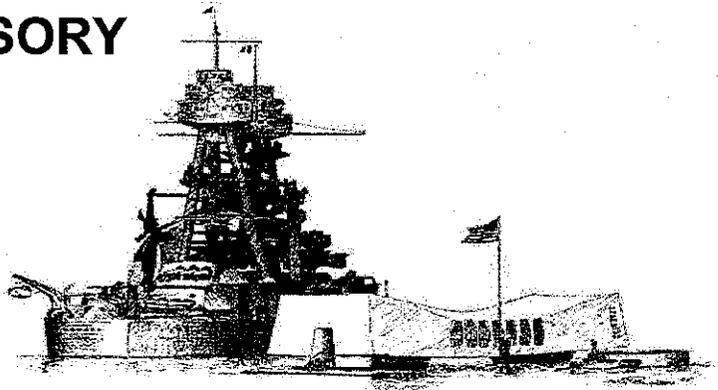


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 15, 2004

POC: Lt.j.g. Nicole Zamora

RELEASE # 020-04

## *Navy P-3 Squadron to participate in 2004 Merrie Monarch Festival*

A Navy P-3 squadron and the Pacific Fleet Dixieland Band will participate in the 41<sup>st</sup> annual Merrie Monarch Festival in Hilo, Hawaii, April 16-18.

Patrol Squadron 9 (VP-9), commanded by Commander Dan Rieck, is based at the Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. Also known as The "Golden Eagles", VP-9 has supported Operations Southern Watch and Enduring Freedom, and flown missions directly against Taliban and al Qaeda forces. They have continued to support the global war on terrorism by supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in the Philippines and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Navy will stay for the weekend festivities and attend the competitions and parade. They will also conduct a community service project at Volcano National Park, a Dixieland Band performance at the Kilauea Military Camp, and offer static display tours of the P-3 Orion aircraft for pre-arranged groups scheduled by the Navy League Hilo Council.

Each year since the start of the Merrie Monarch Festival tradition in 1963, the U.S. Navy has been invited to participate in this statewide event celebrating Hawaii's culture.

*Media representatives interested in covering the Navy's participation should contact the Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs Office, at (808) 473-2888 by 11:00 a.m. April 16th.*

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