

PELELIU NEWS



JUNE 23, 2010



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CORPSMAN BIRTHDAY, PAGE 4

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!

As I reported in my last newsletter, the crew and I had the privilege of sailing past the Island of Peleliu in the Palau Island chain last week. It was a tremendous experience, one few of us will ever forget. From there, we headed west into the Celebes Sea for several days. The Celebes Sea is famous for deep sea diving, exotic sea life, and the cruise ships that ply the waters. All I saw day and night for four days, however, was a multitude of fishing boats that kept popping up unexpectedly in our track. It made for some very interesting days and longer nights as we attempted to conduct necessary flight operations

while dodging boats, buoys, and debris.

Several days ago, we entered the Makassar Strait and began heading south with the island of Borneo on our right and the island of Celebes on our left. It was in this strait in January of 1942 that four U.S. destroyers surprised and destroyed a large Japanese invasion convoy. At the time, Japan had forward bases in Borneo and Celebes and the allies were attempting to thwart their desire to occupy Java. Less than a month later, the Battle of Java Sea occurred. A large task force comprised of American, British, Dutch, and Australian warships engaged the Japanese in the Java Sea. A bitter battle raged for eight hours and when the smoke cleared, 10 allied warships were sunk and 2,173 Sailors lost. It was a disastrous naval defeat for the allies at the hands of the Imperial Japanese Navy. Japan's invasion force went on to invade and occupy the island of Java the following day while allied forces retreated to the Australian mainland.

We later sailed the Java Sea in the immediate vicinity of that battle. It

is hard to describe the feeling one has as you look out and see such beautiful islands in the distance, but realize the remains of such destruction lie just below you on the ocean floor.

On the afternoon Saturday, the entire crew had a special treat when we passed a very small island called Batu Tara. The island consists of nothing but a steep volcano that happened to be erupting steam and gas into the air as we sailed past. It was an impressive and majestic sight!

We arrived Saturday evening in the vicinity of Timor-Leste and anchored the ship off the Capital of Dili early in the morning. We have numerous community relations events planned as well as goodwill engagements with this island nation over the next week. I will be sure to describe them in greater detail in next week's newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support of our deployment. The crew really enjoyed the mail and care packages we received following our visit to Guam. Be safe and have a great week!



Captain Schnell meets the President of Timor Leste, Jose Ramos-Horta,



BMSN Williams, Peleliu's Sailor of the Week enjoys lunch with the Captain. Photo by MC3 Dominquez

FROM THE DECK PLATES



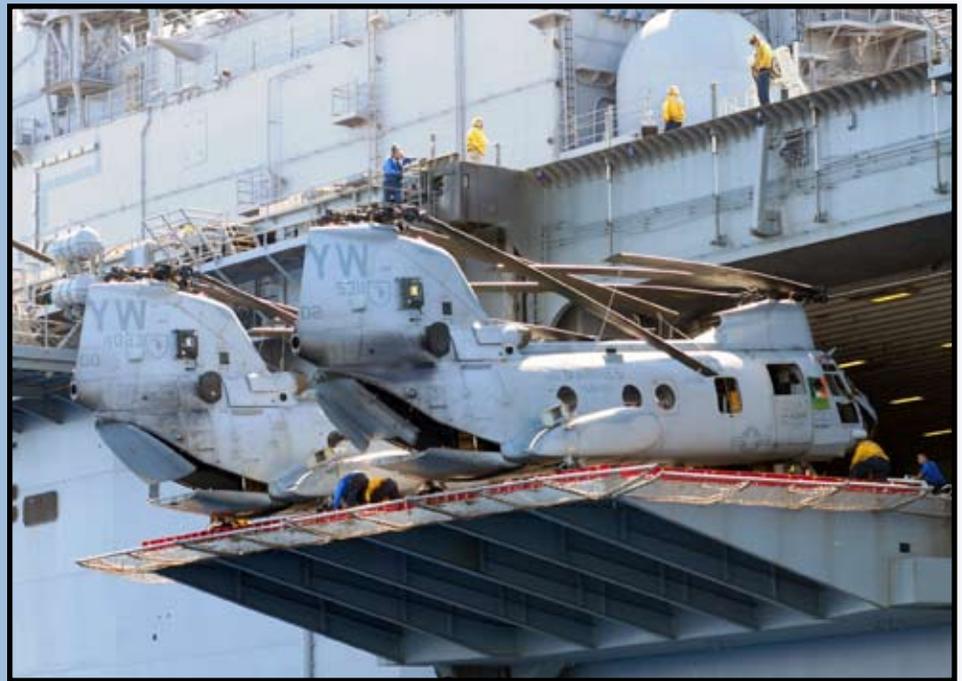
By CMDCM
(SW/AW/SS)
Brent Williams

Good Day Shipmates!

I would like to start out by wishing another 'Happy Birthday' to our Corpsman. Thursday, they celebrated their 112th birthday, and it was a very impressive program; Hoo-yah Docs!!! And congratulations on a proud heritage.

As I have mentioned in the past, the work ups are over, the preparations are made, and now we are here doing the duty. As we get farther into the deployment, I have noticed that it is becoming increasingly more difficult to maintain the routine that we so desperately need. Of course, that is our nature to react to the next event.

During the next several days, PELELIU is going to the center of attention and will be receiving many guests and visitors. It is up to each of us to ensure that we are taking the proper actions to keep our spaces as squared



Members of Peleliu's Air Department secure two Marine CH-46 Sea Knight helicopters to the port-side elevator. Photo by MC2(EXW) Dunlap

away as possible. Cleanliness is paramount as is the material condition of all our spaces. Daily, we should be out and about ensuring that we are ready for anyone to come aboard and recognize that PELELIU is the most ship shape, best prepared, and sharpest ship afloat.

PELELIU carries a proud history and is always sighted as the cleanest ship on the waterfront. Now, we are taking her across the world to further impress and

maintain that reputation. It takes all of us, everyday, to keep that going. We need to take a round turn and if you see something then act on it. Once you allow it, then you have just set a standard, be it food off the mess decks, uniform infractions, trash in the angle irons or a broken door closure.

As always, the success of this command is the responsibility of all of her Sailors and Marines. Take pride in everything you do, the results will be noticed!!

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Medical Celebrates 112th Birthday

By MC2(EXW) Andrew Dunlap
Staff Writer

Navy corpsman on board the amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu(LHA 5) celebrated the Navy Hospital Corps' 112th birthday June 17.

Serving in a vast array of foreign, domestic and shipboard duty stations, as well as Marine Corps units, the Hospital Corpsman rating is the largest in the Navy.

"Service in the Hospital Corps has been the meaning of my life. I cannot think of a more rewarding or satisfying station in life, or for a more honorable and revered title of Hospital Corpsman," said Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman(SW/AW) Jeffrey Dell, Medical Department's Leading Chief Petty Officer during his address as the ceremony's key note speaker.

In addition to Dell's speech, the ceremony opened with a prayer by Cmdr. Gary Clore, Peleliu's Command Chaplain, a reading about the significance of POW/MIA, a poem named "I am the One Called Doc," and a history of the Hospital Corpsman.

In 1916, the Hospital Corps established a new rate structure. A second junior rate was formed known as Hospital Apprentice Second Class(HA2c) and Hospital Apprentice First Class(HA1c). Petty Officers were known as Pharmacist's Mate(PhM), which mirrored the other Navy ratings. A Third Class was known as (PhM3c), Second Class (PhM2c), First Class (PhM1c) and Chief Pharmacist's Mate (CPhM).

In 1947, a merger combined the two rates to the current Hospital Corpsman(HM) or "Doc," an



HM3(FMF) James Ewen leads fellow Corpsman in the "Hospital Corpsman Pledge" during the 112th Birthday Celebration of the Hospital Corpsman. Photo by MC2 Dunlap

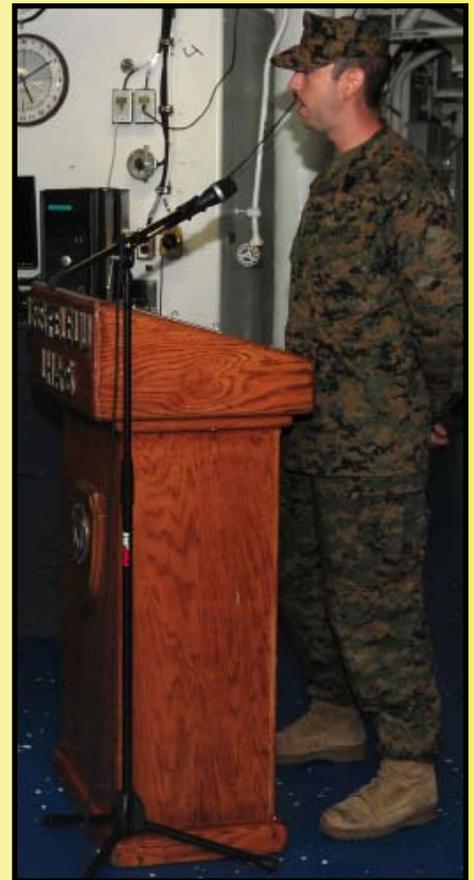
informal way to address a Corpsman but a sign of respect, nonetheless.

"'Doc' is the most rewarding and fulfilling title to earn," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class(SW/AW/FMF) Joven Pimentel. "The respect and trust you earn after training and serving beside Sailors and Marines is the greatest feeling in the world!"

That feeling comes with a price as the ceremony took a moment to honor the names of their fallen brethren from Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The ceremony concluded with words from Capt. David Schnell, Peleliu's commanding officer, the Hospital Corpsman Pledge, an oath recited by every Corpsman, and a cake cutting ceremony by the oldest and youngest corpsman on board

The Hospital Corps has 22 decorated Medal of Honor recipients and has been apart of every American conflict since the Spanish-American War.



HN Mark Malysa reads the poem "I'm the one called "Doc" during the 112th Birthday Celebration of the Hospital Corps June 17th. Photo by MC2 Dunlap

Peleliu ARG/15th MEU Arrive for Exercise Crocodilo



Captain Schnell gives a tour of Peleliu to Major General Taur Matan Ruak, Commander of Timor Leste Defense Force, and other distinguished visitors. Photo by MC3 Bamford

By Commander Amphibious Squadron Three Public Affairs

DILI, Timor-Leste – The U.S. Navy amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) and the amphibious dock landing ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) will be in the Savu Sea and visible from the coast June 19, in preparation for the military exercise hosted by the Falintil-Forças Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL).

Soldiers from the F-FDTL and the International Stability Force (ISF) will train with U.S. Marines from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) throughout Timor-Leste during the week-long Crocodilo Exercise.

The Marines and Sailors of the 15th MEU and Peleliu Amphibious Ready Group (PEL ARG) are looking forward to the training

opportunities in Timor Leste. In conjunction with our partners in this region, we will be able to conduct a broad range of realistic training in a challenging tropical environment,” said Col. Roy Osborn, commanding officer of the 15th MEU. “We are honored to be here and are excited about the potential for future operations.”

In addition to military training, medical and dental professionals from the PEL ARG and 15th MEU will be coming ashore to assist local healthcare workers in providing care to local residents.

“The healing arts are a way to demonstrate the United States’ commitment to the support and development of the nation of Timor-Leste,” said Cmdr. George Linville, amphibious task force surgeon. “The PEL ARG and 15th MEU’s

efforts to bring first class medical and dental care to the citizens of Timor-Leste represent the finest tradition of the Navy and Marine Corps health care team.”

U.S. Marines and Sailors will be visiting Dili and partnering with local government in various service activities. Sailors will be visiting the Santa Dominican Orphanage and the Santa Bakhita Orphanage in Dili, as well as providing school supplies to a local school.

One activity that is open to the public is a soccer game between U.S. Forces and the F-FDTL at Dili Stadium. This event is scheduled for Tuesday, June 22, at 1630 hours.

“Participating in these multilateral exercises is a terrific opportunity for us to make a positive contribution to Timorese society, even as we develop a closer military relationship with the F-FDTL,” said Jonathan Henick, the Charge d’Affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Timor-Leste. The exercises and community events are coordinated through the U.S. Office of Defense Cooperation at the U.S. Embassy.

This is the second time U.S. Navy and Marine Corps have conducted multilateral training. Last year, U.S. Marines and Sailors from the USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) participated in similar exercises.

The PEL ARG’s third ship, amphibious transport dock ship USS Dubuque (LPD 8) is participating in separate military exercises in neighboring Indonesia.

Timorese Get a Grasp on Port Security Training

By MC2(EXW) Andrew Dunlap
Staff Writer

DILI, TIMOR LESTE – Sailors from the amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) and dock landing ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) trained port security operations to the Timorese Maritime Police in the Port of Dili June 22.

The two-day course focused on port patrolling, ship escorting, communicating with inbound ships and maneuvering non-compliant vessels away from the pier.

“The training is good for our country’s future,” said Nelson Sousa Soares, a member of the Dili Maritime Police. “As our country grows, the port will become busier, we must have the ability to take control and execute the proper procedures.”

As the largest port in Timor Leste, and located close to Dili’s business and government center, it provides the interface between sea and road transport.

An island nation, the 150,000 Timorese rely on the Port of Dili for more than 200,000 tons of imported goods a year.

Port of Dili has been controlled by the Timorese since 1999, when the United Nations ordered Indonesia to relinquish control of the territory.

A territory previously known as East Timor, Timor Leste became the first sovereign state of the 21st century on May 20, 2002.

Today was the first time the Dili Maritime Police were trained by U.S. Navy Sailors,



BM2(SW) Dustin Bailey of USS Pearl Harbor instructs a member of the Dili Maritime Police to maneuver toward an approaching vessel during a security training exercise in the Port of Dili. Photo by MC2(EXW) Dunlap

however they have partnered with the U.S Coast Guard in the past, concentrating mainly on water navigation and GPS technology.

With the Peleliu and Pearl Harbor anchored outside the Port of Dili, the water-based training will not only improve the procedures used for the benefit of the Timorese, but also the partnership between a host nation and any visiting naval vessel.

“We want to familiarize them with our security measures whether its maritime security or port security,” said Senior Chief Boatswain Mate(SW/EXW/AW) Daniel Avila, the port maritime security operations lead instructor. “This will help them aid in the security of ships, not only Navy, but for local imports and cargo ships.”



Peleliu’s BM2(SW/AW) Herbert Jackson observes while Nelson Sousa Soares, a Dili Maritime Policeman, tells a vessel to stay away from USS Pearl Harbor during a maritime security training in the Port of Dili. Photo by MC2(EXW) Dunlap

Blue-Green Team Deliver Smiles in Santa Bakhita

By MC2 Edwardo Proano

Staff Writer

DILI, TIMOR LESTE – Sailors and Marines from the Peleliu Amphibious Ready Group (PEL ARG) participated in a community relations project at the Santa Bakhita Orphanage outside Dili June 20.

The ship's chaplain, Cmdr. Gary Clore, led the mission, which provided school supplies, candy, music and games to the orphans.

The ship's mascot, The Peleliu Gator, came along with the team and pantomimed a local fairy tale in front of the kids, as the chaplain read the story. The tale was about a crocodile that became the mountains and hills of Timor Leste.

Throughout the day, Sailors and Marines interacted with children by playing, singing, dancing and giving out candy.

"It's important to contribute to the upkeep of the orphanage because we can make a positive impact in the lives of these kids," said Clore. "We bring them hope by showing that we care."

Clore said community relations projects such as this contribute to strengthen the relationship between the U.S. and Timor Leste on a grass roots level.



CTR2 Ashley Robles(middle) and Captain Dale Fuller(right), Peleliu Amphibious Ready Commander, distribute candy to children at the orphanage. Photo by MC2 Proano

"The goal of this project is to do some cultural interactions with these children," said Clore. "It's also to let them know that we represent the U.S. Navy and we think they are special."

After years as the 27th province of Indonesia, Timor Leste, previously known as East Timor, became the first sovereign state of the 21st century May 20, 2002.

Since their independence, the PEL ARG is one of many U.S. military groups which have helped the developing nation and its people.

"It feels good to reach out to these kids," said Ensign Timothy Tacl, Peleliu's First Division Officer. "I played soccer with them, and it means a lot to see how happy they were. It was awesome."



Sailors and Marines from the amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu play soccer with children from Santa Bakhita Orphanage in Timor Leste. Photo by MC2 Proano

Timor-Leste: THE CROCODILE STORY

Years ago a small crocodile lived in a swamp in a far away place. He dreamed of becoming a big crocodile but as food was scarce, he became weak and grew sadder and sadder.

He left for the open sea, to find food and realise his dream, but the day became increasingly hot and he was still far from the seashore. The little crocodile - rapidly drying out and now in desperation - lay down to die.

A small boy took pity on the stranded crocodile and carried him to the sea. The crocodile, instantly revived, was grateful. "Little boy", he said, "you have saved my life. If I can ever help you in any way, please call me. I will be at your command..."

A few years later, the boy called the crocodile, who was now big and strong. "Brother Crocodile", he said, "I too have a dream. I want to see the world".

"Climb on my back," said the crocodile, "and tell me, which way do you want to go?"

"Follow the sun", said the boy.

The crocodile set off for the east, and they traveled the oceans for years, until one day the crocodile said to the boy, "Brother, we have been travelling for a long time. But now the time has come for me to die. In memory of your kindness, I will turn myself into a beautiful island, where you and your children can live until the sun sinks in the sea."

As the crocodile died, he grew and grew, and his ridged back became the mountains and his scales the hills of Timor.

Now when the people of East Timor swim in the ocean, they enter the water saying "Don't eat me crocodile, I am your relative".

