



CFAY Sailors help Shimoda celebrate 70th Black Ship Festival

Story and photo by Sean Dath,
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The city of Shimoda, Japan held its 70th annual Black Ship Festival May 15 – 17 which commemorated the arrival of Commodore Matthew C. Perry to Japan in 1854 and the subsequent opening of trade between the U.S. and Japan.

Shimoda City officials and U.S. representatives including Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan (CNFJ) Rear Adm. Richard B. Wren; Deputy U.S. Embassy Tokyo Deputy Chief of Mission Ronald Post and the Mayor of Shimoda's sister city, Newport, R.I. Jeanne-Marie Napolitano; participated in the traditional sake barrel breaking at a reception kicking off the festival.

The three-day festival also included fireworks, a reenactment of Perry's arrival, sporting events and a parade featuring Sailors from the Arleigh Burke class guided-missile destroyer *USS McCampbell* (DDG 85), members of the Nile C. Kinnick High School Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps drill team, the U.S. 7th Fleet Band and many Japanese and American participants dressed in garments of their 19th century counterparts.

"This is a great weekend because it symbolizes so many things that are important between our two nations," said Post. "I am a bit at awe at the first Americans and first Japanese that met here in Shimoda, they came from different worlds, but yet with little difficulty, they worked together."

The Black Ship Festival gave Sailors a chance to enjoy Shimoda and admire the local culture, and gave local Japanese a chance to stop them for conversation and photo opportunities, providing each with lasting memories of their time here and helping Perry's legacy live on by further strengthening the relationship between the U.S. and Japan.

"It feels good to be a part of this, being that this is the first place the U.S. interacted with the Japanese," Operations Specialist Seaman Apprentice Rantavious Jones of the *McCampbell* said. "I love it. When you put on the uniform and see the smiles and expressions on people's faces, it makes you feel good to be a part of this."



CNFJ Rear Adm. Richard Wren and his wife Diane wave to the crowd while participating in the parade during the 70th Annual Black Ship Festival in Shimoda, Japan May 16. The festival commemorates the arrival of Commodore Matthew C. Perry to Japan in 1854 and the signing of the "Treaty of Kanagawa," the first of the treaties signed between Japan and other Western countries in the 19th century.

In the mid-19th century, Japan was largely a closed society. For two centuries, Japanese ports were closed to all but a few Dutch and Chinese traders. The U.S. hoped Japan would agree to open certain ports so American vessels could begin to trade with the island kingdom. Attempts by the U. S. and other nations to establish formal relations with Japan were repeatedly rebuffed. In response to this situation, President Millard Fillmore ordered Perry to command the U.S. Navy's East India Squadron and to establish diplomatic relations with Japan. Perry delivered Fillmore's request for a treaty to a representative of the

Japanese emperor in 1853. Perry returned in 1854, arriving in Edo (modern day Tokyo) Bay, and obtained the signature of Japanese authorities to the Treaty of Kanagawa in 1854.

As a result of the treaty, a U.S. consul was stationed at Shimoda, U.S. vessels were allowed access to the ports of Shimoda and Hakodate to obtain provisions and shipwrecked seamen from U.S. vessels were able to receive the assistance of Japanese authorities. This treaty led to significant commercial trade between the U.S. and Japan, contributed to opening Japan to other Western nations and ultimately resulted in the modernization of Japan.

USO, Disney hosts Military Family Appreciation Day aboard CFAY

By Fumiyo Sato, CFAY Public Affairs

The United Service Organizations (USO) Japan, in conjunction with Disney, hosted a Military Family Appreciation Day aboard Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) in Kosano Park May 16.

Parents and children participated in many fun activities and entertainment at the carnival-like event. The activities included face painting, scooping gold fish, a Belly dance demonstration, and small table games. Hot dogs, cotton candy and popcorn were also provided free of charge.

"It's really a day of free events that are geared towards the military and just a way for us to say thanks and show appreciation for everything they do and the sacrifices they make for our nation," said Juliet Domingo, USO country director for Japan. "This is the second year in a row that Disney has sponsored this event. We are very grateful for their sponsorship because without their support, we would not be able to provide this free event to the community."

At the booths, parents and children played various games to win Disney DVDs. Part of the sponsorship Disney provides for the military community includes thousands of free DVDs that USO distributes to military families throughout USO and the world.

"For mainland in Japan alone, we are expecting close to about 15,000 videos that we distribute to various bases in Japan and to family members," Domingo said.

Families came out not only from Yokosuka, but also from Negishi, Zama and Atsugi. Nine-year-old Negishi resident Jiya Allen came to the event with her brother and

mother. "It's fun," Allen said. "I got so many movies. I got two [DVDs] and my brother got two. I also got to see my old friend."

Along with Disney's support, volunteers contributed to the event success. *USS Lassen* (DDG 82) Personnel Specialist 2nd Class Postal Serviceman Kendell Boyer cooked hotdogs for the many guests who stood in a long line waiting. "I had some free time and I just wanted to volunteer and help everyone else," Boyer said. "It's good, you have people come out and enjoy themselves, [It's a] good chance for them to get together."

Chief Postal Clerk Daniel Miller brought his two daughters and wife to the event. "It's a nice contribution that USO is giving back for the active duty military with the free games and lunch and everything," Miller said. "So it gives us something to do together as a family and bring the kids out too."

Despite the unfavorable weather conditions, it didn't deter many families from attending the event. "It is a good turn out," Domingo said. "Last year we had about 1,700 people and this year's goal is to reach 2,000 people. I think we already exceeded the goal today."

For more information on upcoming USO events, visit <http://www.uso.org/japan>.

AT2 Edward Mason tries to catch goldfish with his daughter and son during the USO Military Family Appreciation Carnival at CFAY May 16. The carnival was sponsored by the USO and Disney to show appreciation for service members and their families.

U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Charles Oki

