

TUESDAY 9/26/17

STARADVERTISER.COM >> \$1 Oahu, \$1.25 neighbor islands >> Mostly sunny. High 88, low 74 >> A10



### Honolulu Zoo has new leader

Acting Director Linda Santos is named to the zoo's top post  
LOCAL / B2



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The Pulse of Paradise



James Horton, director of the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, will conduct operations from the new Administration Building.

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## Pacific Fleet chief to retire following lack of promotion

Adm. Scott Swift was thought to be in line to lead Pacific Command

By William Cole  
wco2e@staradvertiser.com

The head of U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor said Monday he had submitted a request to retire after being passed over for the position of commander of the U.S. Pacific Command.

Adm. Scott Swift, a Pacific expert in a time of extreme tension with North Korea, but also with several ship collisions involving overworked sailors and assets under his watch, was seen as a leading candidate for the Pacific Command job at Camp H.M. Smith now held by Adm. Harry Harris.

Both four-star admirals are highly respected; Harris is expected to step down and retire in the spring.

"I have been informed by the chief of naval operations that I will not be his nominee to replace Adm. Harris as the commander, U.S. Pacific Command," Swift said in a release. "In keeping with tradition and in loyalty to the Navy, I have submitted my request to retire. I do so with great appreciation and gratitude for the honor of having served so many sailors and their families for what will be 40 years in January."

Swift added, "Submitting this request now is done with an abundance of respect and admiration for the CNO and his leadership, as well as for the chairman (of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) and secretary of defense as both of them face the challenge of selecting someone to step into the leadership role Adm. Harris has filled with such distinction over the last three years."

Nevertheless, it is an unusual public response to Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson by a high-ranking commander.

The U.S. Pacific Command covers half the globe and includes seven of the world's 10 largest standing armies. About 375,000 U.S. military and civilian personnel are assigned to the command.

Please see **RETIRING, A3**



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Scott Swift  
Head of the U.S. Pacific Fleet



STAR-ADVERTISER

## Suicide prevention training is offered to Oahu students

More sites are being sought to host a program that also deals with bullying

By Susan Essoyan  
sessoyan@staradvertiser.com

More youth in Hawaii die from suicide than from traffic accidents or cancer. Many others feel so down that they consider ending their own lives. But the subject of suicide tends to be hidden — like those desperate thoughts.

Mental Health America of Hawaii is working to intervene early, before people get to the point of despair. The nonprofit is offering free youth suicide and bullying prevention training in public and private schools across Oahu, courtesy of a grant from the City and County of Honolulu.

September is Suicide Prevention Month, and now that the academic year is underway, MHA Hawaii is seeking more sites where it can offer the two-hour program.

Also in the works is a cellphone app called Kokua

### YOUTH TOLL

Leading causes of death, 2012-2016

**YOUTH AGES 10-19**  
Suicides: 47  
Traffic crashes: 46  
Cancer: 25  
Drownings: 11  
Heart disease: 8

Source: State Department of Health, Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention Systems Branch

Life, designed to help youth and adults take better care of themselves, reach out for help and cope with challenges. The app should be available later this year.

"It's not just for emergencies, it's not just for when you're not doing well," said Mara J. Pike, community outreach manager for MHA. "It's for when you are OK. It's about self-care and stress management. Just to be able to get people connected to local agencies, to know that there is information and help out there, is really a big blessing."

Please see **SUCIDE, A3**

## READY FOR OPERATIONS

New administration office for Punchbowl cemetery to open as part of \$30M expansion project  
LOCAL / B1

### INSIDE

Car dealership founder James Pflueger dies at 91  
LOCAL / B1



L.A. Clippers, Toronto Raptors to open preseason in Honolulu  
SPORTS / C1



Stroke survivor and high school senior perseveres in bowling  
SPORTS / C1



local  
Incidental Lives B1  
Obituaries B7

views & voices  
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COURTESY DEB GOEBBEL

Mara J. Pike, center (leaning on table), community outreach manager of Mental Health America of Hawaii, joins members of the state Youth Leadership Council for Suicide Prevention for a workshop.

### SUICIDE

Continued from A1

Across the state, nearly 25 percent of middle school students said they had had suicidal thoughts at some point in their lives, and 12.5 percent said they had made a suicide attempt, according to the 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. In high schools 10.5 percent of students reported making a suicide attempt in the last 12 months. The national survey is administered every other year.

"The numbers are high," said Amanda Martinez, training program coordinator for MHA Hawaii. "Suicidal thoughts are common among youth in Hawaii. With our training, we really want to help youth identify risk factors and warning signs and also to be able to identify ways to cope and ways to help others."

"If they do encounter a situation where a friend comes to them who might be having suicidal thoughts,

#### NEED HELP?

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, call the Crisis Line of Hawaii.

Oahu: 832-3100  
Neighbor Islands: 800-753-0879

Note: To schedule a youth suicide and bullying prevention training seminar, call Mental Health America of Hawaii at 521-1846 or email prevention@mentalhealthhawaii.org.

they know who they can go to for help."

The training is usually offered over two class periods, one on bullying prevention and the other on suicide prevention. The evidence-based curriculum, created by MHA Hawaii, incorporates the experiences and perspectives of local youth.

"This is specifically for middle and high school-age students," Pike said. "We do

a pre- and post-test. With the feedback we get, we know they appreciate being able to have these conversations and they appreciate having the information."

She said it's important to help youth open up about what's going on in their lives and let them know where to get help.

"It's OK to speak up if you're not OK," Pike said. "There is a lot of pressure, we hear from youth themselves, that they are supposed to be able to figure things out on their own."

Suicide is the leading cause of death among youth ages 10 to 19 in Hawaii, according to Daniel Galanis, epidemiologist for the Department of Health's Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch. From 2012 through 2016 there were 47 suicides, 46 traffic deaths, 25 cancer deaths and 11 drownings for that age group.

Hawaii's youth suicide rate is slightly below the national average and ranks 29th highest among the

states, although suicidal thoughts are more frequent here, Galanis said.

For every death by suicide in Hawaii, another six youth were hospitalized and 19 others were treated in emergency rooms for nonfatal self-inflicted injuries each year, he said.

Miki Nishizawa, a University of Hawaii-Manoa student, helps advise the Youth for Safety Club at her alma mater, Waipahu High School, and also serves on the state's Youth Leadership Council on Suicide Prevention.

"When you think of suicide prevention, it seems pretty straightforward," Nishizawa said. "But when it comes to actually putting it into practice, into action, it's very hard."

She added, "School is supposed to prepare you for real life and real situations. We should have some kind of preparation or training for the dangers or risks that we might be open to. I hope more early education will be implemented in school."

## Fukushima cleanup project will delay spent fuel's removal

By Mari Yamaguchi  
Associated Press

TOKYO >> Japan's government today approved a revision to its 30- to 40-year plan to decommission the Fukushima nuclear plant, delaying by two more years the removal of radioactive fuel rods in two of the three reactors damaged in the 2011 disaster.

Six and a half years since an earthquake and tsunami struck the plant on Japan's northeastern coast, the amount of contaminated water that must be pumped out and treated every day has significantly decreased, and remote-controlled robots have seen a limited view of melted fuel debris inside the reactor. Still, the exact location of the melted fuel inside the reactors is largely unknown, and robots that can withstand the high radiation enough to work there are still being developed.

The decommissioning plan, which is the second one approved since the disaster, still calls for the melted nuclear fuel to be removed starting in 2021, citing recent findings on more efficient methods.

But the plan lacks details on the duration of the melted fuel removal, how the radioactive waste will ultimately be stored and the final status of the plant itself, raising doubts about whether the

cleanup can really be completed in 10 years.

Among the highest risks at the plant are the 1,573 units of fuel rods, which are cooled with water in pools that are not enclosed within the reactor building. The plant operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co., had planned to start moving them to safer storage by the end of fiscal 2021, but the latest plan says two more years are needed for reactor Units 1 and 2. Removal at the Unit 3 reactor is set to start next year as planned.

Removing the reactors' melted fuel is by far the hardest part of the decommissioning. An underwater robot in July saw large amounts of rocks and solid lumps, apparently melted nuclear fuel mixed with melted and mangled equipment and internal structures, on the floor of the Unit 3 primary containment chamber. The search for melted fuel in Units 1 and 2 has been unsuccessful due to structural damage and extremely high radiation. Despite the unknowns, debris removal methods will be finalized in 2019, and the actual removal is set to start at one of the reactors in 2021 as planned.

Japan still has no plan for the waste that comes out of the plant during decommissioning. The government and TEPCO are to compile a basic plan during fiscal 2018 when removal of melted debris begins.

## RETIRING

Continued from A1

The Pacific Fleet has 200 ships and nearly 1,100 aircraft.

Carl Baker, executive director of the Pacific Forum Center for Strategic and International Studies in Honolulu, said Swift, who became head of Pacific Fleet in 2015, may have become caught up in blame for the string of Navy ship accidents this year in the western Pacific — including two destroyers that collided with hulking merchant vessels in June and August, killing 17 U.S. sailors.

On Aug. 23, Swift relieved command of the head of the 7th Fleet in Yokosuka, Japan, Vice Adm. Joseph Aucoin, "due to a loss of confidence in his ability to command."

A Sept. 19 U.S. Government Accountability Office report found that "the Navy has increased deployment lengths, shortened training periods, and reduced or deferred maintenance to meet high operational demands, which has resulted in declining ship conditions and a worsening trend in overall readiness."

"What comes to mind immediately is that while Swift wasn't directly identified as being part of the problem with the 7th Fleet, clearly it's part of his command, and so, there's that relationship that exists there that he could very well be being held responsible for some of the activity that occurred," Baker said.

The Navy may have felt "it's time to look beyond the Pacific to bring in somebody new," Baker added.

Swift also has been "fairly strident in his comments on China" and that nation's activities in the South China Sea, he said. Harris, the overall Pacific commander, has made similar remarks.

Such criticism and calls for "freedom of navigation" operations in the contested waters may have gotten Swift crossed with the State Department, Baker said.

Swift said he has not requested a retirement date, "as there is much work to be done here in the Pacific area of responsibility."



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**Harry Harris:**  
He is commander of U.S. Pacific Command

"Whether my timeline of remaining service is six weeks or six months, I will fill that time with the energy of an ensign and the wisdom drawn from the 140,000 sailors who report for duty every morning in the Pacific Fleet," Swift said.

On May 27, 2015, Swift returned to his home state and relieved Harris as commander of the Pacific Fleet during a change of command ceremony on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

Swift was born in Hawaii when his father was stationed at Pearl Harbor. Harris said at the ceremony that Swift's Pacific ties made him the perfect officer to replace him.

"There's no person more suited to be the Pacific Fleet commander than Adm. Swift — former J3 (operations) at PACOM, former 7th Fleet commander and most recently the director of Navy staff," Harris said at the time.

At the same change of command ceremony, Harris relieved Adm. Samuel J. Locklear III as commander of U.S. Pacific Command.

Current Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Bill Moran and Adm. Phillip Davidson, commander of U.S. Fleet Forces Command, are two names mentioned as possible replacements for Harris.

The U.S. Naval Institute News reported that Gen. Terrence O'Shaughnessy, who commands Pacific Air Forces at Pearl Harbor-Hickam, also is in the running. If O'Shaughnessy is selected, it would be a shake-up to the long line of admirals in charge of Pacific Command.



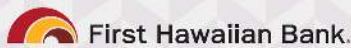
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