

Navy in Hawaii honors Vietnam veterans



(Left) Marines, Airmen and Sailors honor the legacy of Vietnam veterans during the Pearl Harbor Colors ceremony held June 18.

(Below) Sailors from the Joint Base Honors and Ceremonies Guard parade colors during the Pearl Harbor Colors ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. (Additional photo on page A-5.)



Story and photos by MC1 Omari K. Way

Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs

During yesterday's Pearl Harbor Colors ceremony, Navy Region Hawaii, in conjunction with National Park Service, honored the flag and paid tribute to American service members who were on duty during the Vietnam War.

Set at the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument Visitor Center, the ceremony featured the U.S. Pacific Fleet Band, Joint Base Honors and Ceremonies Guard, an official observance of "morning colors" and a timely reminder.

"This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War and today, in recognition of that commemoration, we are here to honor the service and sacrifice of our Vietnam veterans and to say 'thank you' for that service," said Lt. Damall Martin, event organizer, during his opening remarks.

Robert "Tim" Guard, a Vietnam veteran, was the ceremony's guest speaker. Guard is chairman of the board for the USS Missouri Memorial Association and is a recipient of the Navy Meritorious Public Service Citation.

A former Navy lieutenant, Guard talked to the audience about the legacy of the Vietnam War. His awards include a Bronze Star, Navy Commendation Medal, Navy Achievement Medal and the Republic of Vietnam Legion of Merit.

Guard delivered a speech full of lessons learned. "Korea may be remembered as the Forgotten War, but Vietnam could be known as the War of the Forgotten Veteran," he said.

"We Vietnam veterans came home to a nation of fellow Americans who hardly seemed to care that we had ever left," Guard said. "People were apathetic at best, derisive at their worst."

Guard also spoke of the problems faced by many of the Vietnam War veterans living today. As of May, the Veteran Administration reports that number to be more than 153,000.

"The battle 'Vietnam' continues today for many veterans as they cope with unemployment, homelessness, incarceration, PTSD, drugs and inadequate VA medical care. Estimates run as high as 60 percent of all Vietnam veterans who are afflicted today by one or more of these conditions," Guard said.

But Guard soon shifted his focus toward gratitude and hope and noted the difference in how veterans of recent conflicts are treated.

"The lasting lesson learned from the experience of Vietnam is that veterans [today] return home, greeted by well-deserved tributes for their service to America," he said.

Other Vietnam vets who

were part of the 1,500 plus audience agreed with Guard's observation.

Retired U.S. Army Col. Ben Acochido, former Hawaii State VFW commander, said he is thankful that "regardless of politics, troops are supported."

Guard ended his address speaking to the many Vietnam veterans who came to honor the flag. He said, "Vietnam veterans, welcome home."

The bandmaster sounded attention to colors. The color guard paraded the colors.

The next Pearl Harbor Colors ceremony is scheduled for July 16 and will highlight Navy youth outreach programs.

For more news from Navy Region Hawaii, visit www.navy.mil/local/cnrh/.

Kirkendall bids 'aloha' to 647th ABG and Joint Base ohana

Joint Base Pearl Harbor Public Affairs

Col. David Kirkendall will relinquish command of the 647th Air Base Group to Col. Richard Smith during a change of command ceremony today at the Missing Man Formation.

Kirkendall has served as the commander of 647th Air Base Group and deputy commander of Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam since May 2013.

His next assignment will be at PACAF as the 613th Air Operations Center vice commander.

As the 647th Air Base

Group commander, Kirkendall led more than 950 personnel and five squadrons to deliver the full range of mission support for base, theater and global air/joint operations.

As the deputy Joint Base commander, he assisted the Joint Base commander with activating, integrating and guiding more than 50 installation support functions for Joint Base operations, supporting more than 38,000 personnel and their families.

Among his accomplishments, Kirkendall led the first JBPHH "Wings Over



U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Steven Khor

The U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, perform in F/A-18 Hornets during an air show at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Sept. 28, 2014. Col. David Kirkendall led the first JBPHH "Wings Over the Pacific" Air Show.

the Pacific" Air Show, solidifying relationships throughout Oahu and

showcasing military capabilities to more than 90,000 visitors. Through

his direct influence, the installation executed 221 joint projects to revitalize

\$7 billion worth of aging infrastructure to support mission accomplishment.

Before coming to the islands, Smith served as the senior staff officer of the NATO International Military Staff and deputy of the logistics branch, logistics and resources division.

(See next week's Ho'okele for full coverage of Col. Kirkendall's change of command ceremony. See the June 12 edition of Ho'okele for his aloha message to the troops. Ho'okele can be found at www.cnic.navy.mil/hawaii and www.hookelenews.com.)

Operational mission is complete for Screaming Eagles

Tech. Sgt. Aaron Oelrich

15th Wing Public Affairs

Members of the 96th Air Refueling Squadron (ARS) launched four KC-135 Stratotankers to conduct their final mission or "fini" flight June 11 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

According to Lt Col. Jason Work, 96th ARS commander, due to the upcoming deactivation of the 96th ARS, this was the last operational mission for the squadron.

To mark the historic final mission, four KC-135 Stratotankers showed the range of KC-135 capabilities by conducting aerial refueling and defensive maneuvering as a four ship.

"It was a unique opportunity. We do not get to go up in a four ship very often," said Work. "Hawaii offers a great training



U.S. Air Force Photo by Capt. Nicole White

The aircrew from the 96th Air Refueling Squadron get a wet welcome back to celebrate the squadron's last operational flight June 11 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. (Additional photos on page A-5.)

opportunity because there is so much air space, and maintenance

was gracious enough to generate all four aircraft so that

we could go out and fly."

Each KC-135 executed refueling operations for six F-22 Raptors from the 199th Fighter Squadron. The four ship also completed defensive maneuvering by practicing how to react, as a four ship, to an air-to-air or surface-to-air threat. The defensive maneuvering included in-place turns, scatter turns, combat descends and defensive climbs maneuvers, and rejoining at the end of the training to the four-ship formation.

"This is one of those times when you really show the merits of a squadron and how disciplined they are, when you do large ship formations," said Work.

"This is the first opportunity that most of the aircrews have had to operate as a four ship performing defensive maneuvering, and everyone performed perfectly. All the maneuvering

was very safe," he said.

Once on the ground, their families and the squadron leadership greeted the aircrews with lei, water guns and water hoses to celebrate the final mission.

"It is nice to get all of the squadron together to fly as a four ship. We don't get a lot of opportunities to do that," said Capt. Britton Adamson, 96th ARS pilot.

"We had the new pilots flying with the older pilots and landing was great, seeing all the family's coming out and the leadership coming out to the flight line as we parked. It is bittersweet leaving, but it was a gratifying thing to be a part of as we finish our mission."

The 96th ARS will hold a deactivation ceremony in September, marking the end of their five years of service as a total force integration squadron at the 15th Wing.



NEX to honor Oahu's plastic bag ban See page A-2



Pearl Harbor Sailors raise half a million dollars for 2015 NMCRS Fund Drive See page A-6



ITT manager becomes pa'u queen for a day See page B-1



Pearl Harbor survivor Elkovics joins shipmates during USS Utah ceremony See page A-4



Reminder: Properly dispose of your green waste to help eradicate CRB See page A-7



Taking Back Sunday to perform Saturday See page B-4

Drinking water remains safe in Red Hill vicinity

Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs

As Ho'okele went to press on Thursday, preparations were being made for a public meeting to discuss the Red Hill facility. Held at Moanalua Middle School cafeteria Thursday evening, the meeting was hosted by the Environmental Protection Agency.

At the June 18 meeting, the agencies that were involved in the development of an Administrative Order of Consent (AOC) discussed the content of the proposed agreement, answered questions, and accepted verbal comments. A public comment period will conclude July 1.

Results of recent laboratory tests indicate that Navy drinking water sources continue to meet federal regulatory safe drinking water and state of Hawaii standards, and the water is safe to drink.

Test results of samples drawn from the Red Hill Shaft drinking water well that serves Joint Base Pearl



U.S. Navy file photo

Fuel tanks at Red Hill are continuously monitored.

Harbor-Hickam in the vicinity of Red Hill were provided to the State Department of Health (DOH) on June 9. The results from an independent certified laboratory are "non-detect" for all parameters tested, indicating there is no fuel contamination in the drinking water source.

Laboratory tests have been conducted at least quarterly on water samples taken from various wells in the area since a fuel release of 27,000 gallons was reported on Jan. 13, 2014 by operators at the Red Hill

Bulk Fuel Storage Facility. Tests on drinking water samples taken since the release have consistently been well within federal and state guidelines, most often as non-detect, or no presence of fuel contamination in drinking water wells.

The Red Hill facility is a national strategic asset that provides secure fuel storage for ships and aircraft of U.S. Pacific Fleet and other military branches. "While the facility's value to our nation remains vital as America rebalances its forces to the Indo-Asia-Pacific, the Navy

considers the availability of safe drinking water on Oahu to be a non-negotiable requirement," said Capt. Dean Tufts, regional engineer for Navy Region Hawaii.

"Drinking water in the communities surrounding Red Hill remains safe," Tufts added. "And the Navy has maintained a state-approved groundwater protection plan since 2008, updated three times (in 2009, 2010 and 2014), and we continue to coordinate routine updates with the State Department of Health."

The Navy is committed to ensuring the Red Hill fuel storage facility is maintained with the best available, practicable technology, complies with all regulations, and is operated safely. Since 2006, the Department of Defense has invested more than \$150 million in improving facilities, modernizing facilities, and conducting environmental monitoring.

There are more than \$60 million in current and planned projects. This is in addition to projects and upgrades that will be developed through the Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) announced by the Environmental Protection Agency and the DOH on June 1.

"The AOC provides an engineering-based roadmap for the operation of Red Hill. The Navy and Defense Logistics Agency are ready to move forward within the framework of this consent order" Tufts said.

"With the AOC, we can improve the protection of drinking water while preserving an important strategic asset," he said.

The Navy is also preparing to announce their latest annual water quality reports. "Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Hawaii is the Navy's water purveyor in Hawaii, and its personnel operate six water systems," said Aaron Poentis, environmental business line director. "Providing safe drinking water to customers is a mission-critical responsibility we take very seriously."

As with all other drinking water providers throughout the country, NAVFAC Hawaii is required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to report test results on water that has been delivered over the past year. The report for 2014 will show that all Navy water sampling/testing met federal and state drinking water standards and that the results were provided to state regulators as required for review and analysis.

The water quality reports are mailed or hand-delivered to NAVFAC Hawaii's customers in June.

NEX locations in Hawaii to honor Oahu's plastic bag ban

Brandon Bosworth

Assistant Editor, Ho'okele

Per Chapter 9, Article 9 of the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu, as of July 1, Oahu businesses will be prohibited from providing plastic checkout bags and non-recyclable paper bags to customers at the point of sale for the purpose of transporting groceries or other merchandise.

While the Navy Exchange is not required to comply with the ban on plastic bags, the NEX has chosen to voluntarily comply with the ban in order to contribute to Hawaii's environmental objectives.

"All plastic bags in use at NEX locations in Hawaii after July 1 will be in full compliance



with current ASTM D6400 standards and specifications for compostability," said Sante Campanile, Navy Exchange Hawaii District vice president.

"We also intend to promote the use of reusable bags. Customers can bring their own reusable bags or select from a wide range of styles available for purchase," he said.

"The Navy Exchange is proud to support Hawaii's ban on plastic bags and welcomes all authorized patrons to join us in 'thinking green,'" he said.

For more information regarding the plastic bag ban, visit www.opala.org.

A patron uses her own reusable bag while shopping at the NEX.

Photo by Stephanie Lau

Commentary

Reflections of a proud Vietnam veteran who served in combat

Tim Guard

Chairman of the Board of Directors, USS Missouri Memorial Association



Tim Guard

I am a veteran who served in combat and represented our country proudly in the Vietnam War.

For most Americans who did not serve in Vietnam, either because they were too young, too old or lucky enough to receive a high draft number, Vietnam was a war to be quickly forgotten and whose veterans were too often ignored for their service.

Korea may be remembered as the Forgotten War, but Vietnam could be known as the War of the Forgotten Veteran.

More than 2.5 million young Americans bravely served alongside each other in Vietnam. Many fought in unforgiving, deadly battles in dense jungles, firefights to rival any that have been fought in America's more cel-

ebrated wars.

Many crossed exposed rice paddies, leaving themselves vulnerable to enemy attack.

Or like myself, many veterans experienced the sweaty nervous fear of creeping along a narrow canal in the Delta.

Vietnam was a very stark reality for our citizen Soldiers, with memories that we carry with us every day.

Sadly, for more than



50,000 of America's finest, Vietnam became the place where young lives ended and the hearts of families were broken forever.

When our heroic American veterans of Vietnam returned from Asia's far shores, there was no fanfare beyond the hugs and joy from families, friends and loved ones.

There were no bands playing patriotic music, no parades along main street, no proclamation from our political leaders stating, "Welcome home veteran. Thank you for your service."

I remember disembarking from my flight at Honolulu International Airport and being shocked to see effigies of American servicemen hanging from coconut trees.

We Vietnam veterans came home to a nation of fellow Americans who hardly seemed to care that

we had ever left.

People were apathetic at best, derisive at their worst.

The past 45 years have healed most of the psychological wounds, but for many veterans of Vietnam, the pain and trouble are still ever present in their daily lives.

The battle "Vietnam" continues today for many veterans as they cope with unemployment, homelessness, incarceration, PTSD, drugs and inadequate VA medical care. Estimates run as high as 60 percent of all Vietnam veterans are afflicted today by one or more of these conditions.

Time and circumstances have moderated the attitude of Americans about the Vietnam War and, especially, toward their fellow citizens who served our nation in combat so long ago.

Just the generational

change itself has helped to dampen America's negativity about the people who served in Vietnam.

Today, many young Americans would be challenged to locate Vietnam on a map, much less know of the terrible conflict fought there so many years ago.

Ironically, many young Americans now go to Vietnam to vacation and experience the culture of its people.

More recent wars in far off places have replaced the looming specter that Vietnam once occupied in America's collective psyche—Kosovo, Persian Gulf, Iraq, Afghanistan and, today, the borderless war of ISIS. In each case, America's veterans are serving our nation proudly and bravely.

But, thankfully, a lasting lesson learned from the experience of Vietnam is that veterans of these wars return home greeted by well-deserved tributes for their service to America.

Proclamations are issued, bands play patriotic music, parades march along main street, and people cheer.

America truly affirms the pride and appreciation our nation has for the courage, valor, sacrifice and service of these veterans.

It's an affirmation of national pride and appreciation that the veterans of Vietnam longed for so long ago.

Vietnam veterans—welcome home!

(Editor's note: Local businessman and Navy veteran Tim Guard is chairman of the board of directors of the USS Missouri Memorial Association. He is the third chairman in the association's 20-year history. Guard commanded a swift boat during the Vietnam War, earning combat citations such as the Bronze Star, Navy Commendation Medal, Navy Achievement Medal and RVN Legion of Merit. Upon completion of his active naval service, Guard joined the Navy Reserve forces, serving in a variety of command billets. He is a longstanding member of the Navy League of the United States and has previously served as president for the Honolulu Council.)

Diverse Views



What's the top quality that you think a good father should have?



IT2 Joseph Dent
USS Chosin (CG 65)

"Kindness is the most important trait a father can have, in my opinion. Whether it is kindness to your family, your friends, or even to strangers, it is a very important trait for any person to

have. Kindness makes a person approachable, and it also can make a lasting impression."

Master Sgt. Michael Bliss
17th Operational Weather Squadron



"The top quality of a father is a willingness to always teach his children and the willingness to forgive his children's mistakes."



CTR 3 Henry Lundblad
DIRSUP Hawaii

"I would say generosity would be the most important trait a father should have. It could teach his children to be generous themselves, and that is one thing we should perpetuate."

1st Lt. Chris Delano
56th Air and Space Communications Squadron



"A top quality of a father is dedication—dedication to work and family, to ensure his children are well taken care of, and the ability to support them no matter what circumstance."



LSC Joel Williams
DLA Troop Support Pacific

"I believe the most important trait a father could possess is the ability to coach. As a father, you are coaching and mentoring your child at all times, so it is critical to have that ability.

Coaching is all-encompassing, and can lay the foundation for your child's greatness."

Master Sgt. Leslie Franklin
PACAF



"A top quality of a father is always being there for his children emotionally, spiritually and just providing support."



Danielle Mayse
Navy Spouse

"I would say patience is the most important trait a father could possess. When raising a child, one will need to exercise patience nearly every day. Sometimes a child can be very frustrating, and it takes patience to make it through any difficult situation."

Senior Airman James Goins
15th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron



"I believe the top quality a father can have is the ability to speak with candor. The reason being is he's honest and shows his son or daughter the power of honesty."

Provided by Senior Airman Christopher Stoltz and David D. Underwood Jr.

Want to see your command featured in Diverse Views? Got opinions to share?

Drop us a line at editor@hookelenews.com or karen.spangler@navy.mil

Mission commander visits school Sailors helped build



Capt. Christopher Engdahl, mission commander of Pacific Partnership 2015, and Vica Ralulu, headmistress of Viani Primary School in Vanua Levu, Fiji, are greeted by children as they arrive at the school for a ceremony on June 17. The crew of the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) helped build a classroom at the Viani Primary School and celebrated with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Mayra A. Conde

Navy Skyhawk supports Marines in Vietnam



A U.S. Navy Douglas A-4F Skyhawk (BuNo 154976) from Attack Squadron VA-113 Stingers launches "Zuni" rockets in support of U.S. Marines at Khe Sanh, Vietnam, in 1968. VA-113 was assigned to Carrier Air Wing 9 (CVW-9) aboard the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise (CVAN-65) for a deployment to Vietnam from Jan. 3 to July 18, 1968.

U.S. Navy photo

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Pearl Harbor survivor Elkovics joins shipmates during USS Utah ceremony

Story and photos by
MC3 Gabrielle Joyner

Navy Public Affairs Support
Element Detachment Hawaii

The ashes of Pearl Harbor survivor Boatswain's Mate 1st Class Michael Elkovics were laid to rest at USS Utah Memorial on Ford Island, Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam (JBPHH), during a ceremony held June 10.

In attendance were three of Elkovics' grandsons, Michael, Brad and Jason, as well as their spouses, children and family friends.

Jim Taylor, Pearl Harbor survivor liaison, gave remarks and Cmdr. George Mendes, command chaplain at JBPHH, provided the benediction.

"It was my grandfather's wish to rest here and, as the oldest grandson, I wanted to make sure everything was the way he wanted it," said Elkovics' grandson, Robert Bradley Smith.

"I was honored that I was here and that he was able to be here, and I appreciate the Navy for the opportunity," he said.

Elkovics was born Nov. 14, 1921 in Morristown, N.J. He joined the U.S. Navy in August 1940. He served on the cruiser USS St. Louis, which was docked in the shipyard on the morning of Dec. 7. St. Louis had just arrived at Pearl Harbor three or four days prior.

According to Taylor, who told the story of that fateful morning, Michael was doing his laundry when the attack started. St. Louis was the first large ship to get out of the harbor that fateful morning.

"They [USS St. Louis] were credited with shooting down three Japanese planes that day," said Taylor. "Michael stayed on the gun for three



days in anticipation of follow-up battles while the ship was at sea."

"The ship made it through the war—it was, indeed, a lucky ship. Needless to say, Michael was a lucky man to have survived not only the attack on Dec. 7, but the entire war.

"He loved his ship—it was nicknamed the Lucky Lou. He and the ship survived many kamikaze and torpedo attacks. In the long run, the ship was sold by the Navy but it sunk while under tow," Taylor said.

Elkovics also served aboard the USS Mt. Olympus and the USS Magoffin during his Navy career. The USS St. Louis earned 11 battle stars, and Elkovics earned several honors for his service in the U.S. Navy. He died Dec. 13, 2013 at the age of 93.

"Michael probably would have said he was not a hero; he was just doing his job," said Taylor. "He would probably have said the real heroes are those that didn't make it home. I personally disagree. Michael was indeed a hero."

Michael Jason Smith, Elkovics' grandson who also served in the U.S. Navy, reminisced about times he had with his grandfather.

"His stories and his life were the ones that shaped my own," said Jason Smith. "We had similar personalities. I'm glad I was able to say my goodbyes to him."

Taylor talked about Elkovics' wish to have his ashes returned to Hawaii after his death. "It was Michael's wish to have his ashes returned here at Pearl Harbor so he could be with his shipmates, his brothers, who were killed that terrible day. Thanks to his wonderful family, that wish will come true today," Taylor said.

 <http://www.hookelenews.com/> or visit <https://www.cnmc.navy.mil/Hawaii/index.htm> 

Pearl Harbor-Hickam *Highlights*

Former Hawaii State VFW commander and retired U.S. Army Col. Ben V. Acohido captures photos at Pearl Harbor Colors Ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. Acohido served in Vietnam 1968-69.

U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Omari K. Way



U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Omari K. Way

(Above) Former Navy Lt. Robert "Tim" Guard speaks about the lessons learned from the Vietnam War during the Pearl Harbor Colors ceremony held June 18.

(Left) Two KC-135 Stratotankers from the 96th Air Refueling Squadron take off during the 96th ARS's final operational mission at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, June 11. Four KC-135 operated together to executed refueling operations on six F-22 Raptors from the 199th Fighter Squadron and accomplished defensive maneuvering as a four ship during the historical flight.

U.S. Air Force photo by Tech Sgt. Aaron Oelrich



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech Sgt. Aaron Oelrich

Aircrew from the 96th Air Refueling Squadron step to their KC-135 Stratotankers for the final operational mission of the 96th ARS. Aircrews executed aerial refueling and defensive maneuvering in four KC-135s to mark the historic final mission.

(Right) Veterans from the United States Submarine Veterans, Bowfin Base chapter, and Sailors from Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, attend a monthly bell tolling ceremony held June 10 at the Submarine Memorial Chapel at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. This month's event honored seven submarines and their crews lost during the month of June over the submarine force's 115-year history.

U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Steven Khor



JBP HH celebrates Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month

MCC Barry Hirayama

Navy Public Affairs
Support Element
Detachment Hawaii

A military-wide seminar celebrating Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month was held June 10 at Hickam Memorial Theater at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH).

Approximately 100 service members and their family members attended the seminar, which featured remarks from guest speaker Rear Adm. Rick Williams, commander of Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, and several members of the JBPHH LGBT planning committee.

The seminar was also the first of its kind, recognizing LGBT Pride Month at JBPHH.

"It makes me happy to see such a sizeable group of individuals attending our seminar today, because it's



U.S. Navy photo by C2 Jeff Troutman

Members of the Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) planning committee read excerpts from President Barack Obama's LGBT proclamation during a seminar highlighting LGBT Pride Month at Hickam Memorial Theater.

a reflection of the respect our community has for diversity, inclusion and equal opportunity," said Williams.

"It's important that we remember to celebrate this kind of individuality every day and not just on one day of the year or for one

month of the year. It's a major part of our community mentality, where people from all backgrounds are treated with dignity

and respect," he said.

Williams' remarks touched on the impact that LGBT Pride Month continues to have on teamwork and equality across all military branches and commended those individuals who help make LGBT awareness not just a success but a touchstone of our nation's military.

"LGBT awareness and equality in our military proves that we're leading by example," said Williams.

"It shows that members of the LGBT community are being judged by the quality of their work and not by their sexual orientation or their ideals. It's both our military and civic responsibility to support that," he said.

At the conclusion of Williams' speech, five members of the JBPHH LGBT planning committee took turns reading President Barack Obama's proclamation for LGBT Pride Month, which points out the contributions made by LGBT Americans in promoting

equal rights to all regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

"It was a real honor for me to speak to the LGBT community here today, because events like this celebrate who people are and celebrates their individuality," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Nicole Harley, a member of the JBPHH LGBT planning committee.

"We've come such a long way since the repeal when, before, military members had to hide who they really were just for the opportunity to serve. Having the opportunity now to serve and be who we are without fear of prejudice is a real blessing for me," she said.

The month of June is officially recognized by the U.S. military as a time to honor and respect the historic passing of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Repeal Act on Dec. 22, 2010, which allowed members of the LGBT community to serve in the U.S. military without fear of prejudice or discrimination.

Pearl Harbor Sailors raise half a million dollars for 2015 NMCRS Fund Drive

Story and photo by
MC2 Johans Chavarro

Navy Public Affairs
Support Element
Detachment Hawaii

Rear Adm. Rick Williams, commander of Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific and the honorary chair of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Advisory Board, and Rear Adm. (sel) Grafton D. "Chip" Chase Jr., commanding officer of Naval Supply Systems Command Fleet Logistics Center Pearl Harbor, presented Pearl Harbor Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) 2015 Fund Drive award ceremony held June 10 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH).

Commands throughout JBPHH raised \$483,262.31 through Sailor contributions and command-organized events such as car washes, bake sales and similar activities.

During the ceremony, Williams recognized the hard work of those involved in coordinating the 2015 NMCRS fund drive and advised them to let their success in the fund drive motivate them in future endeavors.

"I believe we should take pride and reflect on the great work you [coordinators] have done, as individual leaders, to lead this fund drive and

the challenges that come with it," said Williams.

"When you go back to your commands, you should take back some of the energy and some of the enthusiasm from today, and take pride in the efforts you have made in trying to inspire others to give back to their Navy and their shipmates. If you can do that, like you've done with this fund drive, think of the other things you're going to be able to do. Think of the other things you're going to be able to inspire and influence and lead individuals to do," he said.

Williams described the near half a million dollars raised as a testament of the responsibility and commitment Sailors feel toward one another.

"This nearly half a million dollars is a very good effort and a reflection of how much we care about shipmates, taking care of shipmates," said Williams.

"I really like Adm. Harris' thoughts that the greatest 'ships' in the Navy aren't necessarily the ships in port, but rather the relationships, the partnerships and the friendships. I really believe that, and I think that this half a million dollars we raised is a direct reflection of that."

After his remarks, Williams and Chase presented Paul Belanger, director of Navy Marine Corps Relief Society Pearl Harbor,



Rear Adm. Rick Williams, commander of Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, delivers remarks during the Pearl Harbor Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) 2015 Fund Drive award ceremony at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

with a check for \$483,262.31.

Belanger thanked the command NMCRS representatives throughout Pearl Harbor for staying committed to the 2015 fund drive and, again, beating the previous year's contributions.

"Hawaii, again, has set records for the Navy Relief Fund Drive contributions," said Belanger. "When you look at per capita, based on population size, Hawaii is at the top in the world again ... so the one thing I want to say is, 'thank you,' for running such an outstanding fund drive this year."

Ensign Kelsey McCullough, NMCRS representa-

tive for the guided-missile destroyer USS John Paul Jones (DDG 53), said beyond the opportunity to aid Sailors and peers in need, the NMCRS also allowed all Sailors the opportunity to focus on the mission, rather than financial concern or strain.

"NMCRS is great for the

slogan, 'Sailors helping Sailors.' I think it's a great way for us to give extra to our peers and our Sailors and also helping people all over the nation and the Navy pursue common goals," McCullough said.

"Through the NMCRS, people get the chance to per-

form better at work because they're no longer worried about the financial strain of being behind on bills or having issues with their car. The NMCRS helps eliminate that," he said.

Nearly 90 percent of the NMCRS' workforce is comprised of volunteers who provide financial assistance and counseling, quick assistance loans, education assistance, health education and post-combat support, advice on how to budget for a baby, emergency travel assistance, disaster relief and thrift shops for Sailors, Marines and their families.

NMCRS began in 1904, when several naval officers, wives of naval officers, and civilian friends saw the need for more formal and organized assistance. NMCRS was incorporated on Jan. 23 of that year. Initial funding came from the proceeds of the 1903 Army-Navy Football Game and in its first year, the NMCRS gave \$9,500 to widows and families of enlisted men.

Reminder: Properly dispose of your green waste to help eradicate CRB

Lt. Corbin Dryden

Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs

As new residents settle in during the permanent change of station summer season, all can be reminded of the assistance needed to help prevent spread of the invasive coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB).

All tenants, contractors and residents working or living at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) can help eradicate the CRB through proper and quick disposal of green waste. Green waste includes: all tree, bush, hedge, flower trimmings in part or whole, grass, mulch, compost heaps, fruit and vegetable scraps, decaying stumps and other plant matter. It

excludes fresh grass clippings removed from JBPHH within 12 hours and soil.

A large (up to 2.5 inches long) scarab beetle, CRB bore into the crowns of coconut palms and feed on sap. Once a beetle has bored through developing leaves, they grow out in a distinctive V-shape, weakening and potentially killing the palm.

First discovered on Oahu in December 2013, CRB pose a threat to the island's coconut trees and numerous other ornamental palm species. Lacking natural predators on Oahu, eggs are laid in rotting logs, mulch, compost, potting soil or even manure. Larvae are large, white C-shaped grubs up to 3.5 inches in length; adult beetles emerge about four months later.

Eradication efforts quickly began on military property and a unified command was established by the state. Partnered with the United States Department of Agriculture, Hawaii Department of Agriculture and University of Hawaii, JBPHH has quickly moved to prevent the spread of the beetle through hanging panel traps, barrel traps and clearing of potential breeding sites on the property.

CRB damage and traps are continuously surveyed at Mamala Bay Golf Course, Navy-Marine Corps Golf Course and throughout the base while large mulch piles, which provide a breeding ground for the beetles, are sifted through and moved to a burning site for incineration with air-curtain burners.

Residents can assist in these ef-

orts through proper disposal of green waste and by notifying the state pest hotline if any CRB or CRB damage is found. Keep green waste covered to prevent potential spread and do not stockpile for longer than 24 hours. If any stage of CRB is suspected in your green waste, do not disturb or transfer material and call the pest hotline immediately.

It is undetermined how the CRB arrived on Oahu or JBPHH. Inspectors at Honolulu International Airport (HNL) have discovered CRB in luggage from a flight in Japan. Military flights from east Asia could be another possibility. JBPHH is the nearest green space to the

shared runways at HNL but does not necessarily indicate the beetles arrived via military flight.

Residents can contact the CRB eradication program at 679-5244, email stoprhino@gmail.com, or dial the state pest hotline at 643-PEST to report any sightings of rhino beetles or possible beetle damage.

(Below) Adult rhinoceros beetles are very large, dark brown, with a body length of about two inches.



Women redefined: A Sailor's perspective on military careers

Story and photo by MC3 Amber Porter

Patrol Squadron Nine Public Affairs

"I am a naval Aircrewman mechanical third class petty officer in the United States Navy," said Kishke Nelson, a Sailor assigned to the 'Golden Eagles' of Patrol Squadron (VP) 9.

"I have a job to do, and I perform my duties because I am a hard worker and take pride in my work. It doesn't and shouldn't matter that I am a woman. What does matter is that I am doing my job and doing it well," Nelson said.

Speakers at the 28th annual Joint Women's Leadership Symposium in San Diego, which concluded June 12, talked about some of the issues that women like Nelson face in the military and strategies to overcome these difficulties.

Adm. Michelle Howard, the Navy's number two officer, has said that to normalize workplace relations, move beyond tokenism and overcome stereotypes, the Navy needs a "critical mass" of at least 25 percent women,



Aviation Machinist's Mate Airman Danielle Weakley, assigned to the "Golden Eagles" of Patrol Squadron (VP) 9, inspects engine three from a P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft as part of the squadron's advanced readiness program.

including the same proportion aboard each ship and squadron.

The Navy is progressing steadily toward their target with new recruits, 25 percent of whom are female. At the Naval Academy, 22 percent of midshipmen are women. Currently about 18 percent of the total Navy is female, slightly higher than the average across the services.

Lt. Celesse Hidrovo-Guidry, a P3-C Orion mar-

itime patrol aircraft pilot assigned to the Golden Eagles Patrol Squadron (VP-9) at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe, believes that it is important for women to have representation and opportunity, but emphasized that success in the military is dependent on the individual's attitude and work ethic.

"This job really isn't for everyone. You have to want to serve your country, know what you're getting into, and

do the research," said Hidrovo-Guidry.

"Both males and females have family issues and work issues. Both have goals, aspirations, responsibilities and positional roles to live up to. Women are important to the military and with the recent news around women in combat, it's empowering to see us getting recognition for our same hard work and perseverance," she said.

According to the United

States Navy website, "The idea that certain jobs are better suited for men and men alone is redefined in the Navy. Stereotypes are overridden by determination, by proven capabilities, and by a shared appreciation for work that's driven by hands-on skills and adrenaline. Here, women are definitely in on the action. And women who seek to pursue what some may consider male-dominated roles are not only welcome, they're wanted—in any of dozens of dynamic fields."

For Aviation Machinist's Mate Airman Danielle Weakley, the website was a motivational recruitment tool in her decision to join the Navy. "The allure to join an organization that promises challenges, excitement, rewards and liberation was irresistible," said Weakley.

"I think that what really hooked me though was being able to break a conventional role and earn respect for myself through my profession, equal to that of my male counterparts," she said.

Aviation Electrician's Mate 1st Class Beatriz

Campos, also assigned to the Golden Eagles, said she joined the military to get out of New York City, be independent, and to have financial support to complete college. "The most rewarding part of the Navy has been my education, training, and the travel. I was able to complete my associates degree and am very close to completing my bachelor's degree.

"I love the lifestyle and the job security," said Campos. "I love knowing that I can go on vacation and still get paid and that my family will be taken care of in any case I am not present.

"I am a part of the Facebook group called 'Women Redefined,'" explained Chief Aviation Maintenance Administrationman Arlene Williams.

"It's monitored by the Women in the Navy initiatives and discusses personal and professional-based issues in our working environment. I think that the redefining of women in the Navy is important as more females join, and there are increasing roles that we shouldn't be afraid to step into," Williams said.