

Hawaii MARINE

INSIDE	
CG Mail	A-2
USMC 227th Birthday	A-3
Mass Casualty Drill	A-4
Patrol Squadron 9	A-6
Blotter	A-8
USMC Birthday Ball	B-1
MCCS & SM&SP	B-2
Holiday Mail Dates	B-3
Menu & Ads	B-4
Word to Pass	B-5
Chaplain's Conference	B-6
Tackle Football	C-1
Sports Briefs	C-2
Health & Fitness	C-7

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November 8, 2002

Happy 227th,



Sgt. Alexis R. Mulero

Top — Lance Cpl. Jose Duran, a pay clerk with MCB Hawaii, is dressed as Marines were during the War Between the States. Duran and the rest of the MCB Hawaii pageant crew will perform at Dewey Square today at 10:30 a.m.

Above — Sergeant Sean D. Habian, a military policeman, with MCB Hawaii, plays his role as a World War II Marine.

See page A-3 for more on the 227th birthday celebration.



Sgt. Alexis R. Mulero

We all know that a powerful combination of teamwork and individual achievement forms the strength of our Corps. We are Marines, first and foremost. Through innovation, trust and mutual respect, we have evolved into an adaptive and flexible fighting force ideally suited for 21st century challenges. Though the character of war continually changes, we understand that the nature of war is timeless: that the ultimate arbiter of battle is the human will. We recognize this, and we embrace the values that strengthen our will and define our character. For two-hundred and twenty-seven years, Marines and their families have dedicated themselves to the cause of the defense of freedom. Our accomplishments adorn the mastland of the Battle Color of the Marine Corps for all to admire, and they reflect the importance of the legacy we inherit and willingly accept.

Through a shared experience and success in battle, we distinguish ourselves by selfless service — in a sense, we are a fraternity of sacrifice. As stewards of our rich heritage, we continually reflect upon the generations of Marines who, in their time, faithfully answered our country's call. In their example, we will find the strength and inspiration necessary to meet the coming challenges. We celebrate this connection with our history; yet, we remain focused on the challenges of the future. We have an important dual responsibility; to remain ready for today, while transforming our capabilities to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

We find profoundly gratifying, our life-long pride of association with fellow Marines — active, reserve, veteran and civilian — and the knowledge that we contribute daily to securing our Nation's freedom.

I encourage all Marines to celebrate the camaraderie, enrichment and fulfillment of service with men and women subordinated to a greater cause: preparing for an exciting future and extending the legacy of our great Corps.

Happy Birthday, Marines!

Semper Paratus,
James L. Jones
General, U.S. Marine Corps

Marines!

Riggers gain paraloft

Cpl. Jason E. Miller
Combat Correspondent



Cpl. Jason E. Miller

Above — Brigadier Gen. Jerry C. McAbee, commanding general of MCB Hawaii, and members of the Paraloft Facility untie the Maile Lei. **Below** — The new paraloft was converted from an old storage warehouse at minimal cost to the base.

Staff Sgt. Jerry Smith, paraloft chief for 4th Force Recon. "It will be good for our riggers to work together in a single area, just to gain more experience working with unfamiliar equipment."

The new facility will feature several different parachute lockers and other storage areas that are necessary in a safe paraloft. Different types



of parachutes must be kept in different areas.

Likewise, damaged or unserviceable gear must be held separate from gear that is ready to be used.

See PARALOFT, A-4



Cpl. Jason E. Miller

Marine Aircraft Group 24's commanding officer, Col. Gregory Reuss, welcomes aboard the new paramedics of the Advanced Life Support Emergency Service. The ambulatory service began operation on Sunday.

Base, community get new ambulatory service

Cpl. Jason E. Miller
Combat Correspondent

Residents aboard MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, can now rest a little easier knowing that the Federal Fire Department on base has recently added an Advanced Life Support System to its arsenal for protecting and serving those living here.

The Advance Life Support Paramedic ambulatory service became available Sunday. The Emergency Medical Services ambulance, which was previously based at Branch Medical Clinic, Kaneohe Bay, was transferred to the Federal Fire Department, during a ceremony Nov. 1.

Special guests at the ceremony includ-

ed Brig. Gen. Jerry C. McAbee, commanding general of MCB Hawaii, and Navy Capt. Joseph Moore, commanding officer of the Naval Medical Clinic, Pearl Harbor. Both welcomed the new paramedics aboard.

"Today marks a landmark event," said Capt. Moore during his speech at the ceremony. "The type of emergency response you are getting today is second to none."

Mirroring the transfer of the Emergency Medical Services unit at Pearl Harbor, the transfer serves to provide the MCB Hawaii community with an increased standard of care that only an advanced life support ambulance

See AMBULANCE, A-8

MCBH NEWS BRIEFS

USMC BIRTHDAY PAGEANT BEGINS AT 10:30 A.M.

Marine Corps Base Hawaii will celebrate the Marine Corps' 227th Birthday with a ceremony and pageant on today at Dewey Square. The ceremony will begin at 10:30 a.m. and will include the traditional reading of the commandant's birthday message and a cake-cutting ceremony. The pageant will feature Marine Corps uniforms from throughout the Corps' history. Anderson Hall will feature a Marine Corps birthday meal beginning at 11:30 a.m.

DEERS, CAC CENTER RELOCATE

The MCB Hawaii Defense Enrollment Eligibility System (DEERS), and Common Access Card (CAC) identification system is scheduled to move to Bldg. 216, Room 75, on Tuesday.

The new center will be located next to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society office, and it will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

After Nov. 18, hours will expand to 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

JWC GOES ONLINE

Photos and news from the recent Joint Women's Conference are available on the organization's website at www.jointwomensconference.org.

Marine Corps Base Hawaii spouses responsible for making the event a success were Toni Spoffard, director; Mari Rollins, treasurer; Nico Duncan, Marine Corps liaison; Stephanie Jones-Ortega, workshop coordinator; and Jodi Schlather and Andrea Peterson, whom handled registrations.

COMMISSARY OFFERS NEW HOURS STARTING NOV. 18

The Commissary is changing hours to better serve the community. Starting Nov. 18, it will be open Saturday through Monday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

On-Base Emergencies	257-9111
Military Police	257-7114
Crisis Hotline	521-4555
Child Protective Service	832-5300
Fraud, Waste, Abuse & EEO	257-8852
Business Management Hotline	257-3188

Hawaii MARINE

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Pegasus soars over Philippines

Lance Cpl.
Josh Hauser
MCAS Iwakuni

BASCO ISLAND, Philippines

Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 463 wasted no time stepping up to the challenges posed to it as the most recent squadron assigned to Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni under the Unit Deployment Program.

With little more than a week under its belt aboard the station, the Pegasus took to the skies with four of its CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters, and more than 60 personnel, and headed for the Philippines to tackle Exercise Talon Vision.

After a quick stop at a Japan Air Self Defense Force base at Kanoya and another stop at MCAS Futenma, Japan, to refuel, HMH-463 displayed its ability to emulate the mythical flying horse it's named after, conquering more than eight hours of flight time over the Pacific Ocean.

Before reaching its final destination, Pegasus stopped once again on the small Philippine island of Basco.

However, the stop proved to be much more than just a routine refueling, with the Marines of HMH-463 proudly playing the role of ambassadors for the United States, according to Lt. Col. Scott Kerchner, commanding officer of HMH-463.

"We're grateful that the Philippine government allows us to utilize the airstrip at Basco for refueling," said Kerchner.

"There's no way we could accomplish flying this far of a distance without their assistance."

Officials at Basco invited Kerchner to the governor's home during the visit to meet with the governor and

diplomats from Manila.

"We don't mind the American planes stopping here to refuel," said Governor Vincente Gato. "We'd just like to meet with them from time to time."

Gato went on to say that the friendship between the Philippines and the United States has been a long-standing relationship.

Many of Basco's residents excitedly came out to the airstrip to get a closer glimpse of their aerial visitors.

"This airstrip has been utilized before, but many times the aircraft would just land, refuel and takeoff," said Gato. "It's good to be able to meet the faces coming to the island, even if it's just a short visit."

Kerchner stressed the importance of the island nation's kindness and extended the Marine Corps' gratitude

for their assistance.

"One of the most important factors in maintaining relations between our countries is communication," said Kerchner. "This visit was a great opportunity for us to meet and thank the people who support us around the world."

Approximately 800 U.S. Marines and Sailors from 3d Marine Division and 1st Marine Aircraft Wing stationed on Okinawa and Iwakuni, Japan, are participating in the two-week Talon Vision exercise.

It is a bilateral training event focusing on improving military relationships between the Philippines and the U.S. while increasing readiness for both countries.

The exercise emphasizes quality ground and air integrated training at the small-unit level.



Lance Cpl. Josh Hauser

HMH-463 Marines refuel their CH-53D Sea Stallion aircraft at the airstrip on the Philippine island of Basco during Exercise Talon Vision. More than 800 U.S. Marines and Sailors deployed from Okinawa and Iwakuni, Japan, to participate in the exercise.

Major general visit

Major Gen. Eric Olson, commander for the 25th Infantry Division, Light, visited personnel aboard MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, recently, to see the capabilities of Marines and Sailors in combat situations.



Sgt. Alexis R. Mulero

Buoys now mark range danger zones

Sgt. Alexis R. Mulero
Combat Correspondent

Marines conducting live-fire training at U'lupau Range Training Facility aboard MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, will be able to train more efficiently after the installation of five buoys, Oct. 3-5.

The buoys cost the base an estimated cost of \$75,000, and were assembled and installed by the crew of the USS Coast Guard Cutter Kukui of Honolulu.

The Coast Guardsmen will continue to perform maintenance on these eight-foot-high floating devices that mark the surface danger zone for boaters, fishermen and aircrews traveling around the crater.

"According to the Code of Federal Regulations, Note A, on nautical chart 19357 of Oahu; small arms fir-

ing areas are closed to navigation when ranges are hot," said Maj. John S. Claucherty, deputy chief of staff, G-3, MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay.

Prior to the installation of the buoys, there were no objects to mark the area as prohibited to boaters during live-fire training. The buoys mark the triangle-shaped danger zone for 5.56 mm ammunition used on the range.

"The range also flies 8-foot-long flags when the range is hot,"



Courtesy of Coast Guard

The buoys are eight feet tall, and they are lighted at night.

Claucherty added. "Previously, this was the only way boaters knew live-fire training was going on."

"The majority of boaters understand the Marines are training for war, and they respect that," Claucherty explained. "They will go around the buoys, and the benefit is that when the flag is down and the range is not hot, the buoys are FADs [Fish Aggregation Devices]."

The range will soon install strobe lights that will illuminate the range's red marking flag during night live-fire training.

"The base staff is doing this and other similar projects to directly support the tenant commanders preparation for war," said Claucherty.

SecNav sends b-day greetings

"As we honor the 227th birth of the United States Marine Corps, our Nation continues our strong and decisive response to the terrorist acts of September 11th.

Although the war on terror is still far from over, the Navy and Marine Corps, our fellow services and our allies have terrorized the terrorists, defeated the Taliban and freed the people of Afghanistan.

President Bush, two years before the war on terror began, foresaw the challenges our nation now faces when he noted that, "Moments of national opportunity are either seized or lost and the consequences reach across decades."

Like the Marines of Belleau Wood, Iwo Jima, and Inchon, today's Marines are answering the president's call to make

the world safe for our children and grandchildren.

During this year, our Nation will continue to count on your honor, courage and commitment. Like the generations of Marines that have come before you, I know that one day, our Nation will celebrate your courage and sacrifice during Operation Enduring Freedom as another chapter in the victorious combat

legacy of the United States Marine Corps.

Happy Birthday Marines!

It is an honor to serve alongside each and every one of you.

God Bless you, your families and the United States of America.

Semper Fidelis!"

Honorable
Gordon R. England
Secretary of the Navy

Traditions date from Nov. 10, 1775

On Oct. 21, 1921, Maj. Gen. Edwin McClellan, of the Historical Section, HQMC, sent a memo to Maj. Gen. Commandant John A. Lejeune, suggesting that the original birthday of Nov. 10, 1775, be declared a Marine Corps holiday to be celebrated throughout the Corps. Accordingly, on Nov. 1, 1921, Lejeune issued Marine Corps Order No. 47 summarizing the history, mission, and tradition of the Corps, and directed that it be read to every command each Nov. 10.

"On Nov. 10, 1775, a Corps of Marines was created by a resolution of the Continental Congress. Since that date, many thousand men have borne the name Marine.

In memory of them, it is fitting that we who are Marines should commemorate the birthday of our Corps by calling to mind the glories of its long and illustrious history.

The record of our Corps is one



which will bear comparison with that of the most famous military organizations in the world's history. During 90 of the 146 years of its existence the Marine Corps has been in action against the nation's foes.

From the battle of Trenton to the Argonne. Marines have won foremost honors in war, and in the long eras of tranquility at home.

Generation after generation of Marines have grown gray in war in both hemispheres and in every corner of the seven seas that our country and its citizens might enjoy peace and security.

In every battle and skirmish since

the birth of our Corps, Marines have acquitted themselves with the greatest distinction, winning new honors on each occasion until the term Marine has come to signify all that is highest in military efficiency and soldierly virtue.

This high name of distinction and soldierly repute, we who are Marines, today, have received from those who preceded us in the Corps. With it we also received from them the eternal spirit which has animated our Corps from generation to generation, and has been the distinguishing mark of the Marines in every age.

So long as that spirit continues to flourish, Marines will be found equal to every emergency in the future as they have been in the past, and the men of our nation will regard us as worthy successors to the long line of illustrious men who have served as "Soldiers of the Sea" since the founding of the Corps.

Esprit de Corps — Marine Corps



Cpl. Jessica M. Mills

Commanding officer of Marine Air Logistics Squadron 24, Lt. Col. John C. Wright Sr., cuts the first piece of cake during the Marine Corps' time honored-tradition of the official cake cutting ceremony in honor of the 227th Marine Corps birthday. Sergeant Ben Cobb, embarkation chief for MALS-24, holds the NCO sword used during the ceremony.

Marine Corps Birthday Celebrations

Unit/Organization	Date	Time	Location
MCB Hawaii Uniform Pageant	Today	10:30 a.m.	Dewey Square
Asia Pacific Center	Today	12 p.m.	Asia Pacific Center
Headquarters Bn., MCB Hawaii	Today	6 p.m.	Ilikai Hotel
3rd Bn., 3rd Marine Regiment	Today	6 p.m.	Turtle Bay Hilton
Headquarters and Service Bn., Marine Forces Pacific	Today	7:30 p.m.	Hilton Hawaiian Village
Islandwide Officers Ball Rehearsal	Saturday	9 a.m.	Hilton Hawaiian Village
Islandwide Officers Ball Ceremony	Saturday	8 p.m.	Hilton Hawaiian Village
1st Bn., 3rd Marine Regiment	Monday	6 p.m.	Ilikai Hotel
1st Bn., 12th Marine Regiment	Thursday	6 p.m.	Hale Koa Hotel
3rd Bn., 3rd Marine Regiment	Nov. 15	6 p.m.	Hilton Hawaiian Village
Maui Leatherneck Ball	Nov. 16.	7 p.m.	Maui

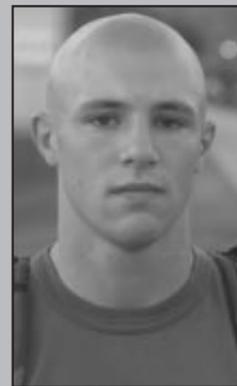


Official U.S.M.C. Photo

Tun Tavern is the birthplace of the Marine Corps.

WORD ON THE STREET

"What was the Marine Corps' proudest moment?"



"...The day the Japanese surrendered in World War II."

Lance Cpl. Donnie Panzica

Squad leader
India Co., 3/3



"...The day Chesty Puller was born."

Cpl. Herlon DaCruz

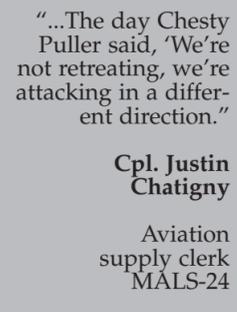
Rifleman
Bravo Co., 3/3



"...The battle of Belleau Wood. We fought well."

Sgt. Mark Kauffman

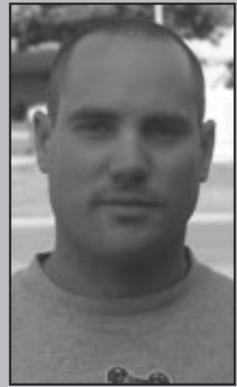
Korean linguist
1st Radio Bn.



"...The day Chesty Puller said, 'We're not retreating, we're attacking in a different direction.'"

Cpl. Justin Chatigny

Aviation supply clerk
MALS-24



"...The day we were born in Tun Tavern, Philadelphia, Pa."

Pfc. Erick Kahila

Disbursing clerk
Headquarters Bn.,
MCB Hawaii



MCAF plays 'victim' during casualty drill

The painful screams of 245 men, women and children could be heard everywhere around the broken, fiery remains of the Boeing 747-400 across the flightline

Story and Photos by
Cpl. Richard W. Holtgraver Jr.
Combat Correspondent

HONOLULU — Fire and medical crews worked feverishly in the hot, hellish environment to try and save as many lives as possible from the burning wreckage.

More than 20 Marines from Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting, part of MCB Hawaii's Marine Corps Air Facility, assisted with the mass casualty drill recently, by portraying the blood-splattered victims of a plane that had experienced landing gear failure upon arriving at Honolulu International Airport.

Several area high schools participated in the drill; more than 50 teenage students lent a helping hand to authorities by portraying the crash victims as well.

More than 400 people responded to the large-scale drill from numerous agencies here, and in Honolulu, each treating it as if it were an actual emergency.

"All airports that accommodate aircraft greater than 30 passengers are required to conduct drills like this every three years under Federal Aviation Regulation 139," said Ronnie Simpson, Honolulu Airport's Federal Aviation Administration district office manager. "This particular event was a full-scale emergency disaster drill mixed with a mass casualty drill."

"I think they did a [really] good job, considering everything that was going on and all of the casualties involved in the drill," said Sgt. Melissa L. Ohm, a crash crewman for ARFF.

For more than an hour and a half, medical and rescue workers toiled at their trade under the intense Oahu sun, trying to save as many lives as possible.

After the last of the 79 casualties was taken away by ambulances, and the flightline cleared of debris, only then could the firefighters and rescuers take a moment to reflect upon what took place during the hour and 40 minutes it took them to



Dave Carter a senior at Kalaheo H.S. plays dead to add realism to the mass casualty drill at Honolulu International Airport.



Above — Another role-player is removed by firefighters.

Right — Sergeant Melissa L. Ohm, a crash crewman with ARFF, acts shocked and detached as she plays out her role in this mock disaster.



complete the drill.

"This whole event was to test the airport's emergency plan," said Peter Phillips, assistant fire chief of Honolulu International Airport, "and it went well."

"My goal was to get medical care to the casualties within an hour after the crash. That time is called the 'Golden Hour.'"

Victims of aviation accidents have a considerably greater chance of survival if they receive medical attention within the first hour after a crash, according to Phillips.

"We were able to implement a tagging system for casualties that helped rescue workers, sort them

into three separate triage areas, according to significance of injury," said Phillips.

As firefighters and medical personnel packed up, they discussed some of the situations and scenarios that had taken place that morning.

Many wore smiles on their faces knowing that they had done their job well.

Those tasked with evaluating the event would have a lot of information to critique.

"They put forth the effort and took the drill seriously, despite the lack of true danger," said Simpson upon reflection.



Leilehua H.S. sophomore Samantha Forestiere adds realism to the drill by screaming for help.

PARALOFT, From A-1

"It's all about control," said Staff Sgt. Smith. "It's essential that we keep the gear locked up. No one is allowed in the paraloft

without being escorted by a rigger.

"The units' gear will even be separated, so they only have access to the gear that belongs to them. It's going to be very se-

cure in the new area."

The new facility comes from a converted storage area, which was utilized by 4th Force and a P-3 Orion squadron aboard the base. The building was emptied

out and cleaned to meet paraloft standards.

Construction on the building, including new lockers and storage areas, totaled around \$70,000.

"That's not very much at all considering the security it will provide for the lives of Marines jumping," said Smith. "We want the Marines here to stay safe."

COMMENTARY

'Alcohol and drugs ... do not just appear'

Capt. Daniel J. Evans
Prosecutor, MCB Hawaii

As a prosecutor on MCB Hawaii for two years, I have seen a myriad of crimes caused by drinking and drugs.

The vast majority of Marines, Sailors and civilians are obviously good and law abiding, and they always do the right thing to help their fellow service and family members.

Drugs and alcohol have a serious impact on judgment, though, and many crimes are caused by good service members who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Drugs and alcohol are to blame for these lapses, and it is easy to blame them for criminal acts and the harm they cause: both for the service member and those around him or her. Alcohol and drugs, however, do not just appear in the blood. The decision to take them is usually a sober one.

That sober decision, before the first sip of beer on Friday night, can lead to later criminal harm.

That sober decision is an important one, because all too often it leads to a life-changing event. By life changing, I mean both life changing for the service member who commits the crime, and for the victims and families the service member impacts.

Of the more than 100 courts-martial and administrative separation boards I have prosecuted, over 90 percent of them dealt with alcohol or drugs, directly or indirectly. The most obvious cases are positive urinalyses, which destroy the service member's military career and gives him or her a criminal record.

Drugs and alcohol also affect behavior which leads to further poor decisions.



Drinking and driving is a well known example of this.

Other, less obvious crimes are also products of drinking such as assaults, disorderly conduct and sex assault.

Alcohol and drugs lower inhibitions and awareness, and they distort reality. Just because inhibitions are lowered, though, does not mean this behavior is tolerated. The law does not make exceptions.

The lifestyle associated with drinking and drugs also leads to a large number of thefts in the barracks. Young Marines



"Of the more than 100 courts-martial and administrative separation boards I have prosecuted, over 90 percent of them dealt with alcohol or drugs."

Capt. Daniel J. Evans
Prosecutor, MCB Hawaii

and Sailors spend much of their pay in Waikiki, and sometimes their pay is not enough toward the end of the

month.

Too often, I have seen cases where a young service member steals money and checks from his barracks so he can go out and party. But the Marine or Sailor convinces himself, "it is only for drinks," and "I'll pay it back when I get paid." Of course it never is paid back, except after they are court-martialed and sent to the brig.

Theft severely impacts both the integrity of the unit and the individual service member whose money was stolen.

By the way, underage drinking is a vi-

olation of a general order, and it's therefore a felony offense. Underage drinking leads to other problems with violence and health, and it should not be tolerated.

Recently, a Marine was sent to the brig for seven days for underage drinking at BayFest. It is the duty of noncommissioned officers in the barracks to police this problem and make sure young Marines know what to do.

Not reporting underage drinking is also a crime, and this leads to a false sense that underage drinking is tolerated.

The key to avoiding problems is to be responsible and make the right choice. Right now, the Marine Corps and Navy need you to be responsible and to be ready for war. Do not put yourself in a position where you are out of control.

- When you drink too much, you are out of control.

- When you hang out with civilians who smoke crystal meth, you are out of control.

- When you go to rave parties and take ecstasy, you are out of control.

It will not be fun when you are caught and sent to prison. Again, your fellow Marines and Sailors need you to be in control and ready for combat.

Stay in control by staying sober.

'Troops to Teachers' allows military to impact young minds

Hawaii Marine Staff
Press Release

Are you about ready to be discharged or separated from military service?

How about teaching young minds and fostering the high standards you adopted in the military in a class-

room?

Several distance learning programs that lead to teacher certification are available via the Internet. However, keep in mind that certification is controlled by individual states.

Review the following Web sites to see how you can make a difference.

"Troops to Teachers" Web sites:

- Drexel University at www.drexel.com/Fields_of_Study/education/GITC/index.shtml
- Liberty University at www.liberty.edu/Academics/Graduate
- Old Dominion University at www.odu.edu/home/distance.htm
- Rio Salado College at www.rio.maricopa.edu/ci/visitors_center/education
- South Carolina Troops to Teachers Coalition at www.hehd.clemson.edu/TTT
- Troops to Teachers at www.proudtoserveagain.com
- University of Phoenix at www.uofphx.quinstreet.com/maed/about.jsp

Golden Eagles prepare to deploy; unit chats with families

**Petty Officer 2nd Class
Phil Hasenkamp**

PACFLT Affairs/CPRFP Asst. PAO

How do you hone an already razor-sharp Patrol Squadron? When it comes to getting an edge before going on deployment, Patrol Squadron 9 has the formula: answer questions.

"We think pre-deployment briefings are critical to readiness," VP-9 Executive Officer Cmdr. Dan Rieck said over the dim hum of families congregating at the the Bachelors Officers Quarters at Kaneohe Bay. "We're going to be a long way from home, and we can't expect our Sailors to focus on what they're doing mission-wise, if they're not sure everyone's being taken care of here at home."

The idea of a pre-deployment briefing

isn't a novel concept. The Navy has held pre-deployment briefings of some type for a very long time. In fact, many of the things covered in VP-9's session have been passed down from years.

"There are general written guidelines as to what should be covered, but most of the stuff is passed down from squadron to squadron," said Rieck. "But the most important thing is to make sure that everyone has their questions answered. And if they don't get their questions answered, we want them to know where they can go to get answers later."

Questions during the briefings can vary. But the queries are usually specific in nature, as great care is taken to cover as many topics as possible.

"People usually ask how they can keep good communications, or what

they can do in the case of a specific medical emergency," explained Rieck.

When Sailors go on deployment, they leave behind more than teary-eyed loved ones. Many of them have significant investments such as cars or boats for which they'll want peace of mind.

"Power of attorney is a big thing," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Erik Grant, as he clutched the hand of his wife Angela. "I want to make sure she can do stuff with our property when I'm gone."

Mrs. Grant had different concerns.

"I'm just hoping everything will be O.K. emotionally. It will be hard, but we're a pretty close family," she said, adding that her husband will miss Christmas, Valentine's Day, the couple's anniversary and the birthday of their two-and-a-half year-old son, Peyton.

"He's going to be gone all of the special times," she said.

But "gone" these days has an altered definition in 2002 for P-3 aviators.

"On my first deployment, years ago, we had the opportunity for a phone call back home once a month," Commanding Officer Cmdr. Brad Carpenter said. "Nowadays, we have video connections, email and almost instantaneous communications. The ability of families to communicate during a deployment has grown by leaps and bounds."

But upgrades in communication between VP-9's Sailors and their families didn't arise out of a want of luxury. These improvements came from necessity. Numerous battle efficiency awards prove that VP-9 can handle almost anything thrown its way.