



MEDICAL MINUTE

Vol. 1, No. 1

Serving the members of Tripler Army Medical Center and Pacific Regional Medical Command

June 2000

Command hosts SAMC board

Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan

Editor

Soldiers have always had a variety of opportunities to distinguish themselves from their peers by participating in activities such as Soldier/NCO of the Quarter boards and Expert Field Medical Badge qualifications.

Pacific Regional Medical Command Soldiers can now add another notch to their belt by competing for selection into one of the NCO Corps' elite organizations — the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club.

Named after Audie Leon Murphy, a Medal of Honor recipient and the most decorated soldier of World War II, the club "recognizes NCOs who have demonstrated performance and inherent leadership qualities and abilities characterized by those" of its namesake, according to U.S. Army Medical Command SAMC guidance.

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Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan

EFMB

Sgt. Enoc Santos, NCOIC of Tripler's Property Management Section, calms an "injured" soldier during the Emergency Medical Treatment lane of Expert Field Medical Badge testing May 22 at Schofield Barracks' East Range. For more on the EFMB, see page 4.

Tripler participates in Asia Pacific medical conference

Margaret Tippy

TAMC Public Affairs Officer

The 10th Annual Asia Pacific Military Medicine Conference was held at the Marina Mandarin Hotel May 8-12 in Singapore.

More than 400 delegates from 28 countries attended the conference breaking all conference records for attendance and presentations. Close to 300 scientific presentations were presented during the conference.

Maj. Gen. Nancy R. Adams, U.S. Army Pacific Surgeon and Commanding General of Tripler Army Medical Center, and Brig. Gen. Lionel Lee, Chief of the Medical Corps, Singapore Armed Forces, co-hosted the conference.

The APMMC is a forum for military medical professionals in the Asia-Pacific region to discuss scientific and military medical issues. The forum provided an opportunity for military medical professionals in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean region to learn and work together in providing the best health care possible to those they serve.

This year's theme was "Hostile Environments: Challenges to Military Medicine." The conference provided a joint/combined medical forum for cooperative engagement or vital health-related

issues, said Lt. Col. (Dr.) Benjamin Berg, a member of the USARPAC Scientific Program Committee, and a physician who specializes in pulmonary and critical care medicine at Tripler.

Berg has been associated with the conference for the past five years and has seen it evolve into a "highly successful forum for international military medical engagements."

"This year's theme encompasses the broad spectrum of environmental, military, fiscal and geographic factors that distinguish military medicine as a unique specialty," Berg said.

Adams added that the conference continues to be a first class continuing education event.

"We are providing a venue that is needed for healthcare professionals to come together for education, communication and networking," she said.

Topics that were covered included "Medical Preparedness for the Threat of Bioterrorism," which was presented by Col. Edward Eitzen, and "Life Version 2.1: An Information Technology Application for Health Promotion," which was given by Janice Tay of Singapore.

"The topics of the conference are very varied and cover every

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Newspaper needs input

Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan
Editor

The *Medical Minute* is a monthly publication which has been created to serve the members of Tripler Army Medical Center and the Pacific Regional Medical Command.

In trying to keep production costs down, we are setting our print circulation at 1,500 copies, and encouraging those with access to the Internet to download the paper off the Tripler home page at www.tamc.amedd.army.mil.

We are currently looking to highlight those programs, departments and employees who are working to make Tripler one of the best military treatment facilities in the world.

Story ideas can be submitted by calling 433-5785. They can also be e-mailed to Michelle.Rowan@haw.tamc.amedd.army.mil or left via CHCS.

COMMANDER'S CORNER

Morale suggestions? Call 433-3658

Welcome to our new newspaper! This is the first edition of Tripler's *Medical Minute* produced by our Public Affairs Office staff with Sgt. Michelle Rowan as editor. This is a great communication tool for the Tripler Ohana. Take advantage of the "Good News" stories in your section and send the information to Sgt. Rowan.

I want to begin by communicating a question I want to ask all of you. If you could do one thing to improve morale at Tripler, what would it be? I want feedback from everyone and we have another new tool to do it with – a feedback forum.

Just call 433-3658 anytime and leave your comments. I want to know what you think we need to do to make sure that we are providing quality healthcare to our patients in a positive, productive work setting.

I welcome your suggestions on morale. This is kind of like those bumper stickers

you see on some vehicles that ask, "How's my driving? Call 1-800-XXX-XXXX." I am asking, "How's morale and what is your feedback to me? Call 433-3658."



Maj. Gen. Adams

As always, I thank you for the wonderful work you do day in and day out taking care of our patients.

This newspaper and the feedback you will provide me is one way of my being able to take care of the people – you – who take care of our patients. Keep up the good work.

The newspaper is also available on our Internet Page for download in your section. It's at www.tamc.amedd.army.mil under headlines.

— Maj. Gen. Nancy R. Adams
Commanding General

Partners in excellence

Tripler's Commanding General Maj. Gen. Nancy R. Adams speaks during the dedication ceremony for the new Department of Veterans Affairs Spark M. Matsunaga Medical and Regional Office Center facilities May 31. Also taking part in the ceremony were (left to right) Senators Daniel K. Inouye and Daniel K. Akaka and Papa Henry Allen Auwae, a Master of Hawaiian Medicine.

The ceremony celebrated the formal blessing and dedication of the new three-story Ambulatory Care Clinic and administrative offices now completely co-located on Tripler Hill.



Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan

MEDICAL MINUTE
<http://www.tamc.amedd.army.mil>

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SAMC

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Murphy, who received a battlefield commission from staff sergeant to second lieutenant and was wounded three times in action, was known for his "lead from the front" attitude and his concern for the welfare of soldiers and their families.

To become a member of this club, soldiers in the rank of corporal though sergeant first class, must prove themselves during a series of selection boards where they are grilled on numerous topics to include land navigation and first aid.

While some may think this is just another board, Sgt. 1st Class Wilfredo Alvarez, NCOIC of Tripler Army Medical Center's Clinical Support Branch and one of the PRMC SAMC organizers, said the board is extremely difficult and requires more than just memorizing answers.

"When preparing for some boards, it's just a matter of repeating word-for-word what's in the study guide, but memorization is definitely not the key here. You must understand and be able to apply what you have learned from all the (regulations, field manuals and technical manuals)," he said. "Many of the questions put you in a leadership situation, and you are graded on the decisions you make."

Alvarez said he considers his induction into the SAMC as one of his greatest military accomplishments.

"Sergeant Audie Murphy Club inductees comprise less than one percent of the U.S. Army. I think it's opened a lot of doors for me," he said. Alvarez also added that just preparing for the board helped him become a better NCO.

"Studying for the board gives you a lot more knowledge as far as what's out there and how to do your job," he said. "It also



helps you be a resource not just for yourself, but for your soldiers as well."

Staff Sgt. Thomas Perkins, a wardmaster and one of six SAMC members currently stationed at Tripler, said he encourages NCOs to participate in the selection boards.

"This is a chance to stand out and be recognized," he said. "A lot of NCOs out there brag about their leadership ability; this is a chance for them to put their money where their mouth is. They need to get out there and set the example for their soldiers."

PRMC is currently in the process of preparing for its second SAMC selection board, which is slated for July, but Alvarez said the command hopes to start conducting the board quarterly.

Soldiers interested in competing for induction into the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club must first get a recommendation from their company first sergeant.

The NCO's selection packet is then forwarded to the Troop Command, which conducts an initial selection board under the direction of the Troop Command command sergeant major.

The soldier is then eligible to participate in the Pacific Regional Medical Command SAMC board, which is the final test. Board members, usually all sergeants major, must then reach a unanimous decision in order for the candidate to be inducted.

If selected, the NCOs will be inducted into the SAMC during a ceremony where they will receive a SAMC medallion among other awards and gifts.

For more information about the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club board, call Alvarez at 433-6375.

Conference

Continued from page 1

interest," said Lt. Gen. R. Jayaswal, senior delegate from Delhi, India. "The conference is focused on humanitarian assistance and disaster management which every country needs to explore."

Maj. Teresa Hall, chief of Community Health Nursing from the 18th Medical Command in Korea, said she was glad she had the opportunity to attend the conference.

"I think it was awesome just being here and being able to network across the Asia-Pacific (region) with various disciplines," she said. "It was an eye opener and very beneficial."

Participating countries included Australia, Bangladesh, Fiji, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Palau, New Guinea, People's Republic of China, Phillipines, Russia, Samoa, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Tonga, Thailand, United States, Vanuatu and Vietnam.

The 2001 APMMC is scheduled to take place in Auckland, New Zealand and will focus on the theme "Health Support in Operations Other Than War."



Margaret Tippy

Col. (Dr.) Dale Vincent, chief of Tripler's Department of Medicine and co-director of the Scientific Committee of the APMMC, places a streamer on the conference's new flag as Maj. Gen. Nancy R. Adams looks on.



Photos by Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan

During Expert Field Medical Badge testing, a candidate is tested on his ability to transport and load personnel into a UH-60 Blackhawk. The evacuation lane is just one of 10 areas candidates are tested on.

EFMB • PRMC Soldiers push minds, bodies to limit to earn coveted medic badge

Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan
Editor

After four sweat-filled days of pushing their minds and bodies to the limit, seven soldiers from the Pacific Regional Medical Command were among 23 U.S. Army, Hawaii soldiers to recently earn the Expert Field Medical Badge.

The EFMB testing, which began with 123 participants vying for the badge, was conducted May 21-25 on Schofield Barracks' East Range.

In order for participants to make it to the awards podium, each was required to complete 10 tasks during the 96-hour field training exercise. The tasks included passing a written test, litter obstacle course, communications station, CPR station, a day and night land navigation course and emergency medical treatment lane.

PRMC soldiers who earned the EFMB are:

2nd Lt. Matthew Bell, B Company, Tripler Army Medical Center

1st Lt. Ian Lee, B Co., TAMC

Col. Michael Madsen, B Co., TAMC

2nd Lt. David Norberg, B Co., TAMC

Capt. Timothy Swanson, U.S. Army Dental Activity

1st Lt. Michael Way, B Co., TAMC

Capt. Matthew Weeks, C Co., TAMC

"This was the most challenging school that I have completed so far (in my military career)," said 1st Lt. Michael Way, a staff nurse at Tripler. Way added that one of the reasons he decided to go for the badge was to challenge himself, and said the test cycle certainly

didn't disappoint him.

"I think the hardest part was the mental stress," he said. "The further along in the training I got, the more pressure I felt to perform. I don't take failing very well."

Tripler began the testing cycle with 23 candidates, but the number dwindled to eight heading into the final event, a 12-mile road march.

1st Lt. David Norberg, also a staff nurse at Tripler, said the final event proved to be one of the most challenging after the stressful FTX.

"I would like to thank all the outstanding individuals who came out and supported the remaining candidates for the 12-mile road march," he said. "Their motivation, encouragement and cold (refreshments) helped us get through the pain."

Although only seven of the original 23 earned the EFMB, Master Sgt. Robert Settle, PRMC training NCO, said the command still surpassed the Army average.

"We always hope more will pass, but the Army average is only 23 percent," he said. "We ended with a 30-percent pass rate."

While it may not be an easy task, 2nd Lt. Matthew Bell, a staff nurse, said he encourages both officers and enlisted to go out for the badge, but added that candidates need to be prepared both mentally and physically for the testing.

"I strongly believe that if you're a career medic, (the EFMB) is a must. If you're thinking about going for the badge, you have to want it," he said. "No one can manufacture the motivation it takes to study when you don't want to and to step it out when you're smoked."





1st Lt. Christopher Stake, a staff nurse, practices his CPR technique before testing on the task during EFMB qualifications May 22.

Settle added that training prior to the test week can also be a deciding factor in a soldier's success. He said all but one of this year's successful candidates participated in training conducted by PRMC.

"I think the training definitely makes a difference. All it takes is one no-go at a station, and it's over," he said. Settle also added that this year's stumbling blocks for competitors included the communications station and land navigation tests.

In addition to the candidates testing for the EFMB, PRMC Command Sgt. Maj. Steven W. Burton also participated in the EFMB festivities as guest speaker at the awards ceremony. Burton, who had been stationed at Schofield Barracks earlier in his career, received his EFMB on the exact field as this cycle's awardees.

Tripler also supplied about 14 personnel to serve as graders and lane personnel in support of the testing.

The EFMB is a biannual event conducted at Schofield Barracks by the 25th Infantry Division (Light) and U.S. Army, Hawaii. The next testing cycle is tentatively scheduled for December.

"I think everyone who is eligible to test for the badge should do it," said Capt. (Dr.)



Sgt. Enoc Santos, NCOIC of the Property Management Section at Tripler, bandages a wound during the EMT lane as a grader evaluates his performance.



Capt. Timothy Swanson, DENTAC, rejoices after reaching the finish line of the 12-mile road march.

Matthew Weeks, a family practice physician at the Schofield Barracks Family Practice Clinic. "...The effort to obtain the EFMB is very beneficial. Not only does it augment one's knowledge base, but it also increases one's empathy for our frontline medics and soldiers."



Spc. Raymond Cortez, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cav., 25th Inf. Div., secures an "injured" soldier into a UH-60 Black hawk during the medical evacuation portion of the EFMB testing.



Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan

A feast fit for a king

Tripler's dining facility celebrated Kamehameha Day June 9 with specialty menu items and decorations such as this sculpture of King Kamehameha, which was created out of shortening. The menu consisted of kalua pig, grilled mahi-mahi, manapua, boiled taro root, spinach luau, haupia and Macademia creme pie.

the winner's circle

Promotions

Maj. William E. Burgess
Master Sgt. Glenroy Christie
Master Sgt. Wendell L. Similton

Awards

Lt. Col. Paul R. Cordts -
Meritorious Service Medal
Maj. Thomas M. Loughney -
MSM
1st Sgt. Thomas D. Bookman -
MSM
1st Sgt. James E. Diggs - *MSM*
Staff Sgt. William R. Anthony -
MSM
Staff Sgt. Martha E. Harris -
MSM
Arlene Iwano - *Commander's*
Award for Civilian Service

EMT graduates

Sgt. Michael Austad

Sgt. Anson Calmes
Staff Sgt. Gary Campbell
LCpl. Joe Croak
HM2 Clifford Edwards
Sgt. John Evans
Sgt. 1st Class James Farely
Spc. Laquitha Fuller
Staff Sgt. Jason Graham
Spc. Erin Hicks
PO3 Vince Hiongson
Sgt. Johnny Holly
HM2 Greg Johnson
Eric Kaeka
Staff Sgt. Theresa Kelly
Spc. Gregory Lawrence
Staff Sgt. Angela Mack
Cpl. Kevin McCarthy
Staff Sgt. Michael Paulsen
Gary Thomas
Minnie William
Staff Sgt. Jeffery Zidek

Lab receives recognition

Guard, Reserve support office thanks Forensic Toxicology Drug Testing staff for contributions

Margaret Tippy

TAMC Public Affairs Officer

Tripler Army Medical Center's Forensic Toxicology Drug Testing Laboratory staff was awarded certificates of appreciation May 18 from the Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve Office – Hawaii and from the 9th Regional Support Command (U.S. Army Reserve).

Lt. Col. Mark Bruins, director of the Forensic Toxicology Drug Testing Laboratory, accepted the awards in front of the Lab staff on its third floor lanai.

Tripler's Lab tests more than 160,000 urine samples for substance abuse for the Guard and Reserve yearly.

"We understand how important the Reserve and National Guard are to the total force," Bruins said, "and we appreciate the seriousness of our work."

Tripler's Lab is the only Department of Defense Lab that can claim absolutely no false positive test results. There are a total of six DoD Labs around the world with Tripler's being the largest one, Bruins said.

Master of Ceremonies Lt. Col. Howard Sugai, the 9th Regional Support Command public affairs officer, introduced the delegation that presented the awards to the audience. P. Pasha Baker, a member of the Executive Council, National Committee for Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, presented the ESGR certificate to Bruins.

"I want to thank all of you for your involvement with our citizen soldiers and your contributions to our community," Baker said.

Col. Robert G.F. Lee, commander of the 9th Regional Support Command and U.S. Army Reserve Pacific, presented Bruins with a plaque from his unit. "As customers, we appreciate what you do. We are one team – Army," he said.

The plaque reads in part "For support to the soldiers of the Pacific Army Reserve. Your willingness to adjust duty hours and work assignments to support Army Reserve members, despite the inconvenience and disruption to normal operations is greatly appreciated."

Also part of the delegation in attendance were Arthur C. Tokin, state chair of the Hawaii ESGR Committee; Lt. Col. Suzie Martin, commander of Detachment 2 (Hawaii), 1984th U.S. Army Hospital (Reserve); and 1st Lt. Joel Stringer, senior unit administrator, 1984th U.S. Army Hospital (Reserve).

The delegation received an extensive tour of the lab following the ceremony activities.

Tripler's Lab has 67 employees – 65 civilian and two active duty – who average processing 60,000 samples a month. Samples must be tested positive by two different methods before they can be called positive.

"We err in favor of the soldiers," Bruins said, "following strict Chain of Custody rules."

Agency receives Joint Meritorious Unit Award

Suzan Holl

TAMC Public Affairs Office

The TRICARE Pacific Lead Agency has been recognized by the Secretary of Defense for providing exceptionally meritorious service throughout the Pacific Region. This recognition has resulted in the agency being the first ever to receive the Joint Meritorious Unit Award.

Dianna Tabler, Deputy Director TRICARE Management Activity, presented the award May 31 to TRICARE Pacific Lead Agent, Maj. Gen. Nancy R. Adams, who has served as the Pacific Lead Agent since October 1999.

The award, presented in the name of the Secretary of Defense, is intended to recognize joint units and activities for their meritorious achievement or service, superior to what is normally expected.

According to the citation signed by Defense Secretary William S. Cohen, the Pacific Lead Agency distinguished itself by providing exceptional meritorious service in the Western Pacific and Alaska from Sept. 1, 1997 to Oct. 31, 1999.

In Hawaii, the agency achieved the best customer satisfaction and knowledge level results of any other TRICARE region by a

Department of Defense survey. Civilian network related healthcare costs were significantly reduced when the agency maximized military treatment facility resource sharing agreements.

In October 1997, the Pacific Lead Agency successfully implemented the full TRICARE program in Alaska. This resulted in enhanced access to health care and made significant advances in the development of a civilian provider network.

At the same time, the TRICARE Overseas Program was extended to the Western Pacific. The agency started the Pacific Case Management Network and Process to facilitate patient movement to the most appropriate level of care closest to the duty station, decreasing lost duty time and the stress of lengthy family separation. It also established a comprehensive health services contract that ensures TRICARE Prime enrollees assigned to remote Western Pacific countries access to quality medical and dental health care close to their duty stations without unnecessary out of pocket costs or claims issues.

TRICARE Pacific Lead Agency first put into practice the TRICARE Overseas Family Member Dental Plan and the CONUS-based Prime Remote and Supplemental Healthcare Programs.

Reading program helps pass time in waiting room

Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan

Editor

Trips to the doctor's office almost always result in at least a few minutes in the waiting room, and with little to keep small children entertained, these minutes can seem like hours to parents.

Thanks to a Social Work Service reading program, parents taking their children in for appointments at Tripler Army Medical Center now have an alternative to chasing them around the room or plopping them down in front of the television.

Through the Read To Me Program, which falls under the Child Life Program, a handful of interns and volunteers take turns reading stories to interested groups of children in the Pediatric Clinic waiting room Monday through Friday from about 10 to 11:30 a.m.

"A lot of children who come in for appointments are nervous or afraid," said Cynthia T. Nachtigall, a social worker with SWS. "This program's goal is to make the visit more pleasant and less stressful for the child."



Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan

Tera Kentris (second from left) and Tasha Walker read to Austin Ferguson, 4, and his brother Eanne, 10, recently in the waiting area of the Pediatric Clinic.

Nachtigall added that the readers try and make the activity as interactive as possible by asking questions and often accompany the reading session with coloring or other activities.

In addition to reading in the waiting area, the storytellers also venture into the patient wards where they visit with youth undergoing treatment.

Sixteen-year-old Tasha Walker, a volunteer from ASSETS High School, said she chose to work with Tripler's Child Life Program because it gave her the opportunity to help patients.

"I know what it feels like to be stuck in a bed," said Walker, who underwent treatment for cancer last year.

Although the program only operates on a limited basis, Nachtigall, one of the organizers of the 2-year-old program, said that the program has slowly expanded to include more days and hours since it's creation and will hopefully keep growing.

"There is so much we'd like to do, but can't because we don't have enough staff and volunteers," she said.

The program is currently looking for flexible and mature volunteers to help out over the summer. Nachtigall said this is a great opportunity for not only adults, but teenagers as well.

Individuals interested in volunteering for the Read To Me Program should contact the Red Cross at 433-6631.



Photos by Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan

Steven W. Burton (left), TAMC's Command Sergeant Major, throws a pitch during first-inning action May 30.

Wolfdogs dominate league

Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan
Editor

Tripler Army Medical Center's Wolfdogs are taking the Fort Shafter intramural softball league by storm, winning the first five games of the season.

In four of the five games, the TAMC team trampled their opponents by seven runs or more.

"Our defense is by far our best attribute," said Bart Holder, an outfielder for the TAMC team and NCOIC of the Schofield Barracks Health Clinic's Optometry Clinic.

Holder also attributes much of the team's success to the team's experience.

"About eight or nine of the players have been playing together as a team for at least three years," said Holder, who has been on the Wolfdog team since 1996.

He added that during his years as a member of the team, they have only lost two games and taken first place in the Fort Shafter league each year.



A Wolfdog player smacks the ball into the outfield during a recent game.

"We compliment each other well. The players that are weaker batters make up for it in defense and vice versa," he said.

The softball season is scheduled to last until September when Fort Shafter's top teams will take on Schofield Barracks' winners for the U.S. Army, Hawaii title.

Fort Shafter softball games are played Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6 and 7 p.m. at the Fort Shafter Bowl.

Exercise contributes to weight loss, improves mood

Sgt. Michelle J. Rowan
Editor

During the hustle and bustle of day-to-day life, many people complain that there are not enough hours in the day to accomplish all the tasks they would like.

Between work, school, family and other requirements, adults often forget about one of the most important fundamentals of staying healthy — exercise.

"There are so many benefits to exercising and staying fit," said Hope Cooper Oliver, chief of Tripler Army Medical Center's Health Education and Promotion Center. "Not only does it contribute to weight loss, but it also lowers your blood pressure, decreases the risk of heart disease, diabetes and osteoporosis and improves your mood."

With all the outdoor activities available throughout the island, Oliver said there is literally something for everyone.

"People often ask what's the best exercise to do. The truth is the best exercise is one that you'll do," she said. "It can be walking, running, swimming, aerobics, kayaking ... anything that will get you out there. The best time to exercise is the time you have to do it."

In addition to watching out for each person's own health, Oliver said parents should also make sure their children are staying active and getting exercise.

"Children are incredibly sedentary these days, which puts them at more of a risk for diabetes," she said. "Parents need to take an interest and set the example."

While some customary means of exercise such as walking and running may be too monotonous for some people, Oliver listed some alternatives to customary exercises for those seeking something a little different.

- Go hiking. The HEP-C offers free maps to local hiking and walking trails.
- Coach a youth sport.
- Take hula lessons.
- Take a swim or walk in the ocean.
- Take the dog for a walk.
- Go kayaking.
- Learn Tai Chi.
- Go golfing — skip the cart if possible.
- Participate in a charity event such as Relay for Life.
- Take up snorkeling.
- Check out your installation's gyms and MWR programs.

For those still unable to find time for a workout, Oliver recommended other ways that will help maintain a person's fitness.

They include:

- Skipping the elevators/escalators and using the stairs.
- Parking farther away than usual.
- Trading in the riding lawn mower and pushing.
- Exploring the neighborhood by bicycle or bus.
- Biking or walking to work.

"There should be no excuses for not exercising," Oliver said. "Take advantage of everything offered on this beautiful island."

To get started on a fitness program with a personal trainer or for more information on fitness, call the HEP-C at 433-1093.