Serving Yokosuka for 50 years

Seahawk 海鷹 Umitaka

U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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CFAY Sailors bring Thanksgiving to Yokohama homeless

Story and photo by MC2 Bryan Reckard, Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan

Sailors and other volunteers from Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Yokohama Detachment came together to feed more than 200 homeless Japanese citizens from the Yokohama Kotobuki-cho area Nov. 24.

Using donated food, the volunteers served traditional Thanksgiving fare, hoping to provide both nourishment and holiday cheer.

According to Master-at-Arms 1st Class Brent Harwood, from Rockford, Ill., volunteers from the Negishi housing complex typically participate in events with the local community at least once a month, offering community service ranging from feeding the homeless to clothing donations.

"We typically conduct community relations events anywhere from every month to sometimes twice a month," Harwood said. "We try to get out with the homeless folks at least once a quarter, as well as the orphanages, we do quite a bit for them - we help out the battered women's shelter and do some clothing donations." said Harwood.

Harwood said there are a lot of people less fortunate than Sailors and it's good for them to be thankful for what they have and try to give back to others within the community. In this particular case, 200 less fortunate Japanese neighbors were able to enjoy a hearty meal.

"We're fortunate to know that we're always going to be taken care of and that someone is going to make sure that we have a meal, we have a place to sleep and we have clothes on our backs," said Harwood. "There are a lot of people who aren't that fortunate and if we can make the slightest positive impact on the community, not only does it make us better, it strengthens the bond we have with our local community [and] the U.S. Navy and Japan relationship."

In the midst of the holiday season, volunteers like Logistic Specialist Seaman Earl Satcher, a native of Shreveport, La., thought it was important to share some American culture with the community by serving a traditional Thanksgiving meal.

Sailors and other volunteers from Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Yokohama Detachment cook and serve a hearty traditional Thanksgiving meal to more than 200 homeless Japanese citizens from the Yokohama Kotobuki-cho area Nov. 24.

"I think it's important to share our culture with the Japanese, just as it's important for us to learn about their culture," said Satcher.

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Yokohama Detachment is located in the middle of Yokohama city and is one of two off base housing detachments.

Lupton relieves Burke as skipper of command ship *Blue Ridge*

By MCSN Cale J. Hatch, *USS Blue Ridge* Public Affairs

Capt. Rudy Lupton relieved Capt. Thom W. Burke as commanding officer of the 7th Fleet command ship *USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) at an official change of command ceremony held on board the ship Nov. 24.

Burke served as commanding officer for 16 months, leading the ship and crew through several deployments, inspections and awards.

During his tenure as commanding officer, Burke guided the ship through unit-level training assessments (ULTRA), earning five command excellence awards that culminated in the Battle Efficiency "E" award, several international cooperative exercises, and passing the supply management certification with the highest score in the Pacific Fleet.

"The real credit of our success belongs to the Sailors," Burke said. "Their hard work allowed us to meet each milestone. They are all fine examples of our Navy and our country."

Rear Adm. Richard B. Landolt, commander, Amphibious Force 7th Fleet, presented Burke with the Legion of Merit at the ceremony.

"This award is not for me," Burke said. "It is for all of you in ranks who have made this command what it is. You are confident and committed defenders of our nation and this alliance. I can see it in you every day, and I applaud you."

(Left) Capt. Rudy Lupton relieves Capt. Thom W. Burke, as commanding officer of the 7th Fleet command ship *USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) during a change of command ceremony Nov. 24, as Commander Amphibious Force 7th Fleet Rear Adm. Richard B. Landolt and Commander 7th Fleet Vice Adm. John M. Bird look on.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Cynthia Griggs

Lupton assumes command of *Blue Ridge* after serving as Executive Assistant and Chief of Staff to the Director for Operational Plans and Joint Force Development, J-7, the Joint Staff. His previous tours include Helicopter Combat Support Squadron (HCSS) 6, HCSS-3, and Executive Officer of *USS John F. Kennedy* (CV 67).

During his remarks, Lupton expressed his admiration for the crew he assumes command of.

"To the crew of *USS Blue Ridge*, it is an honor and privilege for me to take command of this fine ship," Lupton said. "I look forward to serving you and serving with you in providing the very best support to the fleet commander. I have no doubt that no matter the task, mission or circumstance, you will answer the call in a way befitting of the history, customs and traditions of our great Navy."

Lupton assumes command as the 23rd commanding officer of *Blue Ridge* since the ship's commissioning November 14, 1970.

Blue Ridge serves under Commander Expeditionary Strike Group 7/Task Force (CTF) 76, the Navy's only forward-deployed amphibious force. *Blue Ridge* is the flagship for Commander U.S. 7th Fleet. CTF 76 is headquartered at White Beach Naval Facility, Okinawa, Japan, with an operating detachment in Sasebo, Japan.