

Sea Cadets serve aboard 'Mighty Mo'

Story and photos by JO2 Jim Williams
Staff Writer

The Barbers Point Navy League and Honolulu Navy League Council activated the Battleship Missouri Sea Cadet Division aboard the Battleship Missouri Memorial on Aug. 6, - making them the first Sea Cadets to ever be assigned to an actual ship.

"The Sea Cadets will bring the ship to life as they conduct their training exercises onboard the ship on weekends and in public view," said Don Hess, executive vice president and chief operating officer of the Battleship Missouri Memorial Association. "We're proud to support character-building activities for youth and to be the first ship in the United States to serve as a home to a Sea Cadet division."

The "Mighty Mo" offers the Sea Cadets their own state-room aboard to work from as well as the freedom to move about performing their training drills.

In addition, the Sea Cadets will also have the opportunity in the future to man the quarterdeck, greet visitors on special occasions, have their own color guard display the colors for onboard ceremonies and to work side by side with the Missouri's crew maintaining the ship.

"We have this unique opportunity to get them onboard and have a life-at-sea experience," said Raymond Chan, Sea Cadet liaison for the Barbers Point Navy League Council. "This gives guests a chance to see seaman working aboard a ship doing things like swabbing the decks and manning the quarterdeck while giving the cadets a taste of what it's really like to be on a ship."

Many of the cadets from the Battleship Missouri Sea Cadet Division used to meet at Barbers Point. Now the Barbers Point Sea Cadet Squadron, which officially deactivated at the start of this ceremony, has a new place to call home.

The U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps is a federally-chartered youth training organization for young people ages 11-17 that trains with the Navy, the Coast Guard and other military organizations. Their headquarters is in Virginia and is supported by the Navy League of the United States.

"I love it. It's really fun", said Sea Cadet William Medina. "You get to do all kinds of fun activities like camping and stuff while learning all kinds of things about the Navy."

And now these cadets will also have the opportunity to experience ship-life first hand aboard this historical ship.

"I think it's great," continued Medina. "I'm excited to get the chance to learn all about the ship and to see what kind of things we get to do onboard."

Another cadet, Thomas Shea, agreed, "I think it's an honor because this ship has actually been through two wars. So it's cool to put on a uniform and get to be a part of it. We'll get the chance to do and see a lot of things most people can't or don't get to."

The Sea Cadets have been in existence since the mid-1960s. Locally, the Kamehameha Sea Cadet Division was established in 1964 under the Honolulu Navy League Council. In 1978, the Barber's Point Sea Cadet Squadron was established under the Barbers Point Navy League Council. The two Sea Cadet groups merged in 1992 and have been with the Barbers Point Navy League until now.

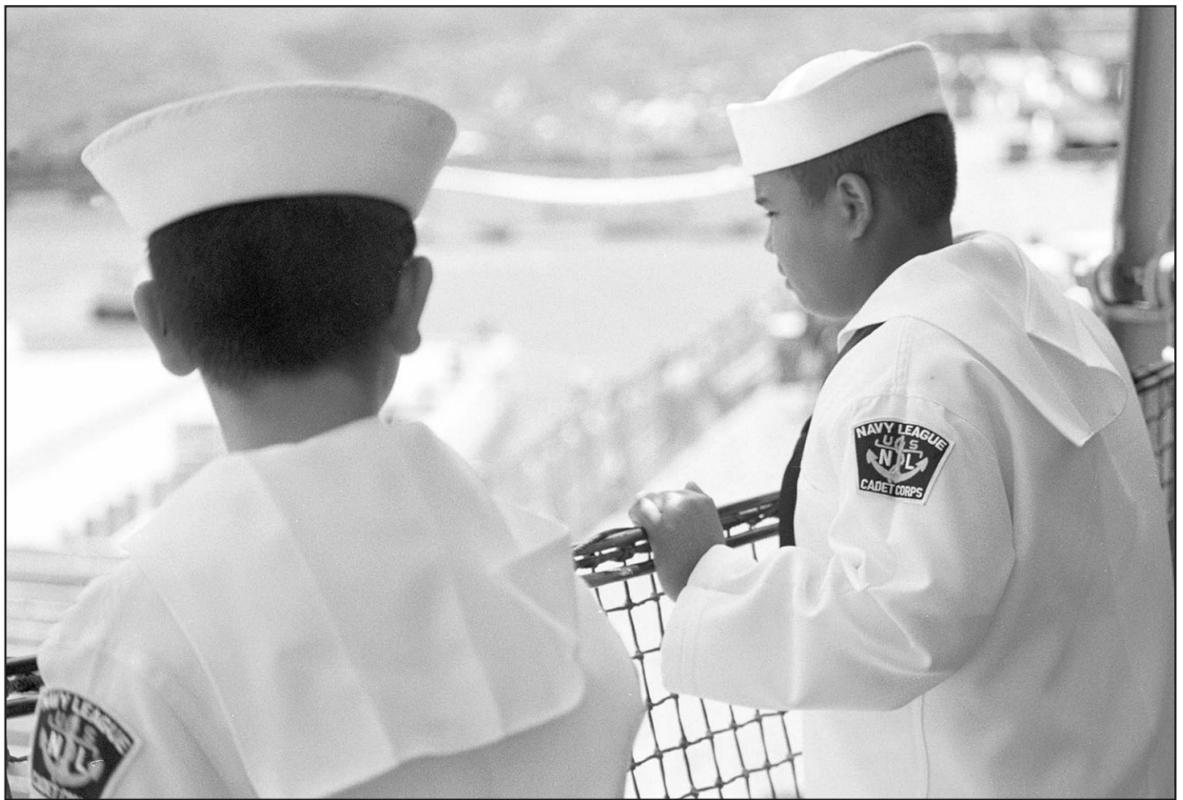
"We are now the only Sea Cadet Division in the nation on a ship," said Chan. "From the Battleship Missouri, we plan to expand the Sea Cadet youth program to recruit kids island-wide to develop positive qualities of patriotism, courage, self-reliance and confidence, pride in our nation and other attributes in developing our leaders of tomorrow."



Crystal Valeriano, a member of the Sea Cadet colors team, rolls up the Navy ensign following the ceremony.



Lou Howard (center), Sea Cadet co-liaison to the Navy League Council, cut the ribbon officially activating the first Sea Cadet division to be assigned to a ship. Glenn Hong (left), president of the Honolulu Navy League Council, and Ed Carter (right), chairman of the board of the Battleship Missouri Memorial Association, assisted.



Sea Cadet Christian Delrosario (right) takes a long look off the side of the Battleship Missouri, the new home of his division.



P. Pasha Baker, Navy League Hawaii president, greets Sea Cadet Christian Delrosario.



Raymond Chan, Sea Cadet liaison to the Barbers Point Navy League Council, offers welcoming remarks at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.