



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet  
Ring of the Bells Ceremony  
Pearl Harbor Visitor Center  
Pearl Harbor, Hawaii  
Admiral Cecil D. Haney  
12 October 2012  
As Prepared For Delivery**

Good morning and Aloha. It is great to see the turnout for this special ceremony.

I would like to thank everyone who had a part in organizing this event including Navy Region Hawaii, Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific and the National Parks Service for your efforts.

I would especially like to thank Uncle Herbie, Uncle Al and Uncle Sterling for attending today. For those of you who don't know, these gentlemen are Herb Weatherwax, Al Rodrigues and Sterling Cale. They are survivors of the attack on Pearl Harbor more than 70 years ago. Please join me in a round of applause for these gentlemen.

I would also like to thank everyone here in uniform and for all those who have worn the uniform in the past. Each of you are part of an important fraternity of men and women who volunteered to protect and defend our Nation and each other. Thank you.

Tomorrow we recognize the 237th birthday of the United States Navy. Looking out at those in uniform today, you look fantastic for your age. No, clearly it is the age of our institution.

On October 13th, 1775, the Continental Congress authorized the armament of two merchantmen to search for munitions ships supplying the British Army in America. From these humble beginnings, our Navy went on to play a significant role in winning our Nation's war for independence. Since then, our Navy has continued to play an important role in defending our Nation and in shaping world history.

Only a few short decades after winning our independence, our Navy once again defended our Nation against the British in the War of 1812; a war that many historians call our second war of independence. This year we have been busy with numerous activities to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812.

Over the last year we have also commemorated historic Naval battles fought right here in the Pacific during World War II. On December 7th of last year, we commemorated the 70th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor right here, with a very passionate crowd of Pearl Harbor survivors, veterans, and their families.

It was on a beautiful morning, not unlike this one, that the Pacific Fleet sat at anchor across this very waterway. We are reminded of that surprise aerial attack, where much of the Pacific Fleet was lost, as we look out over the harbor today at the *Arizona* Memorial. It stands as a monument to the gallant Sailors who lost their lives during that attack. I am always humbled when I see the names of those 1,177 Sailors listed on the Shrine Room's Memorial Wall.

Over the last six months, we have commemorated the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea where we worked with Allied forces to stop the strategic advance of the Japanese toward Australia.

One of my most memorable trips this year was to Midway Atoll to participate in the ceremony for the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Midway, the turning point of the War in the Pacific.

I was also humbled by my visit to the Solomon Islands where we commemorated the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Guadalcanal, where we fought with our Allies through three major land battles, seven naval battles, and nearly constant, day in and day out aerial battles, before winning the campaign. For me though, it was not just the historic battle sites that piqued my passion, but meeting the survivors, those brave veterans who participated in these battles.

As we commemorate the historic battles of the War in the Pacific, we will continue to celebrate the 70th anniversary of our victories until August 2015, when we finally celebrate the 70th anniversary of V-J Day, Victory in Japan.

The neat thing about being stationed here in Hawaii and traveling about the Pacific are the many reminders of our unique maritime history. In addition to the *Arizona* Memorial, the *Bowfin*, sometimes called the *Avenger*, the battleship *Missouri*, the Pacific Air Museum and other sites such as the National Memorial of the Pacific, remind us of what it takes to maintain the freedoms we enjoy. I encourage all, but particularly those in uniform today, to take the opportunity to see these sites and experience our history. Connect it to how we operate here today. Since the conclusion of World War II, our Sailors from the Pacific have continued to add to the history books and that is the reason why maintaining and sustaining credible naval capability is so important.

The Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Cold War also required significant naval capability. We cannot forget the historic conflicts that many of you have been involved in, Operations Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom, and of course, Operation Enduring Freedom. Some of you here may have spent time on the ground, in country, as well as providing our unique maritime capability from the sea, illustrating the versatility of our Navy team. I salute each of you for your valuable contribution to our proud Navy's heritage.

As each of you know from experience, we live in an uncertain world. We work hard to prevent surprise, but when surprised, we are trained to respond. It was 12 years ago today when the USS *Cole* was attacked and today we remember the loss of our 17 Sailors as a result of that attack. It was just over 11 years ago that we saw our own homeland attacked. Over the last few years we have seen the rise and fall of nations as a result of a simple email, a Facebook post, or a tweet. We have also seen nations devastated by natural disasters.

But no matter what the challenge, our great Navy is ready and able to respond and we will continue to respond with the full range of military options along with our Joint Military Forces. Whether it is assisting in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, deterrence operations, or high end warfighting, our Navy is always ready.

Today, as we work these challenges, we are focused on three key tenets of the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Jon Greenert's Sailing Directions-Warfighting First, Operating Forward and to always Be Ready. These tenets are critically important today as we work to address the challenges here in the Pacific and the world. Our global Navy is out and about in a big way, hard at work as we continue the proud tradition of defending America, promoting our National interests around the world, deterring conflict, and if deterrence fails, taking the fight to the enemy-and winning.

Just last month I visited the destroyer USS *Paul Hamilton* before she got underway on a 10-month deployment. I was heartened by the enthusiasm and resolve of the Sailors I spoke with regarding this deployment. I know that the *Paul Hamilton* is ready to operate forward, and as necessary to fight and win.

Today we have four Carrier Strike Groups underway on deployment. Two of them, *George Washington* and *John C. Stennis*, are in the Pacific due to our National interests in this important area of responsibility. I visited the aircraft carrier *John C. Stennis* while she steamed west last month. This ship had just returned from deployment in March and already she was headed out on another deployment. Again, there was that same enthusiasm and resolve to get the job done. Our Navy is ready and able to respond globally, bringing to bear the full range of military options and to continue to surge, as required.

At the end of the day, it should always be remembered that our Navy owes its greatness not only to our technologically advanced equipment, tactics, or weapons, but to the hardworking, innovative and dedicated Sailors who have committed to serve our Nation in the Navy uniform. Sailors just like each of you.

For more than 200 years, our Navy has been successful because of our people. Each and every one of you who serve today are an invaluable member of a special team working and winning in one of the most challenging eras in our Nation's history and I am genuinely grateful for your significant contributions as you serve.

As we celebrate our Navy's 237th birthday, I ask you to consider these historic surroundings that remind us of our rich legacy and how important it is, even in this period of economic uncertainty, to have credible Naval forces and the industrial base that supports it.

As the Commander of the United States Pacific Fleet, I count on you to continue to build on the legacy of our forefathers in the years and decades to come.

I wish each and every one of you a very happy birthday!

May God bless our Nation, our Navy and each of you who serve.

Mahalo.