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# Seahawk 海鷹 Umitaka

U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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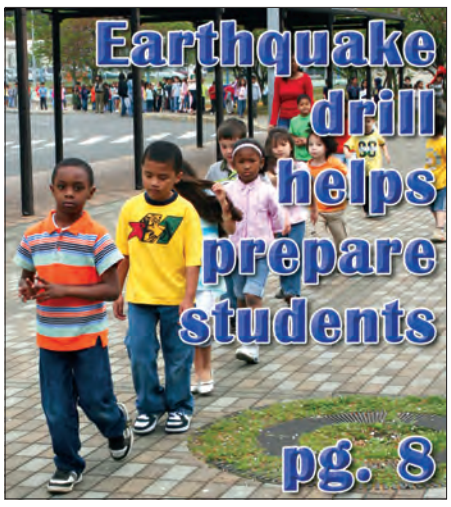


# USN, JMSDF chief petty officers strengthen ties with dining out

**Story and photo by MC3 Bryan Reckard, Navy Public Affairs Support Element**

Chief petty officers (CPO) from the U.S. Navy (USN) and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) came together for a night of strengthening ties and camaraderie at the 6th Annual USN/JMSDF CPO Dining Out celebration aboard Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) April 18.

The distinguished guests of the event included JMSDF Commander in Chief Vice Adm. Tohru Izumi, Commandant JMSDF Yokosuka District Vice Adm. Sadayoshi Matsuoka and Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan (CNFJ) Rear Adm. Richard Wren.

Senior Chief Navy Counselor (SW) Johannes Gonzalez from CNFJ, who served as Mr. Vice, said that the event celebrated not only the CPO rank, but the bond between CPOs of the two naval forces.

"We're celebrating the alliance of the chief petty officers between the Japanese Navy and, of course, the United States Navy chief petty officers," said Gonzalez.

The event also celebrated 116 years of the CPO rank in the USN, and the sixth year of the command master chief program in the JMSDF.

Gonzalez said events like these are important and help strengthen the alliance between the two nations, enhance mission capability and readiness and help all in attendance appreciate the mission of the two forces and what those missions mean for the two countries.

"It's important because of our mission. It's a time to not only celebrate our birthday, but to celebrate our deployments," said Gonzalez.

Over the course of the evening the Sailors were treated to a traditional and very lively Japanese Awa Odori dance performance and live music.

Chief Sonar Technician (Surface) (SW) William Palmer, from *USS Mustin* (DDG 89), said that it was great to experience the event and the Navy tradition of a dining out.

"It's great to have the chance to come out and celebrate the long line of tradition of the CPO dining out," said Palmer. "Tonight's about celebrating the diversity between the U.S. and Japanese forces and bringing it all together," he said.

**(Left) CNFJ Rear Adm. Richard Wren, Commander in Chief JMSDF Fleet Vice Adm. Tohru Izumi, CNFJ Regional Master Chief Bob Shannon, Master Chief Petty Officer of the JMSDF Kazuyasu Hatanaka, Commandant JMSDF Yokosuka District Vice Adm. Sadayoshi Matsuoka and JMSDF Yokosuka District Command Master Chief Tsukasa Nishi break open a ceremonial sake barrel to begin the festivities of the JMSDF-USN CPO Dining Out celebration at CFAY April 18.**

# *Fitzgerald* arrives in China, takes part in international fleet review

**Story and photo by MC2 Matthew R. White, U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs**

The forward-deployed Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer *USS Fitzgerald* (DDG 62) arrived in Qingdao, People's Republic of China, April 19, for a scheduled port visit and to take part in the 2009 International Fleet Review.

The International Fleet Review is in celebration of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy. Approximately 40 warships representing 20 nations were expected to take part in the event.

During the visit, *Fitzgerald* Sailors engaged in professional exchanges with their PLA Navy counterparts, explored the port city of Qingdao, took part in sporting events with PLA sailors, as well as met sailors from navies around the world.

"Military to military interactions between the U.S. and China are important to the collective security and prosperity of the entire Pacific region," said *Fitgerald* Commanding Officer Cmdr. Richard Dromerhauser. "Visits such as these provide the opportunity to enhance cooperation, foster mutual understanding and further develop lines of communication."

*Fitzgerald's* crew also had the opportunity to meet and interact with sailors from many nations.

"All Sailors share a common bond that transcends language, cultural backgrounds and nationality," Dromerhauser said. "The fleet review, through professional and social events, provides critical interaction between multinational mariners."

**(Left) *USS Fitgerald* (DDG 62) Commanding Officer Cmdr. Richard Dromerhauser speaks with officers of the People's Liberation Army Navy after *Fitzgerald's* arrival in the port city of Qingdao, Peoples Republic of China April 19.**

For some *Fitzgerald* Sailors, this will be their first visit to a foreign port.

Quartermaster Seaman Apprentice Leon Williams, has been aboard *Fitzgerald* for only a few months and was looking forward to visiting China for the first time.

"I feel like it's a big accomplishment just to make it here," Williams said. "I'm excited to explore the culture and interact with the people."

The U.S. 7th Fleet Band joined *Fitzgerald* Sailors in building relationships with the countries taking part in the fleet review by performing at several functions in Qingdao.

"It's great that a band can support international relationships and tie the countries together through music," said 7th Fleet Band Musician 3rd Class Drew Williams.

While *Fitzgerald's* visit to China will focus on building military relationships with the navies in attendance, Dromerhauser also recognizes the rare opportunity to build relationships with the people of Qingdao.

"We have the added opportunity to make new friends with the citizens of Qingdao as we learn more about the historic and cultural attractions of this beautiful city," he said.

*Fitzgerald* is assigned to Destroyer Squadron 15 and operates as part of the U.S. 7th Fleet based in Yokosuka, Japan. The U.S. 7th Fleet is the largest of the forward-deployed U.S. fleets, with approximately 60-70 ships, 200-300 aircraft, and 40,000 Sailors and Marines assigned to it at any given time.

## Main Gate closure

**CFAY Carney Gate (main gate) will be closed *May 12* from 8 a.m. to noon to ALL vehicle traffic due to a base exercise. All vehicle traffic will be rerouted to Womble Gate (back gate). Main gate pedestrian traffic will be limited to using only the overpass (boardwalk) entrance/exit.**