

# Hawaii MARINE

INSIDE	
Ulchi Focus Lens	A-2
Major Pless	A-3
VP-4 in Malaysia	A-5
Whale Rescue	B-1
MCCS & SM&SP	B-2
Word to Pass	B-5
Menu	B-6
Ads	B-7
MCAF Races	C-1
Sports Briefs	C-2
Health & Fitness	C-4

## Force Recon brothers reunite at MCB Hawaii

Lance Cpl.  
**Monroe F. Seigle**  
Combat Correspondent

There is a family out there that has brothers from every culture, background and ethnicity that have been through conflicts far worse than anything that could go on in a regular household.

Some of these brothers are lawyers, bankers, bikers, truckers and even generals in the U.S. Marine Corps.



The Force Reconnaissance Association has a mission. It transcends the generations of reconnaissance Marines from World War II, until the present, to keep their coveted brotherhood alive.

Next week, several retired, civilian and veteran Marines who earned the title of a reconnaissance Marine will come from all over the United States to MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, to unite once again as a brotherhood, share their pastimes, and talk about their lives as reconnaissance Marines.

"This is a way to keep those who served in our reconnaissance family together," said Staff Sgt. Jose Tablada, vice president of the FRA. "There are only a few of us, and we want to keep our common bond of brotherhood strong."

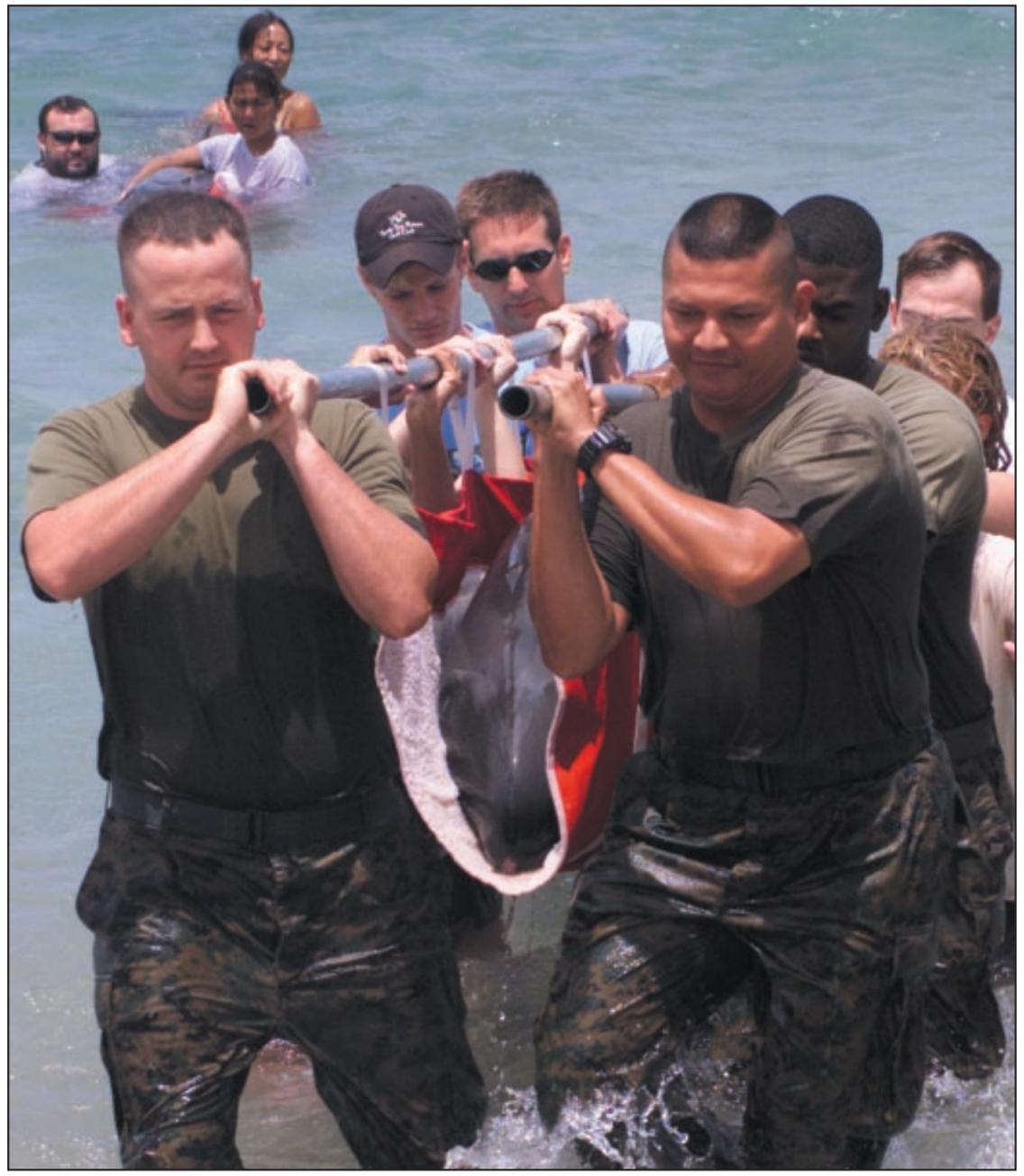
The Marines are going to have an interesting week as they reunite. Their first day together will be spent relaxing and sharing stories while they enjoy the Hawaiian scenery playing golf and going scuba diving.

"I look forward to meeting and getting a chance to learn from the reconnaissance Marines that have come before me and have been there and done that," said Lance Cpl. Jason Dumlao, a Marine in the Reconnaissance Indoctrination Platoon aboard MCB Hawaii. "I think it will motivate me to be able to hear their stories and learn how they accomplished the training missions."

The association's second day will be spent touring the Provost Marshal's Office and meeting the working dogs that sniff out danger and keep our base safe. The brotherhood will get hands-on experience at the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer

See RECON, A-4

## Marines help save whales



Sgt. Joseph A. Lee

Hawaii Marines Sgt. Michael Sloan (left) and Staff Sgt. Frank Benevente, both with Base Motors, Headquarters Bn., MCB Hawaii, assist in the recovery of one of two melon head whales stranded along the shore near Hau'ula State Park on the windward coast of Oahu. Marines also provided transportation to the University of Hawaii Marine Mammal Research Center aboard K-Bay, where the whales are recovering. See full story on page B-1.

## American-Samoan sergeants major say 'aloha'

Lance Cpl. **Monroe F. Seigle**  
Combat Correspondent

It was a day of rejoicing and sorrow for many Marines and Sailors on Oahu when three sergeants major retired from active duty.

Sergeants Maj. Filipino Ilaoa, Tunu Tupuola and Tusipasi Suiaunoa had a combined total of 90 years of honorable service and sacrifices as their careers came to an end Aug. 15 during a post and relief and retirement ceremony at Dewey Square aboard MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay.

During the post and relief ceremony,

Ilaoa relinquished duties as the base sergeant major to Sgt. Maj. Anthony Franks, the incoming sergeant major for MCB Hawaii.

Before enlisting in the Marine Corps, Ilaoa, Tupuola and Suiaunoa were friends in high school while they lived in American Samoa.

They joined the Corps together, and on Oct. 23, 1973, they began their military lives when they went to recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, Calif.

Each of the sergeants major has had numerous accomplishments in his career.

Ilaoa earned the title "Recruiter of the Year" in 1981 and was meritoriously promoted to gunnery sergeant on June 2, 1981. He also deployed to Somalia in support of Operation Restore Hope while serving as the sergeant major of 3rd Bn., 11th Marines, out of 29 Palms, Calif.

Ilaoa's personal decorations include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal with one gold star, Navy Achievement Medal and a Combat Action Ribbon.

"Always think about the three Corps values you have in your heart — honor, courage and commitment," said Ilaoa to

hundreds of Marines at the ceremony.

Tupuola served as a drill instructor at MCRD, Parris Island, S.C., and earned the rank of gunnery sergeant meritoriously upon serving as a drill instructor, senior drill instructor, chief drill instructor and drill master.

Tupuola also served as sergeant major of the 1st Combat Engineer Bn. when he deployed to Operation Desert Storm.

His personal decorations include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with a Gold Star,

See SGT SMAJ, A-4

## New VADS can I.D. engine problems for Motor T

Marines from CSSG-3 gain valuable exposure to the new system as they check a vehicle for possible malfunctions that could have occurred with recent usage.



Lance Cpl. Monroe F. Seigle

Lance Cpl. **Monroe F. Seigle**  
Combat Correspondent

When vehicles have a malfunction, sometimes the hardest part of getting them to work again is correctly identifying exactly what is wrong so the malfunctions can be repaired.

The new Vehicle Automated Diagnostic System, or VADS, which was developed by the U.S. Army, has the capability to locate and identify a malfunction in

military vehicles to include helicopters and tanks.

The VADS system recently became available to the Marines aboard MCB Hawaii to replace the Simplified Test Equipment / Internal Combustion System.

With the simple hookup of one connection and the use of a laptop computer, which comes with the system, any problem in the vehicle that is electrical, air-pressure, oil or fuel-related will be spelled out on the screen.

"This system will tremendously cut down on time and troubleshooting," said Staff Sgt. Scott Franklin, motor transport maintenance instructor with the Logistics Operation School out of Camp Johnson, N.C. "We needed new equipment that is user friendly. With this new technology in the Marine Corps, we will be able to test entire systems of many vehicles for malfunctions."

"This is going to save the

See VADS, A-4

# MCBH NEWS BRIEFS

## VOLUNTEERS SOUGHT FOR KAPA'A QUARRY ROAD CLEANUP

Another Kapa'a Quarry Road cleanup has been scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 30. During the past five months, nearly 100,000 pounds of stuff has been removed from the off-road areas alongside approximately half of the length of the road. Still more dumping needs to be removed from the overgrown bushes.

Volunteers are needed to support clean up efforts along a 2.6 mile stretch. Teams of 10 - 12 people are wanted to go into the bushes and pull out trash — from furniture to burnt-out cars. Equipment will be available for items too big or heavy for volunteers.

Interested individuals are asked to arrive at Le Jardin Academy at 7:30 a.m. Team assignments will be handed out at this staging area and volunteers will receive a safety brief. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m.

Volunteers should wear closed-toe shoes, a hat and lightweight, long-sleeved shirts. The affinity group that finishes first will win a pau hana pupu party at Pinky's Puppu Bar & Grill in Kailua.

For more information, contact Shannon or Jim Wood at 263-6001 or 223-5535.

## ANDERSON HALL MAKES REPAIRS

To serve you better, Anderson Hall's main mess deck will be undergoing repairs to the air conditioning system starting Monday for approximately three weeks. During this period, the main mess deck operations will be moved to the newly renovated snack line.

The snack line was recently renovated to replace the ceiling and lighting, and to add air conditioning. However, the deli line will remain open and will continue to serve a variety of submarine sandwiches and fast food items, hot dogs, hamburgers, etc.

Signs will be posted to make this transition as smooth as possible.

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

On-Base Emergencies 257-9111  
Military Police 257-7114

## Hawaii MARINE

Commanding General Brig. Gen. Jerry C. McAbee  
Public Affairs Director Maj. Chris Hughes  
Public Affairs Chief Gunnery Sgt. Rhys Evans  
Managing Editor Aiko Brum  
Staff Writer Staff Sgt. Robert Carlson  
Staff Writer Sgt. Alexis R. Mulero  
Staff Writer Sgt. Joseph Lee  
Staff Writer Sgt. Joe Lindsay  
Editor Sgt. Jereme Edwards  
Press Chief Cpl. Jason E. Miller  
Editor Cpl. Jessica M. Mills  
Staff Writer Lance Cpl. Monroe F. Seigle

The *Hawaii Marine* is an unofficial newspaper published every Friday by MidWeek Printing, Inc., 45-525 Luluku Road, Kaneohe, HI 96744, a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Marine Corps under exclusive contract to the U.S. Marine Corps. This civilian enterprise is an authorized publication for members of the military services.

Contents of the *Hawaii Marine* are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the United States Government, the Department of Defense or the U.S. Marine Corps. All advertising is provided by MidWeek Printing, Inc., 235-5881.

The appearance of advertising in the *Hawaii Marine*, including inserts and supplements, does not constitute endorsement of the firms' products and services by the DoD, DoN or the U.S. Marine Corps of the products or services advertised.

Everything advertised in the *Hawaii Marine* shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other non-merit factor of the purchaser, user or patron.

Editorial content or public service announcements (i.e. all content other than paid advertisements) is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office aboard Marine Corps Base Hawaii. Opinions expressed are not to be considered an official expression of the DoD or the U.S. Marine Corps.

To contact the MCB Hawaii Public Affairs Office use the following addresses:

HAWAII MARINE, BOX 63062, BLDG. 216,  
MCB HAWAII, KANEOHE BAY, HAWAII 96863  
E-MAIL: HAWAIIIMARINE@MCBH.USMC.MIL  
FAX: 257-2511, PHONE: 257-8840

# U.S., R.O.K. forces combine

**Cpl. Luis R. Agostini**  
*Marine Forces Pacific*

**PALAN, Republic of Korea** — Ulchi Focus Lens, the world's largest computerized command and control exercise combining Republic of Korea and U.S. forces, began here Monday.

Lieutenant Gen. Wallace G. Gregson assumed command of Combined Marine Forces Command Sunday evening, participating in his first exercise since assuming command of Marine Forces Pacific.

Lieutenant Gen. Gregson's R.O.K. counter-

part for the exercise is Lt. Gen. Kim In Sik, commandant of the R.O.K. Marine Corps.

Ulchi Focus Lens 03 will exercise the higher headquarters' staffs of the U.S. and R.O.K. military services through computer-driven gaming scenarios, providing the CMFC and R.O.K. staffs the ability to maneuver armies, corps and Marine Expeditionary Forces on the computer-simulated battlefield.

The staffs are participating in various locations throughout the Korean peninsula, with the majori-

ty of activity at the Korean Marine Corps Headquarters.

"It gives both of our Corps an opportunity to build mutual cooperation, friendship and skills," said Lt. Col. David Maxwell, G-4, Marine Forces Korea.

Although translators for the exercise are readily available, Marines often find themselves communicating directly with their R.O.K. counterparts.

"Their English is really better than some would give them credit for," said Sgt. Sarah Myszka, aviation planner, Aviation Logistics

Division, CMFC. "The [R.O.K.] officers are really good; the enlisted sometimes seem a little wary, because of the rank structure."

This year's exercise differs from last year's, calling for more Marine Corps participation this time around.

"Our participation increased by fifty percent," said Lt. Col. Robert Pinder, staff judge advocate, CMFC.

"Last year, we only participated in the second half of the exercise. This year, we are participating in the full exercise."

## 3rd Rad. Bn. eases language barrier

**Cpl. Luis R. Agostini**  
*Marine Forces Pacific*

**PALAN, Republic of Korea** — One day, every warfighter will be equipped with the technology to translate a foreign language in a distant land at the touch of a button, or the command of a voice. Until that day arrives, however, the Corps will continue to turn to its Marines for language translation, as was done for Ulchi Focus Lens 2003.

Sergeant Andrew Nevitt, a Korean cryptologic linguist from Marine Forces Pacific's 3rd Radio Bn., MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, is one of several translators brought aboard UFL-03 to assist Marines and Sailors in communicating with their Republic of Korea Marine counterparts.

"I talked to my platoon command-



Cpl. Luis R. Agostini

**Nevitt (center) assists in translating dialogue between Master Sgt. Joe Orozco (left) and Republic of Korea Marine Maj. Joo during UFL-03.**

er for possible deployments," said Nevitt. He told me UFL was a good opportunity, and he submitted my name to MarForPac."

Sergeant Nevitt's journey toward supporting Marine Corps operations through Korean translation began after graduating from the 16-month long course at the Defense Language

Institute at Monterey, Calif.

Although he is a certified Korean linguist, perfecting his second language is a constant process.

"It's really interesting to see and learn new words and the different ways things can be said," said Nevitt, who's had the opportunity to pick up some colloquial Korean in nearby Osan.

"It's easier in town. It's more of a relaxed atmosphere," said Nevitt. "The Koreans are very friendly people."

Ulchi Focus Lens exercises the higher headquarters' staffs of the U.S. and R.O.K. military services through computer-driven gaming scenarios, providing the CMFC and R.O.K. staffs the ability to maneuver armies, corps and Marine Expeditionary Forces on the computer-simulated battlefield.

## Aloha Tavern offers fine field dining

**Sgt. Reina Barnett**  
*Marine Forces Pacific*

**CAMP PALAN, Republic of Korea** — Just in time for Ulchi Focus Lens 2003, the Aloha Tavern has opened its doors to the Marines and Sailors here.

In an era of fatty fast food and every Marine's favorite — the nutritious meals ready to eat (MRE), the Aloha Tavern offers not only something different, but also offers a cure to homesickness as well, dishing up all-American cuisine, pleasing the palate of the hard-working Marines and Sailors billeted here. The long lines tell the story.

Built to withstand the great outdoors, the Aloha Tavern has a rustic decor, specializing in hot, home-cooked meals.

Executive chefs Sgt. Aubrey Evans from 1st Bn., 12th Marines, and Cpl. James Owen of Marine Corps Air Facility, both units located at MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, are among the seven Marines who feed those aboard Camp Palan.

"I like to see the smiles on people's faces when they come through the line," said Evans. "We do the best we can."

When asked about his first food service experience at UFL, Owen said, "Cooks are more appreciat-



Sgt. Reina Barnett

**A soldier participating in UFL-03 receives hot chow from a Marine at Aloha Tavern at Camp Palan, Republic of Korea.**

ed in the field. They [patrons] appreciate us when they are hungry."

"The service is awesome," remarked Cmdr. Jeff Rhodes, deputy force chaplain, Marine Forces Pacific.

For breakfast, Marines enjoy omelettes, cooked just the way you like it, or a couple of scoops of scrambled eggs. Alongside the eggs are several choices of select meats, as well as waffles with savory fruit toppings or rich maple syrup. A variety of breads, fruit, coffee and juices can also be found at the tavern, or in any of its adjacent dining areas.

For dinner, the tavern offers the same great service, serving up specialties such as chili with rice, lasagna and baked chicken. Salad, assorted fruits and select desserts are also available. The beverage list here has more than six choices.

Petty Officer First Class Shannon Fisher, religious program specialist for MarForPac, said, "The chicken is very good. However, coffee is paramount."

"They've got to keep the coffee full."

Master Sgt. Gwynn Sadlier, Pacific Command staff noncommissioned

officer-in-charge, praised the baked chicken, saying, "It was good. But there's no ice cream here. You've got to have ice cream!"

There are two softly lighted indoor dining rooms directly across the tavern, which offer ample seating. With bistro-style seating behind the tavern, Marines can also enjoy the beauty of Palan Lake while savoring their meal.

Proper dress attire is required; wearing physical training (PT) gear is not allowed.

The Aloha Tavern is a "can't miss" for patrons of fine Marine Corps field dining.

• **Getting It Straight:** The author of the article entitled "Surviving family members qualify for aid" on page B-9 of the Aug. 15 issue was incorrectly identified. The author is 1st Lt. Christopher Winchell, the legal assistance officer at the Legal Assistance Center, MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay.

All photos from U.S.M.C. Pless Archives



Left — The 821-foot SS Stephen W. Pless is part of the Navy's maritime prepositioned fleet normally located in the Mediterranean Sea, where she prepositions equipment and supplies for the Marine Corps.

Below — The Medal of Honor is America's highest and most-revered medal.



## Gone, but not forgotten by Marines

Family of Medal of Honor recipient visits Pless Hall — named for him

**Sgt. Joe Lindsay**

Community Relations Chief

The annals of Marine Corps history are filled with many heroes, and though it would perhaps be unwise to compare their valor and sacrifice, it would be safe to say that Maj. Stephen W. Pless, the first and only Marine aviator to receive the Medal of Honor in Vietnam, was as brave as they come.

Pless, a Newnan, Ga., native who survived 780 combat helicopter missions in Vietnam, was tragically killed in a motorcycle accident in Pensacola, Fla., on July 20, 1969, just six months after being presented with the Medal of Honor by President Lyndon Baines Johnson at a White House ceremony.

Pless was survived by his pregnant wife, Jo Ann, (who had their fourth child two months after his death); mother, Nancy; and older brother Travis. Also surviving Pless was his first cousin, Ken Ray, who was more like a brother than a cousin to Pless, as the two were often raised together in the same house.

Recently, Ray, a native of Decatur, Ga., and his wife, Dina, a native of Lake Jackson, Texas, visited MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, to see the installation where Pless was once stationed. They especially were interested in visiting Pless Hall, the building named for Ray's cousin, which now serves as home to the Base Thrift Shop.



Photos courtesy of Pless Family

Above — Nancy Pless, mother of aviator Maj. Stephen W. Pless, still remains in close contact with the Corps.

Left — Ken Ray, first cousin of Pless, and his wife Dina pose in front of Pless Hall during their recent visit to MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay.



"It means an awful lot for me to visit here," said Ray, who now, along with his wife, calls Jackson, Miss., home. "Stephen and I grew up together, and it has always been a dream of mine to visit Kaneohe Bay and see the hall named after him. His memory is very special to our entire family."

That memory is especially strong to Ray's aunt Nancy (Pless's mother). She requested that her nephew come back home with photos of the hall.

"Ever since Stephen's death, the Marine Corps has stayed in touch with Nancy," said Ray.

"It just shows that when the Marine Corps says things like 'Once a Marine, Always a Marine,' and 'Semper Paratus,' that these are not just catch phrases, but that there is real meaning and merit behind the words."

"The Marine Corps is like a family, and they don't forget their own. That has meant so much to our family over the years."

The Rays recently had twin sons, the oldest (albeit by two

minutes) they named Aidan Stephen.

"I never knew Steve, but I've heard so much about him," said Dina, her voice drifting off into tears. "Now that we have a child named after him, his legacy means so much personally to me now."

"I want my sons to know all about him, and what he did for his country," she said.

One place where little Aidan Stephen could learn more about



Stephen (left) and his brother, Travis, salute the camera in this 1942 photo. Both boys went on to join the military as young men.

his famous cousin when he gets older would simply be from asking any Marine he might run into, as Pless remains one of Corps' greatest legends.

"In boot camp, we learn about all the heroes of the Marine Corps," said Cpl. Steven Jenkins, a Headquarters Bn., MCB Hawaii, administrative clerk. "Of course, Chesty Puller, Dan Daly and Smedley

See PLESS, A-5

# Word on the Street

Where would you go on deployment if you had a choice?



"...To Thailand, because a bunch of my friends went there, and they said they had a great time."  
**Lance Cpl. Santiago Montesinos**  
Air conditioner, mechanic, CSSG-3



"I would go anywhere in Europe because there are few Marines out there to represent the Marine Corps."  
**Master Gunnery Sgt. Garry Laws**  
S-6 Chief  
3rd Marine Regiment



"I would go to Australia because I know I would have a good time there."  
**Lance Cpl. Michael Cramer**  
CG Administrative clerk  
Headquarters Bn., MCB Hawaii



"I would go to Australia, which is good because I am going there in a week."  
**Lance Cpl. Jacob Chescheir**  
Diesel mechanic  
3rd Marine Regiment



"...To Corfu, Greece, because it is a beautiful island off the coast and has some great scenery."  
**Petty Officer 1st Class David Dibble**  
Administrative leading petty officer  
HSL-37

# 21st Dental cleans, brightens smiles

**Lance Cpl. Monroe F. Seigle**  
*Combat Correspondent*

If you don't brush your teeth twice a day and floss at least once, there is a possibility you can develop cavities and even lose a tooth from the build up of sugars and acids that eat away at the delicate enamel on your teeth.

The good news is that the 21st Dental Co. aboard MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, does not want that to happen to anyone. Several qualified dentists are trained and available at the 21st Dental Co., to catch the smallest amount of any kind of bacteria that can do any possible damage to your teeth.

When many Marines and Sailors think of the dentist, they associate the thoughts with the sound of the grinding drill going into their mouths and a wide-eyed dentist leering over them as he or she prepares to perform a painful surgery.

"Dental hygiene can be quite simple," said Dr. Dave Pruskowskia, a general dentist with 21st Dental. "They key to a healthy mouth and a bright smile is to brush your teeth twice a day and floss at least once a day."

Pruskowski, along with the other certified dentists at the 21st Dental Co. can perform a number of services such as cleanings, fillings, and placing crowns and bridges — and on rare occasions, implants.

Cleanings are the most common service performed. During a cleaning, the



Lance Cpl. Monroe F. Seigle

**Diane Hopkins, a dental hygienist with 21st Dental aboard MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, performs a "quad scale" on Senior Chief Petty Officer Mike Gregory, an air traffic controller with Marine Corps Air Facility, during one of his regular checkups.**

patient is allowed to comfortably lean back in a chair and have his or her teeth cleaned with an ultrasonic scaler that has a vibrating tip, which sprays water and in turn loosens all the tartar and plaque that have built up on the teeth.

Along with cleanings, a dental exam should be performed every year, so the teeth, gums and all tissues in the mouth can be checked for infections and possi-

bly cancer. Exams can determine whether the patient will be considered in a 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th class dental category.

A 4th class dental category means the patient has not been to the dentist in over a year and needs to be checked for any kinds of problems that could have aroused.

Third class identifies patients that

have an urgent issue, and if not taken care of, could seriously effect the patient's ability to perform regular duties. An example of a 3rd class dental patient is one that has an infection in the mouth or needs to have a tooth pulled.

Second class is not as serious as 3rd, but the patient still needs to visit the dentist before the problem progresses into a 3rd class problem. A prime example is someone who needs a filling in his or her teeth or even a cleaning.

A 1st class patient is one who is considered to have no dental problems and has had a checkup in the last year.

"Many Marines and Sailors fail to realize that what they eat and drink can cause cavities, which are caused from bacteria that has gotten hold of some form of sugar and turned into acid," said Dr. Diane Hopkins, also a general dentist at the 21st Dental Co. "Soft drinks probably do the most damage on your teeth because they are full of sugar, and acid as well."

"They should be consumed in moderation and teeth should be brushed after consuming any food or drink high in sugar."

"The biggest problem we have on this base is getting Marines and Sailors in here so we can keep an update on their dental health," said Pruskowskia. "If we can just get them in here, we can correct any potential dental problems before they get any worse."

To make a dental appointment, call 257-3100, ext. 257.

## RECON, From A-1

Center, and the veteran Marines will get a first-hand look at new Force Recon warfighting equipment.

The third and fourth day will be spent shopping at several locations around the island, and includes a guided tour of Naval Station Pearl Harbor, to learn the history of the USS Arizona, USS Bowfin and the USS Missouri.

That same night, FRA will experience a luau at the Paradise Cove.

The fifth day will be spent at the Polynesian Cultural Center and during the sixth, the veterans will hold a scholarship auction to raise money to support the education of reconnaissance Marines and their families.

Before the FRA says goodbye to new friends and brothers, the association will enjoy a farewell brunch.

"Our organization is interesting because there are four commandants within our family along with Marines who served in Vietnam and got out as a corporal," said Tablada. "Several of our brothers are disabled. They represent almost every walk of life you can imagine."

"When we come together, we are family — regardless of who you are or what rank you were or currently are."

"We are brothers of the same blood."

## SGTSMaj, From A-1

Good Conduct Medal with one silver star and two bronze stars.

Suiaunua served as a drill instructor, too, at MCRD, San Diego. He was the first sergeant of Delta Co., 1st Bn., 4th Marines, when he deployed to Operation Desert Shield.

Suiaunua's personal decorations include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, three Navy/ Marine Corps

Achievement Medals and a Combat Action Ribbon.

During the ceremony, the Samoan trio spoke of their experiences in the Corps and what they have learned.

Each has now retired from the Marine Corps the same way they came into the Marine Corps — side by side.

"May God bless each and every one of you Marines in your careers, and Semper Fidelis," said Ilaoa during the closing remarks of the retirement ceremony.



Lance Cpl. Monroe F. Seigle

**Brigadier Gen. Jerry McAbee, commanding general for MCB Hawaii, congratulates the sergeants major after each receives the Legion of Merit during retirement.**

## VADS, From A-1

motor transport Marines' time — and the Marine Corps a lot of money."

Once the equipment has been identified by the new equipment, VADS can also identify any parts that need to be bought and replaced, along with their price.

Another advantage to the new Vehicle Automated Diagnostic System is with the passing of time. The equipment is easy to upgrade and test new vehicles; it's also waterproof and can tolerate falls up to 12 feet.

"This is the future of all testing equipment for the Marine Corps," said Staff Sgt. Michael Hayden, Maintenance Integrated Management Systems chief for Combat Service Support Group 3. "If there are Marines broken down on the side of the road, they can easily find out what is wrong with the vehicle, even if they have no mechanical experience."

# Skinny Dragons wrap in Malaysia

**Lt. j.g. Joshua Calloway**

*Patrol Squadron 4*

**KUANTAN, Malaysia** — Patrol Squadron 4 participated in the final Combined Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercise this week with the Malaysian military in Kuantan on the Malaysian Peninsula. The aircrew and maintenance personnel of VP-4, led by Lt. Cmdr. David Hauth, demonstrated the capabilities and characteristics of the P-3C Orion to the Malaysian Air Force.

The crew flew the maritime patrol aircraft in a series of Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) operations in the South China Sea. The flights, conducted over a span of three days, were flown with the Malaysian Air Force and also included U.S. and Malaysian surface vessels in a joint ASW coordinated exercise.

During a static display of the crew's aircraft, Navy Lt. Eric Cyre, commander, was impressed with the high level of interest the Malaysian pilots showed in the P-3.

Professional exchange and cooperation were enjoyed by both Malaysian and U.S. Navy air crews. While on station, the crew demonstrated the aircraft's ability to shut down and then later restart one of its engines at very low altitudes for fuel efficiency, as well as its ASW capability to localize, track and conduct attacks upon enemy submarines.

The Malaysians witnessed the crew conduct a prosecution while coordinating with the other surface ships to track the sub surface contact. It was a superb demonstration of friendship and international spirit between the two militaries.

The aircrew and maintenance personnel representing VP-4 were proud to have the opportunity to represent their country, and help promote the cultural awareness of the U.S., while achieving a new understanding of the Malaysian people.

"I really discovered quite a bit about Malaysia and their military, and hope they learned something about the maritime operations of the United States Navy," said Lt. j.g. Jerrod Konowal, the crew's navigator.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Spencer Gatewood, an aviation electronics technician and the crew's inflight technician, commented that he enjoyed showing the Malaysian military personnel the full capabilities of the P-3C. He said he "made some memorable acquaintances."

The CARAT 2003 exercises were a huge success for VP-4, the 7th Fleet and foreign military participants. The continued participation of the U.S. Navy in exercises such as this will continue to strengthen its working relationship with allied countries in the 7th Fleet theater of operations, ultimately allowing them to operate as a cohesive force in times of peace or war.

All photos from U.S.M.C. Pless Archives



(Left to Right) Lance Cpl. John Phelps, Pless, Capt. Rupert Fairfield, and Gunnery Sgt. Leroy Poulson, pose for a photo in Da Nang, Vietnam, following their daring rescue mission. Pless was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions. All other members of his crew received the Navy Cross.

## PLESS, From A-3

Butler always jump to a Marine's mind, but Major Stephen Pless is one Marine that always stands out for me.

"For one, he basically went on a suicide mission to save those men in Vietnam," Jenkins explained. "He had to know there was probably no way he was going to survive, but he refused to leave American fighting men behind.

"Somehow he survived and got them all to safety. That's why Marines fight so hard, because they know there are men like Major Pless who've got their backs. That's why Marines are called a brotherhood.

"Major Pless is the poster of

what you would want a Marine to be."

Indeed, Pless had a storied military career, Medal of Honor notwithstanding. When he was promoted to the rank of major, Pless became the youngest Marine officer of that rank in the Marine Corps.

Among his medals and ribbons — which are far too numerous to mention in their entirety — are the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, Navy Commendation Medal with Combat V and the Purple Heart.

"Stephen started out as an enlisted man, and had great aspirations," said Ray. "He had it in his mind that he was going to be commandant some day. There were no selfish motives behind his dream, he was just a goal setter. He was an inspiration.



PLESS



**President Lyndon B. Johnson presents the Medal of Honor to Pless during a White House ceremony. Pless was the first, and only, Marine aviator to receive the medal for service during the war in Vietnam.**

"God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things, and I think Stephen was an example of that," added Ray. "He was my hero long before he became a hero in the war. He always will be."