Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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Vol. LXII, No. 11 www.cnic.navy.mil/yokosuka March 25, 2011

CFAY, Red Cross collect donations for earthquake, tsunami victims

Story and photo by Joe Schmitt, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) and the Red Cross collected money and donations outside the Navy Exchange and commissary March 15, to give to victims of the 9.0-magnitude earthquake and subsequent tsunami that struck Japan March 11.

The American and International Red Cross organizations regularly take donations and give them to people in need. After the earthquake and tsunami that happened near Sendai in northern Japan, both organizations setup ways to collect donations for the victims of the disaster.

On board CFAY, service and community members had a few ways of making donations to these efforts.

At the commissary, people were making donations of blankets, food, hygiene products, baby products and used or new clothing. The donations were being accepted in large cardboard "tri-wall" boxes that are about four-feet wide by four-feet deep and four-feet high. All four of the initial boxes had to be emptied within hours of their placement. Donations were also being accepted at Niban housing tower.

Several of the customers who came out of the commissary immediately went to the boxes to donate. "I think when people need help, we can be there to support them," said Victoria Robison, a spouse of a *USS Stethem* (DDG 63) Sailor, as she was donating a bag of groceries and a bag of clothes. "We are all the same so, it's easy to see how we can help each other."

In charge of accepting the donations was Chief Religious Programs Specialist Kisha Madison from CFAY Chapel of Hope. "It's amazing how fast the boxes filled up," said Madison. "All the people going in [the commissary] are asking how they can give."

Sid Habeeb, a spouse of a Ship Repair Facility-Japan Regional Maintenance Center Yokosuka employee, donated and volunteered at the donation boxes. "We lived through this thing, we saw history being made," Habeeb said. "If you see something like that, you want to give and do what you can."

After seeing the results of the earthquake and tsunami, American Red Cross Yokosuka Branch Senior Station Manager Cecil Goodman got the effort organized to respond. "We are here primarily to support the CFAY area through Red Cross messages, classes like first aid and CPR," he said. "In addition we are available to offer disaster assistance."

The Red Cross is also accepting monetary donations. "Every time there is a natural disaster, people want to donate and they want to know where they can send money and goods," said Goodman. "For people who want to make monetary donations, individuals can designate who they want to donate to, like for the Japanese earthquake. We can take money, checks and money orders, and we give you a receipt. Then we make sure that the money gets to the people who need it."

Donations can be made at the donation boxes, at the Red Cross Office located in the Community Readiness Center or online at the American Red Cross website www.redcross.org.

Sid Habeeb places winter coats into a Red Cross donation box in front of the commissary March 15. The donations were being collected for the victims of the 9.0-magnitude earthquake and subsequent tsunami that struck Japan March 11.

7th Fleet offers salvage support to tsunami-battered Japanese city

Story and photo by MC2 Devon Dow, Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan

A U.S. 7th Fleet salvage officer visited Japanese coast guard members and port authority officials in Hachinohe, Japan, March 18.

Lt. Cmdr. Derek Peterson met with the officials to discuss the salvage capabilities the U.S. Navy can provide in support of Operation Tomodachi.

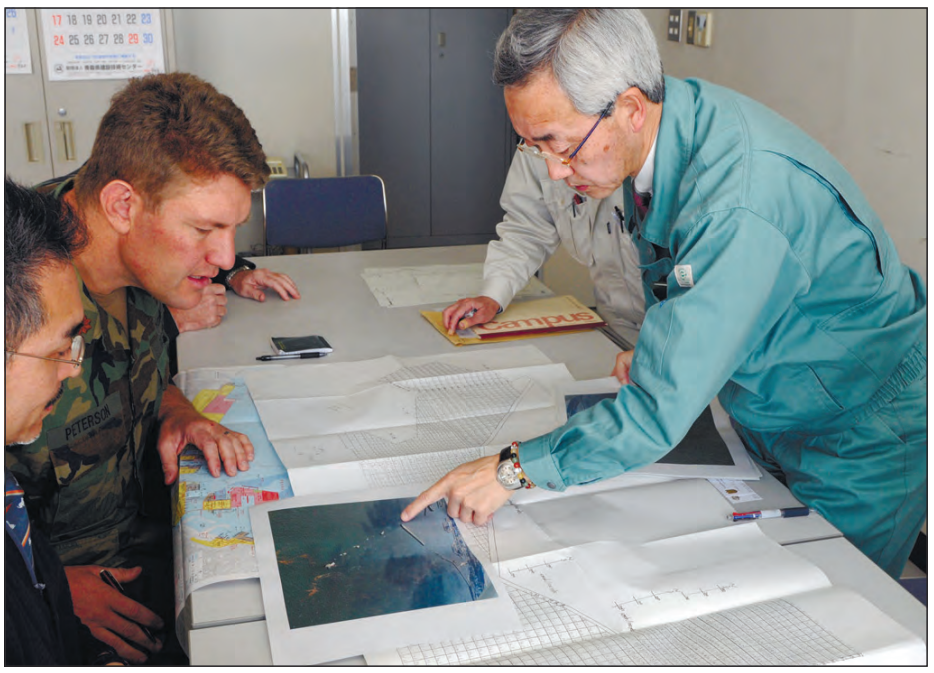
Following a 9.0-magnitude earthquake, the port of Hachinohe suffered severe damage from the subsequent massive tsunami.

Peterson is a subject-matter-expert in salvage harbor clearance and the coordinator of the rescue and salvage ship *USNS Safeguard* (T-ARS 50). According to Peterson, the ship and its crew stand ready to assist in clearing out debris from the northern-Japanese harbor.

"We want to make our presence known to the Japanese and let them know that we are here to help," Peterson said. "We want to bring assets and capabilities, and work side-by-side with the Japanese on whatever they need."

Along with discussing the capabilities of *Safeguard*, Peterson, members of the Japan coast guard and city port authority officials looked over surveys and charts that displayed current conditions of the port. He also attended a meeting with city officials to gain a full understanding of city-wide recovery efforts.

"If given the opportunity, we are hoping to combine our resources and do whatever is needed to be done to help get the city back on its feet," Peterson said.



(Left) Lt. Cmdr. Derek Peterson, a U.S. 7th Fleet salvage officer, views photos March 18, of damage caused by a tsunami to the port in Hachinohe, Japan that followed a 9.0 magnitude earthquake. Peterson is meeting with city officials to offer U.S. Navy salvage support and harbor clearance for the Japanese city in support of Operation Tomodachi.

Peterson said assisting in the clean up and reopening of the port would benefit Japan by giving the country a key hub for delivery of humanitarian development assistance in this battered region.

"With this port reopened, humanitarian assistance possibilities from this port are limitless," he said.

After concluding the day's events, Peterson said he looks forward to the future possibility of working with the Japanese in their time of need.

"They are already doing an outstanding job with the equipment they have," he said. "If we have the opportunity to integrate into their system and provide support with our assets, it will only enhance relief productivity in the area and help get the job done."

USNS Safeguard (T-ARS 50) is one-of-four Military Sealift Command Rescue and Salvage Ships and is part of the 42 ships in the Military Sealift Command Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force. *Safeguard* is forward-deployed to Sasebo, Japan.

INSIDE

Humanitarian assistance supplies bound for Japan

***USS Essex* (LHD 2) on-loaded humanitarian assistance and disaster relief supplies for Japan after it was hit by a massive earthquake and tsunami March 11.**

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Soldiers assist Sailors by providing care to animals

On a base dominated by Navy personnel, Army veterinarians and veterinarian technicians spend countless hours a week providing care to Navy working dogs, pets and stray animals.

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