

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF USS MAKIN ISLAND (LHD 8)

# AROUND THE ISLAND

OCTOBER 13, 2011

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4



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# CMC's CORNER

By CMDM(SW/AW) Steven Alt, Makin Island Command Master Chief



## Our Navy Heritage

### Bravo Zulu

"Bravo Zulu" - We hear it all the time. You might hear it after a successful inspection or from your LPO after you did an outstanding job in completing a task, or even as a command, we might get a "Bravo Zulu" from the admiral for kicking butt during an exercise. Most of us know that it means, "well done," but why do we use "Bravo Zulu" instead of just saying "great job," or "well done?"

I got to be part of using this term a lot in my younger days in the Navy. As a Signalman, we used to always send flaghoist coded signals to other ships using individual flags. You probably see the individual flags that ships fly now to indicate certain things, like the "Kilo" flag which means "Men working aloft." We had to be proficient in sending and receiving coded messages with multiple flags to other ships. After completing a successful exercise or drill, we would fly the signal "BZ" meaning "well done."

During World War II, the signal for "well done" was "TVG," or "Tare Victor George" found in a signal publication that was only used by the U.S. Navy and using the phonetic alphabet the U.S. had established at that time. During World War II, it was very difficult to communicate with our allied navies' ships because everyone had their own signal publication. So, in 1949, the publication ACP 175 was originated for all the countries that were a part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). At that time, "BZ" was known as "Baker Zebra," meaning "well done."

In 1956, the Navy adopted the phonetic alphabet that we use today so that the letters could be pronounced as clearly as possible in English by those who speak different languages. That is when "Baker Zebra" became "Bravo Zulu."

The next time you are doing that outstanding job and someone says "Bravo Zulu" you can think of your Navy heritage of how it came about in meaning "Well done,"

### Timekeeping

Before the advent of the chronometer, time at sea was measured by the trickle of sand through a half - hour glass. One of the ship's boys had the duty of watching the glass and turning it when the sand had run out. When he turned the glass, he struck the bell as a signal that he had performed this vital function. From this ringing of the bell as the glass was turned evolved the tradition of striking the bell once at the end of the first half hour of a four hour watch, twice after the first hour, etc., until eight bells marked the end of the four hour watch. The process was repeated for the succeeding watches. This age-old practice of sounding the bell on the hour and half hour has its place in the nuclear and missile-oriented United States Navy at the dawn of the Twenty-First Century, regulating daily routine, just as it did on our historic vessels under sail in the late Eighteenth Century.

## AROUND THE ISLAND

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF USS MAKIN ISLAND (LHD 8)

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### ON THE COVER:

USS Makin Island operates off the coast of Southern California during a certification exercise (CERTEX). After passing CERTEX, the Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) is now qualified for deployment. [Photo by MC2(SW) Justin L. Webb]



Air department personnel assigned to USS Peleliu (LHA 5) pose for a group photo on Makin Island's flight deck during CERTEX. The group was aboard to earn qualifications prior to Peleliu's sea trials. [Photo by MC1(SW) David McKee]

# Sailors From USS Peleliu's Air Department Train Aboard Makin Island During CERTEX

By MC1(SW) David McKee, Around The Island Staff

The amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island (LHD 8) hosted air department personnel from the amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5), who spent time earning flight deck qualifications, Sept. 29-Oct. 13.

Makin Island was underway for its certification exercise (CERTEX) and Peleliu is currently pier-side in San Diego undergoing its planned maintenance availability (PMA).

The two ships saw the opportunity for two officers and 10 enlisted air department personnel to get qualified prior to Peleliu's upcoming sea trials and future deployment.

Lt. Gregory Lembo, Makin Island's fuels officer, said cooperation between ships, when it comes to training, is a common practice throughout the Navy.

"This kind of training happens fairly regularly," said Lembo.

"Master chiefs up and down the sea wall know each other and make these arrangements as they are needed."

Lt. James Kotora, a division officer in Peleliu's air department, agreed that teamwork between commands is important and said he appreciated the opportunity to train onboard Makin Island again.

"The training was mutually

PELELIU, continued on Page 7

# CERTEX

## Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group Earns Official Deployment Certification

By MC2(SW) Stephen D. Doyle II, Around The Island Staff

The Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) officially qualified for its upcoming deployment by completing a certification exercise (CERTEX) Oct. 12 off the coast of Southern California.

CERTEX is the final phase in a three part pre-deployment

training series used to evaluate and prepare ARGs before deploying overseas. The exercises are designed to provide time for the Navy ARG elements to integrate with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).

"I think the ARG was very successful in the CERTEX, the third event of the basic training cycle that prepares us for deployment," said Capt. Humberto L. Quintanilla II, Commander, Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 5. "It's a strong team, both blue and green. Pear Harbor has joined us in the ARG and we are meeting all the missions that are being levied upon us."

The ARG was evaluated on many different evolutions that test their ability to operate in several mission critical areas, ranging from maritime boarding to amphibious land raids and civilian evacuation drills.

"We're in a high state of readiness," said Quintanilla. "I would offer that if something were to go wrong and we were needed tonight,

that we could set sail for wherever national command authority wanted us to go, and that we would be able to successfully complete any and all

**"We're in a high state of readiness. I would offer that if something were to go wrong and we were needed tonight, that we could set sail for wherever national command authority wanted us to go, and that we would be able to successfully complete any and all missions that were assigned to the Makin Island ARG."**

*-Capt. Humberto L. Quintanilla II, Commander, PHIBRON 5*

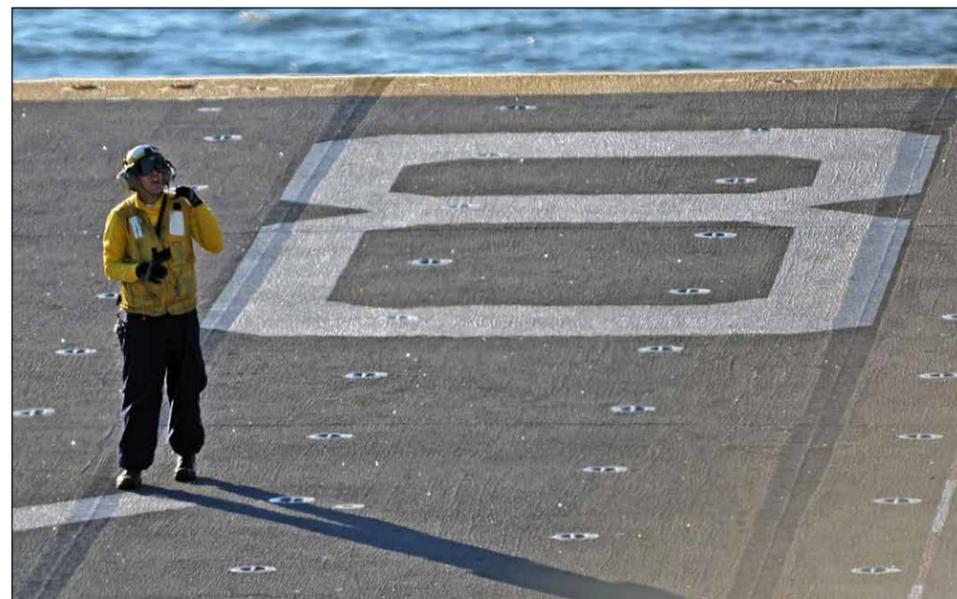
missions that were assigned to the Makin Island ARG."

With three major pre-deployment exercises completed, the ARG is now ready for its scheduled deployment later in the year.

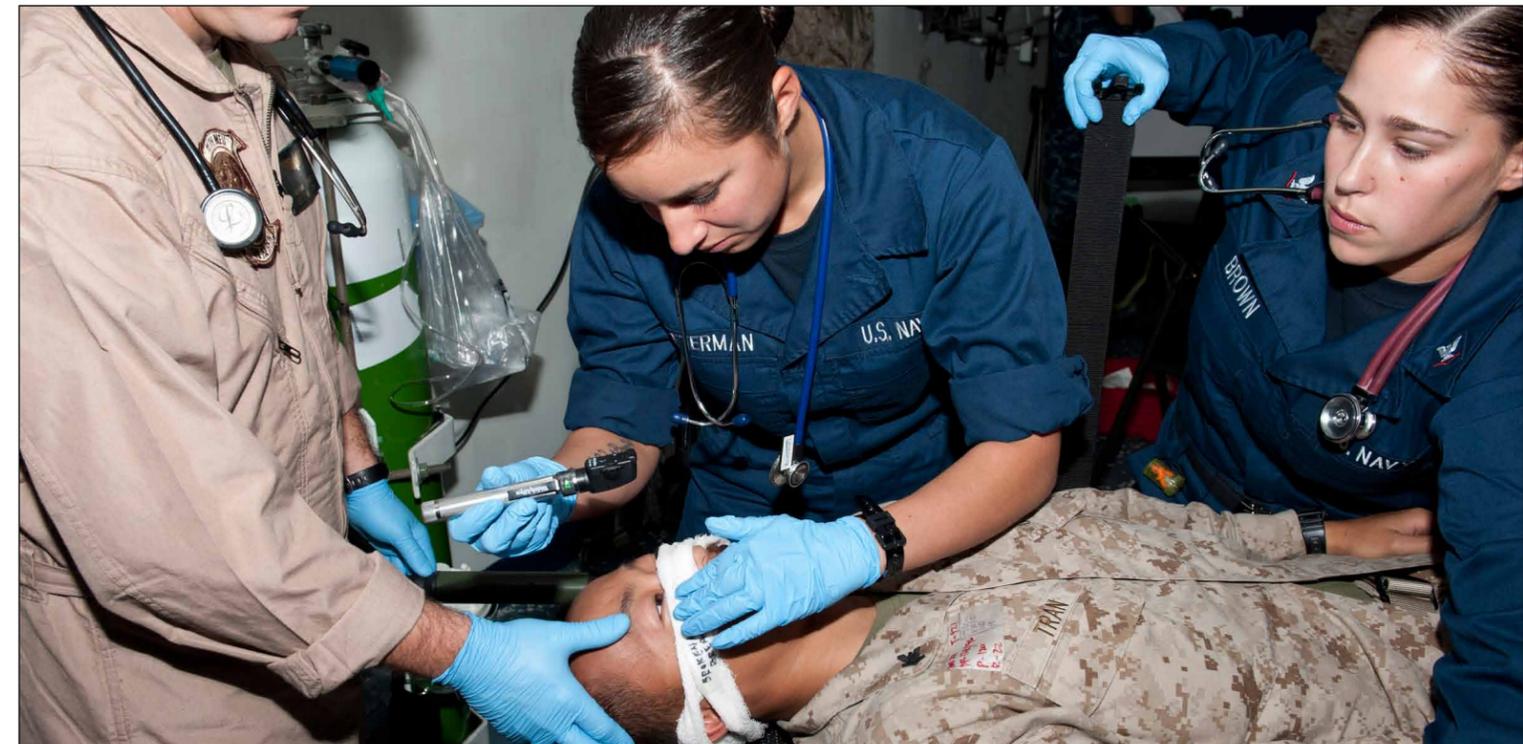
"I think the deployment is going

to go well," said Quintanilla. "I think that there are missions to be completed out there in the global war on terrorism, and if they're assigned to us, that we are going to be successful in planning and executing those missions."

The Makin Island ARG consists of the amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island (LHD 8)—the command ship for PHIBRON 5 and the 11th MEU—as well as the amphibious transport dock ship USS New Orleans (LPD 18) and amphibious dock landing ship USS Pear Harbor (LSD 52).



An aircraft handler communicates to other Sailors working on the flight deck during CERTEX. [Photo by MCSN Kory Alsberry]



Hospital Corpsman Alexandria Greterman and Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Samantha Brown examine a simulated casualty during a mass casualty drill. Medical personnel were evaluated on their response capabilities during CERTEX. [Photo by MC2(SW) Stephen D. Doyle II]



Seaman Apprentice David Parker watches helicopters during flight operations while standing forward lookout watch aboard Makin Island during CERTEX. [Photo by MC2(SW) Alan Gragg]



A landing craft, air cushioned (LCAC) approaches Makin Island after returning from an amphibious landing scenario during CERTEX. [Photo by MC2(SW) Stephen D. Doyle II]



Airman William Roche competes in the bench press competition held aboard Makin Island during CERTEX. [Photo by MCSN Kory Alsberry]



Gunnery Sgt. John Wellons won the bench press competition. [Photo by MCSN Kory Alsberry]

## MWR Hosts Bench Press Challenge at Sea

By MCSN Kory Alsberry, Around The Island Staff

Sailors and Marines aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island (LHD 8) participated in a bench press competition in the ship's gym Oct. 5. Makin Island's Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) division sponsored the event to give Sailors and Marines a break from their training during a certification exercise, which took place off the coast of Southern California.

Competitors were judged on the percentage of their body weight they could lift, and the winner received unlimited gym access for the remainder of the underway period.

Gunnery Sgt. John Wellons outperformed the competition by lifting the highest percentage of his own weight. The 185-pound Marine bench pressed 345 pounds; 186 percent of his total body weight.

"I think fitness is important," said Wellons. "That's why I participated. I think these events are important, and I'm going to keep supporting them."

MWR organized the event as part of an effort to promote healthy and fun activities during off-duty hours.

"The weightlifting competition was held to get people motivated to go to the gym," said Makin Island's Fun Boss Kristen Venoy, who is in

charge of the MWR team.

"I believe Sailors and Marines on the ship should be physically and mentally fit," she added. "The better the mood they're in, the better they will do their job."

Venoy said she tries to schedule MWR events daily to boost morale for the Sailors and Marines. Some of the other events consist of bingo, video game tournaments, pay-per-view fights via satellite, card game tournaments and karaoke.

"We throw these events because we know this job can be stressful," said Venoy. "It can't be all work, work, work; there has to be play time too."

### PELELIU (cont.) from Page 3

beneficial because we sent personnel to train Makin Island's crew, and we want to extend our thanks for the generous invitation," said Kotora.

In August, Makin Island served as a training platform for air department personnel from both ships.

"The main reason we're here is to work on plane handler, chock-and-chain and crash-and-salvage qualifications," said Aviation

Boatswain's Mate (Handling) 2nd Class Lewis Pena, a Peleliu Sailor who has also served aboard USS Wasp (LHD 1) and the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 72).

Pena said he was pleased with the chance to hone his skills on Makin Island.

"It's been a good experience going from an amphibious platform to a carrier and back to an amphib," he said. "It's been a good refresher."

For Ensign Osbaldo Ibarra, Peleliu's crash and salvage officer, time on Makin Island offered the chance to experience the pace of air

operations he expects to see on his ship.

"We are here to watch the tempo of the operations on this type of ship and get familiarized with the flight deck," said Ibarra, a 13-year veteran who was previously enlisted.

Aside from the qualifications needed to conduct air operations, the trip to Makin Island was a chance to prepare for advancement.

"I hope to get more knowledge and experience, so I can do well on my upcoming third class test," said Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Airman Quinton Smith.

When Smith wasn't working on qualifications or preparing

for himself for his test, he spent his down time with peers building lasting relationships.

"That's a good thing about the Navy, you can make new friends wherever you go," said Smith. "You have people from all over the country and even from different commands working for the same goal."

**"This kind of training happens fairly regularly. Master chiefs up and down the sea wall know each other and make these arrangements as they are needed."**

*-Lt. Gregory Lembo, MKI Fuels Officer*



Sailors temporarily assigned to Makin Island from the amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5), tie down a helicopter to Makin Island's aircraft elevator. Makin Island hosted 12 crewmembers from Peleliu who are obtaining various flight operations qualifications while Makin Island was underway for CERTEX. [Photo by MC2(SW) Alan Gragg]

## How are you exercising your brain?

Want to take college courses while deployed?

NCPACE Term 1  
Registration Oct. 21

Want to retake the ASVAB?

Contact ESO about ASVAB Academy Oct. 31-Nov. 11.

## MKI Chili Cookoff

How good is your chili?

Is it the perfect blend of spices, meat and beans?

Can it remove paint from a car?

Friday, Nov. 4 @ 1000 in the ship's hangar bay is your chance to showcase your chili

Cookoff is hosted by Makin Island's Family Readiness Group and open to the crew and family members

Four prize categories: Best Overall Chili, Hottest Chili, Most Creative Chile and Best Departmental Chili

Crewmembers will be the judges

\$5 buys two voting tickets, including a taste of all chilis with fixings, a bottle of water and dessert

Proceeds go to the FRG to support various events during deployment

To sign up to bring a chili, please contact FC1 Levi Miller via email or J-Dial x5505.



SHINE ME

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Are you putting YOUR best foot forward?