



Vitale pays visit to CFAY during western pacific tour

Story and photo by Mark Elrod, CFAY Public Affairs

During his tour of western pacific U.S. Navy installations, Commander Navy Installations Command (CNIC) Vice Adm. Michael C. Vitale paid a visit to Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) May 4.

Having served as commanding officer of *USS John S. McCain* (DDG 56) from April 1996 to December 1997, Vitale is no stranger to CFAY and the city of Yokosuka. "My general take away is things are a lot newer," said Vitale. "There's been a very good maintenance program as far as updating things. There has been some significant improvement in the way the base has been maintained."

Though noticing that the base has been maintained well throughout the years, what really stood out to him was how CFAY personnel facilitated his visit.

"The most impressive thing has been the customer service level from the base support facilities, whether it's the Fleet and Family Support Center, the PSD (Personnel Support Detachment), the fleet recreation center... all aspects of customer service has been very good," he said.

For CNIC, customer service is a very important aspect concerning quality of life on naval installations.

"Any of our overseas bases represent a significant challenge to us in order to take care of our Sailors, our families and their ability to do their jobs," he said. "So, we are focused on ensuring that we provide the best service we can, so they can do the best job that they can."

The fact that his office selected CFAY as the recipient of the Commander in Chief Installation Excellence Award is proof that CFAY is headed in the right direction.

"I think CFAY has done an outstanding job of providing those services to our Sailors, their families and to the fleet to continue to do their mission," he said. "In a time when we have scarce resources and will continue to have scarce resources, CFAY has done a phenomenal job of applying those scarce resources in a very efficient and effective way that ensures that our Sailors and families are taken care of."

I'm very proud when I go to our bases and see the support that [the commands] are providing to our Sailors and families," Vitale said. "Keep up the great work."



(Left) CNFJ Rear Adm. Rick Wren, CNIC Vice Adm. Michael C. Vitale, CFAY Public Works Officer Cmdr. Tim DeWitt and CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. Daniel Weed stop by Berth 12 to examine a display of recent base improvements during Vitale's visit to CFAY May 4.

Established October 1, 2003, CNIC is the Echelon II command under the Chief of Naval Operations responsible for navywide shore installation management. The intent of CNIC is to establish a single shore installation management organization that will focus on installation effectiveness and improve the shore installation management community's ability to support the fleet.

Customer Appreciation Weekend wows CFAY

By Dan Bowen, CFAY Public Affairs

Navy Exchange (NEX) Yokosuka showed its gratitude to Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) residents by hosting the Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR)/NEX Customer Appreciation Weekend May 1-3.

The weekend showcased bargains in the main store along with an array of activities and events outside the store that entertained, educated and amazed NEX patrons.

The weekend featured the magic of Ryan Oakes, the



A large crowd gathers at the red brick area to take part in an array of activities and events that entertained, educated and amazed NEX patrons during the MWR/NEX Customer Appreciation Weekend held May 1-3 aboard CFAY.

Photo by Kai Sullivan

high-flying martial artistry of Sideswipe, the music of Edwin McCain and the amazing stunts of the Vans BMX team. The two-day long event also featured a car giveaway, free trips to Australia, Hong Kong and Singapore as well as a \$12,000 cash giveaway.

Commander Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM) Rear Admiral Robert Bianchi was on hand for the event and was thankful for the beautiful May weather and the ability to join in the celebration with the community.

"They (vendors, performers) love doing this," said Bianchi. "They are honestly committed to supporting the military and their families. They genuinely enjoy doing this as their way to show their appreciation for all that folks do out here, sacrificing for our freedom."

For Chief Electronics Technician Reymond Hatten, whose son volunteered to have a BMX rider jump over him as he stood on one of the ramps, the event was a great way for his son to experience a little Americana.

"This is my third overseas tour, [my children] don't really know what it's like being in the states," said Hatten. "This brings part of it to them, it's just wonderful for them."

The NEX has been hosting Customer Appreciation Weekend for several years, but until this year, the event has been limited to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and Naples, Italy. The event became so popular among the military communities, vendors and performers involved however, that NEX decided to ask MWR to become involved and help bring the event around the world.

"This is the first one we've done in Yokosuka, so we're ecstatic about being able to come out here and give back to the Navy community here in Japan," said Bianchi. "This event took a whole lot of planning, coordination and effort months in advance. And to bring it all together today, I just want to thank all the folks involved, the MWR team, our vendors, all of our associates in the Exchange, and everyone on base for making us feel welcome here. We look forward to coming back."

MCPON honors Navy spouses

By MCPON(SS/SW) Rick D. West

"When I took this job in December, I made a promise to every one of you that I would do everything in my power to ensure you are supported, that you have the quality of life you deserve and when your loved ones are deployed, our Navy will take care of you when you need it.

These were not just words, and I will say the same thing to every family member or Sailor I meet. This is very important to me because I know of the sacrifices our families make so that our Sailors can defend this nation.

The life of a Navy spouse is unlike any other. We ask that you give us your husbands and wives for months at a time. We ask you to support them because nothing is more important to their peace of mind. We ask you to understand the weekend watches, the deployments, the missed holidays and birthdays. You continue to give and ask for very little in return.

We are grateful for that, but we owe you a huge debt. We owe you an equal amount of understanding for the sacrifices you make, and I can promise that you have that from Navy leadership.

May 8 is Military Spouse Appreciation Day and, we will pause a moment that day to thank you appropriately. Please take my word on this when I tell you the appreciation we have for what you do goes far beyond one day per year.

Thank you for your continued support of your Sailor, our Navy and our nation. HOOYAH!"