

MERLION STAR

Serving the Sembawang Community

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Issue 9

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- ✦ Admiral's Cup Volleyball, May 24-25
- ✦ Early Bird Navy Ball tickets, Through May

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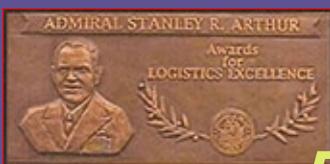
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CLWP Ordnance Team Wins Admiral Stanley R. Arthur Award CY 2011



SATTAHIP, Thailand (May 11, 2011) Rear Adm. Thomas Carney, Commander, Task Force 73, greets a Royal Thai Navy officer during a tour of the sea turtle sanctuary at Sattahip Navy Base. Thai Navy officers provided a tour of the habitat following the opening ceremony for the Thailand phase of Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2011. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Christopher S. Johnson

Expanded Training Highlights 17th U.S. – Thai CARAT Exercise

SATTAHIP, Thailand -- The arrival of four U.S. Navy ships and several aircraft arrived at various ports Wednesday marks the beginning of Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Thailand 2011.

The first phase of CARAT features events ashore, such as engineering and damage control training exchanges, joint medical, dental and civic action projects, and joint community service projects at local schools. The at-sea phase is focused on developing maritime security capabilities in areas such as maritime interdiction, information sharing, combined

operations at sea, patrols and gunnery exercises, and anti-piracy and anti-smuggling exercises.

"We expect this will be a historic year for CARAT, with some of the most complex training ever," said Rear Adm. Thomas Carney, Commander, Task Force 73 and the Executive Agent for the exercise. "In the year since our last exercise the Thai Navy successfully completed its first anti-piracy mission as part of Task Force 151, and the aircraft carrier Chakri Narubet responded to floods in the South to save Thai citizens and international guests," he said.

"These are both scenarios we've

— **Continued page 4**

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Star

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"Space Academy Singapore"

Some of you may have heard of Space Camp®, founded by the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama as an education program in 1982. Singapore now has its own version of space camp called "Space Academy Singapore." This effort is being led by the Singapore Space and Technology Association, a non-profit industry association. Space Academy Singapore is supported by A*Star and the Defense Science Organization.

Space Academy Singapore is designed to create awareness, educate, and promote science and engineering among students through fun, enriching, and informative activities. This five-day, space-themed experience is designed for 14-21 year-olds. It consists of academics, team-projects, and other experiential activities.

The program includes unmanned aerial systems, propulsion, aerodynamics, robotics, satellites, astronautics, systems engineering, and systems management. Students build and launch water rockets,

remotely operate robots, and downlink real-time satellite imagery. Other activities, which vary from class-to-class, include extreme environment training, operating unmanned aerial vehicles, underwater weightlessness training, and full motion flight simulation.

Space Academy is taught by U.S.-based, former NASA engineers. They developed this program because of the enthusiasm and interest students here have in science and engineering as well as Singapore's commitment to grow the space industry. It's a win-win situation for students, parents, schools, teachers, and the community.

SSTA plans to run Space Academy programs for local and international schools during their school holidays between June and December. SSTA will work with schools, organizations, and parents to accommodate special requirements. For more information on Space Academy Singapore and SSTA please check out www.space.org.sg, and get ready for blast off!

CONGRATULATIONS MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND FAR EAST, COMMAND DEPUTY OPERATIONS OFFICER LEONARD BELL



Singapore (6 May, 2011)
Capt. Chip Denman,
Commander, Military
Sealift Command Far
East, presented The
Navy Meritorious Civilian
Service Award to the
command's deputy
operations officer
Leonard Bell. This
award is presented to
civilian employees in
the Department of the
Navy for meritorious
service or contributions
resulting in high value
or benefits for the Navy
or the Marine Corps.
The award is the third
highest civilian award
in the Department of
the Navy.

NPC Concludes 'Dream Jobs' Web Poll

MILLINGTON, Tenn. - Navy Personnel Command (NPC) concluded its recent "Dream Jobs 2011" web poll, May 9, and the results show Sailors are interested in overseas duty.

The Web poll listed various overseas duty stations Sailors could rank as their most and least desirable choice of job locations. The poll also asked about incentive pay associated with certain overseas assignments.

More than 8,400 visitors to the site took the poll and there were nearly 3,800 write-in comments, the most ever for a poll on the NPC website.

"NPC is always interested in knowing what is important to Sailors and what topics they want more information on," said Don Koehler, NPC Web manager. "We ran the poll because leadership wants to encourage Sailors who have not yet done an overseas tour to consider assignments abroad. Hawaii topped the list of favorites, but there were a lot of write-in comments. Japan had the most write-in votes. Spain, Guam, Bahrain and Germany were other entries."

The Navy has 21 installations overseas in 11 countries, offering a variety of perks unique to the location.

"Overseas tours are generally a good experience for families and service members," said Elaine Horrell, Naval Support Activity Mid-South Fleet and Family Service director. "If you read the biographies of service members who have had a successful military career, you will see that the success stories show overseas tours. It is a fun cultural experience for all."

On-base housing is available on every Navy installation, except in Bahrain where there are only single and geographical bachelor quarters. Living in the local community is a choice in most

areas. Sailors may be entitled to all or some of the following housing pays: temporary living allowance, overseas housing allowance, move-in housing allowance and cost-of-living allowance.

The Department of Defense (DoD) education program is another bonus. According to the DoD Education Activity (DoDEA) website, www.dodea.edu/home/, there are approximately 1.2 million student-age children with military affiliation being educated in public, private and home-based schools in the States and around the world by 194 schools.

"If I had known how excellent the DOD schools were, I would have gone overseas when my children were younger," said Horrell. "Research indicates that military children develop great resiliency due to frequent moves, and different cultural experiences are great confidence boosters."

"We have developed a fully accredited Virtual High School that is in its first year online," said Patricia Riley, chief of DoDEA Distance Learning/Virtual School. "This doesn't mean we expect students to attend the Virtual School from 9th through 12th grade, necessarily, but the Virtual High School will increase education options for DoDEA-eligible students."

The Overseas Tour Extension Incentives Program (OTEIP) is one more perk. It offers eligible enlisted members the opportunity to choose one of four incentive options for an extension of the DoD overseas tour length of 12 months or more.

The following options are available:

Option A - \$80 per month special pay for each month during the period of the extension.

Option B - 30 days rest and recuperation (R&R) absence during the period of extension.

Option C - 15 days R&R absence plus round trip transportation at

government expense from the location of the extended tour of duty to the port of debarkation in CONUS and return during the period of extension. Members authorized OTEIP extensions longer than 12 months are entitled to receive 20 days R&R absence.

Option D - \$2,000 lump sum payment on the first day of the 12-month extension.

For more information about OTEIP read MILPERSMAN 1306-300.

Sailors considering a tour abroad must ensure proper overseas screening for themselves and their family members. This guarantees a productive tour for the service member, family and command.

According to Cmdr. Carl Chaffin, Distribution Management and Procedures Branch head, medical issues account for about 50 percent of screening discrepancies.

"The transferring medical facility must request a waiver for any condition that will be ongoing after transfer," he explained. "Any medications required overseas must be cleared with the overseas medical treatment facility to ensure the medications are available. Some military medical facilities overseas have had their services reduced, and the local medical services have not been certified by TRICARE for reimbursement."

"Sometimes these discrepancies are the fault of the Sailor, but in most cases it is either the command not checking with Family Advocacy, legal, etc., or the medical screener not requesting waivers from the overseas medical provider prior to marking Sailors/family members qualified for overseas assignment."

"Each Sailor owes it to himself/herself to explore their overseas options," said Horrell.

For more information, read NAVADMIN 209/10 at www.npc.navy.mil.

CARAT 2011 - Thai CARAT Exercise

trained for in past CARAT exercises,” Carney added, “which underscores the value of the training the U.S. and Thai Navies have developed together.

Approximately 1,800 U.S. Navy and Marine Corps personnel are participating in CARAT Thailand 2011. U.S. Navy ships from Task Group 73.1 include the amphibious dock landing ship USS Tortuga (LSD 46), the guided-missile destroyer USS Howard (DDG 83), the frigate USS Reuben James (FFG 57), and the rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard (T-ARS 50). Additional participants include an amphibious landing force of Marines from 2nd Battalion, 23rd Marines, U.S. Navy Seabees, a U.S. Coast Guard training team, and P-3C Orion and SH-60 Seahawk aircraft.

CARAT is a series of bilateral military exercises between the U.S. Navy and the Armed Forces of Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Additionally, Vietnam participates in a CARAT-like skills exchange.



BAN CHANG, Thailand (May 12, 2011) Operations Specialist Seaman Laura Jackson, attached to USS Tortuga (LSD 46), and a Royal Thai Navy Sailor, paint a bathroom at the Somboon Ranaram School during a joint community service project. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Jose Lopez, Jr.



GULF OF THAILAND (May 8, 2011) 2nd Lt. Robert McCartney, Weapons Platoon Commander, Landing Force Company assists Royal Thai Navy Lt. Cmdr. Pongsapae Thongsook with his rifle during a live-fire range. U.S. Marine Corps Photo by Cpl. Aaron Hostutler



BAN CHANG, Thailand (May 12, 2011) Lt. Cmdr. (Dr.) Mike Termini, a physician from Naval Hospital Yokosuka, Japan, checks the lungs of a patient alongside a Royal Thai Navy physician, as part of a medical civic action project for Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Thailand 2011. U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Cmdr. Mike Morley



Members of the CLWP Ordnance Logistics Team from left to right LCDR Chris Allmon, LT Dave Hamilton, LT Rob Harris, MSGT John Grose, AO1 Egan. Those missing from the photo but whom were also part of the team include: CAPT Jim Smith and MSGT Anthony Garcia Photo by: MC2 Jessica Bidwell

Congratulations to the Commander Logistics Group Western Pacific Ordnance Logistics Team for winning the Admiral Stan Arthur Award, calendar year 2010. This award recognizes military and civilian logisticians who epitomize excellence in logistics planning and execution. As the Pacific Fleet Ordnance Logistics Agents and Seventh Fleet Ordnance Managers, the team was solely responsible for spearheading the Seventh Fleet Ordnance Readiness review; the first in ten years enhancing joint coordination and planning between combined task forces to accurately resolve total munitions requirement deficiencies. In addition, they effectively, efficiently, and safely coordinated and directed more than 64 rollback, resupply, and intra-theater distribution missions for Seventh Fleet, Marine Forces Pacific, Pacific Air Forces, and Army Pacific Units.

OSCS VICKERS RETIRES AFTER 26 YEARS



PHOTOS BY MC2 BIDWELL