

Around the Island!



Congratulations to all newly frocked Senior Chiefs

- EMCS (SW/AW) Raphael Arellano
- YNCS (SW/AW) Kenyatter Ballard
- GSCS (SW) Jeffrey Brotherton
- ABHCS (AW/SW) Tony Jessie
- LSCS (SW) Andrea Ligon
- ITCS (SW) Mark Ross
- ADCS (AW/SW) Jonathon Sison

Congratulations to our new CPO Selectees

- CSC(SEL) (SW/AW) David Cruz
- CSC(SEL) (SW/AW) Michael Novak
- PSC(SEL) (SW/AW) Roberto Navera
- ENC(SEL) (SW/SCW) Alex Daplas
- LSC(SEL) (SW/AW) Yuly Mejia
- MAC(SEL) (SW/AW) Rodney Smith
- ITC(SEL) (SW/AW) Corey Mills
- AOC(SEL) (AW/SW) Travis Steele
- ITC(SEL) (SW) Duane Goodman
- DCC(SEL) (SW) Timothy Bradley
- RPC(SEL) (FMF) Redor Rufo
- NCC(SEL) (SW/AW) Debbie Hamlin
- BMC(SEL) (SW/AW) Michael Cowlshaw
- ASC(SEL) (AW/SW) Manuel Peralta
- QMC(SEL) (SW/AW) Larry Hoyle
- ITC(SEL) (SW/AW) Gabriel Sermenon JR
- OSC(SEL) (SW/AW) Denisha McElveen



MKI Public Affairs::

2009 Thompson-Ravitz Unit Award Winners

Gung Ho! GAZETTE

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COMPLETION OF PSA

Makin Island Wraps up PSA

By MC2 Alec Noe, Contributor

USS Makin Island (LHD 8) returned to port July 1 following two days underway for sea Trials and continued preparations for final contract trials, ending the ship's four-month Post-Shakedown Availability (PSA).

PSA is a repair phase newly commissioned ships go through usually about a year after delivery to work out any maintenance discrepancies and to update equipment.

Makin Island entered PSA to correct any
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CAPT James W. Landers . *Executive Officer*
CMDRCM(SW/AW) Linda Handley . *CMC*
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USS Makin Island (LHD 8)
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aboard Makin Island, and encouraged his fellow midshipmen to make the most out of their shipboard experiences.

"This training, compared to other midshipmen training, is very hands-on," said Malonzo. "It gives you a taste of the fleet, and I think that's important to the Navy."

"Not many people can say they've been aboard USS Makin Island and stayed in berthing; most people don't understand," she said. "I think without the sea cadets, I would definitely have been at a disadvantage when it comes to leadership."

After the sea cadets disembarked, Makin Island departed for another underway period. During the four-day underway, 126 midshipmen came aboard for a summer training program that helped them gain insight on future endeavors and get a glimpse of life as an enlisted Sailor.

Lt. j.g. Tomas Grado, the OI division officer, said the program helps midshipmen see what Sailors go through and what their daily lives are like at sea.

"So by the time they return as an officer, they have some experience with what enlisted life is; how hard it is," he explained.

Midshipman 3rd Class Timothy Saylor, a student who is earning a Bachelor of Science and Nursing degree, agreed with Grado and said the training evolutions were important to the success of future military officers.

"It's beneficial for everyone," said Saylor. "We are going to be officers, and I think it's better for us to come out here and experience the enlisted side and get a taste of what enlisted Sailors have to go through."

By conducting casualty drills, observing underway replenishments, and eating with enlisted Sailors on the mess decks, the midshipmen received numerous training opportunities in both their particular field of study and general Navy life.



MKI ~ Awards and Promotions ~



Makin Island Trains Future Leaders

By MC3 Christopher Fairbanks, Contributor

As USS Makin Island (LHD 8) prepares to become a fully-operational amphibious assault ship, the command is also preparing high school and college students to become more proficient leaders.

During Makin Island's two underway periods in June and July, 32 sea cadets and 126 midshipmen joined the crew to gain leadership experience and learn about life at sea.

Lt.j.g. Gerome Lopez, the ship's wardroom officer, said the cadet leaders chose Makin Island as a platform for the leadership portion of their summer training program. Lopez mentored the cadets by speaking to them about financial responsibility and stability. "It's a really good program," said Lopez. "Any time we can support them, we should support them."

In addition to leadership courses, their training program included military practices. While onboard, the cadets maneuvered around the ship in a military manner; they stood in ranks, paid respects to higher ranking personnel, and rendered honors during colors.

Many of the sea cadets had never been aboard a ship before and their time on Makin Island gave them a chance to be immersed in Navy life.

Brittany Lamon-Paredes, who hopes to attend the U.S. Naval Academy, said being aboard Makin Island as a sea cadet was a unique experience that will help her be more prepared for her military career.

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said. "I think without the sea cadets, I would definitely have been at a disadvantage when it comes to leadership."

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Midshipman 3rd Class Charlene Malonzo, also studying in the medical field, said working aboard Makin Island helped her gain practical knowledge and a better perspective on how to be a good officer.

Malonzo, along with several other midshipmen, received an overview of the medical department onboard, which included pharmacy, dental, sick call and administration. Midshipmen were tasked to apply IVs, draw blood, give shots and take x-rays of crew members.

"I've read over these procedures in a book about how to put an IV in," said Saylor. "But I never understood how difficult it could be and how different every person's body is. This is stuff we wouldn't be doing until our senior year of college."

Saylor said he was impressed with the training he received

Makin Island Choir, Color Guard Honor WWII Veterans

By MC2 Kellie Arakawa, Contributor

USS Makin Island's (LHD 8) choir and color guard paid tribute to the former crew of USS Salt Lake City (CA 25) during a reunion ceremony on board USS Midway Museum June 22.

Makin Island's choir sang four songs in honor of the World War II veterans, including the national anthem, the Navy hymn and "Anchors Aweigh." Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Travis Grantham



provided Salt Lake City's former crew members and their families with a piping demonstration of reveille, "dinner for the crew" and "Taps."

Grantham said he enjoyed demonstrating his piping skills and wanted to give the veterans a taste of Makin Island's daily life at sea.

He also said participating in the reunion ceremony gave him a greater appreciation for the sacrifices Sailors made during World War II.

Al Jowdy, a gunner's mate who served aboard Salt Lake City from 1942 to 1946, described the event as a "dream come true." Jowdy said it was nice to see so many Sailors showing their support 65 years after the war.

"All this attention brings tears to your eyes, and that's not easy for me," Jowdy said.

Electronics Technician 2nd Class (SW/AW) Justine Pennel, a member of Makin Island's choir, volunteered for the event to show her appreciation for the service of previous generations.

"It's nice to give something back to them and say, 'Thank you,' she said. "It's a nice way to say, 'Thank you for your service; We understand what you've gone through, and we appreciate it.'"

Sailors assigned to Makin Island also share a tie to those who served in the Navy during Salt Lake City's era. Makin Island's namesake is CVE 93, the 39th Casablanca-Class escort aircraft carrier that served from 1944-1946. †



AIMD Prepares Sailors and Equipment for Full-Scale Operations

By MC2 Justin Webb, Editor

Most Sailors, regardless of how new they are to the Navy, have an immediate understanding that engineers work on engines, airmen work on the flight deck, etc.

But many junior Sailors may not have a grasp on what happens in AIMD, or what those letters stand for (Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department).

Throughout 2010, every department, division, work center and every Sailor on USS Makin Island (LHD 8) has continued to work toward the successful completion of the Post-Shakedown Availability and the upcoming Final Contract Trials. AIMD Sailors have been no exception.

More than 20 Sailors from AIMD's IM-4 division spent nearly four months at the Naval Air Station Coronado Support Equipment Rework Facility this year, overhauling equipment to ensure Makin Island is prepared for aviation certifications, FCT, and future operations.

"Our job (at the rework facility) was to



basically overhaul all of the equipment," said Chief Aviation Support Equipment Technician (AW/SW) Stephen Parkinson. "Whether it's just changing fluids, filters, tires, worn components, or tearing that piece of equipment all the way down to the frame. Then, reworking it, blasting, powder coating (for corrosion treatment), and turn around and put it all back together so that we can support Air Department and the Marine Corp Squadron's in preparation for work-ups and deployment."

Makin Island wasn't scheduled to bring their aviation equipment to the rework facility, but when the ship was entering PSA, AIMD leadership saw a great opportunity.

"I wanted to get the Sailors there because for a lot of them it's their first ship, so it's a great experience," added Parkinson. "This isn't just helpful for future reworks, but for actually working on the gear. This gives them more knowledge of how the equipment actually works and more in-depth troubleshooting; things they wouldn't normally do onboard the ship. So, it gives them the experience, training and knowledge for when we get underway and things start to break."

Airman Roland Thomas recently struck into the aviation support equipment technician rating, and feels this experience helped him get a better knowledge of how to work in his new rate.

"I would say that working at the rework facility was the most hands-on for understanding the gear such as hydrostatic systems, hydraulic and electrical systems, diesel engines," said Thomas. "This will make me more knowledgeable to respond to casualties quicker because I have a basic knowledge of how all these systems work."

"I'm really proud of these guys, a great bunch of AS', and we do have one AZ [aviation maintenance administrationman] in the shop. These guys get everything done, and this is the best IM-4 I've ever seen. They work hard and they have fun doing it," said Parkinson. †

Continued from front page

deficiencies left over from its initial builder's trials in Pascagoula, Miss., in the beginning of 2009.

The ship underwent various types of large-scale maintenance, including a drydock period, according to Chief Hull Maintenance Technician (SW) Joe Lincoln, maintenance control team division officer.

"A new ship usually goes into dry dock before it's delivered to the Navy, but because our delays added up in Pascagoula we decided to postpone that until our availability here," said Lincoln. "One of the lessons learned from other ships involved piping systems. The end result was 100 percent re-inspection of all our critical piping systems. There were approximately 3,000 welding and repair jobs completed."

Fire Controlman 1st Class (SW) Matthew Lynn, maintenance, materials management coordinator (3MC) assistant, added that, because Makin Island is the first of its kind, there were some unique challenges presented to the crew.

"This is a new ship. We've been finding things wrong that haven't been dealt with before because no other ship has this design," he said "As a result we've had to do a lot of research, a lot of learning and a lot of communicating [with specialists] off the ship."

Throughout PSA, Makin Island Sailors not only assisted and supervised the maintenance occurring on board, they also continued their normal daily mission and training.

"What a lot of people forget is the day-to-day business continues to go on seamlessly behind the scenes," said Lincoln. "You had people getting married, going to college, doing community service. We had an outstanding number of advancements and promotions throughout this period. There are



all the day-to-day operations that had to happen throughout this availability, and Makin Island Sailors really shined and accomplished all that, too."

As PSA drew to a close the ship went through a successful light-off assessment to prove its underway capabilities. Then, all that remained was to see if the numerous repairs and modifications were successful by putting them to the test at sea.

"Now, the end of the availability marks 'Okay, work's done,' it's been tested pier side, now we're out to sea and to work out any bugs and kinks," said Lincoln.

"After four months pierside for PSA, it was a true pleasure to take the ship back into open water and bust the rust off our at-sea capabilities," said Commanding Officer Capt. Bob Kopas.

Makin Island's next milestone is final contract trials (FCT), scheduled for late September. Upon successful completion of FCT, the Navy's newest amphibious assault ship will officially take her place as a deployable ship of the Pacific Fleet and continue the basic training phase and deployment preparations. ‡

Equal Opportunity Advisor excited about tour aboard LHD 8

Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate, Equipment (AW/SW) Derrick Grooms recently reported aboard Makin Island as the new command Equal Opportunity Advisor (EOA).

Grooms brings more than 20 years of service to the table having been on eight deployments. During his service time, he has primarily been stationed aboard aircraft carriers because those are they only aviation ships with catapults and arresting gear.

His vast experience dealing with Sailors at the deckplate level, in the chief's mess and in the wardroom have landed him into a position that is crucial onboard any U.S Navy ship. His primary responsibility is to provide guidance on equal opportunity, and prevention of unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment.

An EOA has several programs that are under his realm of responsibility including the Command Training Team (CTT), the Command Assessment team (CAT), the Command Managed Equal Opportunity (CMEO), and Diversity.

"With all these programs my goal is to make MKI the best there is on the waterfront," he said. "I'm looking forward to getting everyone to see the link between mission readiness and diversity."

For more information on Makin Island's equal opportunity program or to contact the EOA email ABEC (AW/SW) Grooms at groomsdc@lhd8.navy.mil.



Division in the Spotlight

Supply Department S-1 Division

By MC2 Kellie Arakawa, Contributor

As MKI prepares for Final Contract Trials, one division on USS Makin Island (LHD 8) has put in a lot of behind-the-scenes work to ensure the ship's mission readiness.

At the heart of Makin Island's Supply Department is a group of eight sailors in Stock Control, S-1 Division, who manage all the financial aspects for the ship and ensure the crew has everything it needs to conduct daily operations.

"We are basically the main support for the ship," explained Senior Chief Logistics Specialist (SW/AW) Andrea Ligon, S-1's leading chief petty officer. "Before you can fix something you need to make sure you have the part, and that's where we come in to play."

This means the Sailors of S-1 are responsible for managing all the purchases onboard Makin Island, which includes everything from a single ballpoint pen to a \$17,000-piece of equipment.

"The hardest part of our job is handling the money," said Logistics Specialist 2nd Class (SW) Marcus Allen Burdios, Makin Island's credit card holder. "Everything is scrutinized and we could get 'hit' on anything not accounted for. And it's hard because there are a lot of ways to buy things using the ship's money ... so we also need to keep track of that and be aware of how people are procuring items."

Logistics Specialist 2nd Class (SW) Courtney Smythe, financials and continuing services manager, is responsible for ensuring the ship's services, such as fuel, vehicles and phone services, are allotted the appropriate amounts of money.



"I basically balance the check book," she said. "Every day I'll do a budget update, and weekly, I'll do a report that shows how much money we've spent in our different pots of money."

Ligon explained that because Stock Control is such a highly-visible division with a lot of responsibilities, the Sailors of S-1 have to be very meticulous and knowledgeable.

"We're talking about money and accounting, so everyone needs to be trustworthy and reliable to do the job," she added. "On top of that, they must be able to provide good customer service."

Despite Stock Control's seemingly ordinary routine, the Sailors of S-1 said each working day is different. "It's a never-ending job because we're customer service-oriented and have to interact with everybody in every division on the ship," Ligon said.

"I really like it [S-1] because I'm learning a lot, and it's a good division," Smythe said. "We all work well together, and a lot of the RPPOs come in here, so I get to see a lot of people and really get to know them." ‡

