Blue Ridge arrives in Korea, supports combined forces exercise

By MC3 Melvin F. Orr III,
***USS Blue Ridge* Public Affairs**

USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19) arrived in Busan, Republic of Korea (ROK), Aug. 13 in support of Commander U.S. 7th Fleet participation in the combined forces exercise Ulchi Freedom Gold with the ROK navy.

While in Busan, *Blue Ridge* and embarked 7th Fleet staff Sailors will be directly engaged in the annual exercise, which strengthens United States and ROK forces' interoperability and capability to defend the ROK through field exercises and cyber scenarios.

"Every opportunity we have to exercise with our ROK counterparts makes us stronger operationally," said *Blue Ridge* Commanding Officer Capt. Rudy Lupton. "During the coming weeks our Sailors will work closely with their ROK military counterparts to build upon relationships vital to achieving our shared goals. This exercise is a tremendous opportunity for our Sailors to observe operations and participate in personnel exchanges with the ROK Navy, building on years of cooperation and shared experiences in a combined-forces environment."

Blue Ridge, 7th Fleet staff Sailors and embarked Marines of Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team, 1st Company, will participate in several community service projects during the ship's port call. Volunteers will visit with elderly members of the community at the Blue Bird Senior Citizen's Center, where Sailors and Marines will go on walks and sing songs with the residents.

Sailors and Marines embarked aboard *Blue Ridge* will also visit Hee Rak-Wan Children's Welfare Facility and Jinhae Hope Children's Home where they will play games with children and help with cleaning and yard work.

While not participating in the exercise, Sailors will have the opportunity to explore Korea on trips sponsored by Morale, Welfare and Recreation, including the shopping district of Osan and the Korean Demilitarized Zone.

Capt. Rudy Lupton, commanding officer of the U.S. 7th Fleet command ship *USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) and Jang Heui Park, a harbor pilot, prepare to dock the ship to the pier in Busan, Republic of Korea (ROK) Aug. 13. *Blue Ridge* arrived in Busan in support of Commander U.S. 7th Fleet participation in the combined forces exercise Ulchi Freedom Gold with the ROK navy.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Daniel Viramontes

"I'm looking forward to the visit. I'm anxious to try out the local food, and I'm especially interested in seeing the differences and similarities between Japanese and Korean cultures," said Machinist's Mate Fireman Aaron Stanger.

The military exercises won't be the only way for Sailors to interact with Korean forces. Several sporting events are scheduled with ROK athletes and *Blue Ridge's* own basketball, soccer and volleyball teams.

Sailors will also take to the street with their Korean counterparts during a five-kilometer fun run held during the visit.

Newly selected chief petty officers plan to barbecue for the crew during fundraisers as part of their chief petty officer indoctrination.

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

USS John S. McCain leaves lasting legacy following Vietnam visit

By MC1 Brock A. Taylor, Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan

The 270-plus officers and crew of *USS John S. McCain* (DDG 56) were dressed in their summer white uniforms for a traditional "manning the rails" as the guided-missile destroyer made final preparation to get underway from Da Nang, Vietnam Aug 14.

As the ship exited the basin, the crew waved their covers in unison to the citizens of Da Nang and to Vietnamese naval personnel as a closing gesture of appreciation and well wishes. What the crew of *USS John S. McCain* left behind is a stronger and ever growing friendship between the United States and Vietnam.

The ship made the port of call to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between the United States and Vietnam. As a sign of closer ties between the two nations, both navies spent a portion of their visit exchanging know-how in non-combatant techniques such as damage control, search and rescue and culinary arts. U.S. Sailors also participated in community service projects and a sports day with their Vietnamese hosts.

"I've worked with several others navies before, but to be able to be with the Vietnamese for the first time was a very meaningful experience for me," said Chief Damage Controlman (SW) Paul A. Green, an Elgin, Ill. native.

Green and his crew of Repair Division Sailors, displayed their equipment and put on a full day's worth of demonstrations for their Vietnamese counterparts. Throughout the training, Green and his Sailors introduced the Vietnamese sailors to a broad range of damage control skills, from how to dress in full firefighting ensembles to using the portable exothermal cutting device.

"The Vietnamese sailors seemed very interested in the training we were doing with them, and showed a lot of enthusiasm. It was a lot of fun to train with them," said Damage Controlman Fireman William Gilden, from Charleston, S.C.

During the port visit, Sailors made the most of their time ashore. The ship participated in two community service projects. At the Da Nang Village of Hope Center for Disadvantaged Kids, the Sailors played with the children, distributed toys and planted trees.

CT1 Cody Perez, assigned to *USS John S. McCain* (DDG 56), sings along with children at a primary school in Da Nang, Vietnam, during a community service project Aug. 12.

U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Mike Morley

On the final evening, *USS John S. McCain* summed up the visit with a reception on the flight deck, hosting local officials as well as U.S. dignitaries, including U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam, the Honorable Michael Michalak. The Vice Chairperson of the Da Nang People's Committee Phung Van Viet thanked the officers and crew for making the visit a memorable one.

Jewish High Holy Day Services

Rosh Ha Shana

Sept. 8	5 – 6:30 p.m.	Pot Luck Dinner (Beef)
	7 – 8 p.m.	Erev Rosh Hashana
Sept. 9	9 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Rosh Hashana Service
Sept. 10	9 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Rosh Hashana Service
	6 – 7 p.m.	Jewish Sabbath Service
Sept. 11	9 – 11:30 a.m.	Jewish Sabbath Service
	6:30 p.m.	Havdalah Service

Yom Kippur

Sept. 17	5 – 6:30 p.m.	Dinner (Beef)
	6:30 - 8 p.m.	Kol Nidre Service
Sept. 18	10 a.m. – noon	Morning Service
	5:30 – 6:30 p.m.	Evening (Neila) Service
	6:30 – 8 p.m.	Break the Fast (Dairy)

All events will be held at the CFAY Chapel of Hope. Services in the Jewish Chapel – Meals in Fellowship Hall.