Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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Food, dance highlights Asian-Pacific American Heritage event

Story and photo by MC2(SW/AW) John Smolinski, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) multi-cultural committee hosted an Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month celebration at the "Jewel of the East" Commodore Matthew C. Perry General Mess May 18.

The celebration featured guest speakers, a dance performance by Otea Kia Mana and Asian-Pacific inspired cuisine prepared by mess staff.

In 1992, President George H.W. Bush signed into law the official designation of the month of May as Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month. May was chosen to commemorate the first Japanese to immigrate to the United States in 1843 and the completion of the transcontinental railroad in May 1869, whose tracks were laid mostly by Chinese immigrants.

"Just like today's military, Asian-Pacific encompasses a diverse group of the Asian continent and Pacific islands," said Chief Culinary Specialist Peter Dennis Ramos. "To name a few: Tahiti, Samoa, Hawaii, Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, Korea, China and our very own, Japan."

"It's more than just the food and dancers that bring us here, today," said CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. David A. Owen. "It's the significant contributions to our military that the Asian-Pacific community and individuals provide… their resilience and ability to overcome tragedy like what we experienced in March with the earthquake and tsunami."

Asian-Pacific Americans have been serving the U.S. Navy for many decades. Today, a total of more than 50,000 Asian-Pacific Americans serve in the U.S. Navy, including nine flag officers and 11 senior executives.

"The Navy has been my life," said Lt. Cmdr. Victoriano Naval Jr., strike group officer, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command Pacific and guest speaker. "It has been a good life, and I take every opportunity such as this, to thank all of you for your support and leadership, your service, your dedication and loyalty - but most of all for treating your Sailors with the utmost dignity and respect they deserve, for they will relieve us in the future.

"In celebrating this heritage today let us always be reminded of the many sacrifices Asian-Pacific Americans have endured and the many contributions they have given in order to maintain what our forefathers have said about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," Naval added.

The multi-cultural committee is a group of active-duty Sailors that come together to put on events to help promote the various monthly heritage observances throughout the year.

"We want to provide the best opportunity to showcase our diversity as a Navy," said Chief Navy Counselor Tasha Wright, CFAY multi-cultural committee member. "We appreciate all who participated in this event and showed their support to our Asian-Pacific community."

Otea Kia Mana dancers recruited Sailors from the audience, including CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. David Owen, to participate in a traditional polynesian dance during the Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month observance held at the Commodore Matthew C. Perry General Mess May 18.

Information fair prepares *GW* Sailors, families for annual patrol

Story and photo by MCSN William P. Gatlin, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

More than 3,000 Sailors and their families turned out for the *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) annual information fair May 16. The event provides necessary information for services that may be needed by Sailors and their families when *George Washington* returns to sea for its annual patrol.

"The most important thing everyone can gather from this event is information," said Cmdr. Brian Haley, *George Washington* command chaplain. "The fair allows everyone to see what services are offered on the ship and on the base and they are placed in one area for easy access to all."

For families, numerous organizations from across Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) were well represented including Fleet and Family Service Center, Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR), Navy College and the Red Cross. *George Washington* contributed representatives from their legal, medical, dental and command religious ministries departments (CRMD), as well as the *George Washington* ombudsman team.

"The Navy lifestyle is hard for both Sailors and their families and as ombudsmen, we are here to act as a communication link between families and the command," said Lindsey Todd, a representative from the *George Washington* ombudsman team. "This fair allows us to answer any questions service members have and it lets everyone get a grasp on what is needed to prepare for the next patrol."

"This event is mainly for junior Sailors with families who are going to sea for the first time and need help getting prepared," said Religious Program Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW/FMF) Nino Miranda, CRMD leading petty officer aboard *George Washington*. "It allows Sailors to find out what services are offered on the base and allows them to utilize some services that are offered aboard *George Washington*."

Aviation Aerographer's Mate 3rd Class Richard Riley, a Sailor aboard *George Washington*, explained why the fair was beneficial to him.

"This is the third information fair I have been to since I came to *George Washington* and every year I find some new, helpful information," said Riley. "The best thing is that MWR is always here with schedules of events and trips I can take."

George Washington, is the Navy's only full time forward-deployed aircraft carrier, ensuring security and stability across the western Pacific Ocean.

Sailors aboard the aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) stand in line to verify the activation of their Defense Biometric Identification System (DBIDS) on their identification cards during the ship's information fair May 16. DBIDS is a DoD identity authenticator that serves as a physical access control and registration system, using bar codes and biometrics to identify cardholders.

INSIDE

Stethem namesake's brother attends change of command

Cmdr. Michael "Brent" DeVore assumed command of the guided-missile destroyer *USS Stethem* (DDG 63) in a ceremony held at CFAY May 19.

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Financial future secured with Million Dollar Sailor Program

Sailors from various commands at CFAY attended a Million Dollar Sailor course at the Fleet and Family Support Center May 16 and 17.

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