Serving Yokosuka for 50 years

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CFAY Adopt-a-Monument program pairs volunteers with history

Story and photo by Ben Avey, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Public Works Department Environmental Division recently announced a new program titled "Adopt-a-Monument" which will help to preserve local monuments and bring history to life.

The program, which is the first of its kind locally, allows local volunteers and organizations to adopt historical monuments aboard CFAY and provide the nurturing human care these tributes rightly deserve.

In the simplest case, once a month from March to September, volunteers will pick up litter and pull weeds in the immediate vicinity of 21 selected monuments. In addition, they will keep an eye on their adopted monument and inform CFAY if it is in need of additional maintenance.

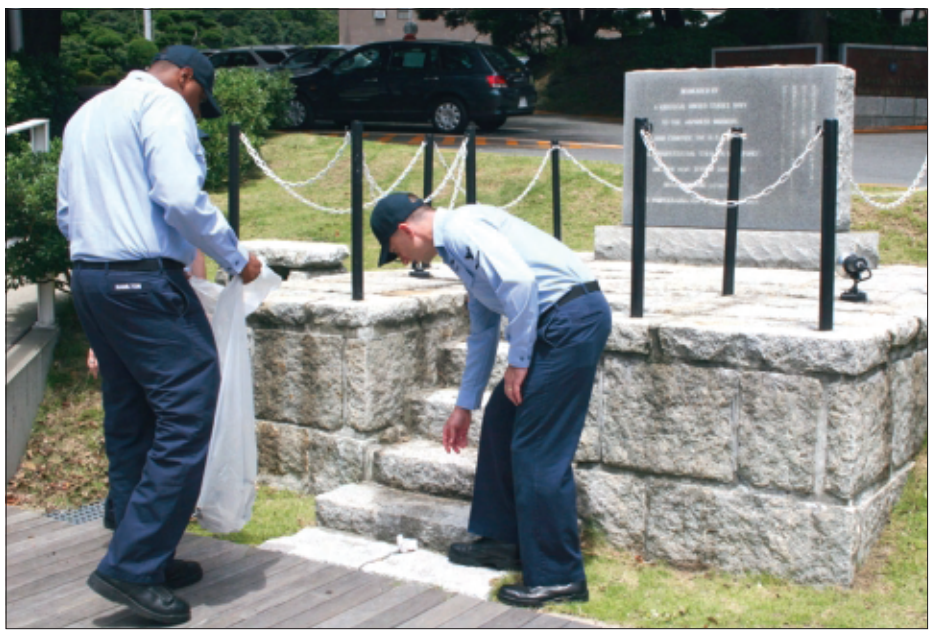
But, for those volunteers with a keen interest in history, this program allows them to uncover the stories that lie below the plaque, sculpture or bronze relief. It allows them to remember the people whom the monument honors and bring to life historic events of the past.

"There are lots of monuments that people might not recognize, but they are very interesting. They are hiding history," said CFAY Environmental Division Natural and Cultural Manager Ryouko Araki. "It doesn't take much time and I think we need to think of [the people the monuments honor]."

As one of the oldest western ports in Japan, CFAY is a monument unto itself. Dating back to 1871, Yokosuka Navy Yard, as it was then named, was a shining example of progress as Japan opened its doors to the world and stepped onto the global stage.

CFAY is home to some of the first western style dry docks in Japan. The headquarters buildings for CFAY and Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan are living memorials to Japan's proud naval heritage. The beaches alone are memorials to the historic moment when Americans first came aboard the installation.

But, it is the smaller momuments that are the target of this program. Volunteers can adopt the sculpture memorializing the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923. They can protect the safe created by the Imperial Japanese Navy near U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka which housed photos of the Japanese Emperor and Empress to help heal the sick and wounded. You can even adopt a tribute to the lasting relationship of American and Japanese Girl Scouts.



Sailors pick up trash around a memorial dedicated to MLC employees who have worked aboard CFAY since 1945. The memorial is one of 21 monuments that is part of a new "Adopt-a-Monument" program to help pair volunteers with historical sites to promote preservation while honoring the memory of those memorialized.

As the name suggests, this program enables you to adopt a monument. But in reality, it allows you to adopt a piece of history.

If you are interested in the "Adopt-a-Monument" program and would like more information, please contact CFAY Environmental Division Natural and Cultural Manager Ryouko Araki at 243-5136 or Ryouko.Araki.ja@navfacfe.navy.mil.

Jewel of the East: Galley garners five-star accreditation yet again

Story and photo by Dan Bowen, CFAY Public Affairs

The Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Commodore Matthew C. Perry General Mess, also known as the "Jewel of the East," has received five-star accreditation from Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) for the 11th straight year.

A five-star accredited food service operation is the pinnacle of Navy food service. The rating is based on wide-ranging criteria covering every aspect of the organization from menu planning, food preparation and the quality of food to management processes, sanitation and customer satisfaction.

The rating is part of the Captain Edward F. Ney Memorial Awards Program which recognizes outstanding Navy afloat and ashore general messes and hospital nutrition management departments.

The Ney Memorial Awards Program is co-sponsored by the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) and the International Food Service Executives Association (IFSEA). IFSEA is a nonprofit food service association dedicated to enhancing the professional image and growth of persons serving the food service industry.

"Five-star accreditation is a step towards the Ney award," said Chief (Sel) Culinary Specialist PeterDennis Ramos who reported to CFAY earlier this year. "Being five-star accredited says you qualify to compete for that title – the best general mess in the Navy."

"The Jewel of the East" is no stranger to accolades; it has won the coveted Ney award four out of the last seven years. "Jewel of the East won in 2002, 2004, 2005 and 2008," said Leading Chief Culinary Specialist Ariel Gonzales. "And I'm confident that we will get it this year as well."

The award is a testament to the dedication of both the military personnel and the master labor contract (MLC) employees assigned to the galley. The meticulous, professional manner which everyone assigned to the galley conducts their duties has helped foster an environment that demands success.

According to Ramos, this is precisely why the "Jewel of the East" has been able to steadily perform at a high level. "It's not just a one-day thing; it's something that you have to prove you do consistently, and show that you are committed to excellence," said Ramos.

Winning an award as prestigious as the Ney award is never an easy task; however, Ramos believes the "Jewel of the East" is more than capable of winning the award again this year.

"When I first came aboard back in February, there was that wow factor as far as the cleanliness, overall appearance, the layout, the ambience," said Ramos. "Our customer service, overall, is number one. I believe that…is the one aspect which got us the five-star accreditation and [will help us] win the Ney. I consider myself fortunate to be working in a place like the "Jewel of the East."

"Jewel of the East" Baker Kazuaki Abiko, prepares dinner rolls at the Commodore Matthew C. Perry General Mess July 28. The mess has received five-star accreditation for the 11th straight year and is in the running for winning its fifth Captain Edward F. Ney Memorial Award in eight years.