

# PELE NEWS

## September 30, 2012

### Recon Marines Finish Qualifications with Dive in Unique Territory



Photo by Capt. Drew MacDougall, USMC

Marines with Reconnaissance Platoon, Battalion Landing Team 3/5, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, and Force Reconnaissance Platoon, 15th MEU, prepare to dive to the USS Arizona, Sept. 19.

**Story by Cpl. John Robbatt III**  
15th MEU Staff Writer

Select reconnaissance Marines from Reconnaissance Platoon, Battalion Landing Team 3/5, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, and Force Reconnaissance Platoon, 15th MEU, dove in to a unique opportunity to honor the fallen and to start the Western Pacific 12-02 deployment, Sept. 17-24.

The swift, silent and deadly divers used the time to sharpen their skills and qualify for some of the unique missions the Marines could be called upon to conduct during the deployment. They viewed the USS Arizona Memorial from an exceptional vantage point and simultaneously earned an open-circuit dive qualification. An open-circuit dive is similar to recreational diving since the Marines use compressed air tanks.

The Force Reconnaissance Platoon acts as a direct action element for the MEU commander, while the BLT's Reconnaissance Platoon provides amphibious reconnaissance capabilities to the BLT commander.

"The dive gave us an appreciation of the monument and gave us a chance to pay our respects to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice," said Capt. Drew A. MacDougall, platoon commander, Reconnaissance Platoon, BLT 3/5, 15th MEU.

The USS Arizona has been at the bottom of Pearl Harbor for more than 70 years. Approximately 1,000 members of the crew died on the USS Arizona, several of whose remains are still inside the skin of the ship to this day.

"This was really a once in a lifetime opportunity," said Staff Sgt. Roland C. LeBlanc, assistant platoon sergeant, Reconnaissance Platoon, BLT 3/5, 15th MEU. "We were all very excited to go and experience something like this. It was the best way to start a deployment," added the 28-year-old native of Chicago.

A military dive qualification requirement is needed in order to dive around the monument, and only a couple hundred people have ever dove down there, said MacDougall.

"It was a real honor and privilege to be able to dive it," said Gunnery Sgt. Brent M. Wright, platoon sergeant, Reconnaissance Platoon, BLT 3/5, 15th MEU. "It was very humbling to see all of the history [behind the monument]."

After the dive, the platoons' leadership gave a history lesson covering the events surrounding the sinking of the USS Arizona. The class took place inside the national monument, which is open to the public, and they impressed upon them the magnitude of diving at the memorial.

"I am truly honored to have been a part of this dive. It was one of the best experiences I've ever had," said Cpl. Bobby D. Hunt, reconnaissance Marine, Reconnaissance Platoon, BLT 3/5, 15th MEU. "Over the course of the week, we were able to refine our standard operating procedures before joining the rest of the MEU for the deployment," added the 20-year-old native of Enterprise, Utah.

In addition to qualifying at the memorial, the teams also qualified on the windward side of the island at Kaneohe Bay on Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

"We spent the week confirming and expanding the dive capabilities that BLT Recon and Force Recon provide to the MEU," said MacDougall. "Over the course of the week, we conducted two 500-meter swims and two 1000-meter swims at day and night. We also conducted a final exercise, practicing infiltration and exfiltration," added the 28-year-old native of Newport R.I.

Exercises such as this cannot be conducted without the assistance of other units. To help make the training possible, the Marines were supported with gear and boats from 4th Force Reconnaissance Company at MCB Hawaii. Mobile Dive Salvage Unit 1 in Pearl Harbor and the National Park Service assisted the Marines by guiding them around the monument.

## Peleliu's Dental Staff Promotes Oral Health



Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Corey Naylor prepares an X-Ray for Damage Controlman 3rd Class Michael Vitiello.

**Photo and Story by MC3 Derek Stroop**  
*Peleliu Staff Writer*

Amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu's (LHA 5) dental staff push forward on deployment and raise awareness during Navy's Dental Health Month.

September is the designated month to promote pressing dental issues for Sailors to stay healthy.

One of these immediate concerns is the consumption of energy drinks.

"Sailors [and Marines] are working long hours and are trying to stay awake," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Maria Pallares, from El Paso, Texas. "They consume these energy drinks with high sugar content, which is a concern. The over-consumption of these drinks is harming their teeth by eroding the enamel, making the conditions perfect for cavities to form."

Sugary, caffeinated drinks not only cause cavities but more serious conditions as well.

"People think that the mouth is just a small portion of the body," said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class George J. Busto, Peleliu's dental office leading petty officer. "In fact, many problems other than tooth problems can originate there, like diabetes or heart disease."

According to Busto, the lack of flossing and overuse of bleaching are two problem

areas for Sailors.

"Flossing is always the biggest problem I see," said Busto. "People only want to floss when they can feel the food is stuck in their teeth, when they actually need to floss regularly. Cleanliness and hygiene are very important."

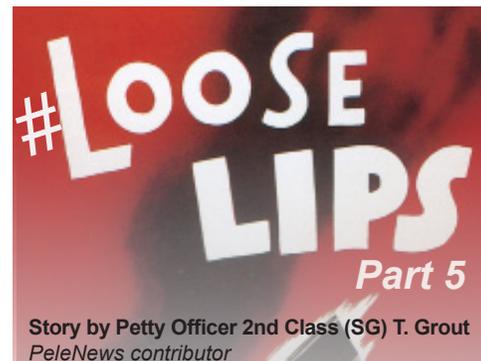
Additionally, Sailors who bleach their teeth have to stay committed to the program, said Busto. Smoking or drinking caffeinated drinks while bleaching can cause major problems down the road. Some of these problems including tooth sensitivity and tooth decay.

"Prevention is key," said Pallares. "It's better to go see a dental hygienist now, rather than a dentist later. Hygienists focus on prevention, while dentists fix complications."

Stopping cavities and other oral health complications are part of the job of Peleliu's dental staff. Educating Sailors about these issues is another part.

"My favorite part [of working in dental] would have to be all the success stories I've seen so far," said Pallares. "Patients come in with little to no education and poor hygiene habits, but I see progress by the next time they come in."

To schedule a dental exam call ext. 5410.



Story by Petty Officer 2nd Class (SG) T. Grout  
*PeleNews contributor*

A sly smile slowly grew upon Blake's face before he realized Stephanie did not provide her phone number. He sent her another Facebook message. After several minutes, nothing. He waited.

Skype.

He opened the program and searched for Stephanie Sharp. Four names, but only one with USN associated with it. As he suspected, the green icon that shows "online" glowed. He called.

"Hello," the smile on the screen said without saying a word. "Hi. You didn't leave me your phone number so I took a chance."

"Oh, yea." Chuckle. "Well I figured I couldn't make it too easy."

If only she knew just how easy she already made it, thought Blake. "Of course not. It was either this or park outside the gym until I catch you working out (again he said to himself). Glad this worked first. My car isn't too comfortable to sleep in. So, how 'bout that coffee? I was thinking we could meet at the Barnes and Noble Starbucks in Grossmont Mall. Say Thursday around 7:00?"

In the back of her mind, Stephanie felt the flick up-side her head, but like most who become flattered from attention she flicked back and without a second thought said, "Sure. I'll see you there." And like that she pressed END CALL on her tablet, fell back in her chair, and grinned.

Blake grinned as well, but for different reasons.

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## Peleliu Celebrates Hispanic American Heritage Month



Top: Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class George Busto teaches salsa dancing to Sailors and Marines. Bottom: Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class George Busto salsa dances with Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Roseann Robles.

**Photos and Story by MCSN Dustin Knight**  
*Peleliu Staff Writer*

Each year the Navy and Marine Corps joins the rest of the country in observing Hispanic American Heritage Month from Sept. 15 - Oct. 15.

Amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) is being proactive in expanding its Sailors' and Marines' knowledge of Hispanic American Heritage Month. The Diversity Committee will be presenting a program Oct. 14, which will highlight Peleliu Sailors and Marines of Hispanic decent cultures.

"During the program individuals will speak to the crew about their country and culture," said Yeoman 2nd Class Christina Shell, Engineering Yeoman and a member of Peleliu's Diversity Committee team.

The Diversity Committee is increasing awareness by advertising posters around the ship and posting notes in the plan of the day highlighting significant contributions Hispanics have made to the Navy.

Additionally, during the program, there will be a salsa dancing demonstration. Salsa is one of the many traditional cultural dances made popular by the Hispanic community.

"We have been holding Salsa classes each week for those interested in learning the dance," Shell said. "I have been participating myself and will be in the demonstration."

Hispanic American Heritage Month recognizes those American citizens whose ancestors hailed from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central and South America by celebrating their histories, cultures and contributions to the United States.

"I'm very proud to serve in the Navy and take part in the celebration of the Hispanic American Heritage Month," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Marcos Ortiz. "As a Sailor of Puerto Rican ethnicity, I take

pleasure in the opportunity that I had to serve as a hospital corpsman and customer service coordinator at Naval Hospital Roosevelt Roads Puerto Rico in 2003 while it was closing down. Being bilingual was critical to communication, treatment, and medication dispensing. Due to staff shortages this became a very demanding, yet, very rewarding experience to be able to provide a service for retirees, dependents, and locals."

This year's theme, "Diversity United, Building America's Future Today," emphasizes the positive changes and affects that Hispanic Americans, past, present and future, have in shaping our country.

"It's an honor to serve with other Hispanics from diverse backgrounds and be recognized for our contributions in America and in the Navy," said Ortiz.

Peleliu has more than 240 Sailors and officers of Hispanic decent.

The U.S. Navy employs over 58,000 Hispanic Sailors and officers.

Hispanic American Heritage observation began in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under the presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson and was extended to the current 30-day period in 1988 when it was enacted into law on August 17 from President Ronald Reagan.



## SAPR CORNER

PELELIU SAPR POC:  
 NCCS SUSAN GARROW

If you have been sexually assaulted, call the 24 hour crisis hotline at 877-995-5247, text your location to 55247 (INCONUS), or contact any of the following personnel BEFORE you speak to anyone else: Any Chaplain; Victim Advocates (VA):

### PELELIU VICTIM ADVOCATES

LT Nicole Schwegman  
 LTJg Andrea Goldstein  
 HMC Jody Lacefield  
 AO1 Jennifer Martin;  
 AO1 Benjamin Callen  
 LS1 Vernita Foster  
 ABH2 Donnell Viree  
 HM2 Janice Sapaden  
 OS2 Canon Deimerly  
 MSgt John Lee  
 GySgt Jennifer Antoine  
 HM1 Ryan Hachez  
 Capt Joseph Babajan  
 Capt Karla Cumbie

### What Are SAPR Victim

#### Advocates?

SAPR Victim Advocates (VA) use traditional advocacy procedures to help victims regain a sense of control over their lives. The primary role of the VA is to provide crisis response, support, process information, and referrals for other services.

#### Key VA responsibilities:

- Provide emotional support and assistance to victims.
- Secure basic needs, e.g., providing clothing to wear from the hospital, arranging transportation.
- Provide information, referral, and options to victim.
- Make follow-up phone contact with 48 hours.
- If victims choose, accompany victims to hospital, interviews, trial, and/or court hearing.
- Offer covered communication for restricted reporting.

## Sailors Aboard Peleliu Celebrate Yom Kippur



Lt. j.g. Andrea Goldstein, Jewish lay leader aboard amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) breaks bread with Intelligence Specialist 3rd Class James Cady during a Yom Kippur service.

### Photos and Story by MCSN Jasmine Sheard Peleliu Staff Writer

Amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) Sailors celebrated Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement, while on deployment Sept. 26.

Yom Kippur, the holiest of the Jewish High Holy days, celebrates reconciliation between people and between individuals in God.

"It's the day we traditionally atone for our sins over the past year," said Lt. j.g. Andrea Goldstein, staff officer assigned to Amphibious Squadron Three. "It's also a time for self-reflection to think about how we can improve our lives and do better by ourselves and most importantly better by others."

Goldstein is the Jewish lay leader on board Peleliu and leads the services held weekly.

"I have been a Jewish lay leader for six months now," Goldstein said. "My faith is very important to me, not just for the religious aspect, but because it gives me opportunities to meditate and reflect, and being able to bring that to other people is very important."

During Yom Kippur, there is a 25-hour fast beginning before sunset on the evening before and ending after nightfall on the day of Yom Kippur. Different prayers are read during the service to demonstrate repentance and make amends.

"Being allowed or given a clean slate is redemption in itself," said Yeoman 3rd Class Angela Symonett.

"This tradition is not to be forgotten, it is to be practiced and remembered," said Symonett.

Jewish services are held on Fridays in the ship's chapel at 2000.



Lt. j.g. Andrea Goldstein, Jewish lay leader aboard amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5), blows a traditional shofar during a Yom Kippur service.

## Man on the Street

By MC3 Valerie Grayson

The choice of Macintosh or PC has been an ongoing debate for many years. The two popular choices are always in competition to beat out one another's best equipment at that moment in time. With that said, PeleNews asks the question..... Mac or PC?

### Damage Controlman 1st Class Rudy Morales, from Huntington Park, Calif.



"The reason why I pick Mac, for one, is they don't easily get viruses like PCs. Two, it's compatible with my phone and iPod. Third, I love Apple."

### Electronics Technician 3rd Class Jenna Wilson, from Piedmont, Okla.



"I prefer a PC because it's user-friendly. The programs are generally cheaper and easier to use. You can usually convert anything from Mac into a PC. When you get a Mac, you are paying for the name."

### Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Gorchen Easy, from Bronx, N.Y.



"I prefer a PC because I am more familiar with the hardware so it's easy to just change out a hard drive or the memory."