



USS O'Kane Homecoming: See more photos... A-5

HAWAII'S NAVY NEWS



Local cruise ship offers whale watching tours, romance for your valentine... B-1

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O'Kane returns from maiden deployment

Ensign J. K. Duquette and JO3 C. L. Glover
USS O'Kane Public Affairs

USS O'Kane (DDG 77) returned from her maiden deployment Jan. 25. O'Kane, an Aegis destroyer, left her homeport of Pearl Harbor on Aug. 1. Her ultimate destination was the Arabian Gulf, but the events of Sept. 11 revealed a new threat and transformed the O'Kane's mission. Her purpose in the Arabian Gulf was no longer a peacetime forward presence.

O'Kane joined up with a multi-national maritime interception force, spending two months enforcing United Nations sanctions against Iraq. Teams of O'Kane Sailors captured several Iraqi oil smugglers and inspected a total of 100 merchant ships. O'Kane's efforts in the northern gulf were so successful that a majority of oil smugglers re-

mained anchored in Iraqi waterways, unwilling to get underway for fear of capture.

O'Kane's next call to duty was in the northern Arabian Sea. There the ship spent a month off the coast of Pakistan acting as the air defense commander for the Amphibious Task Force (ATF) supporting the marines deployed to Afghanistan. O'Kane maintained the guard while two ATFs conducted offshore marine debarkation in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

When O'Kane detached from the ATF, the stop headed to Mumbai, India to conduct a diplomatic mission with USS Antietam (CG 54). Officers and Sailors from O'Kane engaged in professional discourse with their counterparts in the Indian navy. The Indian sailors were particularly interested in how American ships manage the integration of male

▼ See RETURNS, A-5



JO3 Tim Walsh photo

Crew members of USS O'Kane look on as a sailor and his wife have the first kiss on the brow just after the ship moored in Pearl Harbor Jan. 25 from its maiden deployment.

Cheerleaders visit Pearl Harbor



JO2 Daniel J. Calderon photo

Washington Redskins cheerleaders (from left to right) Carly Horen, Shannon Hover, Shelly Finnern and Christine Englehardt tour USS Louisville (SSN 724) during their recent visit to Pearl Harbor Jan. 25. See related story on B-6.

Sailors see changes in BAS

Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

Sailors can now see changes in their Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) when they receive their next Leave and Earnings Statement (LES).

As part of the National Defense Authorization Acts of FY98 and FY02, a single BAS rate (\$241.60 per month) replaced three previous rates of BAS: separate rations (SEPRATS), partial BAS and emergency rations (EM-RATS).

Legislative changes to BAS are designed to remove the inequity between service members on rations-in-kind (RIK - required to subsist in a government mess) and those receiving full BAS. Prior to 1998, members on RIK did not receive the difference between the cost of meals provided and full BAS. Since Jan. 1, members on RIK are only charged for meals provided at the discount meal rate, leaving a surplus of more than \$30 per month.

These changes were also designed to tie BAS to a credible food cost index (FCI) set by the United States

Department of Agriculture. FCI increased to 3.7 percent in 2002.

As a result of BAS reform, all active-duty and reserve component members entitled to basic pay also receive BAS with the exception of initial accessions (i.e., personnel in recruit training). Regardless of duty station, members will see the BAS details on their LES.

"Members will see a small increase to their BAS entitlement as a result of the 3.7 percent USDA food cost index increase, vice the BAS transition authority that only allowed a one percent increase," said Lt. Stormi Looney, assistant section head, Navy compensation office for the Chief of Naval Personnel.

"Members previously on rations-in-kind or partial BAS will now see the full BAS entitlement as a credit on their LES. As government meals are being provided to the members, they will also see a deduction at the discount meal rate for those meals made available."

Personnel in paygrades E-1 through

▼ See BAS, A-8

Blood banks low on supply; qualified donors needed

JO3 Sunday Williams
Staff Writer

Donating blood is not usually on most people's list of things to do. For Tripler Army Medical Center, this poses a problem.

"A lot of people don't feel that giving blood is their problem. What they do not realize is that it may very well be their problem," stressed Rick Maldonado, the blood donor recruiter for Tripler Army Medical Center and retired Navy medical corpsman

1st class.

In day-to-day life, many healthy people usually don't worry that they or family members will get a disease such as cancer. Or they might not think about other traumatic events that could happen that may cause them to need a blood transfusion. Maldonado talked about how he was, at one time, one of those people and how quickly his attitude changed.

"I never imagined that anyone in my family would get sick, but it seemed like out of

nowhere and without any warning symptoms, my son was diagnosed with leukemia," said Maldonado.

Sadly, his son passed away after about two years of treatment. But he wants other people to be able to avoid a situation where there may not be enough blood or platelets for a needed transfusion.

"A choice should not have to be made on who will get a transfusion and who will not due to inadequate supplies of blood, and at this point, this is a problem we are facing,"

said Maldonado.

He stated that most of the time it isn't that there aren't enough people who want to donate, but that they aren't allowed to donate.

"A lot of military personnel who come into a blood drive to donate don't realize that they are going to be turned away due to a previous duty station," he said.

According to Maldonado, anyone who has been stationed or lived in places such as France, Germany, Poland and Turkey for at least six

months or certain places in the United Kingdom for at least three months cannot give blood.

"These places in the United Kingdom, Eastern and Western Europe as well as a couple of places in the Middle East have possible exposure to the antibodies for Creutzfeldt-Jakob (vCJD) disease commonly known as mad cow disease. People who have spent at least six months in any of these places are automatically unable to donate

▼ See BLOOD A-2

A NATION AT WAR

United States assists Afghanistan in developing their own military

Linda D. Kozaryn
American Forces Information Service

President Bush announced that the United States would help Afghanistan set up and train its own military.

The United States will continue to be a friend to the Afghan people in all the challenges that lie ahead, the president pledged to Hamid Karzai, Afghanistan Interim Authority chairman, during the Afghan leader's first visit to the United States.

"Both of us have made the decision that Afghanistan must, as quickly as possible, develop her own military," Bush said. U.S.

Central Command's chief, Army Gen. Tommy Franks "fully understands and is committed to this idea," he added.

Bush and Karzai appeared in the Rose Garden following a White House meeting. The president praised Karzai as a determined leader, a man who stood for freedom in the face of tyranny. Led by Karzai, he said, Afghanistan's interim government "reflects the hopes of all Afghans for a new and better future, a future free from terror, free from war and free from want."

The United States will work closely with peacekeepers from around the world that are helping

provide security on the streets of Kabul, the president said. U.S. officials will also support programs to train new police officers.

Bush also announced that the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation will provide an initial \$50 million line of credit for Afghanistan to finance private sector projects. Earlier this month, the United States pledged to provide \$297 million this year to create jobs and to help rebuild Afghanistan's agricultural sector, health care and educational systems.

After thanking the president and the American people for their

▼ See AFGHANISTAN, A-2



PH1 Ted Banks photo

A senior chief hospital corpsman assigned to the Seabees of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133 (NMCB-133), talks to an Afghan soldier at the Kandahar International Airport during Operation Enduring Freedom.