

# USS Reuben James



Nicole Bush holds up a sign to welcome home her father HTCS(SW) Roger Bush as the USS Reuben James returned last Friday from a five month deployment for Cooperative Afloat Readiness Training (CARAT) 2000



(Above) OS2(SW) John Lindsey, of USS Reuben James, proposes to CTASN LaKeysha King, from Joint Intelligence Command, Pacific (JICPAC), on Bravo pier 25 after returning from a five month deployment last Friday.

(Below) Pearl Harbor Sailors stand ready to tie down Reuben James as the guided missile frigate pulls into Pearl Harbor after a five month deployment for CARAT 2000. The deployment consisted of training exercises with Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines.



Photos by PH2 Chad McNeeley

## USS Reuben James returns from CARAT 2000

By Lt.j.g. Jose O. Fikes  
USS REUBEN JAMES

ON May 23 USS Reuben James (FFG-57) departed Pearl Harbor for the Cooperative Afloat Readiness Training (CARAT 2000) deployment. After a long and challenging five months "Fightin' 57" returned home Oct. 12 for a well deserved stand down period.

Over the last five months the ship participated in extensive training exercises with Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines.

"CARAT-00 has given the ship an opportunity to grow as a team by improving our watchstanding, tactical proficiency, and seamanship skills. The crew has risen to every challenge from community service to gunnery exercises," said Lt. Cmdr. Eldridge, executive officer of Reuben James.

Reuben James Sailors not only excelled as a crew, but they also excelled on their Personal Qualification Standards (PQS) by achieving 100 percent Enlisted Surface Warfare Qualifications (ESWS).

This was a significant achievement requiring extensive work and preparation by the entire

crew. CARAT-00 was more than a tour of the Southeastern Asian countries; it was a time for dynamic change.

"Our Sailors grew up a lot. At times they were challenged with military exercises. At other times they were fortunate enough to visit some real neat countries and cities. For some of them seeing the world is the main reason they joined the Navy. And see the world they did," commented Senior Chief Mess Specialist(SW) Lino Deleon, command senior chief.

"After five months away from home it's good to get back home to family and friends. Honestly, I'm

ready for a good meal," said Enginemen 1st Class(SW) Mark Farris.

"The CARAT series of exercises are designed to forge stronger ties with participating countries and the United States, develop tactical prowess through bilateral exercises at sea, and enhance personal friendships through inport interaction and community service," said Cmdr. Carl Cramb, commanding officer, USS Reuben James. "The crew of Reuben James performed exceptionally well in a very unique and demanding environment, while enjoying the atmosphere of the

finest ports in the Pacific Rim. Everyone represented their country, and the Navy in grand style, and should take a great deal of pride in a job well done. I know their memories of this cruise will last a lifetime," said Cramb.

Pride, professionalism, and community service are what made CARAT-00 a success for the Fightin' 57. Their sincere dedication to the U.S. Navy and improving the Navies of the participating nations was the hallmark of their performance. Families and friends, welcome home USS Reuben James.

## HSL 37 returns from CARAT with Reuben James

By Lt.j.g. Don Johnson  
HSL-37

The "Easy Riders" of Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light (HSL 37) Det 4 led by Lt. Cmdr. Pete Turner returned from a highly successful deployment today.

Assigned to USS Reuben James they participated in five bilateral exercises over the last five months in support of Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2000. The Reuben James deployed to enhance mutual tactical training, build stronger military operations, and strengthen the bond between the navies of allied Southeast Asian nations.

The air detachment conducted over 450 mishap free flight hours, 150 of which were at night. Their operations were not con-

ducted without some obstacles. Some of the major challenges at sea were three engine changes, three phase maintenance evolutions, three high-speed shaft change outs and two windshield replacements. Through it all, "the air detachment had 100 percent mission completion because we were able to stay flexible and keep things going," said Lt. j.g. Torsten Schmidt.

Night encounter exercises, deck landing qualifications, air defense exercises, anti-submarine warfare events, gunnery exercises and missile shoots were some of the exercises conducted with the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore. The officers and aircrew of HSL 37 Det 4 gave briefs on aviation maintenance, search and rescue, over-the-horizon targeting and deck landing procedures during the inport

phase in each country. "Despite the fact that I gave briefs to five different countries, I felt like I took more away from it than I gave," said Lt. j.g. Duane Frist, training officer for HSL-37.

Four of our pilots were given the unique opportunity to fly one of the Royal Brunei Air Force's Blackhawk helicopters. "The severe challenge of landing the helicopter in the rough terrain allowed me to appreciate the rolling deck of the Reuben James," explained Lt. Kevin Heiss, operations officer for HSL-37.

During most of the at sea phases some of the host country's pilots rode the ship re-enforcing the lessons learned in the numerous aviation briefs. While in port the maintainers from the host counties were eager to come aboard, and learn how the squadron

conducted day to day operations.

During the cruise everyone got the chance to go ashore and visit some of the most exciting ports in the Pacific Rim. According to Aviation Machinist's Mate Airman John Tiller, "Seeing the way other cultures live was one of the most rewarding experiences."

Each person in the air detachment now has an extensive library of "sea stories" to tell their friends and families when they return home.

"Having the air detachment embarked allowed us to fully engage each country with which we exercised in CARAT 2000. They performed their tasking brilliantly, and were big players in enhancing the military to military relations with the participating nations of CARAT 2000," said Cmdr. Carl Cramb, commanding officer, USS Reuben James.