

National Night Out

Petty Officer 3rd Class McArthur Albert

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Recognition

NAVAL AIR FACILITY ATSUGI, – This week marked the 29th annual National Night Out (NNO) sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch (NATW). The NATW is a nonprofit, crime prevention organization which works in cooperation with thousands of crime watch groups and law enforcement agencies throughout the United States.

The first NNO was held in August of 1984 when residents began turning on their porch lights and talking about anticrime efforts. In its inaugural year, 2.5 million Americans from across 23 states participated in NNO nation wide.

NATW's executive director Matt. A. Peskin created the event to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate support and participation in local anticrime programs and send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back against crime.

Historically celebrated on the first Tuesday in August, this year's National Night Out was held on August 7th and marks the 29th annual event of its kind. Naval Air Facility Atsugi (NAFA) showed its support by participating in this event for the 12th consecutive year uniting the base community of Sailors, civilians and their families for a common cause.

There were a number of groups participating this year including NAF Atsugi Security Force, Japanese Maritime Self -Defense Force, Ayase City Fire Department, and the Boy Scouts of America. Atsugi's Moral Welfare and Recreation helped sponsor the event in conjunction with the NAF Atsugi Enlisted Spouses Association.

As an active supporter and volunteer at the event, Master at Arms Zack Webb remarked "I feel like I'm setting a good example for the kids. We're out here in our special reaction team (SRT) gear to expose them to different choices, opportunities and possibilities available to them in the years to come."

While the traditional "lights on" and front porch vigils remain a part of NNO, family events and activities have become apart of the yearly affair. NAFA's NNO included free food, music provided by a live DJ and youth activities such as a dunk tank, quarterback toss, and a kick & score soccer display.

"These events are set up around and focused on the kids," said Webb. "It's always a pleasure to do something for a purpose, especially when you really feel you're making a difference."