GW CSADD Sailors volunteer at Society for Protection of Children

Story and photo by MCSN Jacob I. Allison, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

HONG KONG – Sailors aboard the forward-deployed nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) took time away from their Hong Kong port visit liberty Friday to participate in a community service project working with the local Society for the Protection of Children (SPC).

Fifteen Sailors spent the afternoon reading to Hong Kong children and helping to clean the SPC's headquarters.

Sailors who participated were members of the Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions (CSADD), an organization which was founded in 2008 with the goal of helping U.S. Sailors engage in recreational fun without alcohol.

"We organize events for our Sailors to have a good time," said Avionics Technician First Class Shamiya Allen, president of CSADD Chapter 73. "There's no alcohol involved so we show them how to have fun without it."

"We really appreciate the Navy coming out here and helping us," said Harmony Lee, an SPC employee who helped to organize the project. "It's seldom the children get to interact with foreigners, so it makes a big difference when they can read and work on their English."

SPC was established in 1926 to provide assistance and education to needy children in Hong Kong. This year SPC celebrates its 85th anniversary and *George Washington* Sailors are proud to be a part of their history.

"We had a great time reading to the children, it's all about the kids," said Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 1st Class Vincent Cooper from Smith Station, Ala. "I'd definitely do it again, it's good to give a little back."

"It's a little challenging because they aren't very fluent in English and they're just kids so they have a brief attention span, but it's fun and they laugh," said Aviation Structural Mechanic 3rd Class Antoinette Wade from Winston Salem, N.C. After spending time with the children, Sailors helped clean the building, scrubbing down walls and playground equipment.

AZ1 Vincent Cooper from Smith Station, Ala., a member of the Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions stationed aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73), reads a children's book to young children at the Society for the Protection of Children's headquarters building during a community service project in Hong Kong Nov. 12.

CSADD boasts more than 100 members and organizes four events at each liberty port and one event each weekend while the *George Washington* is in her homeport at Fleet Activities Yokosuka.

George Washington was the first aircraft carrier to host a CSADD chapter.

Cowpens visits Hong Kong

By MC1 N. Ross Taylor, *USS Cowpens* Public Affairs

HONG KONG – The Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser *USS Cowpens* (CG 63) arrived in Hong Kong, Nov. 9, for a scheduled port visit.

In addition to participating in community service projects, more than 40 *Cowpens* Sailors will experience the hospitality of 15 families who will host them in their homes and at local restaurants for lunch or dinner through the "Meals in the Home" program.

"Meals in the Home" is an exchange program designed to connect U.S. families living in Hong Kong with U.S. Navy Sailors to enjoy a bit of home, even when they are so far away.

More than 20 Sailors have volunteered to spend their liberty time interacting with the students at the Kowloon Sam Yuk School during a community service project. The Sailors will assist teachers, have conversations with the students in English and share some of their cultural differences and experiences.

The crew will also have the opportunity to experience Hong Kong through Morale, Welfare and Recreation tours like a cultural heritage tour, an ocean park tour, a "Harbor Night" cruise and a "Summit to Sea" mountain bike excursion.

"Hong Kong is a favorite port of many of our Sailors, one rich with culture and history," said *Cowpens* Command Master Chief Bryan Hawkins, a native of Oakland, Calif. "Over the next few days, our Sailors will enjoy the warm hospitality and vibrant city landscapes this international city so proudly embraces. We look forward to creating new and lasting friendships while participating in community service projects and while on liberty."

Cowpens is forward deployed to Yokosuka, Japan, and is underway in the 7th Fleet area of responsibility conducting routine maritime operations.

Operating in the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean, the U.S. 7th Fleet is the largest of the forward-deployed U.S. fleets, covering 48 million square miles, with approximately 60-70 ships, 200-300 aircraft, and 40,000 Sailors and Marines assigned at any time.

USS Blue Ridge announces command Sailors of the Year

From *USS Blue Ridge* Public Affairs

USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19) named the command's Sailors of the Year during a commanding officer's call on the flight deck Nov. 9.

Capt. Daniel Grieco, *Blue Ridge* commanding officer, announced Information Systems Technician 1st Class (SW/AW) Martin Rudolph, Senior Sailor of the Year; Electronics Technician 2nd Class (SW/AW) Ryan James, Junior Sailor of the Year; and Ships' Serviceman (SW) Seaman James Graham, Blue Jacket of the Year were selected.

"I have a lot of people to thank for putting me in this position, including my mentor, [Chief Electronics Technician (SW) Alfonso Trival]," said James. "A lot of my success is because of the great team around me."

Chief Electronics Technician (SW) Scott Cassin said James' constant professionalism and the amount of time he puts into his work is unparalleled.

"He has made many sacrifices to ensure mission accomplishment," said Cassin.

Cassin said James always prioritizes to make sure the jobs get done.

Ship's Serviceman 2nd Class (SW) Richard Molina said Graham's volunteer work highlighted his selection as Blue Jacket of the Year.

"I'm very impressed by his efforts over the last year," said Molina. "He volunteered to represent *Blue Ridge* and help hundreds of fellow Sailors file their taxes this last year. That's just one example of the kind of volunteering he has done."

Rudolph said that he had a memorable experience when he found out he received the award.

"I told my wife and she said 'Congratulations for being nominated,'" said Rudolph. "I had to explain to her that I actually won. She was very excited."

Blue Ridge Sailors of the Year will compete against awardees, from other Commander Task Force (CTF) 76 commands, for CTF-76 Sailor of the Year awards.