

## Bravo Zulu

Joint Intelligence Center Pacific

**Senior Sailor of the Quarter**  
IS1 Deborah Grier

**Sailor of the Quarter**  
SK2 David Dunbar

Naval Reserve Center Honolulu

**Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medal**

Cmdr. David Cassidy  
Cmdr. Owen Kawamoto  
Cmdr. James Liming  
Cmdr. Stephen Paternoster  
Lt. Cmdr. Stephen LeBlanc  
Lt. Cmdr. Caroline Lukasik  
BMCS(SW) Charles Ah Nee

### Around the Fleet

#### Belleau Wood makes historic rendezvous

As the Navy's only forward deployed amphibious assault warship, plying the waters between its homeport of Sasebo, Japan, and White Beach, Okinawa, is usually a fairly ordinary event for USS Belleau Wood's (LHA 3) crew.

Normally, the crew has other concerns to fill their time, such as drills, training and thoughts of home. That was no less true on Aug. 25, but a non-routine encounter with the French research vessel MV Ocean Voyager was not only unusual, it had historical significance as well. Working approximately 250 miles north of Okinawa, Ocean Voyager is using submarines to research and recover artifacts from the sunken Imperial Japanese Navy battleship Yamato. Organized by Japan's Asahi TV and conducted by two research and recovery companies, Aqua of France, and RMS Titanic Inc., from England, the Battleship Yamato Research and Recovery Expedition has two functions, according to George Tulloch, President of RMS Titanic Inc. "The artifacts we recover will be sent to the Maritime Museum in Kure, Japan, the city where Yamato was built," said Tulloch. "The recovered objects are also intended to honor the memory of those lost in the battle, and reflect on the tragedy of war." Tulloch emphasized that there is tremendous Japanese interest in the operation, particularly now during the Japanese season of Obon, an annual ancestral celebration.

Another, more universal aspect of the operation, and of particular relevance to Belleau Wood, is Yamato it-

self, and its' final battle.

Designed in 1936, Yamato and her sister ship Musashi were the largest battleships ever built. Compared to the largest U.S. Navy Iowa-class battleships, Yamato and Musashi were almost 20,000 tons larger at 76,000 tons, and carried 18.1-inch main batteries compared to the 16-inch guns used by the Iowa class. Yamato, shrouded in secrecy during her construction, was the pride of the Japanese Imperial fleet, and would engage in the last major naval battle between the United States and Japan.

On April 7, 1945, Yamato, two cruisers and eight destroyers steamed south to engage U.S. Navy forces massed for an assault on the island. Yamato was a formidable warship, but she and her small flotilla would never reach Okinawa. At 12:37 that afternoon, Navy aircraft began the attack on Yamato and her escorts. In less than two hours, after relentless air assaults, Yamato foundered, racked by explosions and flames that signaled the end of the mighty warship. Carrying a crew of 3,332, only 269 Yamato sailors survived that battle, while her escorts lost another 1,187 men. U.S. casualties that day totaled 12 dead.

The American planes initiating the assault on Yamato came from Task Force 58.1, assigned to USS Belleau Wood (CVL 24), and the carriers Hornet, Essex, and Bennington. According to Tulloch, the Japanese researchers and television documentary crew were well aware of the historical significance involving Belleau Wood and Yamato.

The day was one in which Americans and Japanese felt strong connections to the past.

# Former President Bush visits USS O'Kane in Maine

By Ens. Herron  
USS O'KANE

A little more than 24 hours after beginning their maiden voyage, the crew of the USS O'Kane (DDG 77) was paid a visit by the 41st president of the United States, the Honorable George Bush, while anchored off Biddeford Pool, Maine.

O'Kane is the newest and most technologically advanced Aegis destroyer in the fleet today. On her first day underway she hosted more than 450 guests of crewmembers and families of those who crafted Bath Iron Works hull 465.

Joining the guests was the ship's sponsor Leslie Allen Berry. As O'Kane cleared Kennebec River for the last time and rang up full power, there

was a loud roar of excitement from the crew as they could sense all their hard work paying off.

As O'Kane slowed in preparation to drop anchor, a white speed boat passed by, flying the state flags of Florida and Texas as well as the Presidential flag, with Bush at the helm, waving. Once at anchor Bush brought his boat, "Fidelity II" along side and climbed up the accommodation ladder to a cheering crowd of crewmembers and guests.



U.S. Navy photo

Within minutes of arriving and meeting O'Kane's Commanding Officer, Cmdr. David Hulse, Executive Officer, Cmdr. Steve Alkov, and Command Master Chief Masyer, Chief Ship's Serviceman (SW) John Hill, he began a tour of the ship.

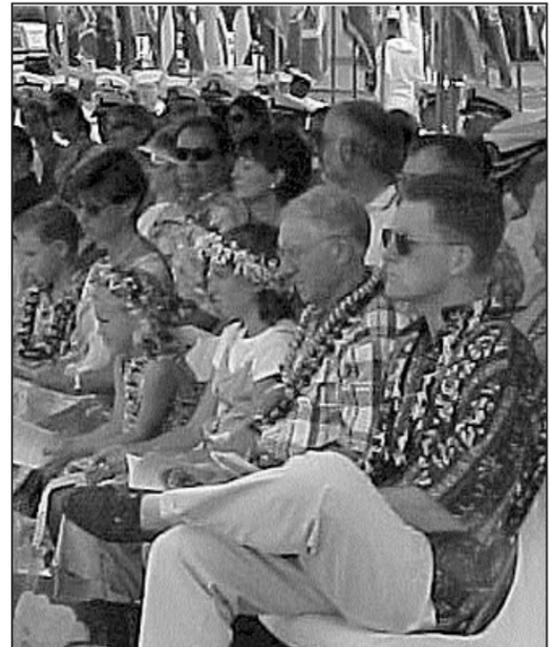
The tour started on the forecabin with a brief explanation of the vertical launch system and gun. As the tour moved into the interior of the ship crewmembers waited in every passageway in hopes of meeting and taking pictures of Bush. In the pilot house Bush was introduced to O'Kane's three chief petty officer (CPO) selects and the senior and junior sailors of the quarter. After signing their CPO charge books and posing for more photos, the next

stop was combat information center. Here Bush was able to see how O'Kane will fight in a multi-threat environment.

The tour ended on the flight deck, where the entire crew and all 150 guests watched Bush reenlist Radioman 2nd Class Augusto Bundoc. After reading the oath, Bush addressed the crew for a few minutes, issuing a challenge to race his boat against O'Kane. He then left everyone with a final motivational thought: "Fifty-three years and two weeks ago I joined the Navy, and that was one of the best things I have ever done in my life." The visit ended with a salute from the president as he raced off in Fidelity II toward Kennebunk Port, Maine, a few miles to the south.



J03 McClain Shewman photo



J03 McClain Shewman photo

Rear Adm. Albert Konetzni, Commander, Submarine Forces Pacific, addresses attendees present for USS Cheyenne's (SSN 773) change of command. USS Cheyenne is a member of Submarine Squadron Seven and is the fourth Navy vessel to bear the name. "The most memorable highlight of my tour was being able to take a ship that was new to the fleet and turn it into one of the most proficient submarines," said Cmdr. Jeff Zerbe, Cheyenne's outgoing skipper.

## Cheyenne changes command

By J03 McClain Shewman  
SUBMARINE FORCES PACIFIC

USS Cheyenne (SSN 773) recently changed command as Cmdr. Jeff Zerbe was relieved by Cmdr. William Stacia in a ceremony held on September 7.

"The most memorable highlight of my tour was being able to take a ship that was new to the fleet and turn it into one of the most proficient submarines," said Zerbe. "We were on deployment in minimal time which is always a great thing. "My crew was an unbelievable team of

guys. I'm grateful for their ability to meet every operational obligation," Zerbe added.

Cheyenne, the newest submarine in the Pacific submarine force, recently returned from its first ever Western Pacific Deployment (WESTPAC) where it spent a significant portion of its deployment in the Arabian Gulf. The boat, which was commissioned in September of 1996, was named after the capital of Wyoming. Cheyenne is the 62nd Los Angeles class submarine and the 23rd improved class submarine to be built.

The submarine force in the Pacific will

continue to provide forward presence and task force protection into the next century. Demand for submarines in support of specific national tasking has more than doubled since the end of the Cold War.

The submarine is capable of fulfilling several missions, including intelligence, reconnaissance and warning, mining, anti-submarine and anti-surface ship warfare.

The submarine is a member of Submarine Squadron Seven based out of Pearl Harbor and is the fourth Navy vessel to bear the name.

## HSL-37 Det Four departs for EASTPAC cruise



J01 David Nagle photo

HSL-37 Public Affairs

Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron (Light) 37 (HSL-37) Detachment Four departed recently aboard USS Crommelin (FFG 37) for a three month eastern Pacific cruise.

Detachment Four is a Light Airborne Multi-Purpose System (LAMPS) helicopter unit that operates off of Navy ships stationed in Pearl Harbor with her parent squadron based at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay.

The detachment, led by Lt. Cmdr. John Treutler, consists of four pilots, two aircrewmen and 11 helicopter maintenance technicians.

Detachment Four will operate in conjunction with ships in the eastern Pacific.

### SPOT CHECK

#### The Pacific Fleet today

Personnel: 230,511  
• 129,382 USN  
• 70,459 USMC  
• 12,848 USNR  
• 30,670 civilians

Ships: 188 (\*)

Underway: 57 (30%) (\*\*)

Aircraft: 1,423 (\*\*)

Exercises: 3

Port Visits: 8 countries

Aircraft Carriers Underway/Deployed:  
• USS Kitty Hawk  
• USS Constellation

LHA/LHD Underway/Deployed:  
• USS Peleliu  
• USS Belleau Wood  
• USS Bonhomme Richard

\* — includes Military Sealift Command ships  
\*\* — includes USMC aircraft