Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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CFAY celebrates Fourth of July with friendly baseball game

Photo and story by Joe Scmitt, CFAY Public Affairs

The DeNA Baystars minor league team invited Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) service members and families to a friendly Fourth of July celebration game held in Opama, Japan July 1.

"Since last year, when [CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. David Owen] threw out the first pitch, the stadium and the team have had a friendly relationship with the command," said Yoshihiro Shimizu, CFAY military liaison. "They called and wanted to do something with us for the Fourth of July. We setup the date for a home game closest to the Fourth of July."

Owen threw out the first pitch at the game as well. It marked the third time Owen has done so. He is the only commanding officer to throw out first pitches at the stadium.

"I feel like a little kid when I get to go out there and throw from the pitcher's mound. I always wanted to be a ball player but never had quite enough skill to do it, so this might be as close as I can get," said Owen.

The team invited CFAY community members out on the field to catch and throw before the game. One of them mentioned that it was the first time she had been on a baseball diamond.

CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. David Owen throws out the first pitch at DeNA Baystars Minor League game at their stadium in Oppama, July 1. The park is close to main base and Ikego housing detachment and invited CFAY community members out to the diamond for Independence Day American friendly game.

"I think this goes a long ways for community relations and showing them that we enjoy the same things that they do," said Owen. "You know, baseball, we understand the game and they understand the game. Hopefully, we can continue to build on these kind of events and see more Americans out here at these great minor league games."

Yeoman 3rd Class William Howard, from CFAY Administration Office, sang the United States national anthem while a U.S. flag raised over the stadium score board .

"It seemed like the Japanese people were moved by his singing, I think that they though that he has a lot of pride and that the Fourth of July must be really important to Americans," said Shimizu.

CFAY community members enjoyed the food, drinks and atmosphere of the park. They tried stadium food staples like curry, *yakitori* (grilled chicken), *takoyaki* (Octopus in pancake balls) , and *yakisoba* (grilled noodles) while fans sang the team song to the beat of a big drum.

"I absolutely recommend this to everybody over here," said Senior Chief Boatswain's Mate Billy Brown. "It's a great time. They play the game well, and it's a good time. Close to base, no reason not come out and enjoy some baseball."

The Baystars went on to defeat the Seibu Lions 6-1.

Carrier Air Wing 5 Sailors become naturalized Americans

Story and photo by MC3 William Pittman, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

BUSAN, Republic of Korea – Four Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 Sailors became U.S. citizens at a nationalization ceremony held aboard the U.S. Navy forward-deployed aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) during its Busan port visit on June 29.

The Sailors, all hailing from different areas of the Philippines, went through months of interviews, paperwork and study with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) before finally being given the oath of allegiance signifying their new country.

USCIS is the government agency that oversees lawful immigration to the United States by providing accurate and detailed information about naturalization, and promoting awareness and understanding of citizenship.

"These individuals have volunteered to serve a country that they have yet to reap the benefits of U.S. citizenship," said retired army Warrant Officer Walter Haith, USCIS field operations director for Korea and Japan, the senior USCIS official involved with nationalizing men and women in the region. "The most precious gift that we can bestow on anyone is citizenship and who's more deserving than active duty military?"

After the Sailors took the oath of allegiance, they led the audience in a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. The Sailors each received a certificate codifying their status as U.S. citizens.

"I almost cried when I recited the [Pledge of Allegiance]," said Aviation Machinist's Mate 1st Class Mark Mendoza, from Cabanatuan City, Philippines, a Sailor with the "Chargers" of Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 14 and one of the newly-naturalized Americans. "I've been serving this country for 14 years and I love this country, so I thought, why not become a citizen. I love America

Newly-naturalized Sailors from Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 cut a cake celebrating their status as U.S. citizens after a naturalization ceremony aboard the U.S. Navy's forward-deployed aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) June 29.

"This was life-changing for me," said Aviation Structural Mechanic Airman Alrobert Albulario, from Iligan City, Philippines, a Sailor with HS 14.

"I feel fulfilled now that I'm serving this country, the best country in the world, as a citizen. Now I can apply for a [U.S.] passport and register to vote."

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GW Sailors offer helping hand at orphanage

Fanfare and flowers greeted *George Washington* Carrier Strike Group leadership as they arrived in Busan, Republic Of Korea for a port visit June 27.

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Commissary patrons advised to stock up for emergencies

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Hurricane Andrew, which hit South Florida Aug. 24, 1992. Your commissary wants to help ensure you are prepared for disasters.

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