Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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Sailors enjoy turkey, football, Thanksgiving at Liberty Center

Story and photos by Joe Schmitt, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Morale, Welfare and Recreation Spectrum Lounge celebrated Thanksgiving with the single Sailors and geographical bachelors from the local community Nov. 25.

The event was called Thanksgiving leftovers because it took place on the Friday after Thanksgiving.

"We brought in breakfast food and we've been open since five this morning," said David Moses, support coordinator at the center. "It's the first year we've had this event. We're still in the first game and we've already had more that 100 people come through."

Football games that usually take place on Thanksgiving evening play early Friday morning in Japan where the Sailors work.

Fans of the teams and people who just like football showed up, chowed down, kicked their feet up, and rooted for their favorite players.

"The holidays can be different for these guys who might be away from their family and friends for the first time. We like to give them a place where they don't have to spend money just to enjoy their time over here," said Moses.

Most of the Sailors in the center during the games were from ships *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) and other ships forward deployed to CFAY that returned to Yokosuka days before the game.

"If we were underway, we'd probably miss the game. Even if we were in port, there's cleaning stations and they turn off the TV. It's good to come here and watch the game," said Machinist Mate 3rd Class Dustin Thomas, stationed on *USS George Washington* (CVN 73).

(Left) Inside the Spectrum Lounge, MM3 Dustin Thomas, stationed on *USS George Washington* (CVN 73), celebrates his team, the Dallas Cowboy, as they win against the Miami Dolphins. The event, held on the morning after Thanksgiving, allowed local Sailors to enjoy the football games they want to see in the unique setting duty in Japan provides.

Thomas was excited when his team, the Dallas Cowboys, went on to win the game against the Miami Dolphins.

"It was great to see them on the big screen. It was a pretty perfect atmosphere in here and I got to sit here with other Cowboy fans. It was good."

The Spectrum Lounge also offered video games, where all the Sailors were playing football games, and computers, where some Sailors managed their fantasy teams and checked on their teams.

In the middle of all the football some were trying to connect with loved ones in the states.

"We have some computers setup so Sailors can call their families. We have Skype and they get in contact with their families during the holidays," said Moses.

More Sailors kept coming and other games were scheduled to play later in the day.

With the positive response from this years event, Moses said there would probably be a similar event next year.

Blue Ridge, 7th Fleet Sailors mentor Yokosuka JROTC students

Story and photo by Brian A. Stone

MOUNT FUJI, Japan – Several *USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) Sailors and embarked 7th Fleet staff mentored Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) high school students on Mount Fuji during a JROTC weekend boot camp Nov. 18-21.

Four platoons of students from Nile C. Kinnick High School, a Department of Defense Dependents School located in Yokosuka, Japan, participated.

The JROTC students three-day training event ended with the last day of competition between the platoons, which included marching and sports competitions.

One volunteer instructor, Operation's Specialist 1st Class Timothy Jones, said he felt the event was about teaching leadership skills and showing the young adults a different side of life.

"You really see the recruits change in those three days," said Jones. "I really hope it will help them learn from my experiences and become better young men and women."

Many of the volunteers said they felt a parental responsibility for the teens, at times teaching them about military life, at other times serving as a father or mother figure for them.

"My father set a good foundation for my life and was always there for me," said Jones. "We teach them to never give up, to never quit or be too proud to ask for help. In some ways, I'm teaching them the same lessons my father taught me when I was their age."

According to Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Danielle Humphrey, she gave similar mentorship to the dozens of female recruits she looked after during the boot camp event.

***USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) and embarked 7th Fleet staff members gather together for a group photograph at the base of Mount Fuji, Nov. 20, after volunteering for a weekend Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) "boot camp" training opportunity.**

"Some feel pressure to live up to their parents' expectations," said Humphrey. "Even though we are marching them in groups and teaching them to work as a team, we're also teaching them to be individuals. Whether the recruits join the military or not, I try to teach them lessons that will make them successful in life."

Chief Aerographer's Mate Chi Maxey said molding the JROTC students is his favorite part of the three day boot camp evolution.

"My main goal is to make them better people when they complete their challenges," said Maxey. "But, it's also about having fun. At that young age, they pick up everything quickly and it's fun for them to just take projects and run with them."

INSIDE

Club Alliance offers evening of culture with *Nippon* Night

CFAY MWR Club Alliance held their Nippon Night dinner and entertainment extravaganza in the third-floor ballroom of the club Nov. 12.

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Afloat Training Group bazaar provides oportunity to shop, help children

Afloat Training Group Western Pacific (ATGWP) Yokosuka held its semiannual bazaar in Yokosuka Middle School's gym Nov. 20.

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