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AROUND THE ISLAND

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Giving Thanks at Sea

Happy Thanksgiving, Sailors and Marines!

Thank you for your commitment to our mission, dedication to our country and the extraordinary effort you put forth every day to represent the finest fighting force the world has ever known.

As we continue our voyage across the Pacific, take this season to give thanks for all the blessings and benefits we hold dear as Americans: the freedoms we share, the security we provide and the sacrifices of those who have gone before us.

This season we give thanks. May God continue to bless us all!

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Commander, PHIBRON 5

Col. Michael Hudson
11th MEU CO

Capt. Jim Landers
USS Makin Island CO

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ON THE COVER:

Culinary Specialist 1st Class James Nagle checks the temperature of a steamship round roast beef prior to serving Thanksgiving dinner aboard USS Makin Island. [Photo by MC1(SW) David McKee]



Navy Culinary specialists and Marine Corps cooks prepared 80 turkeys, 600 pounds of ham, 2,000 pounds of beef and made 5,000 dinner rolls for the crew of USS Makin Island (LHD 8). Cooking and other preparations began at 2 a.m. for the Thanksgiving Day feast. [Photo by MC2(SW) Alan Gragg]

MKI Galley Crew Prepares Thanksgiving Feast At Sea

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

Sailors and Marines working in the galley aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island (LHD 8) provided their shipmates with a memorable Thanksgiving Day feast at sea, Nov. 24.

Serving a traditional holiday dinner for more than 2,000 service members meant preparing 80 turkeys, 600 pounds of ham, 2,000 pounds of beef and 5,000 dinner rolls.

Navy and Marine Corps cooks and food service attendants said they began preparing for the meal at 2 a.m. Thanksgiving Day.

While it took more than 12 hours to cook the food, the whole process began months before the current

deployment even began. Makin Island's Supply Department ordered the ingredients needed to prepare the meal two months before the ship deployed.

enjoying a good meal with their family, friends or loved ones, was definitely worth the extra time and effort.

"It's hard enough for the crew and the Marines to be here working long hours and doing this grueling work away from their families," said Ferrara. "We want to make sure everyone is happy and feels at home."

Ferrara said he thinks the average crew member envisions Thanksgiving as a beautiful time with their family, and that eating the Thanksgiving Day meal on the ship shouldn't tarnish

that holiday feeling.

"We try to go above and beyond,"

"If you're thinking, 'I'm on a ship, I'm going to have to eat Navy food,' we want to change your whole perspective."

*-Culinary Specialist 3rd Class
Michael Ferrara*

Culinary Specialist 3rd Class Michael Ferrara said serving Sailors and Marines who are away from home for the holidays, instead of

MAKIN ISLAND VISITS HAWAII

LHD 8 Sailors Serve Community During Hawaiian Port Visit

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

Sixteen Sailors and Marines from the amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island (LHD 8) helped paint Pearl City Elementary School in Pearl City, Hawaii Nov. 22, during a two-day port visit to Hawaii.

Lt. Jeffrey Perry, a chaplain aboard the Makin Island and the organizer of the community relations (COMREL) project, said he was moved by the fact that a simple project by Sailors and Marines had a real impact on the students at the school.

"The children continually thanked us for the doing the work we did," said Perry. "As kids are naturally curious, they interacted with us, asked us questions, gave us high-fives, hugs, and great big smiles."

For Perry, the experience at Pearl City Elementary School demonstrated why the Navy should keep doing community relations projects.

"We can make a difference, and in the process realize that we do play

an important role in our communities and communities around the world outside of our regular jobs," said Perry.

Sailors and Marines who participated in the project said they enjoyed the opportunity to make a difference in the local community.

Logistics Specialist 3rd Class Zhou Zhong, who has participated in five COMREL projects in the past, believes helping others is a rewarding experience for any Sailor or Marine, as well as a benefit to the military's reputation as ambassadors of the United States.

"I encourage participation in COMRELS because it feels good to give my time to help others, and it's good for the reputation of the Navy in the eyes of the people in Hawaii," said Zhong.

More COMREL and community service projects will be planned during upcoming port visits on deployment.



Marines stand in formation preparing to render honors to the USS Arizona Memorial as USS Makin Island (LHD 8) makes its way into historic Pearl Harbor for the first time. [Photo by MCSA Ethan Tracey]



Makin Island Sailors and Marines squared off on the hardwood at the Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam gymnasium during the Nov. 21-23 port visit. [Photo by MC1(SW) David McKee]



Marines render honors on the flight deck as Makin Island passes the USS Arizona Memorial while pulling in to Pearl Harbor. [Photo by MC1(SW) David McKee]



Sailors and Marines from Makin Island participated in a community relations project at Pearl City Elementary School during the Hawaii port visit. [Photo courtesy of the Chaplain's Office]



Patrons of the MWR-sponsored Oahu Highlights Tour were able to see this view from the Nu'uau Pali Lookout. [Panoramic photomerge by MC1(SW) David McKee]

MKI Sailor Named ESG-3 SOY

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

USS Makin Island's 2011 Senior Sailor of the Year, Navy Counselor 1st Class Jason Duque, earned Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 3's award as the 2011 Sea Sailor of the Year (SOY), Nov. 16.

Prior to his selection as ESG-3's SOY, Duque was chosen as Makin Island's Senior Sailor of the Year, as well as Sailor of the Year for Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 5.

"I was pretty excited, I didn't know if I was going to get selected or not," said Duque after hearing he was chosen as ESG-3 Sailor of the Year. "It was a real good feeling to be selected among my peers."

"It shows for the last four years I was doing something right, all the hard work I put in and helping Sailors progress in their careers has really paid off," said Duque.

"NC1 Duque has a natural talent to manage people," said Master Chief Navy Counselor John Leavitt. "His efforts here on the USS Makin Island have best enabled Sailors to position themselves for success through programs like Perform To Serve and Enlisted Review Boards."

Duque said the key to success is to just stay motivated.

"I know its tough, but good things come to those who do good things," said Duque. "If you do good things for your department and you work hard, eventually your chain-of-command is going to notice."

Leavitt said that even people outside of Duque's chain-of-command have taken notice of his performance.

"His proactive approach and people programs are admired



Makin Island's Senior Sailor of the Year, Navy Counselor 1st Class Jason Duque, was named Expeditionary Strike Group 3's Sea Sailor of the Year for 2011.

"I don't think you could find one Sailor on this ship who isn't proud of NC1 Duque, and proud to say that he represents them as the ship's Sailor of the Year, PHIBRON 5 Sailor of the Year and ESG-3 Sailor of the Year."

*-Master Chief Navy Counselor
John Leavitt*



throughout the Fleet," said Leavitt. "I don't think you could find one Sailor on this ship who isn't proud of NC1 Duque and proud to say that he represents them as the ship's Sailor of the Year, PHIBRON 5 Sailor of the Year and ESG-3 Sailor of the Year."

With the title of ESG-3 SOY, Duque is nominated for Surface Forces Pacific (SURFPAC) Sailor of the Year.

ESG-3 was responsible for certifying Makin Island prior to its current scheduled deployment in support of the Navy's Maritime Strategy.

ESG-3 certifies expeditionary strike group forces through aggressive training and readiness tests to provide combatant commanders with an agile, tailorable, forward-postured and immediately employable force, capable of projecting expeditionary striking power in the maritime, littoral, and inland environs in support of U.S. national interests.

FEAST (cont.) from Page 3

said Ferrara. "If you're thinking, 'I'm on a ship, I'm going to have to eat Navy food,' we want to change your whole perspective."

Ferrara said he was happy the crew appreciated the Thanksgiving meal and said he was grateful for the opportunity to serve it.

"I am thankful for my family being healthy, having a home, and I am thankful for the money I am going to save on deployment," said Ferrara. "And I am thankful for

having a bunch of friends on this deployment."

The home-cooked meal and camaraderie made Marine Pfc. Matt Goss almost feel like he was at home eating a Thanksgiving dinner with his family and watching football on the couch with a bunch of friends.

He said even did something many people do at Thanksgiving.

"When I went back for a second helping, I felt like I was at home except my family on the ship is much

bigger and the lines are longer," said Goss. "I mean, I have a big family, but not this big."

Goss said he felt taken care of by the men and women he relies on to lead him on his first deployment, just like he does with family back at home.

"It's good that the staff NCOs and officers took time out to serve us," said Goss. "After all, I can't be with my family at home, but I have my second family here."



Sailors and Marines worked side-by-side in the galley to prepare the Thanksgiving meal for their shipmates. [Photo by MCSA Ethan Tracey]



Sailors and Marines begin the Turkey Trot 5k run on the flight deck on Thanksgiving morning. The MWR-sponsored event was part of the day's many festivities. [Photo by MC1(SW) Sarah Murphy]



Makin Island's mascot, Chomper The Raider Gator, takes a turn at Thanksgiving turkey bowling on the flight deck. The MWR-sponsored event was part of the day's many festivities. [Photo by MCSA Daniel J. Walls]

Mailing Packages Home?

POST OFFICE HOURS OF OPERATION

IMPORT
MON-FRI

0900-1100

1300-1400

AT SEA
MON-SAT

0900-1100

1300-1400
1800-1900

SAT-SUN

CLOSED

SUN

CLOSED

1-46-1
POST OFFICE
1-45-1-Q

**ABSOLUTE DEADLINE IS DEC. 2
FOR PACKAGES TO ARRIVE BY DEC. 25**

