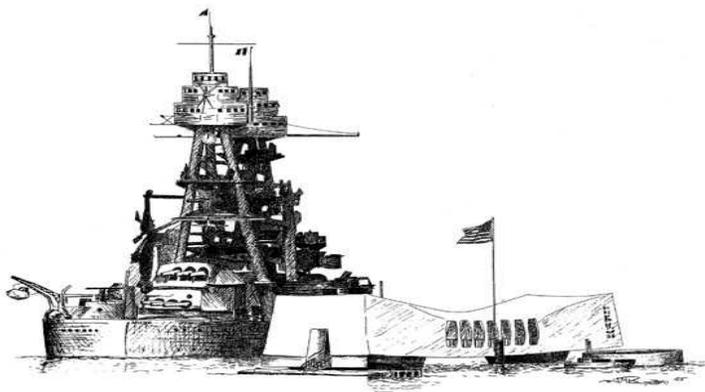


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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POC: Chief David Rush 590-8363

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USS Reuben James returns from the Western Pacific

(PEARL HARBOR) -- Family and Friends will welcome back the more than 220 officers and enlisted personnel of the Pearl Harbor-based guided missile frigate USS Reuben James (FFG-57), when they return to Naval Station Pearl Harbor on Friday, December 19.

USS Reuben James, commanded by Cmdr. Joseph Naman, left Pearl Harbor in September in support of the Pacific Fleet's Mid-Pacific Surface Combatant Operational Employment. While underway, the ship participated in Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines, and multi-national exercises ANNUALEX 20G and SHAREM 159.

The Mid-Pacific Surface Combatant Operational Employment program calls for nine of the 11 Hawaii-based surface combatants to focus on the Western Pacific by conducting intermediate/advanced training and regular deployments in the Western Pacific, and is designed to improve the U.S. Pacific Fleet's war fighting readiness and effectiveness.

While supporting Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines as part of Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines, Reuben James visited Legazpi, Republic of the Philippines. Sailors painted an elementary school with the help of Philippine Navy volunteers and distributed Project Handclasp medical and hygiene supplies to the City Health Office. The ship also visited Yokosuka, Japan, and Saipan.

ANNUALEX 20G was designed as a series of tactical exercises conducted between the U.S. and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Forces. SHAREM 159 was created for the testing analysis of sound propagation in relation to active sonar. During the exercise, Reuben James' sonar technicians received an abundance of acoustic analysis training while dealing with real world Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) scenarios.

USS Reuben James is a 450-foot-long Oliver Hazard Perry-class guided missile frigate with a mission to escort and protect carrier battle groups, amphibious landing groups, underway replenishment groups and convoys.

Media interested in covering the ship's arrival must contact Chief David Rush by COB Thursday at (808) 590-8363. Media will be met at the Pass & ID parking lot next to Nimitz Gate at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 19.

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