

# PELENEWS

JUNE 13, 2010

## CRASH AND SMASH



PUSHING TEETH, PAIN  
HAZMAT, PAGE 1

# VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE



D. A. SCHNELL, Commanding Officer

Hello to the Sailors and Marines of PELELIU, as well as to all our friends and families ashore!

A lot has happened in the two weeks since I last wrote. When we deployed on May 22, it was with the knowledge we'd be sailing across the Pacific at high speed in order to support a critical requirement off the coast of Indonesia. For weeks, our Engineers did a tremendous job keeping our screws turning as we faced adverse weather conditions that included high winds and heavy seas. As circumstances would have it, we received word last Friday that our tasking in the vicinity of Indonesia was no longer required, which meant we suddenly had spare time on our hands. Being the Sailors and Marines we are, we immediately sought out a port to visit. I'm happy to report that PELELIU just completed a very successful 4-day port visit to the U.S. Territory of Guam!

Although the weather was hot and humid, the crew enjoyed many activities in Guam to include ocean diving, snorkeling, hiking, shopping, and general sight-seeing. The availability of great restaurants

for every taste was also a tremendous draw. I know the crew enjoyed their stay and we sailed from port on Wednesday with more than a few sun burns!

We are now proceeding west and preparing for a large bilateral exercise with several allies in the region. This requires us to conduct flight operations daily to ensure our pilots remain at peak proficiency. It is a busy time... but it is not all work. Today was a very special day as we sailed past the Island of Peleliu for which this ship is its namesake. This island became famous 66 years ago during World War II when the Navy landed Marines to fight in what would become one of the bloodiest battles of the Pacific Campaign. This island is now symbolic in the U.S. military for valor and self-sacrifice, and that spirit lives on in the Navy-Marine Corps team aboard USS PELELIU. We recognized this important occasion with a

photograph of our amphibious ready group in close formation with the crew assembled on the flight deck and the island in the background. That photo appears on the back cover of this issue of PeleNews.

Before closing, I'd like to mention that Peleliu has traveled 6,104 nautical miles since departing San Diego last month. Of even more interesting trivia, we passed over Challenger Deep of the Marianas Trench Friday afternoon. At 35,802 feet, this is the deepest spot on earth! To put it into perspective, if we could move Mount Everest and sink it here, there would still be 7,000 feet of water above the tip of the mountain. Of course, I don't recommend doing this as it would create massive flooding in places like Guam... California... Nebraska... I think we'll just take their word for it.

I thank you for all your support. Be safe and have a great month!



Photo by MC3 Omar Dominquez

The Captain has lunch with the Sailor of the Week, ENFN Comparan (left) and Comparan's guest, EM2 Zhang.

# FROM THE DECK PLATES



By CMDCM  
(SW/AW/SS)  
Brent Williams  
Command  
Master Chief

## LIBERTY

Good Day Warriors!,

And welcome to the 2010 Western Pacific Deployment. I hope it is going well for you so far. I know for our new Sailors, you are experiencing many things that are keeping you busy. Based on that, I am getting a lot of great questions daily on the deck plates.

This week, I want to focus on liberty, not just the follow-on ports, but also why it is so important to enjoy the time off and behave appropriately. Many of you question the policies and requirements that we have in place for a successful port call. Some still question the liberty attire, why we have to call in, why we need a liberty buddy, why we can't rent a car, and so on.

First off, the requirements are based on historical conduct ashore by our fellow servicemen in other countries besides the U.S. Many of the rules are in place based on the conduct of the personnel stationed overseas. The Seventh Fleet AOR has been rife with serious incidents, some ending in death of our brothers and sisters in uniform. The dress code, for example, is driven by many factors, cultures of the countries we visit,

our ability to represent the Navy in a positive manner, and mostly so we blend in. We also have a safety concern. It still amazes me that something as simple as wearing a sandal with a heel strap appears so difficult. This occurs through all ranks, not just enlisted. It is a safety issue, that simple. Please don't challenge these simple rules; just follow them.

The XO and I received many compliments on the liberty brief, and for that we thank you. The information given is coming from Fleet leadership, and we must abide by it. We have always stated that once you leave the ship and are at the beach or pool side, then do as the Romans do. Keep in mind that we are held to a higher standard, and the incredible amount of praise and support we constantly receive from the American public should be earned through our performance at work and behavior ashore.

You hear the buzz words, Warrior Diplomat or Ambassador's of the Navy. They are not just catchphrases; they are what we need to be as soon as we step off that brow in another country.

I will go so far as to say that Guam was a win for the ship!!! But we can do better; we have got to truly be able to conduct ourselves as best we can, all the time. Go out, enjoy the sights, have fun, and be safe.

Shipmates, PELELIU is a great command with a great legacy from her namesake. We all need to represent it as such. Every liberty port is a mission - your mission is to make it a success!



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# PLAYING WITH FIRE

By MG3 Foster Bamford

“Normally, how it works is, the boss will get a call first and let us know that we’ve got an inbound 53, or whatever the case is. He’s going to give us about a two-minute standby to get all of our stuff ready to go. That way as soon as it does come in, the moment it hits the deck,” snaps his fingers. “We’re on scene in seconds.”

Aviation Boatswain’s Mate (Handling) 1<sup>st</sup> Class (AW) Rick Vaughn is the LPO of Crash and Salvage, the team that makes sure that any casualties on the flight deck are taken care of “with the quickness.”

“When it happens, we’re right on the spot,” said Vaughn. “If an aircraft comes in, in an emergency, and it crashes, we’re the ones that are running into the fire to pull them out. That’s why we’ve got all this fancy equipment and all this gear, all that fun stuff, so we can do our job.”

That job is an important one, said Vaughn. “Our primary mission up here is basically the life, safety and rescue of all the air crew and pilots.”

Crash and Salvage is well equipped to handle any number of emergencies on the flight deck, up to and including any class of fire. Their most potent weapon against these fires is the Sailors themselves.

“Crash and Smash’s” most potent (non-living) weapon against the big heat is their P-25 Mobile Fire

Fighting Vehicle. This thing holds 750 gallons of water and 60 gallons of AFFF, with 55 gallons of the foamy stuff being useable. It’s turbocharged, liquid cooled, runs on diesel. There are three 20-pound HALON 1211 fire extinguishers kept on the right flank of the beast. AFFF can be sprayed from both the front turret nozzle and from a handline hose reel nozzle and the nozzles can be used separately or in unison to fight a fire.

Vaughn swept his arm across the flight deck, “We’ve got all this real estate to cover right here. If something happens all the way back aft, instead of us running, we have transportation in this thing,” Vaughn said, patting the P-25. “This thing is a major fire fighting agent right here.”

“Like I said, we’re the first ones on the spot, as soon as we get there, we’ll fire this puppy up and get right on the fire while the yellow and blue shirts are manning up the hoses,” said Vaughn.

The P-25 is a pretty awesome toy, according to Vaughn. But another piece of their equipment is the silver lining, literally.

The shiny silver beings you see walking around on the flight deck are not robots. They’re guys inside specialized FFEs (Fire Fighting

Ensemble) called proximity suits, or “bunker gear.” It’s an extra layer of protection on top of the normal FFEs.

“They’re just like the FFEs that they wear downstairs,” said Vaughn. “It’s just got the silver on them. The silver lining repels the heat and the flames. It’s fire protection. It’s not made for you to sit there, light a fire, stand in it and think you’ll be cool. It’s made to protect you, as you go in and get the pilots or the aircrew during a rescue and come back out. The face masks are made of 14 karat gold.”

The team sits on the P-25s for two-hour watch rotations during the day, said Vaughn.

“As we get closer to the gulf they’ll drop down to one hour. ‘Cause staying out here for two hours in that heat, in those suits ... impossible,” said Vaughn. “We go through a lot of water.”

It’s not all sweat and gear for the folks up in crash and smash, they have to have a detailed working knowledge of every part of their job.

“We have to know so much,” said Vaughn. “Off of the top of my head, I know we have 37 AFFF hose reels, 182 flight deck nozzles, 22 salt water stations, let alone every AFFF station has a CO2 and PKP fire extinguisher, there’s just so much to keep up with.”

The most important thing with these guys, just like any shop on the

**“We’re the ones that are running into the fire.”**

ship, is camaraderie.

“Besides all the technical knowledge that we have to know,” said Vaughn. “The biggest thing I emphasize inside that door right there, is team,” he said, pointing to the crash and salvage office door. “You can walk in there and every single one of these guys knows each other by their first names, from me on down, even though I am the LPO. It’s all about camaraderie, because you’ve got to think ... you’ve got to be able to trust that guy that’s standing behind you when you run in there, because if you can’t trust him, no good.”

Considering their main purpose is to run into the proverbial lion’s den and pull a dazed and confused pilot out, why would anyone want to be part of crash and smash?

“This is pretty much the closest to real firefighting you can get,” said Vaughn. “Downstairs, they have their firefighting damage controlmen, but they don’t actually get to run inside burning aircraft or use big forklifts and big crash cranes. We get all the big toys.”

Crash and Salvage is comprised solely of Aviation Boatswain’s Mate Handlers, but don’t get the idea that all ABHs immediately put on red shirts when they arrive onboard.

“Normally in this job, it’s not

automatic. As soon as you come into this rate you’re going to put on a blue shirt and you’re going to work over there chocking and chaining,” said Vaughn. “Then, once you do your time and you work up through the quals, you get the opportunity to be selected to come over here. Cause the guys that work in this office, that are part of this team over here, are just ... top of the line.”

A hot-shot ABHAR that arrives on the flight deck has no chance of donning the red shirt in his first week, or his fifteenth week for that matter.

“If you’re good, you could, from the moment you check onboard, get up through your blue shirt quals and be ready within six months probably,” said Vaughn. “And if we take you over here, then it’s going to take you, probably, another year after that to get proficient at this job.”

They take care in choosing the best candidates for the job, because when something goes wrong, they are the folks who have to make it right, “with the quickness.”



Photo by MC2 Michael Russell



Photo by ASAN Tyler Flott



Photo by MC3 Foster Bamford

## 6 Dental Department Brightens Sailors Smiles

By MC2 Eduardo Proaño

The dental department on board the amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) reported that Sailors' dental health has improved since the ship departed its homeport of San Diego.

Sailors' dental health readiness increased by 3 percent due to the dental department's continued efforts to care for and educate Sailors about their teeth.

"We have 377 patients who don't have any dental needs. We have also 507 more with no urgent need for cleaning or filling," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Maria Pallares.

She also said that there is one case with the potential of developing a complicated (Class 3) and four more that are overdue for dental checkup (Class 4).

"This puts us at 99.44 percent ready," Pallares said.

Practicing proper dental hygiene is encouraged throughout the ship to avoid critical problems which would jeopardize the crew's health and the ship's mission.

Pallares recommended that Sailors brush and floss regularly and visit the dentist at least once a year in order to prevent cavities or other related diseases, such as gingivitis.

"The mouth is never paid enough attention, until you start having problems with a tooth. That's when you are forced to see a dentist," Pallares said. "Prevention is the key. Brushing and flossing properly and visiting the dentist are recommended for a healthy smile."

Ship's Serviceman Seaman Anil Jnawali understands the importance of taking care of his teeth. For that reason, he recently visited the dentist for a cleaning on board Peleliu.

"I saw the dentist for a normal clean up," Jnawali said. "Everything was done with professionalism. Best of all, it didn't hurt much. Afterward the dentist recommended for me to continue brushing at least twice a day and to stay away from sweets."

June 13, 2010



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# “Peleliu Gets Familiar With HAZMAT”

By MCSA Destiny Cheek

“WARNING: FLAMMABLE LIQUID. NO SMOKING. NO OPEN FLAME.”

Supply Department’s S-8 Division, known to the ship’s crew as “Hazmat,” stocks and supplies the crew on board the amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) with hazardous materials needed for the Iron Nickel to function.

“Hazmat is the central management for hazardous materials,” said Chief Logistics Specialist (SW) Maria Delgado.

Logistics Specialists (LS) who work in Hazmat’s two locations: Hazmat Central and the Forward Paint Locker issue, receive, and stow hazardous supplies onboard for departments which require hazmat for maintenance.

Hazmat Central is located on the starboard side of the hangar bay and is equipped with oil for engines and aircraft, grease, hydraulic fluid, adhesive and other materials. Forward Paint Locker stores paint and aerosols but is not limited to these items.

The staff for the central locker are mostly TAD (temporary assigned duty) to that space.

Hazmat central is manned by six TAD personnel who are assigned to a six-month rotation and one LS.

“I help our fellow shipmates issue out hazmat to everyone doing maintenance,” said Aviation Boatswain’s Mate (Fuels) 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Miguel Gallegos.

“Our working hours are 0730 to 1800, for personnel to check out materials,” said Gallegos.

To check out hazmat, a Maintenance Requirement Card (MRC) is mandatory because it has the specific information on the kind of hazmat needed, along with procedures, and safety requirements for the job.

Next, a system called Hicswin is used to inventory and identify what materials are available for use. A receipt is issued for proof the materials were checked out.

Some of the ‘preferred’ customers who check out hazmat are: Damage Control, Air Department, Engineering Department, Combat Systems, and Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Department.

On board, Hazmat has various storage spaces. “Chrimp”, located



in the Lower V, which is a platform below the well deck, and the aviation storage room.

Unsafe waste, including unused oils and hydraulic fuel, are stored in the “Chrimp” until Peleliu conducts an unrep or offload to dispose of the waste off the ship legally and safely.

“Dumping hazardous waste over the side of the ship is no longer allowed,” said Delgado. “It’s unsafe and can cause the ship to be fined.”

Delgado said the shop is not manned 24-hours a day, but they make sure they are always available for customers.

Being TAD allows Sailors and Marines to learn different rates and share their experiences with each other.

I enjoy the job because Marines don’t have anything going on onboard, so the time here allows the day to go by faster,” said Lance

Cpl. Richard Trujillo, assigned to Hazmat.

To check out hazmat materials visit 1-101-3-Q or call extension 5270.





**USS Peleliu sails past  
the Island of Peleliu  
June 13, 2010**