Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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New tugboat *Seminole* arrives, provides upgrade to port operations

By Joe Schmitt, CFAY Public Affairs

The U.S. flagged, heavy-lift ship *BBC Houston* delivered U.S. Navy tugboat *Seminole* (YT 805) from Tacoma, Wash., to Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) April 8. The new tugboat is part of a plan to upgrade CFAY tugboat operations.

The tugboats currently in use in Yokosuka are special because they are some of the only tugboats owned and operated by the U.S. Navy. The tugs have provided a long history of service moving ships forward-deployed to the area like *USS George Washington* (CVN 73), *USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19), *USS John S McCain* (DDG 56) and previous ships that have already been decommissioned like *USS Midway* (CV 41) *USS Independence* (CV 62) and *USS Kitty Hawk* (CV 63). Some of the tugboats have been in service for more that 40 years.

"We have five yard tugboats we use here in Yokosuka," said CFAY Port Operations Officer Lt. Cmdr. Michael Weatherford. "All five of those will be [decommissioned] over the next 18 months. We will be getting three new commercial grade tugboats."

The new 410-ton tugboat looks distinctively different from the current tugboats. It has a larger pilothouse with much larger windows and long exhaust ports that stick high above the deck of the ship. It also has new engines that provide double the amount of power from 2,000 to 4,000 horsepower.

"It gives us increased capability here," said Weatherford. "Currently, to get *George Washington* or *Blue Ridge* underway we have to order in commercial tugs but now with these upgraded tugs we will be able to conduct these operations ourselves."

New tugboat *Seminole* (YT 805) cruises around the harbor with CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. David Owen aboard April 15. *Seminole* was delivered to CFAY April 8 and is part of a plan to replace and upgrade the tugboat fleet that provides support to ships in the area and those forward-deployed in the Western Pacific. Together the tugboats are the U.S. Navy's only totally military operated tugboat fleet.
U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Anthony R. Hayes

As the first of the new tugboats to be put into service in Yokosuka, it was given a distinctive name that both pays tribute to the previous tugboats and represents its increased capabilities.

"Originally when we got the contract for the new tugboat they actually used the name '*Defiant*' for the tug but naval tradition is tugboats were named after [Native American] tribes," said Weatherford. "We took two of our tugboats that are going to be [decommissioned], which are named after [Native American] tribes that made up the Seminole nation. 'Seminole' means 'wild horse' so with the new tug having 4,000 horsepower compared to 2,000 horsepower, we though it was a good name for this new tug."

Chief Machinist Mate DeWayne Johnson, CFAY Port Operations chief engineer, works with the current tugboats and is part of the team aboard the *Seminole*.

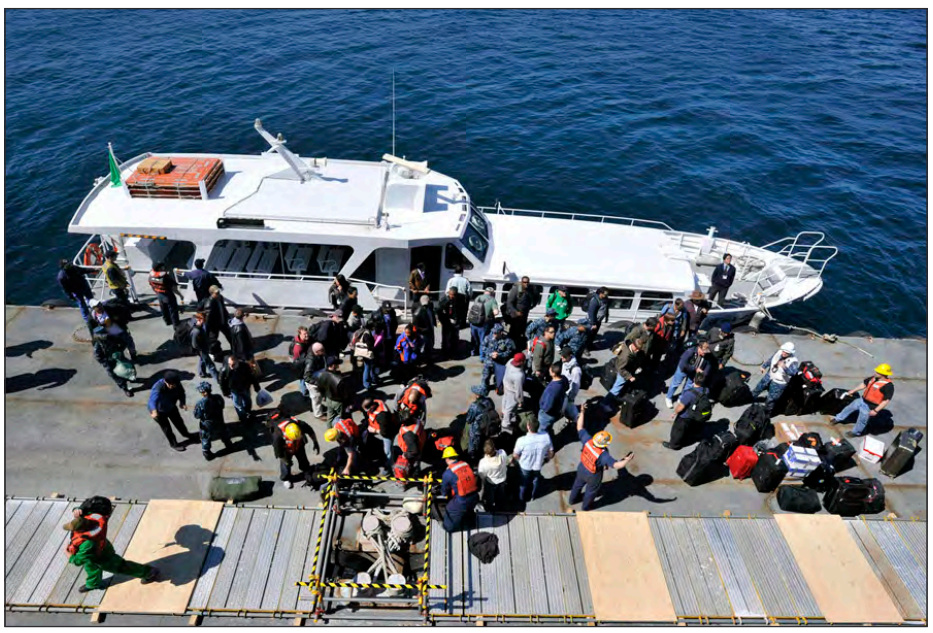
"The versatility of the new tug is the biggest gain," he said. "You'll never see a finer vessel in the Navy, I've never seen one look this good and they built us one heck of a [boat]."

Seminole is already hard at work and will be joined by YT 806 about this time next year with the third tugboat joining the fleet further in the future. All together they will be part of the U.S. Navy's only totally military operated tugboat fleet and one that supports the forward-deployed naval forces here on CFAY.

USS George Washington Sailors experience Sasebo culture

By MC3(SW/AW) Marcus D. Mince, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

USS George Washington (CVN 73) (*GW*) Sailors enjoyed the opportunity to experience Sasebo culture during the carrier's port visit April 12.



Sailors exit a ferry docked next to the aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) (*GW*) as they prepare to return from liberty to the ship. *GW* Sailors enjoyed the opportunity to experience Sasebo culture during the carrier's port visit April 12.
U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Juan Pinalez

This was the crew's first port visit since the ship departed its forward-deployed base of Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan, March 21, in response to the complex nature of the disaster that struck Japan, March 11.

During the visit, *GW* Sailors participated in tours coordinated by the ship's Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Department, including a visit to Noritake, a small suburb near Nagoya, Japan.

"I have never been to this part of Japan before, and I thought this MWR tour would be a good way to get off the base and experience a little bit of culture," said Electrician's Mate 3rd Class (SW) Valerie Salinas.

Among the stops in Noritake was a visit to a porcelain manufacturing company that produces tableware.

"These beautiful pieces of porcelain really show what this country can do," said Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Airman Guadalupe Almarez, *USS George Washington* MWR Department. "They are all of very good quality."

"I think these tours are great for the crew, because it gives us Sailors an opportunity to experience the culture away from the regular scene," said Salinas.

With only one day of liberty for most Sailors, making the most of their time was important to everyone.

"I would recommend MWR tours for other crew members so they can see other parts of Japan or different countries that we may visit; to show them other aspects of culture that they may be looking for," Almarez added. "These tours really help the crew to boost morale and lift their spirits."

While in the area, MWR also coordinated saltwater fishing trips, kayaking excursions, nature hikes and a visit to neighboring Nagasaki to visit a museum dedicated to the events surrounding the dropping of the second atomic bomb.

USS George Washington (CVN 73), homeported out of Yokosuka, Japan, is the Navy's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier, ensuring security and stability across the Western Pacific Ocean.

INSIDE

Blue Ridge concludes patrol, Operation Tomodachi support

***USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) Sailors and embarked 7th Fleet staff returned to CFAY, April 11, following a two-month patrol and support of Operation Tomodachi.**

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Every Sailor empowered to stop sexual assaults

An April 7 announcement from the U.S. Navy describes sexual assaults as crimes that devastate victims, threaten unit cohesiveness and ultimately reduce fleet readiness.

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