Yokosuka Red Cross Office welcomes new manager

Story and photo by Mark Elrod, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Red Cross Office received their new senior station manager Jan. 12.

Cecil Goodman took over the position, replacing Alphonsa Oliver, who transferred to Ft. Stewart, Ga.

Before reporting to Yokosuka, Goodman served as Red Cross Mobile Staff, from December 2007 to January 2009, at Camp Humphries Air Force Base, Republic of Korea.

"It was a three year assignment, but my job here was a promotion," said Goodman, a Wetumpka, Ala. native.

Prior to serving in Korea, Goodman served at Ft. Lewis, Wash., Portsmouth Naval Hospital, Va., Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy, and Ft. Lindenwood, Mo.

Goodman began working with the Red Cross in 1993 after retiring from the Air Force as a senior master sergeant.

"I worked as a contractor while I volunteered with the Red Cross and it was suggested that I come on fulltime as Red Cross mobile staff and I've been doing that ever since," said Goodman.

Goodman brings more than two decades of experience with him to the Yokosuka Red Cross.

"With the Red Cross, I have about 23 years experience, that's 13 as paid staff and the rest was volunteer [work]."

Goodman continues working with the Red Cross because he believes in the organization.

"In every area of their lives, we help people. Whether it's a disaster, whether it's blood services or teaching people how to save lives through helping safety services, or even just giving back to the community through volunteerism."

Yokosuka's new Red Cross Office Senior Station Manager Cecil Goodman checks e-mail in his office located on the second floor of the Community Center. Goodman took over the station manager position Jan. 12.

"I think it's especially important on military installations," he said. "We [Red Cross workers] on installations, our main job is helping people through volunteering, so [people] can find productive areas to get involved in."

According to Goodman, the Red Cross gives to the community by helping spouses learn new trades and finding young service members, productive things to get involved with such as teaching classes or volunteering during their off-duty time.

"I think he brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the organization and has lots of good plans for the future, so there are bigger and better things coming ahead." said Yokosuka Red Cross Field Office Coordinator Lou Sibayan, who also started work Jan. 12. "I think we're going to be involved a lot more, we're going to try to be part of the community and be more active."

This is Goodman's first time in Japan and he plans on making the most of it.

"I'm excited about being here in Yokosuka. I'm looking forward to traveling and helping out, making a difference," he said.

"My vision is to improve on the services that have been provided here and offer world-class services to the community, touch the lives of spouses, service members and the youth. Improve and increase on every type of service we offer and bring in new services as well, and be an asset to the commander of CFAY."

For more information about Yokosuka Red Cross services call 243-3841.

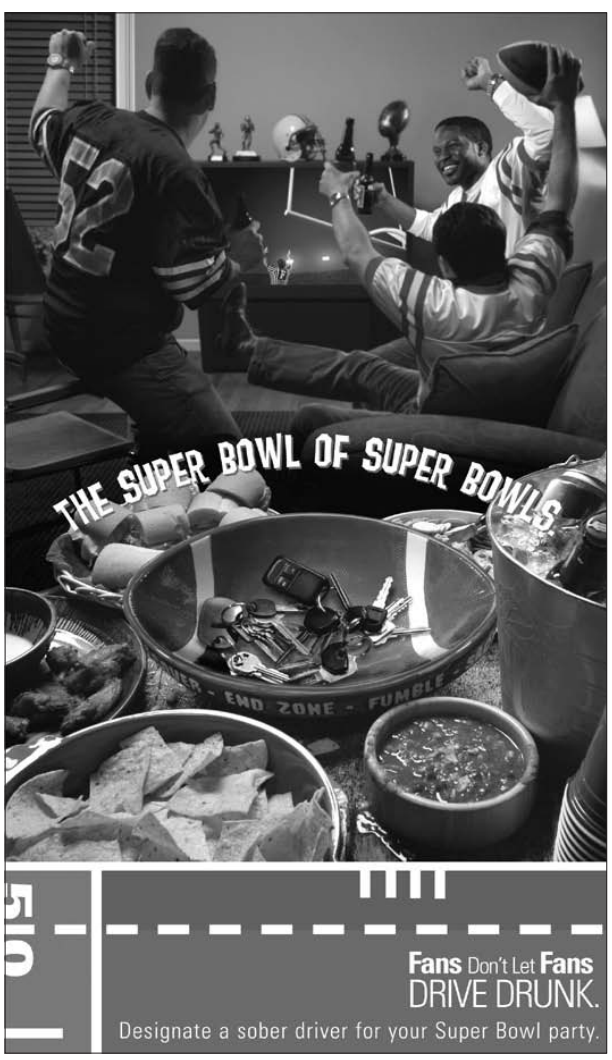
Busy parents stay in shape with Purdy's Child Watch Program

Story and photo by Mark Elrod, CFAY Public Affairs

Some parents desire to workout to stay fit or relieve stress, but often find it difficult due to daily parental duties.

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Purdy Fitness Center is offering a Child Watch Program to help parents fulfill that desire.

The Child Watch Program, which has been in effect for approximately a year and a half, allows parents to leave their children with recreation assistant staff members for an hour and 30 minutes so that they may go exercise in the fitness center.



"It's to let the patrons children interact with other kids and allows [the parents] to get away and relive stress through exercise," said Recreation Assistant Adriel Wall.

The program is open to all Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) sponsored Purdy Fitness Center patrons with children age ten and below.

The children stay in a recreation room where the staff, whom are qualified via background checks, supervise the children as they play together.

The recreation room, which is a converted racket ball court, is big enough for the children to run, jump and play around and relieve stress themselves.

Additionally, there are toy cars, balls and puzzles for them to play with.

The program is not only good for getting the children to interact together, but it is also good for giving the parents a break.

"It's very convenient for me, because I don't have a lot of time to myself," said Ramona Rickard. "To be able to bring them is nice, because then I get an hour and a half to myself and I can workout and they can play with other kids. I don't really do a lot of 'play-dates', so Monday, Wednesday and Friday are my 'play-dates.'"

The Child Watch program is offered on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays with two watch sessions each day. The first session is from 9 to 10:30 a.m. and the second is from 10:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Parents can call the Purdy Fitness center ahead of time to schedule their children for the program, or they can walk in and sign up prior to a watch session.

The program helps the center as well as the parents, because watching the children helps bring in patrons who, otherwise, wouldn't visit the center due to parental duties.

"It's a good program," said Wall. "I think it's a good idea and it's going to help out a lot with the gym as well as with different families."

"It's very helpful," said Rickard. "I recommend it to everyone who has kids."

Children play together at Purdy Fitness Center's Child Watch Program while their parents exercise. The program allows parents to leave their children with qualified recreation assistant staff members for 90 minutes so that they may work out in the fitness center.

For more information about the Child Watch Program contact Purdy Fitness Center at 243-7264.

Yokosuka Girl Scouts Father Daughter Dance – A Father Daughter Dance, sponsored by the Yokosuka Girls Scouts will be held Jan. 31 from 2 to 4 p.m. in the CFAY Headquarters, Building C-2 Auditorium. Tickets are $5 per person. Call 243-4119 or e-mail to YokosukaGirlScouts@hotmail.com for more information.

African American History Month Celebration – Come out and celebrate African American History Month with guest speaker, Naval Inspector General Vice Adm. Anthony L. Winns, 10 a.m., Feb. 9 at the Chapel of Hope. Contact BMCM(SW/EXW) Raynard Kidd at 243-9085 for more information.