



## Fleet Reserve Association honors senior Sailors of the Year

Story and photo by Mark Elrod,  
CFAY Public Affairs

Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) Branch 103 honored local Sailors of the Year (SOY) with its annual SOY luncheon in the Silver Dollar room of Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Chief Petty Officers' Club April 8.

"The purpose of the Sailor of the Year luncheon is for us, [members] from the local fleet reserve branch, to recognize all of the senior Sailors of the year and to show our appreciation [to them]," said Master Chief Damage Controlman (SW/AW) David Singer, who is FRA Branch 103 vice president.

According to Singer, the luncheon, which is solely sponsored by FRA Branch 103, is important because it serves a couple of purposes.

For one, any Sailor who is chosen as SOY, by their respective command, is done so after comparisons with other Sailors within his or her command. The fact that a Sailor gets chosen by their command as SOY is significant and the luncheon recognizes Sailors for this accomplishment.

"I think it's good," said Culinary Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW) Deforest Leonard Pittman, who is Commander Destroyer Squadron 15 SOY. "They didn't have to do it, because we had a luncheon already and a banquet, but this here extends their appreciation."

In addition to showing appreciation, the luncheon serves as a way of introducing, or recruiting, members into the organization.

"Part of what we award them... is a one-year free membership," said Singer. "So, if they are not already members, they can become accustomed to it and maybe



Yokosuka's sea and shored based Sailors of the Year (SOY) received recognition during the annual Fleet Reserve Association Branch 103 SOY Luncheon in the Silver Dollar room of the Chief Petty Officers' Club aboard CFAY April 8.

they'll want to get involved in the organization."

The FRA, which was founded in 1924 by Navy Chief Yeoman George L. Carlin, is a congressionally chartered, non-profit organization that speaks before U.S. Congress on behalf of the sea-service community (Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard) regarding issues such as the pay and benefits of enlisted service members and their families.

Additionally, FRA helps its members with career issues through close relationships with the government agencies.

"I never even knew about the Fleet Reserve Association," said Pittman. "Now that I know about it,

I'm going to spread the word and, not only use my one year free membership, but also try to get more members."

Though the FRA represents the sea-service community members globally, the organization practices philanthropy locally, as well.

"This is [only] one event of [many] that we do throughout the year, this is a pretty high-level event, but our local branch is involved in a lot of charities and community organizations in the local Yokosuka area," said Singer. "So, this is not the only thing that we do."

For contact information for Branch 103 or to learn more about the FRA visit their Web site at [www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org).

## Sen. John McCain Visits *USS John S. McCain* during CODEL visit

By MC2 Byron C. Linder, Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan

Sen. John McCain of Ariz, accompanied by Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minn., and Sen. Lindsey Graham of S.C., visited the Sailors of the guided-missile destroyer *USS John S. McCain* (DDG 56) in port at the ship's forward-deployed operating base of Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, as part of a congressional delegation (CODEL) visit to the Western Pacific April 11.

During the visit, six *McCain* Sailors took advantage of a rare opportunity to have the senator who shares their ship's name deliver the oath of reenlistment on the ship's forecandle.

Following the ceremony, the senator stood on the ship named for his father and grandfather and spoke of his personal history with the ship and the Navy.

"It's great to be back on board this ship. The last time I was here was for the commissioning ceremony, and I'm proud of the work you have done," McCain said. "It's dangerous work you do and I'd like to thank the [Sailors] and their families for continuing to serve. We have the best Navy in the world because we have the best people serving."

Following his remarks, the delegation spent time meeting the Sailors of the forward-deployed naval forces in Japan who gathered from Yokosuka ships and shore commands. McCain attended a briefing in the ship's Combat Information Center (CIC), with a ship's tour closing the visit in memorable fashion.

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class (SW) Joseph Clemons, a Wonder Lake, Ill., native who reenlisted during the visit, expressed his appreciation for the senator's trip to Japan.

"It's definitely a bigger deal here in the forward-deployed naval forces to have the senator here," he said. "To take time out and come all the way here is much appreciated. I was a little nervous when I was reenlisting, but it's going to be an interesting story."

Commanded by Cmdr. Jeffrey J. Kim, *USS John S. McCain* is named in honor of Admirals John S. McCain Sr. and John S. McCain Jr. This Arleigh Burke class, guided



Sen. John McCain talks with Sailors aboard *USS John S. McCain* (DDG 56) April 11. McCain is leading a congressional delegation visit to the Western Pacific and took the opportunity to visit the ship that is named in honor of his father and grandfather.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2(SW) Adam Vernon

missile destroyer is the third commissioned warship to carry the name "John S. McCain" and is one of seven destroyers assigned to Destroyer Squadron 15.

