

FLEET FOCUS

USS Hopper port visits strengthen diplomatic ties



USS Hopper photo

Hopper Commanding Officer, Cmdr. John W. Peterson (right), explains the Aegis-class destroyers advanced ship control systems to Lt. Col. Saqur Al-Maawdah, commanding officer of the Bahraini Oliver Hazard Perry class frigate, BANS Sabha, and his Chief Engineer, Lt. Col. Jassim Al-Jowder.

By Lt. j.g. Richard F. Marshall
USS HOPPER

UNITED STATES Sailors traveling abroad are keenly aware of their duties and responsibilities as 'ambassadors' of their country. During Fifth Fleet Operations in the Arabian Gulf recently, the port visits for USS Hopper (DDG 70) Sailors have proven to be both a great escape from the stresses of sea duty as well as unique opportunities to foster better understanding of U.S. naval operations in the region.

During their second port visit, Hopper Sailors explored the ancient town and desert mountains of Muscat, Oman. Set among a dramatic and dry landscape, Muscat lies on the southern coast of the Arabian peninsula, and is replete with history and adventure.

Many crewmembers explored the cultural sites such as old-town souqs (markets), or shopping centers, as well as the natural wonders, including desert sand dunes which stretched for miles and intricate caves which offered oases of swimming holes.

While crewmembers were enjoying liberty in the old-town shopping centers and among the mountainous sand dunes, Hopper's Commanding Officer, Cmdr. John W. Peterson, and senior officers played host to several high-profile diplomats. The United States Ambassador to Oman, John B. Graig, was joined by such dignitaries as the Ambassador of the State of Kuwait and the Ambassador of the State of Qatar.

Hopper's Executive Officer, Lt. Cmdr. David Hughes remarked, "The opportunity to represent our nation and to be entrusted with such an integral role in our regional engagement strategy was exciting and at the same time sobering."

"The experience really pointed out what our Navy does for our nation: we're there, engaged and working with our allies. We were able to tell them first-hand what we as Hopper and we

as a member of Fifth Fleet were doing in and for their region. I'd like to think we contributed to furthering mutual understanding and laying a firm groundwork for future cooperation," added Hughes.

In a more hands-on international exchange, 'Amazing Grace' crewmembers participated in a training exchange program with the State of Bahrain's Oliver Hazard Perry Class Frigate, BANS Sabha. The training focused on undersea warfare, tactical data exchange procedures, and damage control rescue and assistance practices.

Members of the Sabha's crew benefited greatly from the technical expertise of Damage Control Chief (SW) Scott Wood's instruction in advanced Rescue and Assistance techniques.

"I was impressed with their qualification level," commented Wood "and think every [U.S.] ship could benefit from similar exchanges."

For Hopper Sonar Technicians, the training of Bahraini Sailors was a return to history in more ways than one. Sonar Technicians 1st Class John Thrall, Shawn Devlin and Bill Callaway quickly refreshed their understanding of a sonobuoy localization system that they had not operated in the past decade.

Their rediscovered technical skills proved useful as they taught the Sabha sailors basic to advanced skills on the system. The Sabha's senior Sonar Technician greeted Callaway with an ear-to-ear grin.

Callaway remarked "It was nice to see a familiar face," referring to previous training the two had conducted while in San Diego a number of years back.

During the course of the training exchanges the commanding officer of the BANS Sabha hosted a luncheon for members of Hopper's wardroom, and members of the Sabha's wardroom visited Hopper for a luncheon and tour.

The bilateral training benefited both Bahraini and Hopper Sailors, and its successes may pave the way for more involved and robust training programs in the future.

Maritime students experience submarines aboard USS Cheyenne

By JO2 Cori Rhea
COMSUBPAC PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Recently 16 select American and Japanese students visited Honolulu for three days during a near month-long endeavor to develop "Partners in Peace" through a Maritime Exchange Program. The Partners in Peace Exchange selects eight students from America and eight students from Japan once a year for three weeks of study in both countries.

This year's American students are all Junior Recruit Officer Training Corps (JROTC) with future plans involving the Navy, and the Japanese students were selected because of their demonstrated interest in relations between the United States and Japan.

Lt. Cmdr. Suzy Williams, the group's escort, explained, "We pair up a Japanese student and an American student to work together and learn from one another. It's great to see the interaction between the two."

Their visit to Hawaii gave the group a taste of submarine life. After spending two days in Washington D.C. and 10 days in various cities in Japan, the students were very excited to spend a couple days in Hawaii to learn about submarines and enjoy the islands.

The highlight of their visit in Hawaii was a tour onboard USS Cheyenne (SSN 773). The newest Los Angeles-class attack submarine showcased the latest in technology.

A Jacksonville, Fla. student, Hunt Hawkins, dreams of becoming an officer stationed on a submarine. "I've only been on one submarine before, but it was a museum, so this is my first time on an active sub, still in use," said Hawkins.

The students were amazed at the cramped spaces in the submarine. Laura Bowers, an American student from Sigonella, Sicily, exclaimed, "How do people get along in such a small living environment?"

Her escort, Lt. Andrew Hurst smiled and told the group of all the ports they visit and said, "It is a different world on a submarine and we work hard, but we



A chief aboard the USS Cheyenne (SSN 773) explains the sonar system to some Maritime students recently. Cheyenne hosted sixteen students from the Japanese-American Maritime Youth Exchange.

always have fun. It's a tight-knit group."

The day actually began with a tour of the Naval Submarine Training Center where realistic, simulated training tools are used to provide accurate training to Sailors.

The teen-agers first learned about a sub's 'eyes' through a simulated periscope and sonar room. The highlight of the tour is the ship's control dive trainer which is designed to look like a control room of a real submarine. This simulator actually moves at severe angles to demonstrate the dramatic work environment on a submarine. The students were able to operate the machine a few at a time while the others braced themselves for a bumpy ride.

Understanding damage control on an underwater vessel is vital when learning about submarines, so a trip to Ford Island was made to visit the Fire Fighting Training Facility. The students broke up into four groups and learned about pipe patching and fire fighting.

Finally, after lunch at the Silver Dolphin Bistro (SUBASE Galley) the group finished their tour onboard Cheyenne.

The day was filled with new experiences for the Maritime Youth Exchange Group. The program's objective to create healthy partnerships between American and Japanese youths was clearly fulfilled, leaving everyone with a very memorable experience.

NPMOC/JTWC host Japanese-American Maritime Youth Exchange

By AGC(AW) M. Venglar
NPMOC/JTWC



Suzy Williams photo

AG2(SW/AW) Russell Ingersoll (right) from Naval Pacific Meteorology and Oceanography Center and Joint Typhoon Warning Center (NPMOC/JTWC) instructs Shota Maruko on how to gauge the amount of helium needed to inflate a weather balloon. NPMOC/JTWC hosted students from the Japanese-American Maritime Youth Exchange recently.

On July 31, Naval Pacific Meteorology and Oceanography Center and Joint Typhoon Warning Center (NPMOC/JTWC) hosted students from the Japanese-American Maritime Youth Exchange — "Partners in Peace" program. The students, eight from Japan and eight from the U.S. made a one day educational stop to NPMOC/JTWC where they participated in classroom projects and hands on learning in the realm of natural science; specifically meteorology and oceanography.

The students and their five adult leaders were split into two groups and then using the Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS) method they began to learn about things ranging from ocean currents to atmospheric pressure and wind to inflating and launching weather balloons.

Chris Caldwell of Virginia Beach, Va. and a Salem High school student, especially enjoyed weather chart interpretation. "As the day went on I began to take an interest in the science that is used to track weather," said Caldwell. "It was the way the information was presented that caught my attention." Ai Kayano, from Okayama, Japan said that she "liked talking with so many people and that now she has many friends—both from Japan and the U.S." Ai's favorite part of the day was the launching of a weather balloon.

Ms. Suzy Williams is the coordinator for the program and is committed to de-

veloping educational activities that focus on their major theme — "The seas that divide us, unite us."

She describes the program as "a three week international communication program that joins 16 high school students (8 from each country) with travel and study in Japan and the United States."

It was developed and funded through a partnership between the Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C. and Kaoru Hasegawa beginning in 1996. All agreed on the unified purpose to develop Partners in Peace through a Maritime Exchange. "Maritime" in this case referring to those things that pertain to the oceans—history, economy, ecology, aesthetics and health, international relations and military.

The program places one American cadet (NJROTC) with one Japanese student together as "Partners in Peace" throughout the exchange. "We believe that building understanding, respect, teamwork, and friendship individually and as a group will work to create a healthy partnership in the future and greatly benefit both countries," said Williams. "The major objective is to increase mutual understanding by Japanese and American youth of our maritime traditions and the importance of our continued cooperation and alliance," added Williams.

The students that participated in the program were selected through a screening process from all over the U.S. and Japan. For more information on the Japanese-American Maritime Youth Exchange check out my web-site at <http://hometown.aol.com/myex2000/my-homepage/profile.html>.

Lake Erie participates in 'Caps for Kids' program

By USS Lake Erie Public Affairs

The religious ministries department aboard USS Lake Erie (CG 70) recently ran a Ship's ball cap collection campaign.

One Sailor commented, "When I discovered why the ball caps were being collected and where they were going, I gladly contributed."

The worthy cause referred to is the "Caps For Kids" program. It's based in Dallas, Texas and exists solely for the collection of ball caps from various organizations to give to children who are severely ill.

The aim is to tangibly demonstrate the care and concern of others for them.

Program coordinator Lt. Lori Dague said, "Send the ball caps whenever you want to and are able." "There are many participating children's

hospitals in our region that we continue to work with. We will ensure the ball caps get to a child. No time limit here, just an ongoing need," added Dague.

Those desiring to participate in "Caps For Kids" may do so by sending ball caps to the following address:

"Caps For Kids" Director
Navy Office of Information,
S/W
1114 Commerce St.,
Suite 811
Dallas, TX 75242

"This is the second year our ship has participated in the 'Caps For Kids' program," said Lake Erie's Chaplain, Lt. Dan McKay. "It's a truly great cause and one our crew has responded to in a wonderful way. It's a project that takes little time or effort, and it helps bring a smile to a hurting child's face. So, how



USS Lake Erie photo

USS Lake Erie Sailors proudly show off their ship caps and a plaque they received for participating in the "Caps for Kids" program. The program consists of a collection of ball caps from various organizations to give to children who are severely ill.