

AROUND THE ISLAND

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MKI CHANGES COMMAND

Capt. Pringle Relieves Capt. Landers as Commanding Officer (Page 3)

THEN, NOW AND BEYOND

How SH3 Plamarrero Reshaped His Life (Page 4)

KEEPING IN TOUCH

LHD 8 Completes 100th VTC of Deployment (Page 8)

SAFETY NOTE

Makin' it Right

By Lt. Harriet Johnson, Makin Island Safety Officer

As a ship and crew, we are now sailing in new waters, both figuratively and literally. We have just experienced a "changing of the guard" with our new CO, Capt. Pringle, and the ship has changed physical bodies of water, into a part of the world that is known for its uncertainty.

So how does this alter our daily lives?

Hopefully these two changes rejuvenate our drive to stay on our "A-game."

How do we keep on top of it all?

Training and vigilance.

We have spent the last few months building a reputation of teamwork, excellence and professionalism. These good habits are what will continue to keep us strong and safe as the possibility of a real-world threat increases.

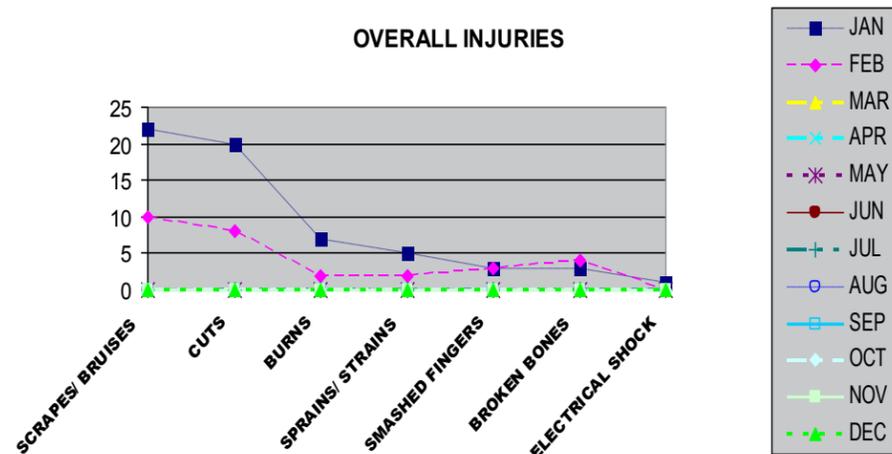
In our walks about the ship, the Safety Department has noticed an overall increase in the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in the last month.

Since the Safety Pause, four departments have also executed "Back to Basics" training days, and although they do not focus entirely on safety, they do highlight two very important elements.

First, training of any sort prevents the big accidents from taking us out of the fight by refreshing our knowledge of the fundamentals.

Second, by-the-book and precision training increases our awareness of our surroundings, which stops the little bumps and cuts from decreasing our readiness. From the Safety Department's perspective, our efforts as a crew to stay sharp are having an effect.

Reported injuries are down from January's total of 61, to February's total of 36 injuries. Keep training, keep wearing your PPE, and when you see something off, keep on Makin' It Right.



AROUND THE ISLAND

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EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

CAPT ALVIN HOLSEY

COMMAND MASTER CHIEF:

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ON THE COVER:

Capt. Cedric E. Pringle arrives at the change of command ceremony prior to fleetting up from executive officer to assume command of USS Makin Island. [Photo by MCC(SW/AW) John Lill]



Capt. Cedric E. Pringle speaks at the Makin Island Change of Command Ceremony, Feb. 29. Pringle relieved Capt. Jim Landers as Makin Island's commanding officer. [Photo by MCC(SW/AW) John Lill]

Makin Island Changes Command at Sea

By MCCS (SW/AW) Donnie Ryan, Around the Island Staff

With the traditional reading of official orders, exchange of salutes and the words "I relieve you, Sir," command of the Navy's newest amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island (LHD 8) was passed from one naval officer to another during a ceremony held at sea in the Arabian Gulf, Feb. 29.

During the ceremony, Capt. Cedric E. Pringle relieved Capt. Jim Landers as the commanding officer of Makin Island. Pringle becomes the ship's third commanding officer since commissioning in 2009 and the first African-American to hold the position.

For the past 18 months, Pringle had served as the ship's executive officer and played a major role in ensuring the ship was ready for deployment before fleetting up to fill the role of commanding officer.

"This is truly a dream come true," said Pringle after assuming command of Makin Island. "This dream started about 25 years ago on the deck of a U.S. aircraft carrier as a young boot-camp ensign trying to get my SWO [Surface Warfare Officer] quals."

Pringle spoke about the variety of jobs he has held as a naval officer, including almost 20 years of working with Marines; which has helped him prepare to command an

amphibious assault ship.

"When I left as the commanding officer of USS Whidbey Island, I only prayed for one job and that job was commanding officer of USS Makin Island," said Pringle.

During his speech, Pringle stressed that while command of Makin Island did change the continuity of leadership and ability to conduct successful operations in the dynamic 5th Fleet area of responsibility (AOR) did not.

"Our operational leadership has trusted us that we are in a position where we can transition leadership and still continue our current mission," said Pringle.

Col. Michael Hudson, commanding officer of the embarked 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), presented Landers with his end of tour award during the ceremony.

"I am humbled to be a MAGTF [Marine Air-Ground Task Force] commander, but I am even more humbled to have served on this ship under your leadership," Hudson told Landers during the ceremony.

Then, Now and Beyond: How One Sailor Reshaped His Life

Story by MC1(SW) David McKee, Around the Island Staff

Thirty-two pounds and three months ago, Ship's Serviceman 3rd Class Jose Plamarrero had a weight problem and it was getting in the way of his personal and his professional life.

He was disappointed with how he looked in his uniform. He was tired of being out of breath when he climbed ladders on the ship. After being put on the ship's fitness enhancement program (FEP) following the PFA last November, he was ready for a change.

"I felt like I am letting my family down if I fail the fitness assessment," said Plamarrero. "And I don't want to lose my career and my ability to take care of my family."

The 22-year-old husband and father of two boys decided to adopt a new lifestyle more conducive to his Navy career and to supporting his family. To show her support his wife, Vilmarie, joined him on his quest to shed pounds.

Because of Plamarrero's upcoming deployment, it looked like their plans to lose weight together wasn't going to happen. The couple was determined not to let deployment stop them from pursuing their goal, so they faced the challenge together; they made a pledge to each other to make their separation worthwhile.

"My wife and I promised each other we would lose 30 pounds by the end of deployment," said Plamarrero. "I started the day we left on deployment and my last weigh-in was last Friday."

Plamarrero was not active when he was young and didn't participate in sports. Consequently he gained weight in his twenties. By the time he joined the Navy, he was required to submit to a body composition assessment for every semi-annual personal fitness assessment.

At the last PFA he learned he was teetering on the border of failing to meet Navy fitness standards because he was 30 pounds overweight.

As a result, he had to exercise with the fitness enhancement program (FEP) until he was within standards for two months. This meant he had to exercise five days a week in the morning and attend weekly Ship Shape nutrition classes.

To make matters worse, the PFA results were not the end of his weight assessment. He had to adjust his weight-loss goal.

"I was planning on losing 30 pounds. Then I weighed myself at home and I realized I had 37 pounds to lose," said Plamarrero. "I knew I had to get to work."



Nov. 14, 2011

When the crew and Marines on Makin Island departed San Diego, Plamarrero got down to the business of losing the fat. At first, he was slow and out of breath, but FEP taught him how to exercise and work hard.

The FEP regimen included getting out of his rack at 0530 to join the ship's FEP group. With the group he ran, performed calisthenics, and stretched. Soon he got better at exercising, and after a few weeks, he added another workout to his routine.

He started going to the gym on his own time. In the gym he added weight lifting and an additional thirty minutes of cardio to his routine.

Nutrition, along with exercise, is needed to successfully lose weight and keep it off. With the help of the Ship Shape nutrition program on the ship,



Feb. 29, 2012

Plamarrero learned how to eat to build a healthy body instead of haphazardly eating and gaining extra pounds. He stopped eating indiscriminately and began choosing the right foods from the galley, the ship's store and the vending machines.

Since being on deployment, Plamarrero has changed his lifestyle and overcame the behaviors that got in the way of his fitness success.

Before he drank too many carbonated drinks, ate too many sweets and snacks, and avoided the gym because he couldn't find time. Now he drinks water and eats properly and exercises regularly.

In fact, he did not stop with eating and exercising, he also gave up smoking.

The hard work and dedication paid off, because he passed his last weigh-in, and met the requirement of

two months within body standards. He is no longer required to attend FEP and has only four pounds left to reach his personal weight-loss goal.

Throughout the three months, he kept his wife informed of the weight he was losing. When she hears that he is doing better and she sees the photos, she is proud and happy he is meeting his goal. His success encourages her to continue going to the gym and staying on track.

"I am on my way to meeting my goal," said his wife who spends up to two hours per session in the gym. She added, "I feel so proud of him and I am happy he is meeting his goal."

After he loses 37 pounds, his next goal is to keep the weight off. After deployment, he plans to go to a YMCA near his house and continue his exercise program, and he plans to continue eating right.

The benefits of losing weight include having more endurance, looking healthier and more professional in his uniform, and the positive reactions from people who have not seen him for a while.

"It is amazing that many of the Marines who haven't seen me for a while don't even recognize me," said Plamarrero.

Of course the most important reaction is his wife's.

"I am so excited to see him and his new body shape," said Vilmarie. "I know this will help him in his career and our relationship, because it's one thing less to worry about."

Ironically, another downside to his success is he has to buy new civilian clothes and uniforms, but he can live with that because he will have the most important thing in life.

"There is not another feeling like you have your life and career back," said Plamarrero.

Plamarrero is not alone on the ship. Many people are losing weight or trying to lose weight. Plamarrero tries to motivate others to get to the gym, eat better and make other positive changes in their lives by his actions, but he also has a few words for those who are struggling.

"If you want to accomplish losing weight, set a goal, stay focused, and eliminate distractions," said Plamarrero. "So far I have lost 32 pounds and my wife has lost 10 pounds. We are both on our way to success."

Anyone is welcome to participate in FEP, in the morning at 0545 and 2100 in the hangar bay. Contact Lt. Whitmeyer for information on Ship Shape.



[Photo by MCSN Kory Alsberry]



[Photo by MC2(SW) Alan Gragg]



[Photo by MCC(SW/AW) John Lill]



[Photo by MCC(SW/AW) John Lill]

USS Makin Island Change of Command

Feb. 29, 2012

Capt. Cedric E. Pringle relieved Capt. Jim Landers as Makin Island's commanding officer, during the Change of Command Ceremony aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island (LHD 8). Sailors and Marines stood in ranks as guest speaker Cmdr. Dwight Horn, Makin Island's Command Chaplain, spoke about Landers' accomplishments.



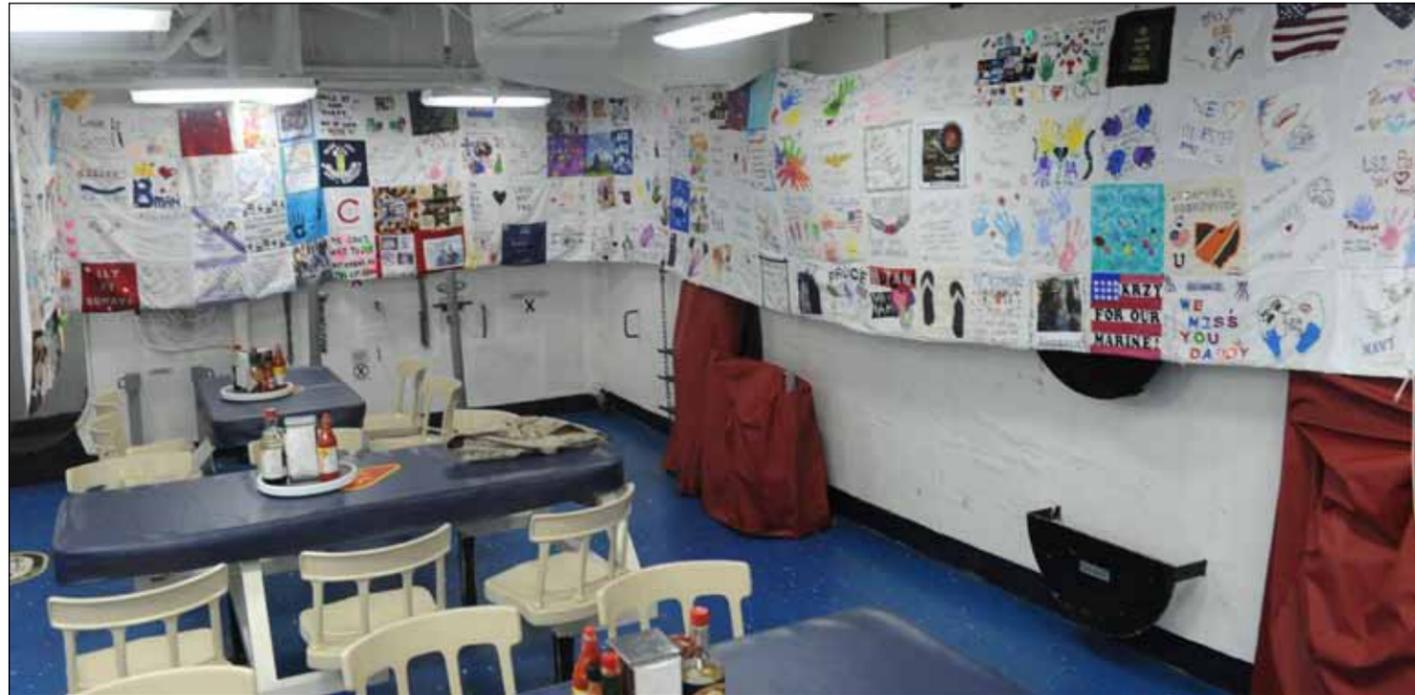
[Photo by MC2(SW) Alan Gragg]



[Photo by MCSA Ethan Tracey]



[Photo by MCSN Kory Alsberry]



The FRG quilt hangs in the mess decks. It has 144 total squares, 36 square rows across and 4 square rows tall. [Photo by MCSA Ethan Tracey]

MKI FRG Sends Quilt to Show Support for Sailors, Marines

By MCSA Ethan Tracey, Around The Island Staff

A stroll through the mess decks is something we do everyday but have you noticed anything different lately?

Take a closer look.

The Family Readiness Group (FRG) had an idea several months ago to have families and friends

send in personally decorated square sheets, to make a huge quilt, said Fire Controlman 1st Class Levi Miller.

"The quilt is 36 square rows across and 4 square rows tall, for a total of 144 squares," said Miller. "Families from all over the nation sent in their pieces to Michelle Mance, who is the Vice President of the FRG and who single-handedly sewed all of the pieces together, which made the finished product."

FC1 Miller's wife Marci, The FRG's president said "The story on the banner is pretty simple. Our FRG is so diverse; we have spouses, parents, grandparents, girlfriends, brothers and sisters spread out across our country. Each one of our families is so different, but despite our differences the one thing that we all have in common, and what creates our bond, is we all love our

Sailors and Marines."

She continued, "We brought each one of these squares together and bound them to the other squares which represents the FRG's main goal and purpose of coming together despite our differences; creating friendships, showing our love and support for our Sailor or Marine and creating something quite impressive to get us through and boost morale."

To the Sailors and Marines on board, Miller said she hoped the quilt reminds them of the support from the homefront.

"We hope that when you look at the banner you not only see all the time and hard work, but you also see the love and support that follow you wherever you go, and friendships that help carry us through this deployment until you all return," said Miller.

Makin Island Reaches VTC Milestone

By MCSA Ethan Tracey, Around The Island Staff

Makin Island held its 100th Video teleconference (VTC) of deployment, Feb. 23 in an effort to give Sailors and Marines an opportunity to communicate with their families.

The 100th user of the program was Information Systems Technician 3rd Class Marcus Anderson.

Although he was the centennial caller, no confetti fell nor did he win any gifts—just the special prize of a 15-minute conversation with a loved-one.

"I think that this is a great way to connect with family," said Anderson. "I was so happy to be able to see my wife."

This was Anderson's first VTC and he said he is glad Makin Island has this available for the crew to use to help stay in touch with loved ones.

The Family VTC program has been running aboard Makin Island since Dec. 2, 2011.

"The program has benefitted the crew by allowing them

to see, not just hear, their loved ones," said Information Systems Technician 1st Class Robert Ortloff, the Family VTC Coordinator.

Ortloff continued, "We have been able to get all sorts family and friends to attend: moms, dads, wives, husbands, girlfriends and boyfriends, but most importantly newborns. You can not hear a newborn on the phone, so to see them is so important."

Ortloff also said that all a participant has to do is find an available date their family can attend the VTC at the Fleet and Family Support Center in San Diego and sign up.

To sign up, send an email to Ortloff (ortloffra@lhd8.navy.mil).

"We work very closely with the Family Readiness Group and Ombudsman to make sure your family knows where to go and when to be there," said Ortloff

For more information about Family VTC contact IT1 Robert Ortloff at x5541 or x6549.

COMMAND (cont.) from Page 3

Hudson spoke about how Landers' strong leadership helped to bring the Makin Island blue and green team together during pre-deployment workups and how that strong leadership continued on the current deployment.

"It was an honor to serve with you on USS Makin Island on her first deployment," Hudson added.

Landers's next assignment will be as Operations Officer (N3) on the staff of Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

His numerous accomplishments aboard Makin Island include taking the ship through sea trials, passing special sea trials by the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV), completing the first Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX) and leading the ship on its maiden deployment to U.S. 7th and 5th Fleet AORs.

Landers had also previously served 11 months as the ship's executive officer before assuming command Aug. 27, 2010.

"Now looking back over the time from then to now, I can state with absolute certainty that the officers, chiefs and Sailors of 'Team Raider' delivered; exceeding my expectations of excellence," said Landers. "You rose to every challenge, and today you stand victorious on the ash head of devoured insurmountable challenges."

Landers thanked his family, department heads, wardroom, chief petty officers mess and the Sailors and Marines aboard Makin Island who helped make his command tour a success.

"Shipmates, thank you for doing what you do every day for this ship, our Navy and our nation," said Landers. "May God continue to bless this ship and all who sail in her."

Join CSADD Today!

Are you 18-25?

E-5 or Below?

Each month, CSADD invites Sailors and Marines to gather and discuss a topic that can enhance decision making and improve quality of life. This month's topic reveals how the Fleet and Family Support Center is a tool you can use to plan your family around your Navy career. Contact AO1 Moreno at x5451 for more information.

The Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions

VITA
Volunteer
Income
Tax
Assistance

VITA has new hours in Raider Room.com:
Mon 0900-1200
Wed 1400-1700
Fri 2000-2300

W-2 forms are now available on MyPay
The filing deadline for tax day 2012 is April 17
Contact LSC Mejia at x2340 for more information.

OPINION ISLAND

What activities are you involved in that have positively impacted your life?



"Joining the Marine Corps. It taught me discipline, hardships, and how to appreciate the good things in life."

-SGT Michael Moltagen

"Going to the gym twice-a-day and living a healthier lifestyle."

-ATAN Kaylee Kantor



"Getting into Moto Cross really changed my life. When my friend died of a bike crash, I celebrated his life through riding."

-LCPL Casey Farrell

"Getting my surface warfare pin. It was a big accomplishment for me."

-HTFN Nicholas Humbert



Safety Pro of the Week:



EN3 Joshua Creighton
Engineering / A-Division

On Feb. 23, 2012, Engineman 3rd Class Joshua Creighton was on watch and had to restart the NR3 Air Condition Unit in the auxiliary machinery room due to a load shed. As he left to notify CCS of his actions, he heard a loud "BOOM" and observed a 440V arc flash followed by a plume of black smoke. Thereafter, the NR3 A/C Unit automatically shut down. Realizing the magnitude of the occurrence, he immediately notified CCS of the sequence of events, where they promptly secured power to the equipment.

Later, he detected an odor originating from the NR3 Chilled Water Pump. Upon investigating, he found the pump and the surrounding lagging to be hot to the touch. After reporting to CCS, he was directed to secure the NR3 A/C Unit, again preventing damage to the equipment, and the associated dangers that would follow.

Petty Officer Creighton's expeditious actions, which ensured the removal of power, prevented what could have likely developed into two separate fires, damaging thousands of dollars in equipment and saving even more in repairs not to mention saving any associated danger to other spaces and personnel aboard. BZ!

MAKIN ISLAND'S UPCOMING EVENTS

SAT. 3 MAR

1600 Sales end for MWR tours

1900 ESWS Test (First Class Mess)

2000 Spelling Bee (Mess Decks)

SUN. 4 MAR

2000 Latin Dance Instruction (Upper Vehicle)

2000 ESWS Training (First Class Mess)

MON. 5 MAR

2000 ESWS Training (First Class Mess)

2000 BINGO (Mess Decks)

TUE. 6 MAR

2000 Trivia (Mess Decks)

WED. 7 MAR

THU. 8 MAR

FRI. 9 MAR

SAT. 10 MAR

IT TAKES ALL HANDS



Please consider giving at least \$10 per month

2012 Active Duty Fund Drive

This year's fund drive will be held from March 1st until April 30th.

We are Marines & Sailors caring for our own since 1904.



www.nmcrs.org

For more information, contact:

EMC Kumar x2940

LSC Mejia x2340

