



U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Anthony N. Hilkowski



U.S. Navy photo by Capt. Dean Tufts

U.S. Navy photo by Capt. Dean Tufts

USS Theodore Roosevelt visits Hawaii

Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs

USS Theodore Roosevelt Public Affairs

The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) arrived Nov. 15 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam on the way to the ship's new homeport of San Diego to conclude a nearly nine-month deployment.

During the visit, the crew enjoyed liberty in Hawaii, and many met friends and

family members.

Theodore Roosevelt (TR) departed Norfolk on March 11 for an around-the-world deployment, scheduled to conclude in San Diego as part of a three-carrier swap. During deployment, TR and its Sailors conducted operations in the U.S. 5th, 6th and 7th Fleet areas of operations.

While in U.S. 5th Fleet, the TR Carrier Strike Group (TRCSG) conducted airstrikes in Iraq and Syria as directed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR), the U.S.

coalition conducting airstrikes against ISIS. The TRCSG carried out 1,812 combat sorties totaling 10,618 combat flight hours, taking on 14.5 million gallons of jet fuel and expending 1,085 precision-guided munitions.

"We are proud to welcome the warfighters of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt to our waterfront and to historic Pearl Harbor," said Rear Adm. John Fuller, commander of Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific.

Theodore Roosevelt departed the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations and entered the U.S. 3rd Fleet area of operations Nov. 13.

While in U.S. 7th Fleet, Theodore Roosevelt participated in Exercise Malabar 15 with the Indian navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, made a port visit to Singapore, and hosted Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter and Malaysia's defense minister.

"It has been an arduous eight months and the crew has done a superb job, and I am in-

credibly proud of their accomplishments. I look forward to finishing strong and bringing Theodore Roosevelt to her new home in San Diego," said Capt. Craig Clapperton, commanding officer of Theodore Roosevelt.

Theodore Roosevelt's change of homeport is part of a three-carrier swap that includes USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), forward-deployed to Yokosuka, Japan, and USS George Washington (CVN 73), which is on the way to a new homeport in Norfolk.

Military, Honolulu officials rededicate site as war memorial

Story and photo by MC2 Johans Chavarro

Navy Public Affairs Support Element Detachment Hawaii

HONOLULU—Military service members, representatives from the City and County of Honolulu, and community members gathered at the Neal S. Blaisdell Center in Honolulu for a war memorial plaque rededication ceremony Nov. 10.

Originally dedicated on Sept. 12, 1964 as a living memorial to all of Hawaii's war veterans and war dead, acknowledgement and distinction of the Neal S. Blaisdell Center, formerly the Honolulu International Center, as a war memorial began to fade when the original memorial plaque went missing some time around 1970.

Approximately 51 years later from the original dedication in 1964, playing as they did in the original ceremony, the Royal Hawaiian Band be-

gan the rededication ceremony with the playing of the national anthem and "Hawaii Pono'i."

"We are here to rededicate a plaque originally placed on these grounds in 1964 to honor the men and women of Hawaii who offered their final measure of devotion to their comrades, and to their country, by laying down their lives in the service of our nation," said Guy H. Kaulukui, director of the department of enterprise services of the city and county of Honolulu and master of ceremonies for the event.

During the ceremony, Adm. Harry B. Harris Jr., commander of U.S. Pacific Command, also delivered remarks to those in attendance, emphasizing the importance of remembering the nation's veterans.

"So as we remember and reflect, we must also act," said Harris.

"It's up to us to ensure that every day we do right by our veterans.



Adm. Harry B. Harris Jr., commander of U.S. Pacific Command, salutes the new war memorial plaque unveiled at the Neal S. Blaisdell Center in Honolulu during a war memorial plaque rededication ceremony. (Additional photo on page A-5.)

It's up to us to ensure that we do more than remember our veterans on just one day a year. It's up to us to live our lives

in ways that honor those who gave so much of their lives for us. Let us be worthy of their service and sacrifice," he said.

Representing Mayor of Honolulu Kirk Caldwell, Roy K. Amemiya Jr., managing director of the city and county of Hono-

lulu, echoed Harris' sentiments.

"Unveiling this plaque See MEMORIAL page A-7

Pearl Harbor Colors ceremony honors Marine birthday

Story and photo by MC2 Gabrielle Joyner

Navy Public Affairs Support Element Detachment Hawaii

The monthly Pearl Harbor Colors honors and heritage ceremony was held Nov. 19 at the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

The ceremony this month was held to celebrate the Marine Corps 240th birthday (Nov. 10), Veterans Day and Wounded Warrior Care Month.

"Number one, we were honored to do the ceremony today with Marine Corps birthday, Veterans Day and some distinguished guests," said Master Sgt. Salvatore Cardella, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific



U.S. Marine Forces Pacific Color Guard parades the colors during a Pearl Harbor Colors honors and heritage ceremony at the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. (Additional photos on page A-5.)

public affairs chief.

"It's always good to come out here when veterans come to

visit to showcase and remind everybody that we are still here in Hawaii," he said.

The event featured the United States Marine Corps Forces and the Marine Corps Forces Pacific Band. Special guests who attended included Pearl Harbor survivor Delton "Wally" Walling, as well as wounded service members in honor of Wounded Warrior Care Month.

"The ceremony was very insightful, and I enjoyed getting to see veterans and survivors in person because it makes me remember why I'm fighting, why I keep going," said Operations Specialist 2nd Class Danielle Donnell, assigned to Fleet Area Control and Surveillance Facility Pearl Harbor.

"And the Marine band was awesome. They did a great job. My daughter was jamming," she said.

After the ceremony, Walling told sea stories as a gathering of Navy, Marine Corps and civilian spectators listened.

According to Cardella, it is important to have these monthly colors ceremonies open to the public to bring military and civilians closer together and remind everyone that we are still here to serve.

"It gives them an opportunity to talk to us face-to-face," said Cardella.

"It gives us an opportunity to get close to the civilian population that might not be aware of what the Marine Corp does, what the Navy does, [and] Army, Air Force and Coast Guard, and some of the great things that our young people today are doing. And they will pass that on," he said.



Setting foundations: PACAF hosts ROKAF Academy cadet visit See page A-2



Encounter with 'death' helped this smoker quit See page A-6



Gobble up fun at Thanksgiving events See page B-1



Veterans Day events See pages A-2, A-4



USS Oklahoma disinterments complete See page A-7



Cooking safely helps prevent holiday fires See page B-7

Setting foundations: PACAF hosts ROKAF Academy cadet visit

Story and photo by
Tech. Sgt. Amanda Dick

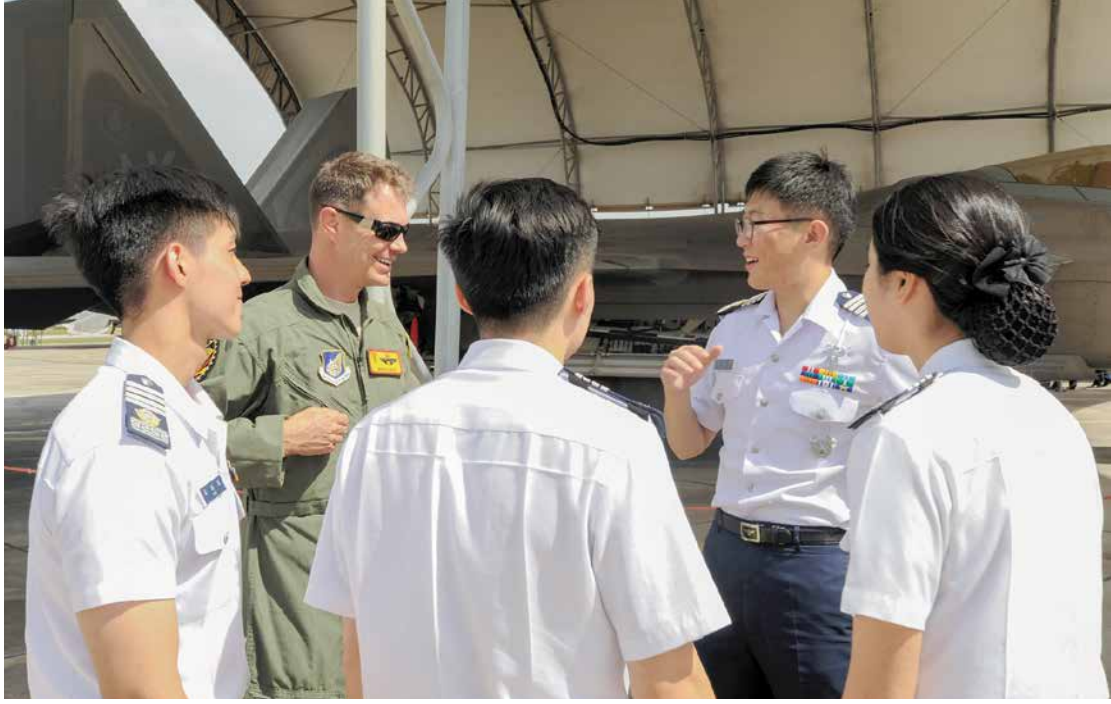
Headquarters Pacific Air Forces
Public Affairs

Pacific Air Forces hosted more than 70 Republic of Korea Air Force Academy cadets during a visit to the headquarters Nov. 10.

The visit was part of an effort to build a foundation of partnership and interoperability between PACAF and future ROKAF leaders.

"Sixty-five years ago, many of our nation's men and women made the ultimate sacrifice defending the Korean peninsula," said Maj. Gen. Mark Dillon, PACAF vice commander, speaking to the cadets.

"Over those past 65 years, to honor their sacrifice, our friendship and alliance has continued to grow and strengthen. Through exercises such as Red Flag-Alaska or Ulchi Freedom Guardian, and events like your presence here today, our alliance will



Air Force Lt. Col. James Sage, Hawaii Raptors pilot, discusses U.S. Air Force F-22 Raptor capabilities with Republic of Korea Air Force Academy cadets Nov. 10 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

remain strong for the future," Dillon said.

The visit included U.S. Pacific Command strategy and

PACAF command briefs, as well as an F-22 Raptor static display, to highlight the command's role and mission in

the Indo-Asia-Pacific region and further the cadets' understanding of that role.

During the PACAF brief-

ing, Dillon correlated the ROKAF's part in presence, partnership, power projection and people.

"The ROKAF helps project power throughout the region with PACAF and will continue through upgrades in your KF-16s, purchase of the F-35s, as well as the procurement of the Global Hawk," Dillon said.

For Republic of Korea Air Force Academy Senior Cadet Minjae Kang, a highlight was the PACAF briefing.

"My favorite part of the visit was the general's presentation about PACAF and learning about PACAF's major tasks with ROKAF," Kang said.

"We learned about U.S. Air Force tasks and strategies and what PACAF's organization structure is like. This allowed me to see military tasks in a broad view—it helped me very much," Kang added.

This was the first time a ROKAF cadet class has visited Headquarters PACAF.

Veterans Day ceremony aboard Mighty Mo honors veterans

Story and photo by
MC2 Jeffrey Troutman

Navy Public Affairs Support Element Detachment
Hawaii

America's Veterans Day ceremonies came to a close in Pearl Harbor aboard the nation's last battleship, the historic Battleship Missouri Memorial, during a Veterans Day sunset ceremony held Nov. 11 that honored America's veterans past and present.

The ceremony was attended by more than 400 military veterans, active duty service members and their families, and was in honor of the 70-year anniversary of the end of World War II and the 40-year anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War.

Several distinguished guests spoke at the ceremony in remembrance of their combat experiences and the pride they felt in serving their country.

"Every Vietnam veteran should hold his or her head high with the knowledge that, despite what popular opinion or the media would have us believe, we succeeded in our efforts during the Vietnam conflict," said Retired Navy Capt. Gerald Coffee, a Vietnam War veteran and former prisoner of war during the conflict.

"God bless you and congratulations on a job extremely well done. You may not hear that from many quarters, but that doesn't mean you don't deserve to hear it," he said.

Coffee used the podium to perform a traditional Vietnam prisoner of war tap-code for the audience, in honor of his fellow veterans: "God bless and God bless America. Thank you."

Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard, the U.S. House Rep. for Hawaii's 2nd Congressional District and a major in the Hawaii Army National Guard, was a keynote speaker for the ceremony and delivered a speech about never forgetting the sacrifices our veterans make for our country. "The spirits of the brave men and women who served in America's conflicts stand watch with us this afternoon, as our colors wave proudly in this historic harbor," said Gabbard.

"On this day there is a lot of gratitude, as our nation is forever grateful and indebted to our fallen warriors and to those who served and made it home. It is a debt impossible to measure, but it's a debt that is important for us to remember," she said.

Echoing Gabbard's sentiments was Tim Guard, the chairman of the USS Missouri Memorial Association and a Navy veteran of the Vietnam War.

"For many veterans of the Vietnam War, there were no bands or parades in their honor upon returning home, but we recognize your sacrifices to this country here today," said Guard.

"The past 40 years since the end of the Vietnam War have seen many veterans cope and recover



Retired Air Force Col. Jack Detour, left, salutes Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Air Force Honor Guard member Airman 1st Class Joshua Namio, after receiving an American flag that flew over the USS Missouri on Veterans Day 2015. Detour served in World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War during his military career.

from the psychological effects of that conflict, but for many still, the pain and the hardships they experienced live on. It's important that we never forget the sacrifices those veterans made for this country and honor that sacrifice with our service today," he said.

Many current active duty service members attended the ceremony to pay their respects to the country's fallen veterans and also to show their gratitude and support to the veterans who were in attendance.

"It's such an honor for me to participate in today's ceremony," said Culinary Specialist 1st Class Dong Ruan, a member of the joint service color guard who participated in the event.

"This is my very first time participating in a Veterans Day event, and it's something I'm definitely going to make a habit of doing now, to show my support to the veterans of this country," Ruan said.

Members of the Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Air Force

Honor Guard also performed a special flag-folding ceremony at the event and presented the American flag that flew over the Battleship Missouri Memorial on that day to retired Air Force Col. Jack Detour.

Detour was attending the ceremony with the distinction of having served in World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War during his military career.

He received a prolonged standing ovation for his service as the flag was presented to him.

Many of the veterans in attendance saluted Detour as the presentation occurred.

"On behalf of the USS Missouri Memorial Association, we salute you, Col. Detour, and thank you and all veterans of war for your service to this country," said Michael Carr, president and chief executive officer of the USS Missouri Memorial Association.

A final moment of silence was observed as the sun set over America's last 2015 Veterans Day ceremony.



Diverse VIEWS



Besides another person, what are you most thankful for and why?



Staff Sgt. Camron Calloway
735th Air Mobility Squadron

"I am most thankful for the times I get to de-stress, a relaxing walk, run, gym time, or a day at the beach."

MMW2 Jose Cancel
USS Cheyenne (SSN-773)

"I am thankful that I live in a country in which I can do what I want to do, within reason of course. There are many places in the world where people do not have this freedom."



Chief Master Sgt. Amy Long
8th Intelligence Squadron

"I am most thankful for my family, to include my Air Force family. They are my inspiration, motivation and support."

MMW2 Robert Hollister
USS Louisville (SSN-724)

"I am thankful for my liberty."



Capt. Dukmin Park
37th Intelligence Squadron

"I am most thankful of water. On a hot sunny day, imagine a drink of cold water. What more can I say."

CTISN Abigail Predmesky
NIOC

"I am thankful for the many opportunities which the Navy has given me. It has brought me to places I never thought I would see."



Master Sgt. Tara Thomas
U.S. Transportation Command

"I am most thankful for my health. Oftentimes you can forget how invaluable it is."

MM1 Andrew Mitchell Szad
USS Columbus (SSN-762)

"I am thankful for my freedom."



Zabrina Truesdell
735th Air Mobility Squadron

"I am most thankful I have the ability to assist others daily, be it personal or professional. Training is awesome."

CTI2 Christopher Ventura
NIOC

"I am thankful for being stationed in Hawaii, where we have great weather and I can always do things outdoors."



Provided by Lt. Paul Fylstra 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

Commentary

Stakeholder letter updates community about Red Hill

Rear Adm. John V. Fuller

Commander, Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific

(Editor's note: This letter from Rear Adm. John Fuller, commander, Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, was sent to elected officials and other stakeholders Nov. 13 and is posted on Navy Region Hawaii's Red Hill webpage: www.cnic.navy.mil/redhill. As part of Rear Adm. Fuller's stated commitment to keeping the community informed, the letter is printed here for our readers.)

Thank you for your continued support to our Navy team in Hawaii. As you know, the Navy, Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Hawaii's State Department of Health (DoH) signed a landmark agreement on Sept. 28 covering future actions at the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility.

The Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) provides a path ahead for future inspections and modernization upgrades that will further protect drinking water and minimize the risk of future releases from the facility.

This agreement also confirms that these parties will work together into the future to fulfill our collective responsibility to protect Oahu's drinking water while acknowledging the facility's strategic importance to our nation.

The AOC lays out specific requirements, along with deadlines and milestones for completing each task. These tasks include: tank inspections; repairs and maintenance; upgrade alternatives and release detection processes; tank



Rear Adm. John Fuller

tightness testing; corrosion and metal fatigue studies; and ground water protection and evaluation. EPA and DoH may assess monetary penalties against the Navy and DLA if deadlines are missed.

My staff met with Hawaii's DoH and the EPA at the end of October to address the first set of deadline requirements. These requirements included an exchange of information on tank inspections, fuel release response procedures, surveillance monitoring, ground water modeling and tank corrosion dynamics.

As part of the continuing facility modernization efforts that began before the AOC negotiation, we recently awarded over \$43 million in contracts to upgrade the facility's fire suppression, ventilation and oil-tight door systems.

Since the fuel loss from tank 5 in January 2014, we increased our vigilance and response capabilities. We continuously monitor fuel levels and conduct tank inspections.

When fuel is transferred in Red Hill, we follow and then exceed industry standard operating practices with an added level of measured scrutiny and precaution.

We employ state-of-the-art automated alarms and regularly test our response capabilities. Taken together,

I am confident we have minimized the possibility of future releases at the Red Hill facility.

Due to the complexity of the surrounding geology, the EPA, DoH and Navy will be consulting with experts to determine what actions should be taken to address the fuel that was lost in January 2014. We will be gathering additional information as to how quickly fuel breaks down in basalt as part of natural biological and chemical processes.

To date, all available evidence indicates that no free product fuel released from the Red Hill facility has reached the aquifer. The AOC requires that before any precipitous actions are taken, additional studies must be conducted to add to our collective knowledge as to the nature, fate and transport of fuel constituents in this particular location.

Meanwhile, my environmental professionals continue their long-term effort to monitor ground water and drinking water sources and to provide the results to the regulatory agencies for evaluation and assessment. The results indicate that the drinking water remains safe for all users.

As you know, the Navy's Red Hill drinking water shaft is the drinking water source closest to the Red Hill facility. Over the years, we have detected trace amounts of fuel constituents (parts of fuel) at this location in levels so low that they often cannot be quantified by the EPA-certified labs we are required to use.

The sampling results to date indicate that, when detected, these constituents have always been well below environmental action levels (EALs). EALs are established by the regulators

as standards protective of human health. We provide the sampling results to the DoH for evaluation.

Let me assure you that we remain committed to continued compliance with the DoH-approved groundwater protection plan and the updates to that plan which will be prepared pursuant to the AOC. With DoH and EPA oversight, the Navy and DLA will be responsible for implementing any remedy that would be needed to continue to keep the drinking water safe. We will not walk away from our responsibilities.

I am dedicated to making this a transparent and inclusive effort and will continue to communicate frequently with you about our progress.

As you receive this, I'm proud to report that we have conducted our 75th familiarization visit to the facility in the past 18 months, showing it to more than 500 stakeholders. They learned about the facility's operations and our environmental protection efforts. Our guests also had the opportunity to comprehend the size of the facility and appreciate why it may take more than 20 years to complete the agreed upgrades throughout the entire facility.

Your continued support is invaluable. Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time regarding the AOC's progress or Red Hill operations.

I encourage you to learn more about Red Hill by reviewing the Navy's website (www.cnic.navy.mil/redhill) or suggest that you subscribe to the EPA's website (www3.epa.gov/region9/waste/ust/redhill/index.html).

Thank you again for your time, interest and extraordinary support to our Navy.

F-100s fly in formation

In this undated photo from the 1960s, F-100s fly over Hickam Air Force Base.

Photo courtesy of the state of Hawaii Department of Transportation, Airports Division



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USS O'Kane celebrates 'sweet 16' anniversary

Lt. j.g. Megan Wilson

USS O'Kane (DDG 77)
Public Affairs

Families, friends and crew members from USS O'Kane (DDG 77) celebrated the 16th anniversary of the ship's commissioning Oct. 23 at Bellows Air Force Station.

The O'Kane's First Class Petty Officer Association hosted the ceremony and the festivities that followed as a way to commemorate all the ship's achievements to date, including 10 deployments. The ceremony began with raising the Battle Cat flag on the yardarm.

The Battle Cat flag is flown in honor of Rear Adm. Richard O'Kane's accomplishments during World War II. The flag can be described as a black panther superimposed on a Japanese naval ensign. The Battle Cat flag was then taken to Bellows Beach to ceremoniously represent O'Kane.

Cmdr. Colby Sherwood, the ship's executive officer, and Command Master Chief (SW) Charles Thomas cut the cakes provided by O'Kane's Junior Sailors Association. Families and friends were introduced to information about O'Kane's command history and indulged in picnic food cooked by the First Class Petty Officer Association.

"I've spent 3.5 years on USS O'Kane and through all the changes she has made, one thing has never changed. O'Kane's crew always comes together and becomes ohana," said Cryptologic Technician (Technical) (SW) Kendra Sims.

Christened in March

1998, accepted by the Navy in May 1999 and commissioned in Pearl Harbor on Oct. 23, 1999, O'Kane took its place in the fleet as the country's 26th Arleigh Burke-class destroyer.

O'Kane departed for its maiden deployment on Aug. 1, 2001 where it transited the Strait of Hormuz and joined coalition forces in the Arabian Gulf for two months, setting new records for boardings. Since then, it has deployed multiple times in direct support of the Global War on Terrorism.

O'Kane has been a part of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Exercise Northern Edge 06. O'Kane was tasked to support Aegis ballistic missile defense (BMD) presence requirements in U.S. 5th Fleet several times and served as the test ship for the first-ever intercept of an intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) where the successful intercept provided proof-of-concept for the president's phased adaptive approach (PAA) for defense of Europe.

Currently, the ship is undergoing its maintenance availability after returning from a deployment to U.S. 5th Fleet in December.

O'Kane is named for Rear Adm. Richard O'Kane, a submarine commander in World War II who received the Medal of Honor for his service aboard USS Tang (SS-306). He directly participated in more successful attacks on shipping than any other submarine officer during the war.

USS O'Kane continues "a tradition of honor," the



Operations Specialist 2nd Class Katelyn Kincaid, a member of Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions (CSADD), hands out pieces of O'Kane's birthday cake to Sailors while celebrating Oct. 23 at Bellows Air Force Station.

U.S. Navy photo by CTT2 (SW) Kendra Sims

USS O'Kane raises the "Battle Cat" on the yardarm while crew members sing to celebrate the 16th anniversary of O'Kane's commissioning during a birthday event Oct. 23 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

U.S. Navy photo by Lt. j.g. Megan Wilson

ship's motto, and a simple summation in tribute to Rear Adm. O'Kane's service.



Parade honors veterans



Photos by Jack Kampfer

(Above) Capt. William A. Dodge Jr., commanding officer of Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station Pacific, and his wife Sharon ride in the Wahiawa Lions Club's 69th annual Veterans Day Parade held Nov. 11. (Right photos) The Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps Detachment 175 of the University of Hawaii and James Campbell High School Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps march in the parade.



Pearl Harbor-Hickam *Highlights*



U.S. Air Force Capt. Jared Fujii, Hawaii Raptors pilot, talks with Republic of Korea Air Force Academy cadets Nov. 10 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. The cadet's visit was part of an effort to build a foundation of partnership and interoperability between Headquarters Pacific Air Forces and future ROKAF leaders.

U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Amanda Dick

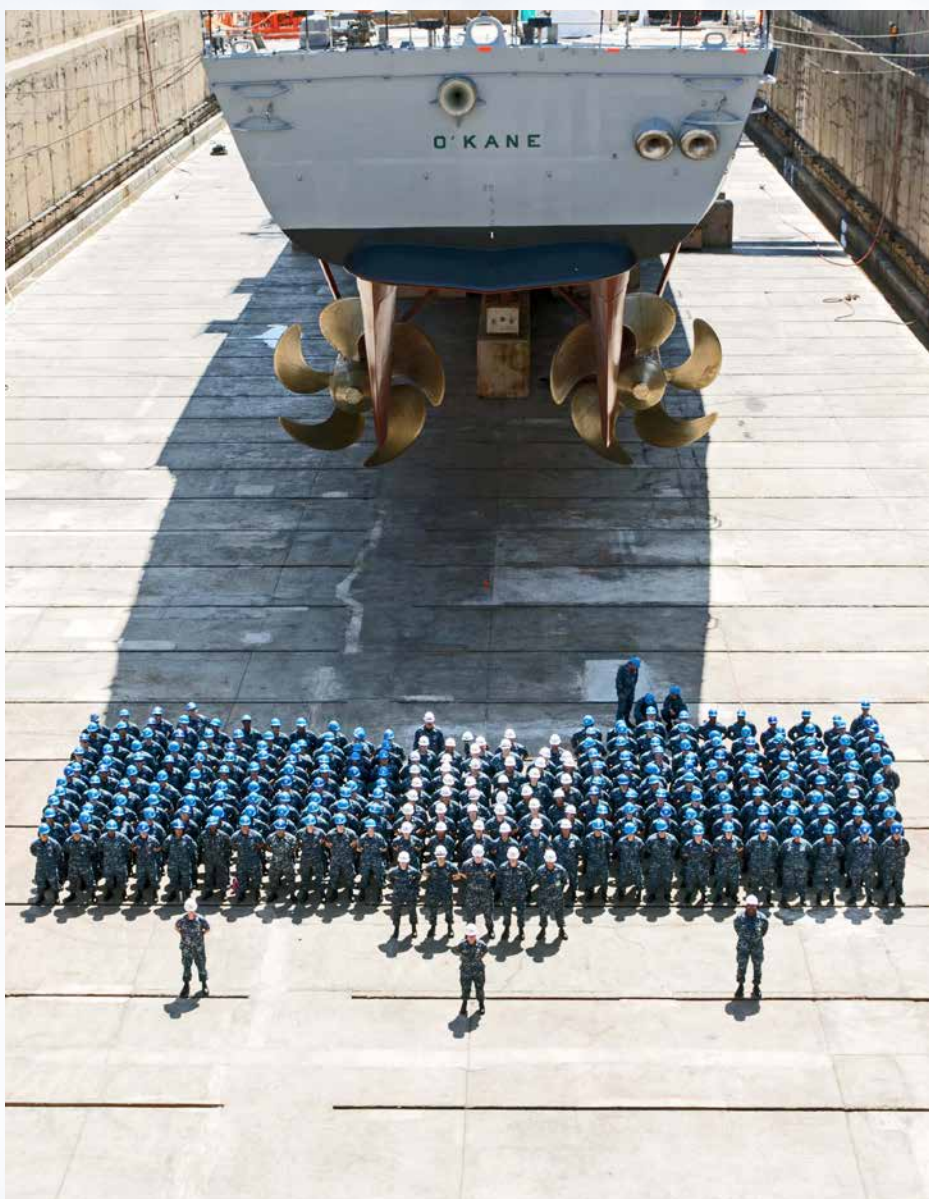
(Right) A woman bows her head in front of the new war memorial plaque unveiled Nov. 10 at the Neal S. Blaisdell Center in Honolulu during a war memorial plaque rededication ceremony.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Johans Chavarro



(Below) The crew of USS O'Kane (DDG 77) stand at attention in the dry dock 4 basin prior to the ship's undocking during the ship's availability Sept. 9 at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard.

U.S. Navy photo by Lt. j.g. Megan Wilson



Pearl Harbor survivor and veteran Delton "Wally" Walling (right) speaks with Rear Adm. John Fuller, commander, Navy Region Hawaii and Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, during a Pearl Harbor Colors honors and heritage ceremony Nov. 19 at the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Gabrielle Joyner



Marines assigned to the United States Marine Corps Forces Pacific Band perform during Pearl Harbor Colors Nov. 19. The ceremony was held in honor of the Marine Corps' 240th birthday, as well as Veterans Day and Wounded Warrior Care Month.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Gabrielle Joyner

Bremerton mayor presents Navy League Awards to USS Bremerton Sailors

Story and photo by
Lt. Brett Zimmerman

Commander Submarine
Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet
Public Affairs Office

Bremerton, Wash. Mayor Patty Lent was on hand to present awards, Nov. 9, to four Sailors from the Los Angeles class fast-attack submarine, USS Bremerton (SSN 698), on behalf of the Bremerton-Olympic Peninsula Council of the Navy League.

The Sailors selected for the awards were nominated based on outstanding achievement over the last year.

"It is an honor to be here with the crew and to represent the population of Bremerton and the Navy League," said Lent. "I am impressed with the ability of the crew and their dedication for excellence."

Electronics Technician 2nd Class Joshua Walters was awarded the Bowditch Award for Navigation Excellence. Machinist's Mate 2nd Class Anthony Robinson was awarded the Engineering Go-to Guy Award for Engineering Excellence.



Bremerton, Wash. Mayor Patty Lent congratulates Sonar Technician 3rd Class Tyler Unger on being awarded the "Tactical Adonis Award" from the Bremerton-Olympic Peninsula Council of the Navy League. This award represents outstanding achievement and excellence in weapons and tactical operations.

Sonar Technician 3rd Class Tyler Unger was awarded the Tactical Adonis Award for Tactical and Weapons Department Excellence. Culinary Specialist 3rd Class Kenneth Silva was awarded the Supply Specialist Award for Supply

Department Excellence.

"I am honored to receive this award from our namesake city of Bremerton," said Unger. "It's great to be recognized for working hard and doing my job." "It's gratifying. This award represents many

events that have occurred over a long period of time to get the ship in ready conditions," said Walters.

The Bremerton-Olympic Peninsula Council of the Navy League sponsors USS Bremerton. The organization provides

awards to four Sailors each year who are serving aboard, based on superior performance over the past year. This initiative was started in 2010.

"We are lucky to have such a supportive city and Navy League," said Cmdr. Wes Bringham,

Bremerton commanding officer.

"The crew and I were honored to have a port call in Bremerton earlier this year where the city really rolled out the red carpet for us. It was overwhelming the amount of support they showed us," he said.

As Lent ended the awards ceremony, she expressed her appreciation to the crew. "Thank you, thank you, thank you from myself, every citizen of Bremerton and the Navy League," Lent said.

The USS Bremerton is the oldest, commissioned Los Angeles-class submarine still in active service and is homeported at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

Bringham is currently preparing his crew and the Bremerton for its second-to-last scheduled deployment to the western Pacific before its scheduled decommissioning.

"I look forward to continuing to represent the city of Bremerton through our next two deployments and with the hard work of this crew, this boat could expect service past 2017," said Bringham.

Encounter with 'death' helped this smoker quit

Jason Bortz

Naval Hospital Pensacola
Public Affairs

(Editor's note: Although this story doesn't have any local ties, it is a personal and powerful story about one man's journey to overcome a smoking habit that had lasted for decades.)

PENSACOLA, Fla. (NNS) – Sept. 17 has been an annual day of celebration for retired Army sergeant first class Jerry Evatt for the past six years.

That day isn't the birthday of one of his grandchildren or the day he retired from the post office. It's the day he last smoked a cigarette and came face to face with "death."

Like many young men in the 1960s, Evatt was drafted into the Army. He retired after 20 years of service but unfortunately developed a bad habit during his Army career.

"I smoked some as a teenager but started heavy smoking in the military," said Evatt. "Cigarettes were cheap back then, and the majority of Soldiers smoked. I could buy a carton of cigarettes for around a dollar, and they even came in our C-rations."

By the time the first Surgeon General's warning appeared on a pack of cigarettes in 1970, Evatt was a full-time smoker. At the height of his smoking, he was going through a minimum of two packs

a day, and all three of his children became smokers. Despite declining health and warnings from his doctors to quit, Evatt kept smoking.

"I knew it was bad for me, but I couldn't stop," said Evatt. "You get used to the taste of cigarettes and want it."

Evatt started and ended every day by smoking a cigarette in his bed. He smoked every time he got in his truck and every time he used his computer. Even after Evatt was placed on oxygen, he continued to smoke. He even smoked while wearing his oxygen mask.

Despite a constant cough and respiratory problems, it was the constant drain on his bank account that made Evatt think about quitting. By 2009, he was spending \$300 a month on cigarettes.

On Sept. 17, 2009, Evatt finally got the motivation he needed to quit smoking.

He woke that morning and did not feel well. He decided to go see his doctor at Naval Hospital Pensacola (NHP) and knew he would probably have to stay there for a few days. After packing an overnight bag, Evatt sat down to eat breakfast. Breathing was getting harder and harder, and Evatt knew he was in trouble. He called 911 and told the operator, "I can't breathe."

Within minutes, the paramedics arrived and prepared to take Evatt

to the hospital. As he was being taken out of his home on a gurney, he once again succumbed to the additive power of cigarettes.

"As I was being taken out my front door, I reached out and grabbed my pack of cigarettes and lighter," said Evatt. "The paramedic looked at me and just shook his head."

After being placed in the ambulance, Evatt told the paramedics to take him to Naval Hospital Pensacola despite other hospitals being closer.

"My doctor was at [at Naval Hospital Pensacola] and that's where I wanted to go," said Evatt.

Those were the last words Evatt spoke before slipping into a coma, due to viral pneumonia, for two weeks. While in that coma, Evatt had a life-changing encounter that convinced him to never smoke a cigarette again.

"I met 'death,'" said Evatt. "He appeared to me as a well-dressed man out of nowhere. He reached his hand out and said, 'Follow me.'"

"I asked to where and he said, 'It doesn't matter, just follow.' I told him, 'I think I will stay here,' and then he was gone as quickly as he appeared. If I had taken his hand, I wouldn't be here today."

While Evatt was in a coma, doctors at NHP placed a nicotine patch on him to start his process of quitting smoking for good. After two weeks at NHP and another week at

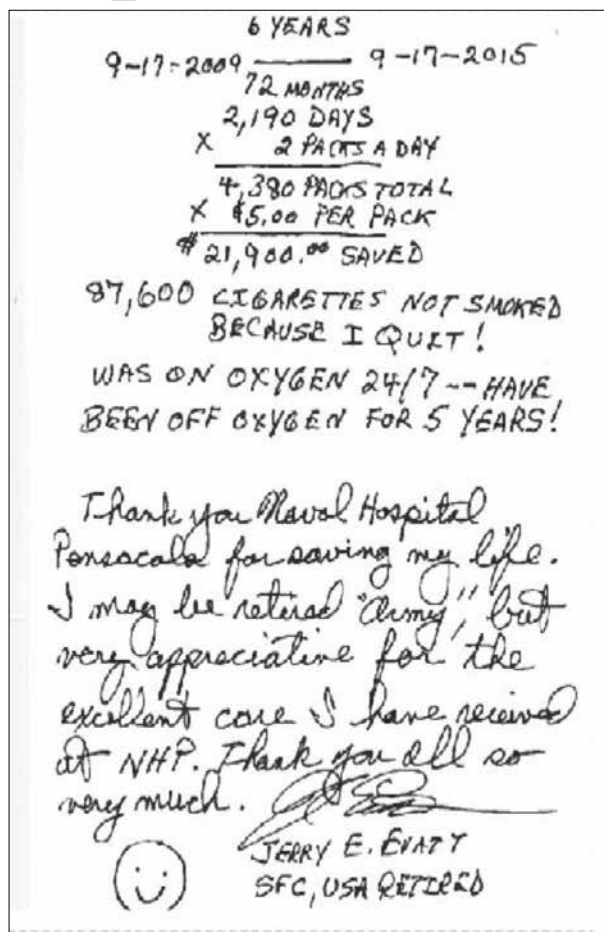


Image courtesy of Naval Hospital Pensacola Public Affairs

Jerry Evatt, a retired Army sergeant first class, sent a thank you card to Naval Hospital Pensacola (NHP) this year for saving his life.

another facility, Evatt returned to his home. Now the true test for his commitment to quit smoking would begin.

"I didn't really have any urges while I was in the hospital," said Evatt. "It wasn't until I got back into a normal routine that I got the urge to smoke again. When I got into my truck, I would reach into my pocket for

a pack of cigarettes that wasn't there. It was just habit."

To help fight those urges, Evatt decided to use a monetary incentive to keep him on the right path. On the 17th day of every month, he went to the bank and withdrew three \$100 dollar bills that he placed in a safe in his home. When the urge to smoke came, he would

take out the money and count it.

First it was \$300, then \$600, \$900, \$1,200. After six months, he had reached \$1,800 and hadn't smoked a cigarette. He decided to reward himself with something he could never afford when he was smoking.

"I used that money to take a trip to West Virginia to see my grandchildren," said Evatt. "I got to walk with them in the snow and even make homemade maple syrup."

Every September, Evatt returns to NHP to thank the staff for his new lease on life. This year, he sent a card that estimated how much money he would have spent on cigarettes in the past six years and how many cigarettes he would have smoked. He estimates he would have spent more than \$21,000 and smoked about 87,000 cigarettes since 2009. He did this to let the staff know just how appreciative he is of his health now.

"Naval Hospital Pensacola saved my life," said Evatt. "I wouldn't want to go anywhere else for my care."

His encounter with death, improved health and monthly trip to the bank has led to an improved life for Evatt. No longer on oxygen, Evatt now takes full advantage of his new life and hopes to inspire others to quit smoking. In fact, he has already convinced at least one person to quit smoking—his banker. She hasn't smoked for two years now.

USS Oklahoma disinterments complete, identification underway

Staff Sgt.
Kathrine Dodd

Defense POW/MIA
Accounting Agency

(Editor's note: Ray Emory, a Pearl Harbor survivor who lives in Hawaii and is a former Navy chief, carried out painstaking research on the USS Oklahoma unknowns and was a strong advocate for their identification and accounting. Emory was serving on the USS Honolulu at the time of the Dec. 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.)

Under a serene morning sky, save a low, solemn cadence, honor guardsmen assigned from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) escort the last four caskets containing the remains of unidentified service members lost on the USS Oklahoma to loading trucks from their plots at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP), Punchbowl.

The initiative to disinter these 61 caskets began five months ago, after Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert O. Work released a memo allowing the Department of Defense to include remains commingled during the salvage operations of the USS Oklahoma in its identification efforts.

Over the last six months DPAA, with the help of the Department of Veteran Affairs, exhumed the remains of up to 388 service members from 45 graves at the NMCP.

After the remains are verified and accessioned into the DPAA Laboratory, the identification process begins.

"[The] identifications of the dental remains will be completed in Hawaii first," said Ben Soria, the lead evidence coordinator at the DPAA Lab.



DOD photo by Spc Crystal D. Madriz



(Above, left) U.S. service members from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) participate in a disinterment ceremony Nov. 9 at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. (Below) Members of the DPAA march alongside a disinterred casket holding the remains of unknown USS Oklahoma service members during a disinterment ceremony at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Nov. 5



According to Soria, the re-sorting and processing of the post-cranial remains will be performed at the DPAA Laboratory at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha. Forensic scientists there will also organize the remains into individuals using anthropological and DNA analysis.

DPAA, in concert with the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory,

will use DNA samples donated by applicable family members, as well as medical and dental records, in the identification process. The agency estimates that 80 percent of the unknown remains associated with the USS Oklahoma can be identified within five years.

More than 70 years have passed since the USS Oklahoma cap-

sized in defense of Pearl Harbor. With new technologies and advances in forensic science now available, DPAA will be able to put names to those previously buried as unknown, something long owed to those who fell.

Those remains that still cannot be identified will be reinterred in a known group burial in Arlington National Cemetery, the NMCP, or an-

other as of yet unknown course of action may be taken.

"As important as it is to return the fallen to their families, it's equally if not more important to the nation," said Brig. Gen. Mark Spindler, DPAA deputy director.

"This is our sacred promise that we make to our sons and daughters when we put them

in harm's way and ask them to do the most difficult tasks around," he said.

"We must work as hard as we can to restore their names," Spindler continued. "Right now they remain nameless out there, but what we do when we fulfill the nation's promise is restore the name. Give the name back to the nation and give it back to their family."

War memorial

Continued from page A-1

brings the spirit of Veterans Day to our every day, keeping on our minds and in our hearts the unrepayable debt owed to those who serve and who have served our nation," said Amemiya.

"This facility is showing its age and, regardless of its fate, this site will remain in perpetuity a memorial to all the sons and daughters of Hawaii who served their country in a time of war and a special tribute to those who gave their lives in order that freedom and justice might prevail throughout the world," Amemiya said.

Carol Fukunaga, member of the Honolulu City Council in Hawaii, also thanked the continued support and effort from those who saw the need to rededicate the Blaisdell Center as the war memorial it was intended to be.

"I think that these efforts remind us of the many sacrifices the veterans have made, not just on Veterans Day, but also as we enjoy the music, culture and arts, entertainment and freedoms that they fought to protect," said Fukunaga.

Thomas K. Kaulukukui Jr., veteran and chairman of the board and managing trustee of Queen Lili'uokalani Trust, closed out the ceremony by thanking all parties involved in rededicating the Blaisdell Center as a war memorial and noting the significance it makes in not just honoring the past, but also the future.

"So today, on behalf of all veterans, and especially those who have served in times of war, and especially those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, I sincerely thank you all, and thank those who have made this day possible," said Kaulukukui.

"This includes the private citizens who initiated these actions, the city council and the council members who moved on this, [and] the mayor and his staff who organized this."

"This afternoon, we do more than to just recall our heroes of the past, we inspire our heroes of the future," said Kaulukukui.

Following a musical interlude and the playing of "God Bless America," those in attendance moved to the Blaisdell Center lawn for the unveiling of the new memorial plaque.

The memorial reads: "This site was known as the Honolulu International Center from 1963-1976.

Dedicated to all the sons and daughters of Hawaii who served their country in the time of war and in special tribute to those who gave their lives in order that freedom and justice might prevail throughout the world.

City and Council of Honolulu, September 12, 1964"

(The efforts to rededicate the Blaisdell Center originated from Tanya Harrison, who began researching the now occupied Blaisdell area as a family genealogy project.

However, when her research brought to light old newspapers from 1964 that described the Blaisdell Center as a war memorial, Harrison became motivated to figure out how the title could have been forgotten and what she could do to get it back. It was then that Harrison, with the help of veterans who became interested in the project, met with Mayor Kirk Caldwell and Honolulu City Council members, Ann Kobayashi and Carol Fukunaga, on how to rededicate the Blaisdell Center as a war memorial.)