Volunteers honored at Sullivans celebration

By Steve Parker,
The Sullivans Elementary School Public Affairs

Volunteers who selflessly gave of their precious time all year long were recognized at a volunteer recognition ceremony in The Sullivans Elementary School gym May 12. Following the assembly, volunteers, staff and students broke bread together at a luncheon served up by grateful teachers at the school cafeteria.

Volunteers were nominated by teachers at the classroom level for helping out wherever needed all year long. Volunteers help in copious ways to enrich the student's experience. In classrooms, they read to students, perform clerical duties, chaperone field trips and, or tutor as needed. They are an invaluable resource and their contributions are sorely needed and greatly appreciated by everyone who comes in contact with them.

In addition to volunteering for a child's teacher, Sailors and civilians at the school have several avenues by which they can share their talents. The school has partnered with various commands on Yokosuka base through the classroom mentorship program. Sailors mentor classrooms from grades sure start through fifth grade. The mentors form a partnership with their classroom teacher and take a special interest in helping their adopted students develop into successful learners and world-class citizens. For more information about the classroom mentorship program, contact Audrey Murphy, school counselor at 243-7336.

Another avenue for volunteerism is The Dolphin Reading Academy of which the primary goal is to impact the reading performance of students at the school. This year's program included students, Sailors and civilians from Nile C. Kinnick High School (KHS) cadets, KHS National Honor Society, Yokosuka Middle School National Junior Honor Society, D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistence Education) officers, *USS George Washington* (CVN 73), the American Red Cross, United Services Organization and individual volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering to help students read through the Dolphin Reading Academy, contact Vice Principal Laverne Outen at 243-7336.

No discussion of volunteerism at The Sullivans School would be complete without mention of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Sullivans is often referred to as the flagship of Department of Defense Dependent Schools Pacific. If that is true, our PTO is the ship upon which our flag flies. This longstanding organization supports our students and teachers by raising funds, working in classrooms, coordinating school pictures, holding carnivals, running a school store, arranging author visits and staging scholastic book fairs to name a few. They are our go-to organization of can-do volunteers who have been there for Sullivans for many years.

Bethany Thornton, Sullivans 2012 PTO president quotes Lily Tomlin, when she thinks of why she serves. "I always wondered why somebody doesn't do something about that. Then I realized I was somebody." If you are also that someone, please join our PTO team. You can e-mail us at sullivanspto@gmail.com for more information.

In conclusion, a simple thank you is all we at Sullivans wholeheartedly render to you, our volunteers, for your efforts on our behalf. We cannot say it enough, from all of us to all of you, Thank you. Your contributions are welcome and our gratitude is immense.

The Sullivans School choir, directed by Tamara Choate, shows their gratitude to volunteers both musically and with signs during the school's Volunteer Recognition ceremony held May 12.

Photo by Patrice Noma

Ikego Town Hall meeting addresses community's questions, concerns

From CFAY Public Affairs

The following is the question and answer session from the Ikego Housing Detachment Town Hall meeting held May 17:

Q: If we are to experience blackouts in Ikego, how will we know in advance? Additionally, we hear public announcements in Japanese and we don't know what is being said. Who can we contact to find out what is being said in the announcement?

A: When Tokyo Electric and Power Co. (TEPCO) puts out a Rolling Blackout schedule, it will be posted on the base channel 15, our Facebook page and the Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) website. You can contact the Ikego Housing Detachment Fire Department and ask for a bilingual speaker to explain what the announcement said.

Q: Can we get designated areas for smokers? Some of us are getting secondhand smoke into our apartments from those who are smoking on their balconies?

A: This request cannot be supported. There is no Navy policy prohibiting smoking on balconies in military family housing. Residents are expected to be good neighbors and talk with each other and find solutions. Often, it may only be a matter of compromise and shutting a window temporarily. If the residents concerned cannot come to an agreement, then they should contact housing for assistance. Housing will help mediate between the occupants, as needed. There is currently not enough of a demand to secure smoking on all balconies, as a general policy.

Q: Can we get the bathrooms on the main playground opened?

A: This action is completed.

Q: Can we get the pool rules posted in a better location where they can be plainly seen by everyone and enforced by the life guards without them randomly modifying them?

A: Yes, there will signs posted clearly at all pools this summer and guards will be trained on the rules so that they are enforced consistently. If a patron notices any inconsistencies in the enforcement of these rules, contact Amy Jo Jenkins at 243-5052.

Q: Can we get some kind of tarp covering on the playground to provide shade?

A: This request cannot be supported. Costs associated with the purchase, installation and high maintenance requirements of covers at playgrounds make this request impractical. Permanent canopies present a significant safety hazard during typhoons or other high wind events due to their large sail area. As portable devices, they are subject to removal and, or replacement often (during high winds) resulting in additional costs that cannot be readily supported with current limited financial resources.

Q: Can we get gates for the playground?

A: This request is approved. Housing will submit projects to have playgrounds fenced and gated.

Q: What can be done about the large number of unsupervised children at the playgrounds and too many older kids climbing on top of the playground equipment?

A: A Supervision of Children and Curfew statement will be published.

Q: What can be done about the large number of stray animals?

A: Base security will deploy additional animal traps in support of this need.

Q: Can the bubble gym stay open on rainy days?

A: The indoor Sprung Structure Gymnasium will be open during the summer months (once school is out) on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays from 2 to 6 p.m. These days and times were determined based on historical use of the facility and also to avoid conflicts with Youth Sports and Youth Center programs. If there were in fact days in the past where the facility did not open during scheduled hours, we apologize for the oversight. If you notice this in the future contact John Benningfield or duty manager at the Purdy Fitness Center at 243-5398.

Q: Why do we need to submit a request to the Yokosuka Housing Office to use a party room here?

A: You don't. You request at housing here in Ikego and they send the request to Yokosuka.

Q: Can I start a private yoga business on base?

A: Unfortunately, it must be contracted through Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR).

Q: Why is the Child Development Center (CDC) waiting list not moving even though there are people on the list that are no longer here?

A: The CDC is short-staffed. They cannot take people off the list unless they are notified officially that they are no longer here.

Q: What is the base doing to support the urgent need for energy conservation?

A: By not scheduling any sporting events at night and turning off lights in parking garages. Additionally, energy conservation tips have been publicized in the Seahawk, on Facebook, the CFAY website and channel 15. We welcome your ideas and suggestions as well.

Q: Can important information be delivered door to door? Can we designate a door-to-door "Smile" person?

A: Unfortunately, this request cannot be supported as we don't have the manning.

Q: I feel Ikego is third-rate to Yokosuka. What can be done to improve this?

A: It's unfortunate that you feel that way. Significant efforts are made by CFAY leadership and the installation officers in charge (OIC) to provide the same or equitable standard of living of all of its residents of Yokosuka, Ikego and Negishi. However, because Yokosuka is the larger of the facilities, it can accommodate more activities than its smaller detachments. The OIC offices are always open to recommendations that will make on base living better keeping in mind that all recommendations may not be feasible for economical or logistical reasons.

Q: Can the Housing Office leave a note to say they are going to be entering a resident and give a week or so notice to give the resident a chance to contact housing? That way housing can enter the unoccupied units to turn off or unplug electrical items to save power.

A: There is a current process to address this situation. Occupants are required to leave notification with housing when they are absent from quarters for seven days or longer. When notification is made, residents are reminded to turn off all electrical appliances and lights. If a resident notices that neighbors are temporarily absent from quarters, and have left lights on, then they should notify housing as soon as possible. Housing will take the authorized action to secure these lights.

Q: Is it possible for us to switch from a five-day, eight-hour a day work week to a four-day 10- hour a day work week? This could save a lot of electrical power.

A: Thank you for your suggestion. Switching the work week for U.S. civil service and Japanese master labor contract employees is more difficult for overseas installations than it is for bases in the United States. For master labor contract employees, which are the bulk of the installation work force, CFAY is mandated to comply with Japan labor laws, which do not readily accommodate compressed work schedules with regards to work hours, leave and other conditions of employment. We are however, considering other alternatives to conserve energy and stagger peak hour consumption.

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