CFAY Environmental Division adopts Sullivans fourth-grade class

By Steve Parker,
The Sullivans Elementary School Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Public Works Department (PWD) Environmental Division adopted the fourth grade of The Sullivans Elementary School this year in a big way with a series of field trips and competitions that enriched student learning in astounding measure.

The adoption began in October during Energy Week, when students from the entire fourth-grade walked towards Berkey Field looking for what Tom Bawden, Naval Facilities Command Far East Yokosuka base energy manager described as, "The tallest structure on Yokosuka base." What the students found was a meteorological tower that was set up for a year to record data and test the feasibility of building a wind turbine on the base to provide energy. This was a perfect match for the Department of Defense Education Activity fourth-grade Science Standard (4Sd) the students were studying at the time. Standard 4Sd states that student will demonstrate an understanding of weather patterns and phenomena. The excited students asked questions as Bawden pointed out anemometers and weather vanes at different heights on the structure.

In December, Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Shadia Flowers and Seiroh Koike from Defense Distribution Depot Yokosuka, Japan, and CFAY PWD arranged a morning visit to the Cardboard Recycling Plant at Warehouse J-39. Students watched with fascination as a piece of cardboard was pulled through the shredder and prepared to be used as packing material inside the warehouse. Each student carried their own piece of recycled cardboard back to school and shared their stories with parents, siblings and fellow students. They also gained an understanding of how recycling is helping save their environment.

(Right) Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Distribution Yokosuka, Cardboard Recycling Center employee Seiroh Koike shows fourth-grade students how cardboard gets shredded. The students from The Sullivans Elementary School went on a field trip to the Cardboard Recycling Center to learn the importance of recycling. During the visit, the students toured DLA warehouse J-39, which was built during World War II. DLA Distribution Yokosuka recycles roughly 240 tons of cardboard a year. U.S. Navy photo by LS2 Guy Stephey

That understanding was put to good use in March, when Lily Mow of CFAY PWD Environmental Division sponsored an essay contest for the students around the theme, "What Can You do to Help Save the Earth?" Winners of the contest were presented with awards at an assembly from Eric Rankin, CFAY PWD deputy public works officer and Lily Mow, as well as school principal Walter Wilhoit.

Finally, the extraordinary year-long partnership in education was culminated at an Eel grass-Tiger Blowfish release project coordinated with the Kanagawa Prefectural Fisheries Technology Center and CFAY PWD Environmental Branch May 16. Students walked to Kosano Park, and prepared a clay-nutrient wrap for divers from the Yokosuka Bubble Club to plant. The eel grass-wrap helped control further erosion, while the eel grass offered protection for the marine life as well as a food source for the fish.

The students then moved towards the shore and gently released the fish provided for the event by the Fisheries Center. The fish swam for the protection of the newly-planted eel grass. Their purpose was to rejuvenate the marine life and demonstrate how, we, as a community are working together with the Japanese community to preserve and beautify the local area.

The Sullivans School students and teachers of the fourth grade wish to thank CFAY PWD and tenant commands for these extraordinary learning opportunities.

DoDEA looking for school input

From Department of Defense Education Activity

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is seeking your insight and ideas on how future learning environments are designed, constructed and furnished.

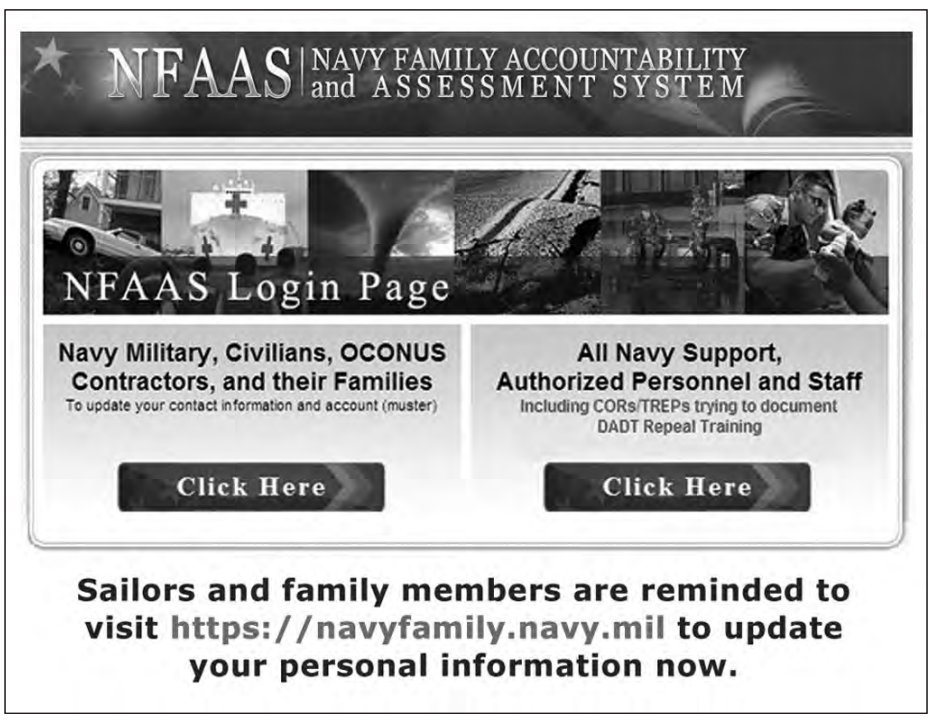
In January, President Barack Obama released the report "Strengthening our Military Families" that identified education as one of his key areas. Complementing this initiative, the Department of Defense has committed to an ambitious military construction program that will build or significantly renovate more than 100 DoDEA schools.

From now until 2016, this modernization initiative will replace an aging inventory of facilities with state-of-the-art schools to support dependent education for the next 45 years.

School districts across the nation, including DoDEA, are facing major facility challenges due largely to the aging infrastructure and the related costs. Providing a safe, secure and educationally appropriate facility for all military children is a critical responsibility for DoDEA.

Submissions can be in the form of videos, images, written narratives or audio files. All student work must be submitted by a teacher using the established Intranet site to ensure adult moderation. The site provides registration information, guiding questions and the process for submitting ideas electronically.

Parents and community members are invited to share their ideas by visiting the website: http://21stcentury.dodea.edu/. DoDEA will take innovations in education, curriculum delivery, use of technology and the growing expectations for sustainability and energy conservation into consideration as the process moves forward. The deadline for submission is June 16.



TRICARE Online now allows expanded health data access

From Military Health Systems Public Affairs

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – A new feature on TRICARE Online at www.tricareonline.com now allows users access to expanded personal health data, including lab results, patient history and diagnoses, and provider visits.

These features are an expansion of the current Blue Button capability, which already allowed beneficiaries to safely and securely access and print or save their demographic information, allergy and medication profiles. The Blue Button features will further encourage beneficiaries to actively engage in their healthcare. The level of data available will be dependent on where treatment occurs – with the most data available to those who regularly get care at military hospitals and clinics.

"These new capabilities are a major step forward in engaging military health system patients as partners in their own health care," said Rear Adm. Christine Hunter, TRICARE Management Activity deputy director. "Personal electronic health records can also improve care by conveying accurate patient information between providers, avoiding duplication of tests and reducing delays in treatment."

The Blue Button was fielded by TRICARE and was made generally available by other federal health care providers last year. It is the result of a close interagency partnership between the Department of Defense (DoD), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Blue Button already has over 250,000 users.

"Innovations like the Blue Button are great examples of how healthcare information technology can keep institutions like TRICARE, CMS and VA on the vanguard of patient care by enabling safe, secure access to their electronic records," said Veterans Affairs Chief of Staff John Gingrich. "TRICARE has raised the bar on what can be accomplished when our agencies work closely together."

"The Blue Button efforts are just another example of how DoD and VA are working together to shape the future of health care IT collaboration, interoperability and transparency for the patients and families we serve," said Dr. George Peach Taylor, Jr., the acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs). "We could not have accomplished this without the continuing strong collaboration between DoD and the VA."

TRICARE Online (TOL) is the Military Health System's Internet point of entry that provides all 9.6 million TRICARE beneficiaries access to available healthcare services and information through an enterprisewide secure portal. TOL users who receive their care at a military treatment facility can schedule appointments, order prescription refills and view their personal health data. Other TOL users with active prescriptions at a military pharmacy can also request a refill for those prescriptions.

To learn more, visit the website www.tricareonline.com or visit www.health.mil/mhscio.