Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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# Ikego Friendship Day helps bridge cultures together

**Story and photo by Mark Elrod, CFAY Public Affairs**

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Ikego Housing Detachment held its annual Ikego Friendship Day on board the detachment in the city of Zushi May 22.

The event is meant to help Americans and Japanese develop a greater appreciation for each others' friendship and culture.

"Friendship Day is important to the Japanese-American alliance," said Ikego Housing Detachment Officer-in-Charge Lt. Cmdr. Eddi Watson. "I think it's a big quality of life issue to get to know all the people around the city, to get out to know the people, to get to understand their culture, and have a better time, overall, while they are in Japan."

Zushi City Mayor Ryuichi Hirai attended the event and was grateful that Americans and Japanese get to opportunity to experience each others' culture.

"I would like to express my deep gratitude to Captain [Daniel] Weed, to Commander [Donna] Kasper, Lieutenant Commander Watson and all other staff members involved in preparing such a wonderful opportunity for many citizens to visit and spend time together to deepen their friendships with Ikego [Housing Detachment] residents," said Hirai, as he addressed the crowd during the opening ceremony. "For Lieutenant Commander Watson, this was his first Ikego Friendship Day, since he took his new post, last September. I look forward to seeing our relations being deepened further more."

**A crowd of attendees watch TheYokosuka Sparkling Spurs give an American country and western line dancing performance, during the annual Ikego Friendship Day May 22.**

During the event there were various food kiosks with Japanese and American foods, *kakigori* (shaved ice), and cotton candy.

There were also kiosks selling Japanese toys as well as large air toys for the children.

There was entertainment for the whole family, as well, in the form of performances from the 7th Fleet Band The Orient Express, Yokosuka Sparkling Spurs, Tokyo Kiss and *taiko* [Japanese drum] and Hawaiian dance performances.

Ikego Friendship Day offers a unique opportunity for Americans and Japanese to spend a day together enjoying food, entertainment and each other.

"I would encourage people to take advantage of Ikego Friendship Day, there is a lot of entertainment. It's a good place to bring the kids, a nice, safe place, a lot of things to do a lot of good food to eat, and get to know our Japanese neighbors," said Watson.

# Local personnel among Zenkokai Association award recipients

**Story and photo by MCSN Mike Mulcare, Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan**

The Nippon Zenkokai Association honored U.S. Sailors and Department of Defense (DoD) civilians for outstanding public service in the Japanese community at the Meiji-Jingu Shrine in Tokyo May 22.

The ceremony recognized nine Sailors, a DoD civilian, and five groups assigned to Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY), Commander Fleet Activities Sasebo, Naval Air Facility Atsugi and Naval Air Facility Misawa.

"These types of ceremonies are good for the relationship between America and Japan," said Interior Communications Electrician 1st Class (SW) Derrick Williams, an award winner assigned to CFAY Port Operations. "We often hear about the negative aspects of U.S. forces, but this really shines the spotlight on all the positives."

The Nippon Zenkokai Association, a non-profit organization under the control of the cabinet office of Japanese government was founded in 1951. In 1955 award nominations opened up to foreigners, including U.S. service members and civilians.

"President Kawamura Kohsho [of the Zenkokai Awards Association] and I are very grateful for the contributions of the United States forces," said Tsutomu Kojima, administrative director of the Zenkokai Awards Association. "The president is always telling me how thankful he is from the bottom of his heart for everything the United States forces do for the Japanese community."

This year's award recipients were recognized for volunteer work with homeless and handicapped citizens, foster childcare, preserving the environment, community service projects and other deeds that stood out in the public eye.

"I was put in for this award for saving a lady in Yamato," said Master-at-Arms 1st Class Michael Nixon, assigned to Naval Security at Naval Air Facility Atsugi. "She collapsed of a seizure and went into cardiac arrest and I conducted CPR and successfully resuscitated her."

The award is broken down into four categories including juvenile, emergency and international contributions, as well as a special foreigner's category.

"Ten individuals and five groups have received the award today and I've been told that this is the largest number to receive the award," said Capt. Peter B. Rush, chief of staff of U.S. Naval Forces Japan. "It may not be widely known to the public, but there are quite a few Americans who spend many hours engaging in community relations efforts including supporting orphanages, clean-up efforts and caring for the elderly."

The winners from this year's awards ceremony are:

- Interior Communications Electrician 1st Class Derrick L. Williams
- Electronics Technician 2nd Class Randy L. Brown
- Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Fuels) 3rd Class Gilberto Escobar
- Culinary Specialist 1st Class Dennis V. Adams
- Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Leah Bongbonga
- Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Michael E. Nixon
- Legalman 1st Class John McBroom
- Gunner's Mate 2nd Class Tanya A. Lovejoy
- Master-at-Arms 2nd Class William Warren Peoples
- Fleet and Family Support Center William Driscoll.

**A group of Sailors and DoD civilians receive their Zenkokai or Good Conduct Awards from the Zenkokai Selection Association President Kohsho Kawamura May 22 at the Meiji-Jingu Shrine in Tokyo. Ten individuals and five organizations were honored with the award for their public service in the Japanese community.**

"I am very proud and honored to have been awarded by the Japanese nation as a whole for the simple act of helping out one of my neighbors," said Nixon.

## INSIDE

### Navy commemorates Battle of Midway

**The Battle of Midway, which is considered to be a pivotal moment in the war in the Pacific will be commemorated by the U.S. Navy at the U.S. Navy Memorial June 4.**

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### Sailors honor fallen service memebers

**Sailors honored the deceased during a community relations project by helping to beautify the Yokohama Foreign General Cemetery in Yokohama May 26.**

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