Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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Festival celebrates historical event between United States, Japan

Story and photo by Mark Elrod, CFAY Public Affairs

Sailors from Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) participated in the annual Kurihama Perry Festival by performing as historical figures in a parade held in Kurihama, Japan July 17.

This year, approximately 20,000 people attended the festival and parade, and approximately 95,000 people attended the fireworks display.

The festival, which is held every July, is meant to commemorate the landing of Commodore Matthew Perry in Kurihama and is sponsored by the Kurihama Tourist Association, Kurihama Shopping Mall and Yokosuka City.

In 1853, Commodore Matthew C. Perry visited Japan aboard the *USS Susquehanna*, flag ship of the U.S. Navy East India Squadron, accompanied by three war vessels to present the Tokugawa Shogunate with a letter from U.S. President Millard Fillmore. In 1854, the United States and Japan signed a treaty of amity and commerce.

The parade went through Kurihama Shopping mall to Keikyu Kurihama train station and featured Yokosuka Mayor Yuto Yoshida, CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. David Owen and other distinguished guests, followed by entertainment in the form of cheerleaders, marching bands, a drum and fife corps and Japanese folk dance groups.

Sailors from the 7th Fleet Band march through the streets of Kurihama during a festival held July 17 in celebration of Commodore Matthew Perry's 1853 expedition to Japan. His expedition resulted in the Tokugawa Shogunate opening Japanese ports to foreign trade. This year, approximately 20,000 people attended the festival and parade.

In the parade, six CFAY Sailors - Chief Religious Programs Specialist Lisa Wimbush, Chief Personnel Specialist (SW/AW) John Valentin, Fire Controlman 1st Class (SW) Walter Haward, Mater-at-Arms 1st Class (SW) Adladdin Slate, Yeoman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Tomorror Caine and Cryptologic Technician (Technical) 2nd Class Arthur Bailey, dressed as Commodore Perry and his crew in 19th-century-era Navy costumes, and waved and shook hands with spectators.

Unlike other events where Americans help celebrate Japanese events or Japanese helping to celebrate United States events, the Kurihama festival is a good way for Americans and Japanese to celebrate a historical event that involved both countries.

"I like doing events that involve Japanese and American cultural history and I think that it's a good experience for me and everybody else in Japan," said Slate, who played the role of Capt. Franklin Buchanan in the parade. "It helps our relationship with Japan. It shows that we are interested in the Japanese people and their culture and their country."

Slate enjoys participating in local events and thinks that others would enjoy the experience as well.

"Every chance I get, I participate in the Japanese parades. I participated in this particular parade last year… and it was just as fun as it was this year," said Slate. "I would highly recommend anybody from the CFAY community, whether they are military or civilian, to participate in these types of events. If they have an opportunity, they need to jump on it."

USNH Yokosuka deploys staff; reduces Negishi clinic services

Story and photo by Ben Avey, USNH Yokosuka Public Affairs

This summer and fall, nearly 70 medical staff from U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Yokosuka will deploy in support of overseas contingency operations and Navy missions worldwide. From Iraq to Afghanistan, on land and at sea, USNH Yokosuka Sailors are, and will continue to be, on the front lines of the United States military mission abroad.

As a military treatment facility, these deployments occur regularly and are prepared for in advance to minimize the effect on beneficiaries. However, due to the fluid nature of deployments and other workforce shaping variables, USNH Yokosuka currently has more medical providers deployed than expected. As such, some changes to services are anticipated as the hospital adapts to operational requirements of our Navy and Marine Corps.

"It is important for folks to know that we may make some changes, but we do so for the benefit of our entire community," said USNH Yokosuka Commanding Officer Capt. Kevin Moore. "We are committed to caring for their needs no matter what challenges present themselves."

Regrettably, one noticeable change will be the reduction in services at Branch Health Annex (BHA) Yokohama on board Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Negishi Housing Detachment after Aug. 13. While emergency ambulance response will remain, primary care services will no longer be offered at that facility. USNH Yokosuka will be consolidating those services to the core hospital facility.

"We have exhausted all of our options and have no choice but to reduce services at BHA Yokohama," said Moore. "It's a shame and I wish we didn't have to do it, but with fewer medical providers on hand right now, we need to assign them to the clinics where they can see the most patients."

Blue Star flags honoring USNH Yokosuka medical staff who are currently deployed as individual augmentees in support of overseas contingency operations and Navy missions around the world are proudly displayed at the hospital. Due to these deployments, a reduction in Branch Health Annex Yokohama services at Negishi Housing Detachment will begin after Aug. 13.

Due to the shift of care to the main hospital and deployment of medical providers, patients may encounter longer wait times for appointments. However, USNH Yokosuka is using creative solutions to mitigate these potential delays.

"We are trying to ease the scheduling congestion by giving patients more options regarding the providers they see," said Director for Medical Services Capt. (Dr.) Treyce Knee. "For example, patients under the age of 17 are now scheduled to see pediatrics providers who can provide more timely access to care than the family practice clinic where we are short on staff."

Other solutions include a special clinic Aug. 28 for local student's sports physicals. Sports physicals are required annually for many students who participate in extracurricular activities and regularly clog the clinic schedules in the months prior to the start of the school year.

The community can also help by ensuring that patients call the hospital to cancel or reschedule appointments 24 hours in advance if they can't make it. Last summer 1,560 appointments were wasted due to patient "no-shows."

INSIDE

Yokosuka ships arrive in Busan for port visit

Sailors aboard *USS McCampbell* (DDG 85), *USS John S. McCain* (DDG 56) and *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) arrived in South Korea, July 21 for a port visit.

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Yokosuka Seabee caps 21-year career with retirement ceremony

PWD Yokosuka Self-Help Project Supervisor Senior Chief Builder (SCW) Eric L. Tapia capped a successful 21-year career as a Seabee with his retirement ceremony July 16.

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