司令官の相談室

Capt. Daniel L. Weed, Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka

CMDCM Wayne E. Smith, Command Master Chief

New CFAY Web site URL – Effective immediately, the new CFAY Web site URL is *www.cnic.navy.mil/yokosuka*.

Visa Waiver Program Travel Changes – The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) initiated the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA), a new online system that is part of the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) this past August. The ESTA web-based system is now open for voluntary applications but becomes mandatory Jan. 12. Once ESTA is mandatory, all nationals or citizens of participating VWP countries who plan to travel to the United States for 90 days or less for temporary business or pleasure under the VWP will need to receive an electronic travel authorization prior to boarding a U.S. bound airplane or cruise ship. Anyone traveling using VWP will need to ensure to process ESTA at least 72 hours prior to departure. This is applicable not only for official travel such as Temporary Additional Duty (TAD), Emergency Leave travel and medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) but also for your private travel. Visit the U.S. Embassy Web site at http://tokyo.usembassy.gov/e/visa/tvisa-esta2008.html or the Travel Web site at: https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/esta.html?_flowExecutionKey=_cDF02137F-CF9C-11CE-9929-C2D7A8FDD806_kA0E1E0C7-8022-4497-57F8-7A4123696F7D for more information.

AOB/ICR Class Now Five Days – The weekly Area Orientation Briefings and Intercultural Relations class (AOB/ICR) is now a five-day program. Classes start on Mondays at 8:45 a.m. Tuesday walk-ins will be turned away and will have to attend at a later date. Attendance at AOB/ICR is a prerequisite to attending the Driving Safety Lecture and Test (DSL) on Friday. AOB/ICR is facilitated by Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC). The DSL is facilitated by the CFAY Safety Office. At present, both the AOB/ICR and DSL programs are conducted at the Benny Decker Theater. In the spring of 2009, AOB/ICR and the DSL will relocate to the 4th floor of the new Community Support Facility, Bldg. 3655, across from the commissary. With the new five-day schedule in place, AOB/ICR and DSL will not be held in any week that has a national holiday. If needed, child care vouchers are provided to attendees for the duration of the class. Call 243-3372 for more information.

BZ: I appreciate the great staff at the Housing Referral Office and wanted to comment on their helpfulness and willingness to go the extra mile. Thanks for the friendly greeting at the reception desk and the great brief by Otis. Interpreters Yumi-san and Taeko-san were extra patient, kind and helpful with my complicated housing requests. I could not have done this without your help and I'm sure I am not the only one who has felt great gratitude for the outstanding professionalism shown at this office.

BZ: I would like to comment on the Driver's Safety Course. The course was thorough and well planned to meet the needs of non-native drivers in Japan. I appreciated the instructor's (Douglas Knight) willingness to make the brief interesting and enjoyable. He effectively kept the student's attention and brought attention to the important differences between U.S. and Japan driving conditions. I have attended the driver's safety brief at two other locations in Japan and of those experiences; this was the most informative and helpful, with enough detail to be useful on the road. Thank you for a job well done!

Action Line correspondence may be edited for length and readability. Your questions, suggestions and "Bravo Zulu" comments are appreciated. Address concerns with your chain of command or directly with the parties involved, at the lowest level possible. If you don't get results, send an e-mail to cfay.pao.watch@fe.navy.mil. We welcome your feedback, especially if it is of a general nature and can help others. To contact the Seahawk, call 243-5607/3003 or send an e-mail to: Seahawk-Umitaka@fe.navy.mil.

National African-American History Month, 2009

A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America

The history of African-Americans is unique and rich, and one that has helped to define what it means to be an American. Arriving on ships on the shores of North America more than 300 years ago, recognized more as possessions than people, African-Americans have come to know the freedoms fought for in establishing the United States and gained through the use of our founding principles of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the right to assembly and due process of law. The ideals of the founders became more real and more true for every citizen as African-Americans pressed us to realize our full potential as a nation and to uphold those ideals for all who enter into our borders and embrace the notion that we are all endowed with certain unalienable rights.

Since Carter G. Woodson first sought to illuminate the African-American experience, each February we pause to reflect on the contributions of this community to our national identity. The history is one of struggle for the recognition of each person's humanity as well as an influence on the broader American culture. African-Americans designed our beautiful Capital City, gave us the melodic rhythms of New Orleans Jazz, issued new discoveries in science and medicine, and forced us to examine ourselves in the pages of classic literature. This legacy has only added luster to the brand of the United States, which has drawn immigrants to our shores for centuries.

President Barack Obama

This year's theme, "The Quest for Black Citizenship in the Americas," is a chance to examine the evolution of our country and how African-Americans helped draw us ever closer to becoming a more perfect union.

The narrative of the African-American pursuit of full citizenship with all of the rights and privileges afforded others in this country is also the story of a maturing young nation. The voices and examples of the African-American people worked collectively to remove the boulders of systemic racism and discrimination that pervaded our laws and our public consciousness for decades. Through the work of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman, Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver, Martin Luther King and Thurgood Marshall, the African-American community has steadily made progress toward the dreams within its grasp and the promise of our nation. Meanwhile, the belief that those dreams might one day be realized by all of our citizens gave African-American men and women the same sense of duty and love of country that led them to shed blood in every war we have ever fought, to invest hard-earned resources in their communities with the hope of self empowerment, and to pass the ideals of this great land down to their children and grandchildren.

As we mark National African-American History Month, we should take note of this special moment in our nation's history and the actors who worked so diligently to deliver us to this place. One such organization is the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – the NAACP – which this year will witness 100 years of service to the nation Feb. 12. Because of their work, including the contributions of those luminaries on the front lines and great advocates behind the scenes, we as a nation were able to take the dramatic steps we have in recent history.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim February 2009 as National African-American History Month. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians and all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, activities and programs that raise awareness and appreciation of African-American history.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka
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