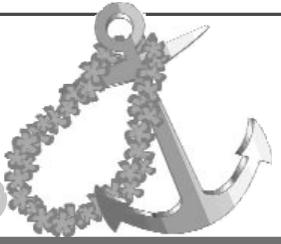


Hawaii Navy News



Volume 24 Issue 29

Serving the "Best Homeport in the Navy"

July 23, 1999

IN BRIEF

Barbers Point NEX Focus Group

Voice your questions and concerns about continuing Navy Exchange services at Barbers Point now that the base has closed at a focus group on July 29 at 10 a.m. at the Barbers Point main store Furniture/Admin Area. Call 421-3401 for more information.

Soliciting not permitted in family housing

There have been numerous reports of vendors soliciting in Navy housing neighborhoods. Commercial solicitation on Navy property, including family housing, is strictly forbidden. Commercial vendors may be permitted to conduct business in government housing only if they have a specific appointment with a resident.

If housing residents notice commercial vendors soliciting within housing areas, they should call the base police. Residents should also note the name of the company and call their housing representative.

Navy-supported youth organizations may be granted approval for fundraising projects. Such requests are considered on a case-by-case basis by the Assistant Chief of Staff for Housing.

Tripler puts focus on domestic violence

Tripler's health promotions center reminds the community that family violence includes the abuse of spouses, partners, elders, and children.

Child abuse, specifically, is one of society's most explosive problems; it was the focus of April's health promotion. July, family violence, domestic violence and abuse are designated as this month's aspect of prevention to be addressed.

For more information call: 473-4222 X4.



Bayfest '99: The annual summer bash at Marine Corps Base, Kaneohe Bay hosted thousands of visitors during the three-day event. **B-1**

INDEX

Commander's Column	A-2
Chapel Pennant	A-3
Fleet News	A-4
Movie Call	B-2
Community Calendar	B-2
Classifieds	B-3

COLA cuts announced

By J01 David Nagle

NAVY REGION HAWAII

HAWAII based Sailors should prepare for a smaller paycheck on August 13, as the result of the latest reduction in the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) for Oahu.

Effective August 1, 1999, the COLA indexes for Oahu will be reduced, based on the final results of the Defense Department's 1999 Military COLA Survey. The new COLA rates will be reflected in August 13 paychecks.

Oahu's COLA index was lowered from 116 to 112. This results in a COLA decrease of approximately 25 percent, based on paygrade, time in service and number of family members.

For example, an E-5 with six years time in service and two family members currently receives \$245.33 in COLA. On August 13, his/her COLA will be reduced to \$184, a decrease of \$61.33. Likewise, an O-3 with eight years time in service and two dependents presently receives \$374.66 in COLA. His COLA will be reduced to \$281 on August 13, a decrease of \$93.66.

"It's a big change," said Master Chief



PH2 Chad McLesley photo

Servicemembers may feel the pinch from COLA reductions planned for Oahu and the Big Island, to take place in August. Oahu's COLA was lowered because survey results indicated lower local prices for fresh milk, flour, pasta and cereal and lower commissary prices for milk, bread, flour, cereal and soda.

Disbursing Clerk (SW) Ricardo Francisco, Personnel Support Detachment Pearl Harbor's senior enlisted advisor. "The area command

master chiefs and senior enlisted advisors are looking into this matter and

▼ See COLA, A-5

Frequently asked questions about overseas COLA

Information compiled from Defense Finance and Accounting Website

Q. What is COLA?
A. The Cost of Living Allowance, or COLA, is an allowance paid to service members stationed in high-cost areas overseas (including Alaska and Hawaii). COLA helps maintain purchasing power so you can purchase about the same goods and services overseas as in the United States.

Q. Does everyone assigned overseas receive COLA?

A. No. If the cost of living in the overseas area where you are assigned is the same as, or lower than it would be in an average area in the United States, you do not receive COLA.

▼ See Q&A, A-5

Bates returns from final voyage

By J03 McClain Shewman

COMSUBPAC PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Family Housing Office to relocate

The Navy Family Housing Office will soon relocate to a new building in Moanalua Shopping Center. The move is scheduled for early to mid-October.

Plans are underway to ensure that the relocation to the new office facility will be a smooth transition. Disruption of service to customers is expected to be minimal. The new office will be located at 988 Spence St., Bldg. 2652.

USS William H. Bates (SSN 680) returned home from its final deployment last Monday. Commanded by Cmdr. Curt Stevens, Bates departed March 5th of this year for the last deployment for a Pacific-based Sturgeon-class submarine.

The ship's crew is excited about being

part of the final and historic deployment and understands the importance for a continued U.S. submarine presence worldwide.

"Submarines are the most durable, survivable and stealthily assets for ensuring peace," said Lt. Wesley Guinn of Tucson, Ariz., Bates' operations officer. "Without them, the U.S. would be hazardedly vulnerable," said Guinn.

"It feels fantastic to return from a flawless WESTPAC, and not only that but as the last of the Sturgeon class. My crew helped the Bates to leave a remarkable impression," said Stevens. "Everything was successful and I couldn't ask for a better crew. I wish I could do it all over again," said the native of Fishertown, Penn.

The submarine force in the Pacific will continue to shrink from as many as 40 in the early 1990s to only 25 early in the next decade. Ironically, demand for sub-



J03 McClain Shewman photo

A USS William H. Bates (SSN 680) Sailor greets his son at a Pearl Harbor reunion last Monday. Bates completed its last deployment and will inactivate later this summer.

SECDEF, Chairman respond to Times' anthrax editorial

American Forces Press Service

Halting mandatory anthrax shots would represent a "significant disservice" to men and women in uniform, Defense Secretary William Cohen and Gen. Henry Shelton said in a written rebuttal to the Army Times Publishing Co.

The July 12 editorial in the company's Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Times newspapers said DoD should let service members choose whether to receive the shots until more testing is done to determine if the vaccine may cause long-term health effects.

Cohen and Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said their greatest concern is to adequately protect service members serving in combat zones or anywhere anthrax may be a threat, and making vaccinations optional could diminish military battle readiness. At least 10 potential adversaries have worked to develop an-

thrax as an offensive weapon, they said.

"Our commanders must know that all, not simply some fraction, of their forces are protected from this biological threat," the secretary and chairman wrote. "Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines fight in teams, and they need to know that all team members are protected from anthrax."

The two defense leaders compared receiving the shots to wearing protective equipment. "Wearing helmets in battle isn't voluntary because everybody needs protection," they said. "The same is true of anthrax. Allowing a voluntary vaccination program is inadequate in the face of this deadly threat."

"It would be unconscionable not to protect our entire force with a safe and effective vaccine," they said. Immunization requires six shots over a period of 18 months. About 300,000 service members have begun the series since Cohen ordered the mandatory inoculations in early 1998, and about 1 million shots have been given to date.

Cohen and Shelton challenged an assertion the anthrax vaccine hasn't been properly tested for safety. They said the Food and Drug Administration first licensed the vaccine nearly 30 years ago, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization and Institute of Medicine endorse its use.

They said the vaccine manufacturer, BioPort Corp. of Lansing, Mich., works under a compliance plan approved by the FDA to ensure quality and is on schedule to meet DoD needs.

The full text of the Cohen-Shelton response is available at <www.defenselink.mil/specials/anth_ed.html>

TRICARE Prime reenrollment is now automatic

By Karl Kiyokawa

QUEEN'S MEDICAL CENTER

TRICARE Prime members will now be automatically re-enrolled in TRICARE Prime every year without having to fill out forms.

This change will affect members with an expiration date on their TRICARE Prime ID card of July 31, 1999, or later.

A new notice of re-enrollment will be sent 30 days prior to the enrollment expiration date and should be returned only if members decide to disenroll from Prime.

If disenrollment is preferred, members should complete the form and return it to the nearest TRICARE office or mail it to Foundation Health Federal Services.

If members want to remain in TRICARE Prime, they do not have to respond to the notice. Shortly after automatic re-enrollment, new TRICARE Prime ID cards will be mailed.

The new TRICARE Prime ID cards will not have an expiration date.

Retirees, their family members, survivors or eligible former spouses must continue to send their annual or quarterly payments with the re-enrollment notice, by the



due date to stay enrolled in TRICARE Prime.

If the enrollment fees are not sent in by the renewal date, members will be disenrolled from TRICARE Prime covered under TRICARE standard, provided they are eligible.

Members will continue to receive billing statements for enrollment fees, however, the 60-day annual reminder notice and quarterly reminder notice will be discontinued.

The 30-day notice will be sent to the sponsor's address prior to the end of the enrollment period and before payment is due.

If the member did not receive a notice due to change of address or eligibility, or for further assistance, they may contact the TRICARE Hawaii Customer Service Line at 1-800-242-6788 or visit the nearest TRICARE office.