Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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Vol. LXII, No. 28 www.cnic.navy.mil/yokosuka July 22, 2011

Monkey Island clean up catalyst for fostering friendship

By Jeffrey C. Doepp, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka First Class Petty Officer Association (CFCPOA) sponsored a community relations (COMREL) clean up event at Sarushima, also known as Monkey Island July 9.

Association President YN1 Lakisha Harris of CFAY Admin spearheaded what she said was an event to help not only foster the continued friendship between the U.S. Navy and our host city Yokosuka, but among the entire base community.

"This is a good event to help promote camaraderie with the Yokosuka community and for the people on base," Harris said. "An event the whole community could come out and enjoy a great sunny day, some good barbecue, and do something for the community."

More than 100 volunteers, consisting of Sailors, civilians and family members showed up early Saturday morning at the James D. Kelly Fleet Recreation Center. The Volunteers then boarded a ferry that was provided especially for the COMREL at CFAY Port Operations.

The all-day event, which included a barbecue on the beach, was open to all hands who wanted to visit the historical island and lend a hand to the city of Yokosuka.

One of those volunteers was Boatswain's Mate 1st Class Stanley Ochonogor of CFAY Public Affairs. Ochonogor, who is also a member of the CFAY CFCPOA, said that because of the earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan a few months ago, the association felt a need to open up more to the Japanese community.

"We wanted to show the Japanese community our concern for them and to show them that we feel their pain and to help them build their spirit again," he said. "It's not just going out doing a community relations clean up event, but to build on our existing friendship and tell the Japanese people the U.S. Navy will be here for them, and we will always be their friend."

Many of the volunteers had never been to the island before and jumped at the opportunity to take part in the COMREL event.

Kathy Bell, whose husband is stationed on *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) and who has been in Japan for only six months, brought along her daughter to take part in the event.

"This is my first community relations event and my first visit to the island," Bell said. "My husband and I wanted to come here before but they weren't sending any boats out from Mikasa Park. So, he told me to come check it out. When he comes back we can both come here together and I can show him what fun things to do here."

Monkey Island is located about one-mile off the coast of Yokosuka in Tokyo Bay and is a quick getaway to relax or explore with family and friends.

The top of the island is a plateau with dense evergreen woodlands that cover steep slopes that fall toward the ocean.

(Left) AG1 Lakisha Tate and Kaci Shigemoto of Naval Oceanography Antisubmarine Warfare Center (NOAC) Yokosuka pick up trash on one of the many paths and trails that wind throughout Sarushima, also known as Monkey Island, during the CFAY CFCPOA Monkey Island clean up community relations (COMREL) event July 9.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 (SW/AW) John Smolinski

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USS George Washington, *USS Cowpens* aid vessel in distress

By Lt. Cmdr. Dave Hecht, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

INDIAN OCEAN – The nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) and the guided-missile cruiser *USS Cowpens* (CG 63) came to the aid and support of an Indonesian flagged fishing vessel in distress, July 8 while en route to Australia to participate in exercise Talisman Sabre 2011.

"This is an example of what the United States Navy does best," said *George Washington* Commanding Officer, Capt. David A. Lausman. "When a fellow mariner is in need of help, it is our responsibility to come to their aid. That's what we did today and I'm very proud of the way our crew responded to this situation."

While conducting a replenishment-at-sea, helicopter pilots in the air and assigned to *George Washington* first noticed the small fishing vessel *KM Jimmy Wijaya* 9.

The boat appeared to be dead in the water with the crew topside, wearing lifejackets and waving to the helicopters for help. Two crewmembers from the distressed vessel jumped into the water and were rescued by search and rescue swimmers from one of the helicopters.

"No one on the boat was injured but they've been out here for a while and are pretty thirsty," said *George Washington* Navigator, Cmdr. Wes McCall.

The crew of the fishing vessel reported that they had been adrift for eight days without food and water.

George Washington dispatched two rigid hull inflatable boats (RHIB) to the fishing vessel and ultimately transported 25 people to Cowpens.

Another six crewmembers, including the ship's master stayed behind.

For those who remained on the stranded boat, *George Washington* provided several cases of fresh water and food.

"It's a great feeling to know that we were able to go out here and help out," said Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class William Delancey. "I was pretty excited actually because it's a real situation that we train for. We get to drive these RHIBs a lot but to finally put our training into action and take care of a real life situation feels really good."

The ship's master and crew who chose to remain aboard *KM Jimmy Wijaya* 9 received notice that their company was sending a vessel to assist them when *USS Cowpens* departed. The 25 passengers that chose to embark *Cowpens* were later transferred to an Indonesian Navy ship.

Sailors assigned to the aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) approach a crippled Indonesian fishing vessel after transporting 28 passengers from the vessel to the Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser *USS Cowpens* (CG 63) July 8. The vessel began taking on water, forcing crew members to signal for assistance. A total of 28 crew members were transported to *Cowpens*.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Adam K. Thomas

INSIDE

7th Fleet Orient Express band supports "America in 3-D"

The 7th Fleet Band's "Orient Express" performed at Baguio City, Philippines in support of the U.S. Embassy's "America in 3-D" exhibition July 8-10.

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Farmers' Market brings off-base produce to on-base families

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Sailors and community members got a taste of Japan from local farmers at a "farmers' market" held just off base July 9.

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