Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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Yokosuka celebrates 35th annual Mikoshi Parade

By Paul Long, CFAY Public Affairs

A team of volunteers representing Commander Fleet Activities, Yokosuka (CFAY) marched in a procession as Yokosuka City celebrated its 35th annual Mikoshi Parade Sept. 16.

According to Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Special Activities Manager John Saito, *mikoshi* are portable shrines that carry a local Shinto shrine's deity.

Mikoshi can be very elaborate and require several people to carry them.

"They are very heavy and the weight of them is unknown "because it's impossible to weigh God," said Saito

Approximately 60 people volunteered to carry the shrine that represents all CFAY commands

"This is a good friendship event," Saito said "The community… they love to see Americans carry mikoshi and they like to hear everyone scream *Washoi*!"

Saito explained that word washoi has no direct translation, but it's a cheer used to motivate the people carrying the shrine.

According to Hideo Hayashi, a resident of Yokosuka's Uraga district, his neighborhood association partnered with the Minami Sano Omikoshi Hozonkai association, which built and donated the mikoshi that the CFAY team carried. Hayashi also said that for the past 15 years, the Minami Sano association has donated a mikoshi to CFAY.

"*Washoi* is the traditional chant…and CFAY is the only group that used the chant today," Hayashi said.

Saito said that he's been involved with this festival for the past 18 years and that there were 75 *mikoshi* (shrines) and *dashi* (floats) representing various Yokosuka neighborhoods that participated in the parade. "It's a big parade that combines the city and the base," he said.

The parade kicked off at 10:30 a.m. on Dobuita Street, the main street in the center of Yokosuka city, and ended on base in the parking lot adjacent to the bowling alley. The parade route covered 1.5 miles.

Yokosuka base officials say that more than 24,000 people visited the base.

Lauren Hamburg, a contractor working at Commander, Submarine Group Seven, said that she grew up in Misawa (northern Japan), as a child and played the *taiko*, a specific type of Japanese drum.

"I'm here to support Japan by participating in their events and build camaraderie with the command and the Japanese," she said.

Accoring to Mike Lutman, a contractor at Afloat Training Group Western Pacific, it was his seventh time participating in the mikoshi parade.

"It's quite different from seeing and doing," he said.

Members of the local community purchase popular American foods from various vendors at CFAY during the 35th Annual Yokosuka Mikoshi Parade Oct. 16. More than 24,000 visitors attended the parade as it made its way through CFAY promoting positive relations between CFAY and the local community.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Devon Dow

CFAY volunteers carry a mikoshi shrine during the 35th Annual Yokosuka Mikoshi Parade Sept. 16.

Photo by Paul Long

USS Mustin visits center for children in Thailand

By MC3 Corey Hensley, *USS Frank Cable* Public Affairs

RAYONG, Thailand – Sailors from the *USS Mustin* (DDG 89) visited the Camillian Social Center in Rayong, Thailand, an establishment for children who suffer from HIV/AIDS, Oct. 22 as part of a port visit to Thailand.

Sailors were honored to have the opportunity to visit with the kids. More than 30 Sailors signed up for the community service project and departed the pier within five hours of the signup sheet's posting.

During the visit Sailors toured the center to see the children's daily routines and played various games from soccer and football to Frisbee with more than 80 children.

"The children always love visitors and I'm really thrilled that the Navy decided to come here," said Paul Baird, longtime English volunteer to the center. "It's nice to have younger people visit for a change because they can play with the children and spread smiles, a lot of our older volunteers like me try to play with the children but we have a hard time keeping up."

After the tour and games Sailors were treated to a Catholic children's hymn sung by the children. Following the hymn, Chief Intelligence Specialist (SW/AW) Fuller, the community service event coordinator, spoke a few words.

"I feel blessed to be here today and I sincerely hope that we can visit again in the future," said Fuller. "We came with the intent to put smiles on your faces but I think the children here far out did us. As we say in the Navy, fair winds and following seas, which really means we hope good blessings come to you on and on into the future."

Mustin arrived in Lam Chabang, Thailand Oct. 21 for a port visit. While in port, the crew is participating in community service projects and engaging with their Royal Thai Navy counterparts in an effort to build upon existing ties between the U.S. and Kingdom of Thailand.

FC1 Harold Singleton assigned to *USS Mustin* (DDG 89), plays catch with a child during a community service project at the Camillian Social Center Rayong Thailand Oct. 22. The center is for children who suffer from HIV/AIDS. While in port, the crew of *Mustin* will participate in community service projects in an effort to build upon existing ties between the two nations.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Mikey Mulcare

INSIDE

Celebrities greet fans, sign autographs during visit

Retired MLB pitcher Randy Johnson and well known movie and TV actor Dennis Haysbert met with fans and signed autographs during their visit on board CFAY Oct. 11.

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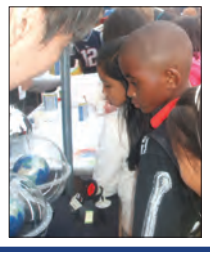

Energy Fair caps a week of The Sullivans School field trips

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka sponsored an energy fair on the Red Brick Courtyard outside the Commissary Oct. 19.

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