

CNO, MCPON visit Pearl Harbor on Navy's birthday

Story and photo by
MC2 Jeffrey Troutman

Navy Public Affairs
Support Element West Det.
Hawaii

Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. John Richardson visited Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Oct. 13 on his first overseas tour as CNO, engaging with Sailors and leadership and celebrating the Navy's 240th birthday.

During his visit, Richardson discussed current naval affairs, policies and the Navy's ongoing commitment to the Pacific region.

"It's my personal responsibility to ensure that we provide the maximum possible return on the nation's investment in the Navy," said Richardson. "Some of our Navy's most advanced capabilities are being debuted right here in the Pacific."

During Navy birthday celebrations, Richardson noted Pearl Harbor's deep connection to Navy heritage and Sailors.

"It's particularly wonderful for me to be here to participate in the celebration of the 240th birthday of the



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson and Rear Adm. Fritz Roegge, commander of Submarine Force U.S. Pacific Fleet, render honors during a Pearl Harbor Colors honors and heritage ceremony Oct. 13 celebrating the Navy's 240th birthday at the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center.

U.S. Navy," said Richardson.

"The power of the commitment our service members have when they take the oath to serve in the U.S. Navy—the power of

the idea of what the United States of America represents—is symbolized here at Pearl Harbor, with the USS Arizona Memorial and the Battleship Missouri Memorial, to remind us of

the freedoms we have and the sacrifices we've made," he said.

Richardson attended a Pearl Harbor Colors honors and heritage ceremony at the Pearl Harbor Visitor

Center during the celebration of the Navy's birthday.

The ceremony featured the traditional ringing of the USS Arizona bell, which was tolled eight

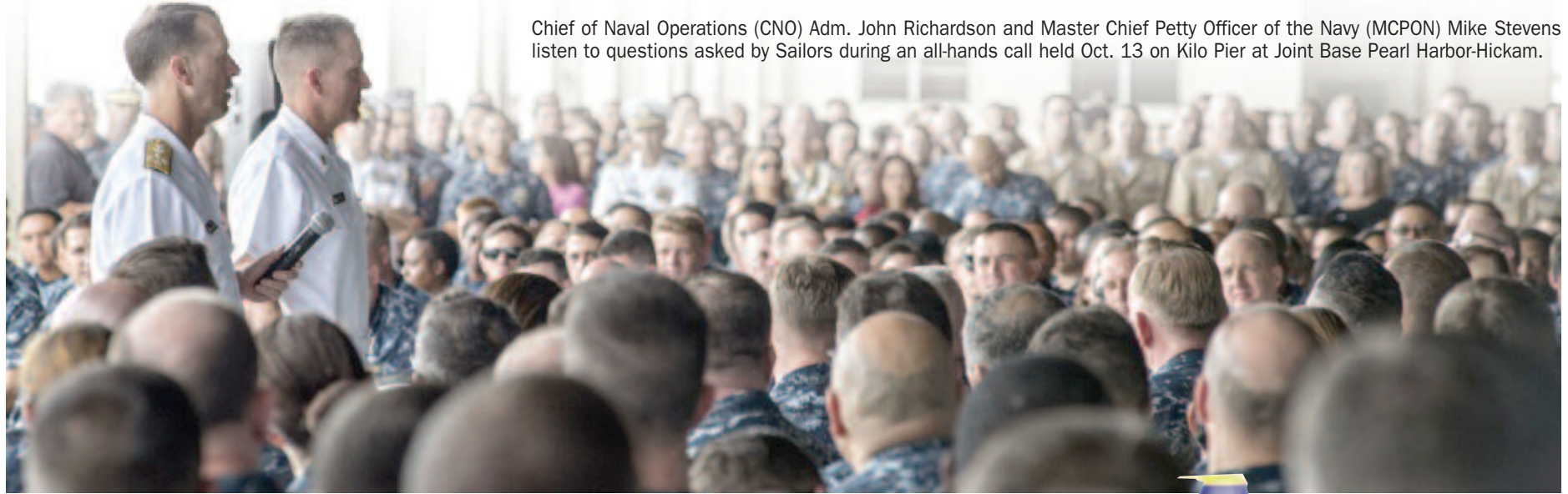
times to signal the end of the watch, and the end of the current birthday year. After a reading of the Navy's traditional heritage message, the bell was rung a ninth and final time to signify the start of a new watch and the beginning of a new year in the Navy's history.

Richardson addressed the crowd and thanked the service members in attendance for their commitment to their country and for their continuing role in the Navy's heritage.

"When I think about the 240 years our Navy has been in existence, the thing that strikes me is that this marks 240 years of dedicated professionalism," said Richardson.

Richardson is currently on his first overseas trip as the CNO. The destinations will include Hawaii, Japan, South Korea, Philippines, Bahrain and Italy.

Richardson became the 31st CNO on Sept. 18, serving as the Navy's most senior officer, a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and a principal advisor to the Secretary of the Navy, Secretary of the Defense and the president.



Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. John Richardson and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Mike Stevens listen to questions asked by Sailors during an all-hands call held Oct. 13 on Kilo Pier at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

Feeling energized



Attendees visit information booths at an energy action fair held Oct. 14 at the Ford Island Conference Center at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. The event was hosted by Naval Facilities Engineering Command Hawaii. (See next week's Ho'okele for complete coverage.)

U.S. Navy photos by Denise Emsley



Photo courtesy MCSS Hawaii

Blue Angels to fly over 'K-Bay' this weekend

Brandon Bosworth

Assistant Editor, Ho'okele

The U.S. Navy flight team the Blue Angels will be the featured performers at the Kaneohe Bay Air Show this Saturday and Sunday at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe.

The Blue Angels will be flying F/A-18 Hornet aircraft and demonstrating the refinement of skills possessed by all naval aviators. There will also be demonstrations by the Blue Angels C-130 Hercules support aircraft, known as "Fat Albert."

The Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) will demonstrate a combined offensive, including simulated explosions and a wall of fire.

The air show will also offer static displays of vintage and modern aircraft, food booths and a carnival midway, featuring rides, games and more, for the kids.

"This event is important to us because it's a great opportunity to say thank you to our neighbors across Oahu, while showcasing the pride and professionalism of

Hawaii Marines and Sailors," said Col. Eric Schaefer, Marine Corps Base Hawaii commanding officer.

The event is open to the public and general admission is free. Premium seating is available for purchase now at military ticket outlets, including all Information, Tickets & Travel offices at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

The gates open to the public at 9 a.m. on both days. Security restrictions will be in place.

The only people who will be allowed to utilize the Mokapu Road Gate (commonly referred to as the back gate) during the air show on Oct. 17 and 18 are Marine Corps Base Hawaii base residents or those who have a vendor/performer/promoter pass. All others—regardless of whether they possess a military or Department of Defense civilian identification card, are active duty or are a retiree—will be turned around and told to enter through the main gate at the end of H-3.

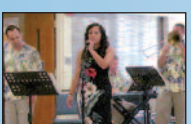
(For more information, visit www.kaneohebayairshow.com.)



Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy ship visits Pearl Harbor
See page A-2



SAPR survey launches
See page A-3



JBPHH hosts Hispanic Heritage Month featuring Joint Base 'bands'
See page A-4



Maxwell relieves Tothero as CO of USS Buffalo
See page A-6



U.S., Chinese sailors get a 'kick' out of athletics
See page B-1



Spooktacular events planned
See page B-5

Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy ship visits Pearl Harbor

Story and photo by
MC2 Laurie Dexter

Navy Public Affairs Support
Element Detachment Hawaii

The Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) midshipmen training vessel Zheng He (Type 679, Hull 81) arrived Oct. 12 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam and is expected to stay until Oct. 16.

As part of a planned series of military-to-military exchanges between the two nations, Zheng He will be hosted by the guided-missile cruiser USS Chosin (CG 65). Chinese and U.S. naval officers will conduct dialogues to build confidence and mutual understanding.

According to Capt. Eric Weilenman, chief of staff of Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, the visit is a good chance for both navies' Sailors to interact with one another.

"It's a great opportunity for a mil-to-mil exchange, to develop trust, build confidence in each other's abilities, a great oppor-



Civilians gather to greet the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy midshipmen training ship Zheng He (Type 679, Hull 81) as it arrives Oct. 12 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

tunity for the midshipmen to experience Hawaii and to interact with the host ship Sailors.

They've planned soccer games, tug-of-war, basketball games—basically an opportunity to in-

teract with our Sailors," Weilenman said. Capt. Kevin Brand, command-

ing officer of Chosin, said that during the visit, U.S. and Chinese sailors plan to engage in deck-plate level events, giving both navies the opportunity to exchange professional knowledge.

"While the Zheng He is here, we'll be doing some naval planning exercises on board. We're going to do a search and rescue planning event—a table-top exercise—to show them how we go about planning a search and rescue. We'll also do a recovery exercise where we'll actually put a man in the water to show them how we would recover on board the ship and do some medical care.

"In addition to that, we're also going to do a damage control exercise where we're going to share some of our best practices. We'll show them our equipment and how it works and hopefully learn from them at the same time," Brand said.

The U.S. Navy is committed to continued engagement to improve mutual understanding, build trust, enhance transparency, and reduce the risk of misperceptions and miscalculations.

Holly Petraeus brings financial advice to Joint Base

Story and photo by
Brandon Bosworth

Assistant Editor, Ho'okele

The Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel hosted a town hall meeting featuring Holly Petraeus of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) on Oct. 8. Petraeus discussed financial topics of importance to service members and their families.

Founded in 2011, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) is the first federal agency solely focused on consumer financial protection.

Petraeus is the assistant director of the office of service member affairs



Holly Petraeus, assistant director of the office of service member affairs at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, addresses military financial concerns at Pearl Harbor Memorial Chapel, Oct. 8.

section of the agency, which works on financial challenges affecting service members, veterans and their families.

During her presentation, Petraeus said that problems with debt collectors are the top source of complaints to her office.

"We get a lot of calls about the bad behavior of debt collectors," she said. "Some collectors even threaten to have your security clearance pulled. Others contact a person's commanding officer. That's illegal."

Petraeus also talked about questionable auto loans geared toward military consumers. She told of one service member who took out a loan for a \$1,200 car that had an ef-

fective interest rate of 400 percent.

"He would have ended up paying over \$15,000 for a \$1,200 car," she said. "That may be legal, but not what I'd call ethical."

Petraeus stressed that it is important for service members to come forward with their financial issues, as the CFPB might be able to intervene.

"We've been able to get back over \$200 million for service members," she said. "And if we see a pattern of questionable behavior from a company, we can refer the case to our enforcement division."

(For more information or to make a complaint, visit www.consumerfinance.gov.)

Diverse Views



What is the most important quality you look for in a leader?



OASN Jasmine Marie Bencid

JBPHH

"A great leader needs to be a leader versus a boss. The person needs to be part of the solution and help the group reach the goal. A boss is a person who just gives orders with no direction or involvement."

Staff Sgt. Colten Brantley

647th Logistics Readiness Squadron

"The number one quality I look for in a good leader is reliability. I want to know I can count on them no matter what happens."



CTMC Ricky Garcia
PACFLT

"The top quality in a leader is the ability to listen. It is important for a leader to actually hear what their supervisor and subordinates are saying to them to allow them to make informed decisions."

ET1 Nick Johnson
NCTAMS PAC

"The number one quality is someone who does not make assumptions. They need to keep an open mind and use input from everyone."



Suzanne Reeves

Military spouse

"The quality I look for in a leader is followership, someone who is willing to spend time learning before leading."

Amanda Stoltz
Military spouse

"The quality I look for most in a leader is the capability to be unbiased. Being able to make a smart decision without being partial to one's own opinions is paramount when leading."



Provided by Staff Sgt. Christopher Stoltz and Lt. Paul Fylstra

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

Commentary

Presidential proclamation on National Disability Employment Awareness Month, October 2015

President Barack Obama



President Barack Obama

A quarter century ago, our country took a major step toward fulfilling the fundamental American promises of equal access, equal opportunity and equal respect for all when the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was made the law of the land.

While we have continued to make advancements that help uphold this basic belief, we must address the injustices that remain. During National Disability Employment Awareness Month, we celebrate the ways individuals with disabilities strengthen our workforce, our communities and our country, and we recommit to cultivating an America where all people are able to build vibrant futures for themselves and for their families.

Americans with disabilities make up almost one-fifth of our population but are unemployed at a rate that is twice that of people without disabilities and for women and minorities with disabilities, the rates are even higher. Despite all they contribute to our society, people with disabilities still face discrimination by employers, limited access to

skills training, and, too often, unfairly low expectations.

As a nation, we must continue to promote inclusion in the workplace and to tear down the barriers that remain—in hearts, in minds, and in policies—to the security and prosperity that stable jobs provide and that all our people deserve. And we must actively foster a culture in which individuals are supported and accepted for who they are and in which it is okay to disclose one's disability without fear of discrimination.

My administration is working to make sure our country does not let the incredible talents of Americans with disabilities go to waste. We are working to strengthen protections

against disability-based discrimination in the workplace and to expand employment possibilities for people with disabilities, and the federal government is leading by example.

I have taken action to require agencies and federal contractors to hire more people with disabilities and, thanks to these efforts, more Americans with disabilities are in federal service than at any point in the last three decades.

I will continue fighting to widen pathways to opportunity for individuals with disabilities and supporting employers in their efforts to increase disability inclusion. The White House hosted a summit on disability and employment earlier this year to provide businesses, philanthropies and advocates with information on federal resources for hiring disabled individuals.

Last year, I was proud to sign the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which encourages greater coordination across federal, state and local programs to expand access to high-quality workforce, education and rehabilitation services. WIOA also helps youth with disabilities to receive extensive pre-employment transition services so

they can find positions alongside people without disabilities and get paid above minimum wage.

Additionally, last year I signed the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act, which allows eligible people with disabilities to establish tax-free savings accounts.

America is at its strongest when we harness the talents and celebrate the distinct gifts of all our people. This October, as we observe the 70th anniversary of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, let us pay tribute to all who fought for better laws, demanded better treatment, and overcame ignorance and indifference to make our nation more perfect.

In their honor, and for the betterment of generations of Americans to come, let us continue the work of removing obstacles to employment, so every American has the chance to develop their skills and make their unique mark on the world we share.

I urge all Americans to embrace the talents and skills that individuals with disabilities bring to our workplaces and communities and to promote the right to equal employment opportunity for all people.

SAPR survey launches

Sexual Assault and Prevention Response Program, Navy Region Hawaii



will help regional and installation SARC's (sexual assault response coordinators) and civilian victim advocates to:

- Gain a better understanding of the top local SAPR challenges faced by command leaders.
- Identify which of these challenges the SAPR staff can realistically help address/mitigate.
- Develop ideas/strategies on how to enhance support and assistance to commands who are addressing victim care management issues.

The SAPR (Sexual Assault and Prevention Response) Command Triad Survey will launch Oct. 23 and will continue through Nov. 6.

The survey is mainly geared to all personnel who are commanding officers, officers in charge, executive officers, chiefs of the boat, and command master chiefs at Navy commands on Oahu and Kauai.

The Navy Region Hawaii SAPR office is requesting inputs, explaining that the survey takes only about three minutes to complete and can help to enhance SAPR services. The survey consists of five questions specifically targeted to command leadership. The objective of the survey

The end point will result in an overall higher quality of care for victims, according to the SAPR team at Navy Region Hawaii.

(For more information, contact the SAPR office at CNL_PRLH_SAPRHawaii@navy.mil or 474-1999.)

USS Arizona dive to be webcast Oct. 17

National Park Service

The National Park Service's Submerged Resources Center will conduct a field dive of the sunken USS Arizona to commemorate the 99th anniversary of the ship's commissioning.

The dive will take place from 4 to 5 p.m. Oct. 17. Visitors to the USS Arizona Memorial will be able to watch the divers' activities from the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center theater and ask questions. Others can log on to view a live webcast on Adobe Connect and interact with the diving team as well.

The live webcast on Adobe Connect begins at 3:45 p.m. Pre-register at the website at www.nps.gov/valr.

The divers will share their findings with guests and help them learn more about the damage to the battleship caused by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, as well as ongoing conservation efforts.

Before Saturday's event, the public can submit questions to park officials and dive team via social media (Facebook and Twitter), using the hashtag #USSAZ99.

Hornet packed a 'sting' in WWII



U.S. Navy photograph in the National Archives collection

The USS Hornet (CV-8) was commissioned Oct. 20, 1941, 74 years ago this month. During World War II, it participated in the Doolittle Raid on Japan, the Battle of Midway and the Solomon Islands Campaign. On Oct. 26, 1942, at the Battle of Santa Cruz Islands, Hornet was severely damaged by the Imperial Japanese. Hornet is shown here in this photo at Pearl Harbor in the summer of 1942, wearing a pattern of modified camouflage.

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JBPHH hosts Hispanic Heritage Month featuring Joint Base bands

Story and photo by Blair Martin Gradel

Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Public Affairs

A Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) Hispanic Heritage Month observance ceremony was held Oct. 1 at the Hickam Chapel Center.

Since 1968, Hispanic Heritage Month has been celebrated from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, during which various Latin countries, including Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua celebrate their independence days.

According to a 2014 census, 50.5 million people or 16 percent of the American population are of Hispanic or Latino origin. The term Hispanic or Latino refers to Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin re-



A Joint Base band comprised of Sailors and Airmen perform authentic Latin music at the Hispanic Heritage Month observance on Oct. 1 at the Hickam Chapel Center.

gardless of race.

“Understanding individual cultures and traditions is what helps create a military culture of diversity,” said Fruji “Ken” Mills, leading chief petty officer at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Memorial Chapel, who also helped coordinate the event. “People who live under a

rock or in a box and are never enlightened about all the cultures that make up our country tend to be less open minded about respecting others in their traditions and cultures,” he added.

One hallmark of the ceremony was the authentic Latin music, including salsa, merengue, samba, provided

by a Joint Base band comprised of Sailor and Airmen musicians from both Navy Pacific Fleet Band and U.S. Air Force Band of the Pacific.

Other Navy musicians also lent their musical talents to the performances. Cmdr. Dennis Mojica, an executive operations officer, played congas with the band,

and Seaman Jasmine Bencid performed a Mexican ballad duet with Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class Petty Officer Leszek Romero.

In addition to the musical performances, Master Chief Culinary Specialist Adeline Lopes, a direct descendant of the original Puerto Rican im-

migrants to Hawaii, gave a brief speech about her unique family heritage and the Puerto Rican legacy that can be found in Hawaiian culture.

“It’s truly a celebration,” said Navy Counselor 1st Class Jonathon Young, who attended the event. “The more you know about different cultures, the more you can celebrate the individuality of the culture and what it brings to the whole.”

Young, also of Puerto Rican descent, said he especially enjoyed the authentic music the members of the Joint Base band provided.

“All the energy everyone puts into an event like this—not just the live performance but behind the scenes as well—is great to see because it shows everyone coming together to celebrate culture,” he said. “It is showing that kind of unity is what makes America great.”

JBPHH celebrates Sailors and Airmen during Hispanic Heritage Month

Story and photo by Blair Martin Gradel

Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Public Affairs

From Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) celebrated the many contributions of Hispanic Airmen and Sailors who make up our diverse community.

Both Airman 1st Class Omar Martinez-Gavalo and Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class (SW/AW/EXW) Leszek Romero fled to America as young teenagers with their families in search of a new life on American soil.

Romero, who came to America with his sister in the late 1990s, said the economy in Honduras was so bad that most people, including the children in his family, had to figure out ways to survive.

“There were definitely days we didn’t eat,” he said, remembering his childhood. “We were dirt poor and the kind of kids you would see walking around in their underwear

eating whatever we found out of the creeks. I don’t ever want my children to go through something like that which is why I feel very blessed that God gave me a new life [here in America],” he added.

Gavalo said his move to America was prompted after his mother, a business administrator in Columbia, was laid off work and, as the sole provider for her family, was suddenly unable to care for her two children. When the family finally moved to New York City in 2003, the magnitude of the big city left a lasting impression on the Airman.

“Needless to say, I definitely had culture shock, never experiencing a city like that before,” he said. “It was just amazing seeing skyscrapers for the first time along with all the different languages and people. Back home, I was used to seeing one race and [in America], it was just like 80 different ethnicities in one place. It was shocking,” he added.

Now as naturalized American citizens, Gavalo and Romero agree



Airman 1st Class Omar Martinez-Gavalo and Technical Sgt. Britney Canezaro demonstrate some of the processes their squadron manages at the 647th Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS) at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

that the new life they have forged for themselves in the military has been a blessing to their families.

Romero, who now works with the 1st Lieutenant’s Division at

JBPHH, said his Honduras childhood helped give him the discipline needed to succeed through the military ranks as well as impart important lessons to his four children.

“The discipline my father and grandmother gave me early on is helping me today with work as well as letting me teach my children the power of discipline,” he explained.

“They also must learn to respect other cultures and be grateful for what you have. No one is entitled to anything; you have to earn it,” he added.

Gavalo, who is with the 647th Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS) at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, also agreed that the hardships from his childhood have only made him more appreciative of the many opportunities he enjoys today as a new American citizen.

“America is definitely the land of opportunity,” he admitted. “There are definitely no limitations as long as you are willing to put the work in. My mom went from working at McDonald’s when we first got here to becoming an RN. Sure it was rough at times, but it just goes to show you that anything is possible if you are willing to work hard and make sacrifices.”

Pearl Harbor-Hickam *Highlights*



U.S. Air Force Gen. Lori J. Robinson, Pacific Air Forces commander, meets with Republic of Singapore Air Force Maj. Gen. Hoo Cher Mou, chief of air force, Sept. 28 in Singapore. The visit highlights the partnership between the two countries, as well as enhancing the interoperability and professionalism between the two air forces.

Photo courtesy of Singapore Ministry of Defence photo

(Below) U.S. Air Force Gen. Lori J. Robinson, Pacific Air Forces commander, inspects the guard of honour at the Ministry of Defence in Singapore, Sept. 28. The inspection was part of Robinson's introductory visit to Singapore from Sept. 27-30.

Photo courtesy of Singapore Ministry of Defence



Capt. Kevin Brand, commanding officer of the guided-missile cruiser USS Chosin (CG 65), speaks with the Chinese People's Liberation Army Maj. Gen. Xu Nan Feng during the arrival of the midshipmen training ship Zheng He (Type 679, Hull 81) Oct. 12 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Class Laurie Dexter



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson speaks to U.S. Navy service members and attendees during a Pearl Harbor Colors honors and heritage ceremony celebrating the Navy's 240th birthday at the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Class Jeff Troutman

Maxwell relieves Tothero as CO of USS Buffalo

Story and photo by
MC1 Jason Swink

Submarine Force Pacific Public Affairs

Command of the Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Buffalo (SSN 715) was passed Oct. 6 as Cmdr. Micah Maxwell relieved Cmdr. Brian Tothero as commanding officer during a ceremony at the submarine piers at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

Tothero expressed how proud he was of having the opportunity to be in command of the submarine and working with the outstanding crew.

"It is with greatest pride that I have this opportunity to say how honored I am to have served with this country's finest examples of young men," said Tothero. "Like all



Cmdr. Brian Tothero is piped ashore Oct. 6, following a successful tour as commanding officer of the Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Buffalo (SSN 715). He was relieved by Cmdr. Micah Maxwell.

the other submarine Sailors on the Pearl Harbor waterfront, these men represent our country well."

While in command, Tothero led his submarine through the completion of a 17-month shipyard avail-

ability, then through the transition back to at-sea operations including exercises like Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2014, three submarine command courses, and numerous other tactical development exer-

cises and training events.

"I am proud to say that throughout all of these events, the one constant has been the resolve and grit of the crew," said Tothero.

The ceremony's guest speaker, Capt. Harry Ganteaume, director of training for tactical development, doctrine and knowledge management for the Pacific Submarine Force, praised Tothero for his leadership while in command.

"Brian has positively influenced many of our future leaders, including an XO (executive officer) who screened for command at sea, two department heads who screened for executive officer, several high performing division officers, many of whom will return to serve as department heads in our submarines, the commissioning of three limited duty officers and the promotion of five Sailors to

chief petty officers," said Ganteaume.

During the ceremony, Tothero was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for his performance on board Buffalo from February 2013 to October 2015.

As Maxwell assumed command, he thanked Tothero for turning over a very capable ship and addressed the crew.

"I stand here today ready to embark on a great adventure with you, protecting our families and our nation," said Maxwell. "Together, we will learn much about ourselves and each other as we carry on the long tradition of excellence in submarine service."

Buffalo is the third United States ship to bear the name of Buffalo. It is the 25th nuclear-powered fast-attack submarine of the Los Angeles-class design.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Blair Martin Gradel

Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Public Affairs

This month marks the 70th national observance of disability employment awareness around the world. With one in five Americans suffering from some sort of disability, the movement advocates the equal treatment and hiring of Americans with disabilities, specifically military veterans and wounded warriors. This year's theme is "My disability is one part

of who I am."

In 1945, President Harry S. Truman announced October as the National Disability Employment Awareness (NDEA) Month, after hundreds of wounded veterans returned home from WWII with injuries that limited their job prospects.

Senior Chief Thomas Howell serves as director for Navy Region Hawaii Safe Harbor, a program that assists wounded warriors and their family members with resources and non-medical care management.

Howell said he hopes the military community at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam will continue to encourage and support any policies and customs that would expand the opportunities for those with disabilities in our country.

"It is especially important during disability awareness month to keep our wounded warriors in mind," said Howell. "They are transitioning from military service with an extra burden to bear while they learn their new normal and experience life

with a new disability."

According to the Department of Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) as of 2008 there are 5.5 million disabled veterans and as of 2014, 573,000 of them are unemployed.

The majority of the unemployed demographic range from ages 25 to 44. In fact, DEOMI research shows the entire homeless population is made up of 16 percent veterans, a number

steadily increasing.

In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed that helped ensure disabled people were awarded the same opportunities in the work force and community life.

In 2010, President Barack Obama signed executive order 13548, asking for 100,000 individuals to be hired by the Department of Defense by 2015. The movement also encouraged the

hiring of individuals with disabilities to include veterans (who have a more than 30 percent disability rating).

"Everybody has a part to play and a benefit to gain from increasing opportunities for meaningful employment for people with disabilities," said Kathy Martinez, assistant secretary of labor for disability employment policy. "It's about creating a continuum of inclusion," she said.

Safe detonations continue at Waipio

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Hawaii

The Navy received a new state emergency hazardous waste permit from the State Department of Health (DOH) on Oct. 5, allowing the future treatment of waste military munitions by detonation at a specific site on Waipio Peninsula for 90 calendar days.

“Our contractors have successfully managed the screening and destruction of military munitions recovered from a cleanup project of past dredged material from Pearl Harbor,” said Aaron Poentis, Navy Region Hawaii environmental program director.

“The waste munitions continue to be collected in a safe, secured location at the Navy’s confined disposal facility, Waipio Peninsula, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.”

This year’s work was initiated in May with the first DOH permit issued in June.

Approximately 40,000 cubic yards of dredged material has been sifted and more than 2,000 munitions items plus numerous small arms ammunitions have been recovered. Sixty-three detonation events have occurred which have safely destroyed 1,919 munitions items plus numerous small arms ammunition.

“The new permit will allow the Navy and its contractors, Cape Environmental Management Inc., and USA Environmental, to move forward and avoid delays with the screening and destruction of recovered munitions over the next 90 days,” said Poentis.

“Detonation events will be conducted in accordance with the respective work plan, health and safety plan, explosives safety submission and applicable

standard operating procedures.”

Munitions that are found during screening of dredged material are collected and safely stored in secured portable magazines until a detonation event is scheduled for their destruction.

All future detonations will be scheduled as needed and will occur during a normal business week, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., at the pre-designated, secure location at Waipio Peninsula. Indication of detonation work may be a series of “popping” sounds that could be carried on the wind and heard by the public. At no time will the public be at risk.

As required by the DOH permit, a notice for the public regarding the issuance of this 90-day permit was placed in the Honolulu Advertiser on Sept. 27.

DOH initially granted the Navy a state emergency hazardous waste permit on June 29, allowing the treatment of identified waste military munitions by detonation at a specific site on Waipio Peninsula for 90 calendar days from the issuance of the permit. A maximum of 50 detonation events were allowed by the permit.

An additional 20 detonation events to a maximum of 70 detonation events were authorized by DOH

on Aug. 20. The new permit allows a maximum of 90 denotation events with each having the same limit of 15 pounds of net explosive weight.

Contractor personnel performing this work are trained and have implemented various controls and safety precautions to ensure safety of personnel and protection of the environment.

Initially this project began in April 2013. Work is estimated to continue through the spring/summer 2016.

Due to past historical events (e.g., Dec. 7, 1941 attack, May 1944 landing ship tank explosion, suspected past disposal practices, etc.), some munitions are suspected to be in waters of Pearl Harbor.

During construction and maintenance dredging, munitions have been removed along with the dredged material. Dredged material has been temporarily accumulated within earth-bermed cells on Waipio Peninsula to be dewatered, dried and screened prior to use for other beneficial purposes (e.g., landfill soil cover, etc.).

“Everything has gone according to plan, and we expect that future work will continue to be unobtrusive to the public,” said Poentis. “This announcement is to keep everyone informed, so if unfamiliar noises are heard from this activity, no one is surprised.”