role in saving these valuable resources. Electricity is just one of the resources that we need, but frequently abuse.

Here are some "common sense" energy-saving tips from the people at Hawaiian Electric Company that will enable you to do your part in conserving electricity.

- User lower wattage bulbs wherever possible and be sure to turn off lights when not in use. Use fluorescent lights where possible. Compact fluorescents use 75 percent less energy and last 10 times longer.

- Dishwashers use 37 percent less water than washing dishes by hand, as long as you are washing full loads and using the short cycle.

- Use a microwave if you are cooking or heating a small amount of food.

- When doing laundry, always use the cold water rinse cycle. Dry full loads, but don't overload. Check and clean your dryer's lint filter often.

- When taking showers and baths, run the water as little as possible. Take some time to talk with all of the members of your family about pitching in to manage wisely and conserve electrical use.

For those who work or live on Navy installations, remember that utility bills must be paid by the Navy using taxpayer dollars. Help the Navy to use those taxpayer dollars - YOUR dollars - more wisely and, at the same time, take an active role in energy conservation efforts.

USS Nevada (BB 36) after repair from torpedo damage



Official U.S. Navy photo by PH2 H.S. Fawcett, now in the collections of the National Archives

USS Nevada (BB-36) departs from Pearl Harbor after temporary repair of bomb and torpedo damage received during the Japanese air raid on Dec. 7, 1941. Photograph is dated April 19, 1942, possibly taken as the ship was leaving Pearl Harbor for a trial run. The Pearl Harbor Navy Yard's work on her was completed on April 22, after which she steamed to the Puget Sound Navy Yard for permanent repairs and modernization. Note Sailors watching, each carrying a gas mask container.

Hawaii Navy News

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Navy Region Hawai'i hosts 5th annual Earth Day Fair

Story and photo by
MC2 John W. Ciccarelli Jr.

Fleet Public Affairs Center
Detachment Hawai'i

Navy Region Hawai'i (CNRH) hosted the 5th Annual Navy Region Hawai'i 2008 Earth Day Fair at the Pearl Harbor Navy Exchange (NEX) on April 19.

It partnered with the Navy Exchange (NEX), Navy Facilities Engineering Command Hawai'i (NAVFAC) and the Federal Fire Department to help educate patrons on how to make a difference in our everyday environment and to save our planet's natural resources.

Sailors assigned to Naval Maritime Forecast Center/Joint Typhoon Warning Center (NMFC/JTWC) conducted experiments and explained the dynamics of tornados and hurricanes.

"We are here today discussing tornados and typhoons and how a lot of things we do to our environ-

ment are affecting weather patterns. The things we do to the environment at this moment can affect tropical systems to a point that can make them larger, stronger and more dangerous," said Aerographer's Mate 3rd Class Sylvia Maness, assigned to NMFC/JTWC.

Maness was pleased with the large turnout of people who were eager to learn more about how they could make a difference in the environment.

"I think it's really great that everyone is out here at the fair learning different ways to be aware of the problems that we face and that we all need to do our part to make it a livable place for generations to come," said Maness.

Matt Flach, a landscape architect at NAVFAC Hawai'i, educated patrons on xeroscaping, a type of desert landscaping that requires little or no water and how CNRH has implemented this practice.

"It helps by planting plants that take less water to maintain without taking



Federal Firefighter David Yoshida shows a child the warning system of a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) at the 5th annual Navy Region Hawai'i 2008 Earth Day Fair on April 19 at the Navy Exchange. Navy Region Hawai'i partnered with the Navy Exchange, Navy Facilities Engineering Command Pacific Hawai'i (NAVFAC) and the Federal Fire Department to educate patrons on how to make a difference in our everyday environment.

away the beauty," said Flach.

According to Flach, the

Navy has executive orders for the next eight years to

reduce water consumption

by two percent and a total of 16 percent by the year 2016.

"It's important that we

recognize what Earth Day is all about and it really is great that all these departments and agencies came here to support ways they can cut back on water consumption and benefit from a cleaner environment," said Flach.

Other organizations at the fair included the CNRH environmental department, Hawaiian Electric Company, Hawaiian Island Humpback Whale Sanctuary, Navy Energy Team, Navy Recycling Program, General Electric, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the City and County of Honolulu environmental services department.

"This is a great partnership with the Navy Region, NAVFAC Hawai'i and everybody involved toward this very worthy cause - educating the public on saving our energy and conserving our natural resources toward a cleaner future," said Beverly Borges, marketing manager for Pearl Harbor Navy Exchange.

Nominations solicited for Region Energy Awards Program

Naval Facilities
Engineering Command
Hawai'i

To recognize the outstanding efforts put forth by military and civilian personnel, Navy Region Hawai'i has established a Region Energy Awards Program (COMNAVREGHI-INST 4101.1B).

On a quarterly basis, nominations will be accepted for individuals, small groups and activities who have taken action to assist the region with

its energy conservation efforts. If you know of an individual, small group or activity that has taken steps to reduce energy use or improve energy efficiency, you are encouraged to complete a nomination form.

To request a nomination form, contact the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Hawai'i Energy Team at 471-0440 or krista.stehn.ctr@navy.mil. Nominations for the second quarter of Fiscal Year '08 must be received by April 30.

Fallon leaves a stronger Navy

Continued from A-1

deploying to the Mediterranean Sea, Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans embarked aboard USS Saratoga (CV 60), USS Ranger (CV61), USS Nimitz (CVN 68), USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) and USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). He has logged more than 1,300 carrier arrested landings and 4,800 flight hours in tactical jet aircraft.

Fallon commanded Attack Squadron 65 embarked aboard Dwight D. Eisenhower, Medium Attack Wing 1 at Naval Air Station Oceana, Va. and Carrier Air Wing 8 aboard Theodore Roosevelt during a combat deployment to the Persian Gulf for Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

Assigned as Commander, Carrier

Group 8 in 1995, he deployed to the Mediterranean as commander, Theodore Roosevelt Battle Group and commanded Battle Force 6th Fleet (CTF 60) during NATO's Combat Operation Deliberate Force in Bosnia. He also served as Commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet and Commander, Striking Fleet Atlantic from November 1997 to September 2000.

His first flag officer assignment was with NATO as assistant chief of staff, plans and policy for Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic. He was then assigned as deputy and chief of staff, U.S. Atlantic Fleet followed by assignments as deputy commander-in-chief and chief of staff, U.S. Atlantic Command. Fallon served as the 31st Vice Chief of Naval Operations from October 2000 to

August 2003. He was the Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command and U.S. Atlantic Fleet from October 2003 to February 2005. He served as Commander, U.S. Pacific Command from February 2005 until March 2007.

Fallon is a graduate of the Naval War College, Newport, R.I., the National War College in Washington, D.C., and has a master of arts degree in international studies from Old Dominion University.

His awards include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, and various unit and campaign decorations.

Pearl Harbor Highlights

(Right) A child of a Sailor assigned to the Oliver Hazard Perry-class guided-missile frigate USS Reuben James (FFG 57) plays on the pier as the ship departs Naval Station Pearl Harbor. Reuben James and the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS O'Kane (DDG 77) departed from their homeport of Pearl Harbor on April 18 to join USS Nimitz (CVN 68) Carrier Strike Group. Nimitz CSG is deployed under the Navy's fleet response plan (FRP) and will operate in the Western Pacific in support of U.S. commitments in the region. The FRP provides the United States with the ability to respond to any global commitment with flexible and sustainable forces and the ability to rapidly respond to a range of situations on short notice.

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



Navy Region Hawai'i Federal Fire Department firefighters drag a dummy deceased casualty to safety during a chlorine gas leak drill April 17 as part of the Joint Program Managers Guardian Exercise on board Naval Station (NAVSTA) Pearl Harbor. The two-day exercise is designed to evaluate the performance of the NAVSTA Pearl Harbor Emergency Operations Center during casualties.

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



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Michael A. Lantron
Members of the Navy Region Hawai'i Federal Fire Department's hazardous material unit check their equipment during a chlorine gas leak drill April 17 as part of the Joint Program Managers Guardian Exercise on board Naval Station (NAVSTA) Pearl Harbor.

(Below) Aerographer's Mate 3rd Class Sylvia Maness and Aerographer's Mate 1st Class (AW) Minh Ho, assigned to Naval Maritime Forecast Center/Joint Typhoon Warning Center, demonstrate how a tornado forms to a child at the 5th annual Navy Region Hawai'i 2008 Earth Day Fair on April 19 at the Navy Exchange. Navy Region Hawai'i partnered with the Navy Exchange, Navy Facilities Engineering Command Hawai'i (NAVFAC) and the Federal Fire Department to educate patrons on how to make a difference in our everyday environment.

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



Fifth graders take COMPACFLT to school

Story and photo by
MC2 Sarah K. Murphy

U.S. Pacific Fleet Public
Affairs

Kamehameha Elementary School opened its doors to parents and guests on April 9 to share what the fifth-grade students in room 202 learned about modern day "Pu'uloa," now known as Pearl Harbor.

Student Erinn Kamalani Ortiz, who showcased the history and mission of the Pacific Fleet, invited Adm. Robert F. Willard, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Other students had models and presentations about Pearl Harbor's history, with most focusing on the U.S. Navy.

"This was a rare and special opportunity," said Willard. "I was impressed with Kamehameha School, teacher Ms. Ohia and especially the students – young scholars who did a remarkable job on their various projects. I'm glad the Navy was invited to participate. This was a wonderful opportunity."

The projects were the result of two days of on-site field trips to Naval Station Pearl Harbor and Ford Island. The class visited the Battleship Missouri Memorial, the USS Arizona Memorial and the

Pacific Aviation Museum. After these tours, students made models, posters and displays and then explained their projects to classroom visitors.

Ortiz's project included an interview with Willard conducted earlier this year in which she learned about the Navy's part in humanitarian efforts, including earthquake, tsunami and cyclone relief. During the interview, Willard mentioned the tropical cyclone in Bangladesh.

"I looked in a magazine and learned more and I wanted to include it in my project," said Ortiz. "I learned that 3,200 people died and millions were homeless and that the Navy and some other people went to help Bangladesh. I also learned they gave food and clothes and water and shelter."

Willard visited with each of the students, provided encouragement and listened to their presentations.

Ortiz's mother, Rosanna Namoca, expressed her thanks in writing to Willard. "Words cannot adequately express the magnitude of the impact your presence and interaction made on a classroom of 24 Kamehameha Elementary School fifth graders and their teacher," Namoca wrote. "You took

great care and time to show genuine personal interest in their work, effectively validating their efforts."

"Having Adm. Willard here is like the icing on the cake," said Lindell Ohia, fifth-grade teacher at the school.

Adm. Robert F. Willard, commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet, visits a fifth grade class at Kamehameha Elementary School in Honolulu on April 9 for the Modern Day Pu'uloa-Pearl Harbor Showcase. Willard was invited by Erinn Ortiz, a student at the school who exchanged leis with him and explained her research project that showcased the history of Pacific Fleet. Her project included an in-depth interview with Willard and his knowledge of past Pacific Fleet commanders.



Pacific Fleet sea, shore SOYs announced

Story and photo by
MC2 Sarah K. Murphy

U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

Rear Adm. John Bird, deputy commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, announced the winners of the 2008 Sailors of the Year competition April 17 during a recognition luncheon in Honolulu.

Aviation Boatswain's Mate (fuels) 1st Class (AW/SW) Justin H. Melton was named Pacific Fleet's Sea Sailor of the Year and Intelligence Specialist 1st Class (AW/SW) Heather Strow was named Pacific Fleet's Shore Sailor of the Year.

Melton and Strow competed against first class petty officers from throughout the Pacific Fleet area of operations; however, the final competition was narrowed to four in each of the two categories – sea and shore. According to Bird, all eight were the “best of the best,” serving the Pacific Fleet.

“Each Sailor of the year here today should take great pride in being chosen from such an exceptional field of talent,” said Bird, one of the keynote speakers. “The Sailors we honor here today are the best of their breed. They distinguished themselves as the finest in their division, their department, their command and now the fleet.”

Representing USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), Melton was born in Newport News, Va. This summer, Melton will be meritoriously advanced to chief petty officer along with the Fleet Forces Command and Reserve Force Sailors of the year.

“It's an honor to say that I have been chosen to represent the Pacific Fleet,” Melton said. “This is quite an accomplishment. It's something that I know I haven't been able to take in full effect right now. It's really incredible.”

Strow, a Lancaster, Calif., native, represents Commander U.S. 3rd Fleet. From here she will head to Washington, D.C., where she will represent the Pacific Fleet at the Chief of Naval Operations Shore



Intelligence Specialist 1st Class Heather Strow, center, learns of her selection as the Pacific Fleet Shore Sailor of the Year, during a recognition luncheon April 17 in Honolulu. Strow, assigned to Commander, U.S. Third Fleet, competed against thousands of shore-based Sailors throughout the U.S. Pacific Fleet area of responsibility. The announcement culminated a week of personal and professional evaluations as well as leadership, naval heritage and team-building events throughout historic Pearl Harbor.

Sailor of the Year Competition. If selected, she, too, will be meritoriously promoted to chief petty officer.

“An unbelievable feeling, I can't express to you how honored I am,” said Strow upon being selected as the Shore Sailor of the Year. “It's a huge achievement not just for myself, but for my command and other Sailors who will one day take my place.”

Bird explained how these Sailors arrived at this point in the competition and how they were able to rise above the other competitors. He also spoke of the inspiration the Sailors of the Year are to everyone, including himself.

“These petty officers have led the way with their initiative, command involvement and care for their shipmates. First off, they know what it takes to get the job done. Secondly

and more importantly they know how to lead their shipmates on how to get the job done,” said Bird. “Lastly, the first two traits are probably a result of this last characteristic - they are well-rounded. They participate in community activities, they volunteer, they interact across departmental boundaries, and they seek higher education and opportunities to learn about the world cultures. I am inspired by these individuals to do more and better, myself.”

In addition to Bird, Hawai'i Lt. Gov. James R. “Duke” Aiona Jr. spoke to all in attendance at the luncheon. He not only praised the Sailors for the incredible milestone in their careers, but also thanked all military members in attendance for their service to the nation and to the state of Hawai'i.

“[Our military personnel] have committed themselves to the service and a result of that commitment is not only perseverance, but also ultimately strength,” Aiona said. “It's that perseverance and that strength through commitment that makes outstanding young men and women, but more importantly models to our young people. All I can say is thank you, mahalo, for everything you do.”

Before wrapping up the day's events, Pacific Fleet Master Chief (SW/AW) Tom Howard, who spearheaded the competition, addressed the Sailors of the Year, describing what he called “a week-long career development board.” Howard encouraged the Sailors and challenged them to use the information received to become stronger leaders.

“There is no doubt that all of you

are the best in the fleet and the recognition you earn here today is awesome. But I would tell you this. Don't ever rest on the laurels of yesterday, because tomorrow nobody cares what you did today,” Howard said. “They want to know what you're going to do next.”

The eight Sailor of the Year finalists spent five days in Hawai'i, participating in a variety of personal and professional evaluations as well as leadership, naval heritage and team-building events prior to the announcement of the winners.

“Our desire this year was to ensure today's Sailor had a chance to talk with yesterday's Sailor as there is so much to learn about leadership from these heroes among us,” Howard said about the week's events and about the retirees who attended the recognition luncheon.

The other Sailors nominated for the Sea Sailor of the Year title were Religious Program Specialist 1st Class (FMF/SW/AW) Parrish D. Walker, 3rd Marine Air Wing, MCAS Miramar; Yeoman 1st Class Juanette A. Martin, USS Shoup (DDG 86); and Special Warfare Operator 1st Class (SEAL/FFP) Charles S. Melton, Seal Team Five.

Others nominated for Shore Sailor of the Year were Yeoman 1st Class (SW) LaTonya N. Grace, currently assigned to U.S. Pacific Command but represented Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet; Electronics Technician 1st Class (SW) Manuel Tamayo, U.S. Naval Ship Repair Facility-Japan; and Master at Arms 1st Class (SW/AW/PJ) Chad V. Bearden, Afloat Training Group, Middle Pacific.

The Sailors of the Year received a ceremonial cutlass and a Lone Sailor statue. The runners-up received a Lone Sailor statue and Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medals.

Adm. Elmo Zumwalt initiated the Sailor of the Year program in 1972 as he sought to recognize outstanding Atlantic and Pacific Fleet Sailors at sea. The following year, the Shore Sailor of the Year program was introduced.

Distressed swimmers rescued as water safety class watches

MC1 (SW/AW) Johnny Michael

Pacific Missile Range Facility, Barking Sands, Kauai

Two distressed swimmers were pulled from a strong current on April 16 at the Major's Bay recreation area located on Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF), Barking Sands, Hawai'i. The men, Navy employees from Rhode Island working on a project at PMRF, were unwittingly the key players in a lesson on water safety.

The swimmers were initially noticed by Aaron Labuguen, one of six firefighters with the base fire and rescue department who were participating in a water safety training course on the beach several hundred yards away. Labuguen

alerted the course instructors to the presence of the swimmers, noting that the two men seemed to be experiencing some difficulty.

Training was stopped as the instructors assessed the situation. After several minutes of careful observation, it was obvious to the professional rescue swimmers leading the course that their beachside classroom could potentially turn into the staging area for a seaborne rescue.

"We watched them swim for a while," said Ian MacDonald, an instructor with Ku'au Patrol, a company specializing in rescue swimmer training and certifications. "They had control for a while. The problem began when they tried to come back...and that was right against the current."

The two swimmers

attempted to swim perpendicular to the current after realizing their predicament, but were rapidly losing ground. Seeing that the situation had become dangerous, two of the instructors, Jeffrey Barbeito and

ing a jet-ski hurtle toward them from the beach.

"We had been swimming at lunchtime at Major's for the past week so we had been out there three or four times already," explained Gregory Behie, one of the

"We were discussing [water safety] all week. Then on day three we have a real incident during the training."

- Makani Christensen

MacDonald, launched the jet-ski they had brought as a precaution for the day's training and raced out to provide assistance to the rapidly receding swimmers.

The swimmers had been taken completely by surprise when they found themselves suddenly getting swept out and then just as quickly see-

two rescued swimmers. "We went in, started swimming and got past the surf and we started swimming down [the beach]. After five minutes I

looked up, just got a sight, and I saw next to me the cottages. So we decided we were going to head back in and in a matter of seconds, we realized we were in a

current. This was all in a matter of minutes and the water was kind of turbulent. There wasn't any regularity to the waves or the swells like you would normally experience. I also noticed that we had been pulled offshore. We were about a hundred yards or more off the beach and this all happened pretty fast. It was only a matter of 10 minutes between the time that we entered the surf and we found ourselves in this situation. It was right then that we saw the guys on the jet-ski coming across the water toward us."

According to Behie, the two were not prepared for the dramatic and sudden change in conditions. Both are experienced open-water swimmers who had been swimming for the past week in that same spot during

their lunchtime breaks. By the time they knew they were in a rip current, it was already too late.

"We were swimming negative. We were swimming in one direction, but going in the other," said Behie, an experienced triathlete. "So we were getting dragged. It doesn't matter how good a swimmer you are. You're not going to swim out of that."

The two men expressed their gratitude to their rescuers and all who were involved marveled at the coincidence of the swimmers' misadventure occurring on the same beach as a water safety class. Another instructor with Ku'au Patrol, Makani Christensen, noted the irony, "We were discussing [water safety] all week. Then on day three we have a real incident during the training."

USS Port Royal, USS Hopper visit Palau

Ensign Katie Burkhardt

USS Hopper (DDG 70) Public Affairs

Two Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i-based ships, guided-missile cruiser USS Port Royal (CG 73) and guided-missile destroyer USS Hopper (DDG 70), visited the island of Palau on April 14.

"The United States has a unique and mutually beneficial relationship with Palau," said Hopper's commanding officer, Cmdr. Jeffrey W. James. "We feel honored to explore the island and experience the culture and rich history that this area holds."

The people of Palau and the Sailors have another common bond - both are islanders. Capt. David B. Adler, Port Royal's commanding officer, and James both extended a friendly "aloha" to Palau on behalf of themselves and their crews.

Port Royal and Hopper received a warm welcome from Vice President Elias Camsek Chin during the reception on April 14 at the Ngarachemayong Cultural Center. Festivities included displays of local arts and crafts, performances by local dancers and samplings of traditional entrees.

Port Royal and Hopper are on a scheduled deployment in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility. Operating in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean, the U.S. 7th Fleet is the largest of forward-deployed U.S. fleets, with approximately 50 ships, 120 aircraft and 20,000 Sailors and Marines assigned at any given time.