

# PELELIU NEWS

March 28, 2014

## Peleliu Receives Back-To-Back Battle 'E'



Story by MCSN Michael Duran  
Peleliu Staff Writer

The amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) won the 2013 Battle Efficiency Award for the second year in a row, March 21.

Peleliu competed with other ships within its Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and was selected for its exemplary performance in an operational environment as well as its distinguished achievement during certifications and qualifications conducted throughout the year.

"It feels great," said Command Master Chief TyRon Flynn. "Obtaining the Battle 'E' is a cumulative process over a number of different warfare areas in terms of sustainment and readiness, and we broke out amongst the other ships in the ARG."

The Battle 'E' is awarded to the ship

within a command that demonstrates the highest level of sustained superior performance and battle readiness.

In addition to the Battle 'E', Peleliu also won the Red 'E' for Engineering/Survivability Excellence and the Blue 'E' for Logistics Management Excellence. This marks the 11th consecutive year Peleliu's Supply department has taken home the award for logistics excellence.

"We try to manage our storerooms the best that we can and we're going to continue to do just that," said Logistics Specialist 1st Class Jimmy Vo, leading petty officer of Supply department's Stock Control division. "We have good Sailors and junior Sailors and everything that went into this award came from them."

Achieving Battle 'E' requires teamwork

and represents the combined effort of all Peleliu personnel during 2013 and who are now authorized to wear the Battle 'E' ribbon and insignia in lieu of first award.

"I'm extremely proud of the crew and extremely proud of the accomplishment of winning a Battle 'E,'" said Flynn. "It's a significant accomplishment and not something that comes easy, especially for those on their first or second tour. Be thankful that you received one, remember what you did to earn it, and do it again."

Peleliu ARG (PELARG) is comprised of Peleliu, amphibious transport dock ship USS Green Bay (LPD 20), and amphibious dock landing ship USS Rushmore (LSD 47).

Peleliu is conducting sea trials after a seven-month maintenance availability period in preparation for a future deployment.

# Peleliu's First Underway After PMA



BM1 Stephen O'Neal measures the distance from the Coronado Bay Bridge to the bow of the ship.

Story by **MC2 Alex Van'tLeven**  
Peleliu Staff Writer

After more than three decades of service, the amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) shakes off the dust of a \$31 million phased maintenance availability (PMA) and readies herself for the Pacific, completing a brief underway, March 11-14.

After seven months of maintenance, repairs and routine upkeep Peleliu's crew put her to the test. While underway the ship conducted a boiler flex test, a counter-measure wash down test, an aqueous film forming foam system test, ballast testing, a close-in weapons system Pre-Aim Calibration Fire (PACFIRE), and various other system checks and scenarios.

"I was extremely pleased with the underway. We left the pier on time, we made a successful transit out of San Diego, and we accomplished all the testing that we had planned," said Capt. Paul C. Spedero, commanding officer. "We've made a big step in the right direction toward getting this ship back to full combat capability. So I would say that so far it's been very successful."

Along with system tests the ship also took on approximately 414,000 gallons of diesel fuel, and 200,870 gallons of jet fuel during an underway replenishment with the Marine Sealift Command ship USNS Guadalupe (T-AO 200).

Every department on the ship contributes to the mission in various ways. Some departments face a heavier work load in the initial steps of getting underway.

"Engineering Department had the heaviest load as they prepared for their Safe-to-Operate assessment. This requires them to meet and maintain 100% completion of their material checks on minimum equipment," said the assistant operations officer Chief Warrant Officer Michael F. Thomas. "They must also demonstrate the ability to fight a main space fire. All of their programs must be verified and effective. Engineering management programs must also be ready to support operations. Many in-port and underway man-hours were utilized to ensure their success."

With many different moving parts, it is important to ensure everyone

involved is on the same page.

"Planning is an all-hands effort that began back in October of 2013 with scheduling our Basic Phase ATG (Afloat Training Group) events upon completion of PMA," said Thomas. "Department heads meet daily to discuss upcoming events and requirements. Outside agency support is required for many events as well and thus make it necessary to plan early and often."

Commissioned May 3, 1980, the ship has seen numerous deployments. The crew will continue to ensure the ship is ready for the demands of its latest scheduled deployment. Spedero said he sees a parallel between these preparations and the battle for which the ship takes its name.

"It was one of the hardest-fought battles of the Pacific campaign in World War II," he said. "That in itself, kind of sets the tone for what Peleliu stands for. It's part of America, it's part of our American history, it's part of our American culture – it doesn't matter how difficult the task, we're going to see it through, and I think that's a testament to what's going on now, where we have a ship that has seen many deployments, a ship that maybe hasn't gotten all the attention that it should have on the maintenance front, but that's made it none less capable, and that's because of the crew and that ethos that we share, not only, in the United States Navy but in America in general," said Spedero.

The first successful underway is the beginning of a high-tempo operational phase for both the ship and crew. Once completed the ship is scheduled to participate in exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2014, and conduct a follow-on deployment to the Western Pacific.

PeleNews is published and printed on board by the USS Peleliu (LHA 5) Media Division. This newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents are not necessarily the official views of the U.S. Government. PeleNews reserves the right to edit submissions. Submission deadline is Thursday by noon to [pao@lha5.navy.mil](mailto:pao@lha5.navy.mil)

**Commanding Officer**  
Capt. Paul C. Spedero  
**Executive Officer**  
Cmdr. Scott Hudson  
**Command Master Chief**  
CMDMCM(SW/AW/EXW)  
TyRon Flynn

**Managing Editor**  
MCC(SW/AW) Michael Wagoner  
**Leading Petty Officer**  
MC2(SW) Daniel Viramontes  
**Designer/Editor**  
MC3 Dustin Knight

**Staff**  
MC2 Alex Van'tLeven  
MC3 Dustin Knight  
MCSN(SW) Michael Duran  
MCSN Ryan Batchelder

## Peleliu's Enlisted Sailors Learn Ways to Become Officers

Story by MC3 Dustin Knight  
Peleliu Staff Writer

Command Career Counselors held a commissioning program presentation, as well as a question and answer session with many officers who were former enlisted Sailors, with enlisted personnel aboard amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5), March 13.

The purpose of the class was to give shipboard enlisted Sailors information regarding the many career paths available for those interested in becoming a commissioned officer.

"Enlisted programs going into a commissioning is excellent and it's an awesome opportunity for you, as an enlisted Sailor, to pursue your naval career," said Senior Chief Navy Counselor Susan Garrow. "Your career path, whether you came in as an E-1 or an E-3, is to be Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy. That's your roadmap. There will be some turns along that career path and those turns may be to STA-21 or to another commissioning program."

During the session, Sailors learned about the many options that are available such as the Seaman to Admiral-21 (STA-21) program, the Limited Duty Officer (LDO) program, the Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) program and the Medical Enlisted Commissioning Program (MECP).

STA-21 is a commissioning program offered to Sailors 27 years or younger that provides an excellent opportunity for highly motivated active-duty enlisted personnel to attend college, earn a degree and become a commissioned officer.

"I was an E-5 when I put my package

for STA-21 in and got picked up the first time," said Ensign Emmanuel Richardson, ship's commissioning programs officer. "I never thought that would happen, but it did, so I felt lucky." "A lot of people don't apply for these packages so you'll never know unless you put it in."

The LDO and CWO Programs are offered to highly qualified and motivated enlisted E6 through E9 personnel and do not require a college degree.

"Qualifications matter," said LCDR Terrance Patterson, ship's chief engineer. "Continue what you're doing in your rate. To be an LDO or CWO you will need those qualifications and you will need to build your résumé. That tells the Navy why you should be picked up."

On hand for the presentation were many officers who have gone through these programs, including United States Naval Academy graduates, as well as Chief Navy Counselor Rhonaka Williams and Master Chief Master-at-Arms Richard Gonzales who were just selected this year, to answer any questions Sailors may have.

"If you don't take advantage of programs in the Navy, they go away," said Command Master Chief Tyron Flynn. "Why can't it be you? Always have belief and confidence in your self, be realistic about the goals that you set and never undersell yourself. If you have a goal or desire to succeed, focus on it, make that plan and execute."

For more information regarding commissioning programs visit the career counselors or go to <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/Pages/default.aspx>

## CMC's Corner



**CMDCM (SW/AW/EXW) TyRon Flynn**  
Command Master Chief, USS Peleliu (LHA 5)

Hooyah, Iron Nickel!

In this issue of the PELENEWS, I want to focus on watch station proficiency. It's been a long eight months of shipyard work with mother PEL going through our Planned Maintenance Availability. The ship has had a lot of contract work, living and eating on the berthing barge and working in an industrial environment can take a toll on the crew. Well, combine that with a significant turn over of personnel and our proficiency is definitely going to take a dip!

As we press on with our Sea Trials, and warfare area certifications, I want our seasoned PELELIU watchstanders to take that leadership role and rely on your experiences as well as your watch station fundamentals and emergency tasks and actions to train our new team members and shipmates. Remember, always comply with operational procedures. Rehearse your controlling actions before you take the watch. Train your shipmates under instruction on the correct way to stand that watch.

Remember, we work in a challenging environment just by the nature of what we do as sea warriors aboard a U.S. warship. Our jobs are inherently challenging with the potential for danger, BUT we are sea warriors that are trained and proficient in our tasks! Be proud in what it is that you do.

**And always, be polite, be professional and be prepared!**  
**Hooyah, Iron Nickel! CMC out!**



**NAVY-MARINE CORPS  
RELIEF SOCIETY**

## HAZE GRAY AND UNDERWAY



Photo by MCSN Ryan Batchelder



Photo by MC3 Dustin Knight



Photo by MC2 Daniel Viramontes



Photo by MC2 Alex Van'tLeven

**Top:** Sailors fire the M16 assault rifle during a small-arms gun shoot on the flight deck. **Center Left:** Sailors watch from the flight deck as an F/A-18 Hornet performs precision approach landing system (PALS) checks. **Center Right:** Sailors stand an armed watch on the flight deck. **Bottom:** MV-22 Osprey aircraft from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 161 and Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 363 conduct flight operations.

## Man on the Street

By MCSN Ryan Batchelder

*As the Peleliu works its way up to deployment.... What's your favorite part about being underway?*

CSSN Zach Claycomb, Virginia Beach, VA



"My favorite part about being underway is looking at the ocean and seeing dolphins and a whale once in a while, and the beautiful sunsets and sunrises."

AC1 Cassandra Studivant, Chicago, IL



"My favorite thing about being underway is flight operations. When we're in port, we don't get the opportunity to do our job and now that we're underway with aircraft

onboard we actually get to do our job as air traffic controllers."

YNCS Donnella Anderson, Washington, D.C.



"The extra time you get to spend with your Sailors and learning more about them on and off duty."

Ensign Jacob Boudreau, Elmira, N.Y.



"This is my first underway, so it's pretty exciting being on the water like this on a Navy ship. I like the routine of getting up early, there's always something to do to keep me busy. I'm

in engineering, so it's neat going through and seeing all of the evolutions that the engineering department goes through underway. It's a lot of things that most Sailors probably don't see unless they're in engineering."