Facebook, Twitter new outlet for CFAY internet audience

By Ben Avey, CFAY Public Affairs

Are you on Facebook? Do you tweet on Twitter? Are you a member of yokosukabase.com? If not, you might want to check them out, because your boss is.

Local Navy commands are embracing new media Web sites such as these in ways never imagined. No longer is the Navy tethered to official government Web sites to disseminate photos, videos and command messages.

Following the lead of other government entities like the White House, the Navy has warmed to the idea of sending out information via third party social networking sites to help bring their message to Sailors, families, contractors and civilians who are interested in the latest happenings of the Navy community.

Locally, Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) launched a Facebook page and Twitter feed. Both of which, according to the online profiles, will give them the opportunity to reach out to people and highlight the CFAY community.

Private organizations have taken to the web with locally targeted interactive Web sites as well. Yokosukabase.com, a privately owned company with no official ties to the government launched July 1. The site, which is growing at an astounding rate according to site developer and owner Adam Jones, already receives between 800-1,200 "hits" or visits a day.

"It's a community Web site we've put together that allows Sailors and their family members to put up their pictures and videos and share their experiences through the forums," said Jones. "We really want to offer a one-stop shop for everything you do while you're in Yokosuka."

Adding to the services of photo sharing and community interaction offered by Facebook and Twitter, Yokosukabase.com offers visitors local classified ads, restaurant listings, home listings and interactive forums where site members can create groups to communicate with people who share similar interests.

The forum groups run the gamut of interests and even include those sharing sea stories from Yokosuka's distant past.

"We have members who joined who were [in Yokosuka] back in the 50s and 60s," said Jones. "Its amazing that that many people still have a tie to Yokosuka; they still have that tie and they want to share their experiences."

Following the lead of other government entities like the White House, the Navy has warmed to the idea of sending out information via third party social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to help bring their message to Sailors, families and civilians who are interested in the latest happenings of the Navy community.

While yokosukabase.com, Facebook and Twitter all showcase different aspects of life in Yokosuka, they all unite to create a great mosaic of life in the forward-deployed naval forces.

To become a Facebook fan of CFAY and receive all the latest updates and photos, log onto http://www.facebook.com and search for Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka. Once on the page, click "Become a fan" on the left side of the screen. For the Twitter feed, go to http://www.twitter.com/cfay_yokosuka and click the "follow" button under the photo on the left side. Other Web sites include http://www.yokosukabase.com.

Sailors provide emergency aid to fellow airline passenger

By Mark Elrod, CFAY Public Affairs

Two Navy reserve Sailors en route to Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) from Kansas City, Mo., rushed to provide emergency aid during an airline flight to a Marine Corps civilian contractor July 24.

Master-At-Arms 3rd Class Arthur Gibson and Senior Chief Master-at-Arms Michael Fryer, both attached to Navy Operational Support Center Kansas City, Mo., were relaxing in their seats when Matthew Harrington, of Richmond Va., walked past them toward the rear of the aircraft.

"I was in an isle seat and, about two rows back from where I was sitting, I heard a thud. I looked back and he was on the floor," said Gibson.

According to Fryer, witnesses said that Harrington hit his head on the overhead storage compartments as he fell. Gibson immediately got up and started checking Harrington for vital signs.

"He had a weak radial pulse, which is in the wrist, but he had a strong pulse in his neck," said Gibson. "[The flight crew] brought out the medical bag and entrusted us with opening it and getting everything we needed out of it."

"Both Petty Officer Gibson and I are first responders in civilian life," said Fryer. "So, when we assessed the situation, one of the things that we tried to determine was what was exactly going on with the young man."

According to Fryer, Harrington was unconscious for approximately five minutes.

"When we got him awake, we started asking him some cognitive questions, such as where he was at, who he is and he was able answer those," said Fryer.

(Right) CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. Daniel Weed presents the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal to MA3 Arthur Gibson, Aug. 1, for his efforts in providing emergency aid to a man suffering from hypoglycemic shock July 24.

Photo by Ben Avey

During that time, Gibson continued monitoring his vital signs and relaying the information to the flight attendants. The attendants relayed the information to the pilot who would radio to a doctor on the ground to make a determination whether or not the situation warranted diverting the aircraft.

"He was able to tell us that he has a history of hypoglycemia and his family has a history of diabetes," said Gibson. "From that we were able to determine that he needed sugar. So, we had the flight attendants get him some orange juice and put some sugar in it."

According to Fryer, after about 10 minutes of lying on the deck, Harrington was able to get up. With the help of the aircrew, Fryer and Gibson were able to rearrange some passengers' seating and get him up to the front of the aircraft. They then moved their seats up to the front of the aircraft, so they could sit up there and maintain contact with him until they arrived at Dulles. Once on the ground, paramedics met Harrington on the tarmac, where they deemed him safe to continue back home to Richmond, Va.

Though the event is over, the two Sailors will not forget the experience of assisting a person in need.

"It felt pretty good" said Gibson. "It was kind of surreal at the time. I kind of just blacked out and did what I was trained to do… I've never had to use that training before and it just kind of clicked."

For his efforts, Gibson was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal from CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. Daniel Weed Aug. 1.