

# Sailor Finds Message in a Bottle During Beach Cleanup

## From Japan to Kauai in Five Years

**AN UNEXPECTED TREASURE** was found underneath the sizzling sun on the beaches of the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) on 15 September 2011. The treasure was discovered by Petty Officer Jon Moore during PMRF's participation in the

Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup Day.

What Moore found was a literal message-in-a-bottle among a collection of ocean debris picked up on a one mile stretch of the base's coastline. The bottle contained a message from Saki

Arikawa—a sixth grader at the time in Japan—who launched the bottle in 2006 with a letter, four origami flowers and a photo of her class.

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More than 40 Sailors and PMRF personnel teamed up with 16 students and faculty of Ke Kula Ni'ihau O Kekaha School to pick up trash on 15 September 2011. The beach cleanup effort was in observance of the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup Day.

*MC1 Jay Pugh*



ABOVE: Electrician's Mate 2nd Class Jon Moore removes a message from a bottle sent from Kagoshima, Japan more than five years ago.

RIGHT: Saki Arikawa's message in bottle found by Petty Officer Jon Moore.

MC1 Jay Pugh



The photo of Saki Arikawa and her sixth grade class was also found in the bottle discovered by Petty Officer Jon Moore.

School in observance of International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) Day. Over the past 25 years, nearly nine million ICC volunteers from 152 countries have picked up more than 144 million pounds of harmful trash from the ocean and water-

ways. During this signature event each September, hundreds of thousands of volunteers from countries all over the world spend a day picking up everything from cigarette butts and food wrappers to lost fishing nets and

## It's All About the Relationships: Success in Hawaii a Direct Result of Partnerships

**LOOKING INTO THE** success of the recent ICC event, and others like it at PMRF, it's no wonder that Navy Region Hawaii Environmental Counsel Becky Hommon has a briefing slide titled "It's All About the Relationships."

That's how these events begin, how they continue, and how they breed more success in an ever-growing social network of cooperative conservation between the Navy, government, volunteers and community organizations.

Navy Region Hawaii, headquartered on the island of Oahu, and PMRF on the island of Kauai, can attribute their environmental success to the long and healthy relationships built from constant contact and mutual goals with agencies and people throughout the state of Hawaii.

The ICC beach walk is in its third year at PMRF, thanks to a solid partnership built by John Burger, Range Sustainment Environmental Coordinator at PMRF, and Chris Woolaway, Hawaii State ICC Coordinator. "That collaboration began in 2005 when Chris advised me of an Ocean Conservancy/U.S. Environmental Protection Agency study underway," Burger said. "It was called the National Marine Debris Monitoring Program. Chris was wondering if PMRF might participate." Burger garnered a core of 10-12 loyal participants to go out at lunchtime on Friday every 28 days for 26 months to collect and catalogue marine debris over two 500-meter, Global Positioning System-located stretches of PMRF. From that initial experience, John and Chris have collaborated on a number of efforts, including exploring a "Keep Kauai Beautiful" campaign aligned with "Keep America Beautiful" and "Keep Hawaii Beautiful" programs, followed by "World Oceans Day" in June and the most recent "ICC/Get the Drift and Bag It" beach cleanup.

Reporting back to Chris and the ICC, Burger was able to claim 421 pounds of debris collected, including a large tire, and of course, the message-in-a-bottle.

The fact that the bottle came from Japan caught the interest of others that Burger has partnered with, as ocean debris specialists from the University of Hawaii anticipate the eventual appearance of tsunami relics on Hawaii's shores.

Dr. Nikolai Maximenko of the International Pacific Research Center School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology, University of Hawaii at Manoa, was already sharing data with Burger before the beach cleanup. In fact, Maximenko visited PMRF months earlier to collect information on some unusual debris that had shown up on base, just to make sure it was not an extremely early arrival from the Japan earthquake and tsunami. It turned out it was not from that event, however there was one interesting item that turned up—a Russian worker's hard hat with Cyrillic writing on the brim. Burger willingly surrendered the item to Maximenko, since he is originally from Russia and is an expert at studying debris. It seemed "most appropriate for him to have this particular item," Burger said.

Burger is also the energy behind numerous cultural exchanges and learning opportunities with Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha, a Hawaiian language charter school just a few miles down the road from PMRF. Literally translated as "The Niihau School of Kekaha," the school perpetuates the Niihau island dialect for students of Niihau heritage living in and around the town of Kekaha.

Past partnership projects with this school include the Mana Gardens Biomes, featuring four environmental regions in miniature form surrounding the visitor center at PMRF's main gate. Each biome contains Native Hawaiian plants from distinct regions. During development of the project, students from Ke Kula Niihau were responsible for learning the names and practical uses of each plant, and conducted a guided tour of the biomes on opening day, explaining the value of the plants to dignitaries in attendance.

These students joined Sailors and other PMRF volunteers for the beach walk, and saw first-hand the excitement of Petty Officer Jon Moore opening the message-in-a-bottle. In addition to Moore building a relationship between his family and the school in Japan, Ke Kula Niihau also initiated a sister school exchange based on this experience.

Haunani Seward, principal of Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha, is one of the few who can match energy levels with Burger, and recognized the opportunity for broadening the horizons of her students by engaging their counterparts in Japan. The principal of the school in Kagoshima is in contact with Seward. And so the relationships continue to build.



Aviation Maintenance  
Administrationman 2nd Class  
Devon Brandenburg collects garbage  
with the help of two students from  
Ke Kula Ni'ihau O Kekaha School.  
*MC1 Jay Pugh*

## The message is more than just a letter to Moore. When he found it, it reminded him of home.

major appliances. But on this day Moore found a bottle that wasn't just your average rubbish.

The bottle was sent from Arikawa from Kagoshima, Japan and traveled more than 4,000 miles and five years before it was discovered on the west side of Kauai.

"I looked over and saw the bottle. I jokingly thought it would have a treasure map inside, but it actually had a message," said Moore.

When Moore found the bottle, all the volunteers wanted to know what was inside.

"When I started reading the letter, the Kanji looked familiar since I used to live in Japan and the name of the student sounded like an average Japanese name to me. I was just glad the letter was also in English," stated Moore.

The letter, dated 25 March 2006, was sent as an elementary school graduation memory for Arikawa with the intent that the recipient would write a letter back.

"I'll definitely respond. I want to write back to the school and get their thoughts," said Moore.

The message is more than just a letter to Moore. When he found it, it reminded him of home. Though originally from Guyana, South America, he considers Japan home since his wife and son reside there. He's excited to tell them about what he found and plans to visit Kagoshima on his next trip home to visit his family. ↴

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