USS Curtis Wilbur Sailors feed Yokohoma homeless

By Lt.j.g.. John S. Shaffer,
***USS Curtis Wilbur* Public Affairs**

Sailors from the U.S. Navy destroyer *USS Curtis Wilbur* (DDG 54) volunteered their time to feed the homeless at the Kotobuki Worker's Welfare Association shelter in Kotobuki-cho, Yokohama, Japan Sept. 18.

The Sailors purchased, cooked and served spaghetti and garlic bread to more than 300 people illustrating the close ties between the U.S. Navy and the local community.

Negishi community relations specialist Rieko Komatsu worked with the *USS Curtis Wilbur* First Class Petty Officer Association (FCPOA), Chief Petty Officer (CPO) Mess and the shelter to coordinate the event.

The Kotobuki Worker's Welfare Association provides local homeless various types of support including medical care, entertainment, a library and job placement services.

Volunteers participate in many events hosted by the shelter throughout the year including a Christmas tree decoration during the holidays.

Earlier in the summer, Sailors from *Curtis Wilbur* volunteered at the shelter to serve food.

Information Technician 1st Class (SW) Angel Ruiz, president of the FCPOA, asked shelter representitives if there would be another opportunity to serve food before the ship left port.

*See **KOTOBUKI** page 4*

***USS Curtis Wilbur* (DDG 54) Sailors serve food to local homeless people at an event hosted by the Kotobuki Worker's Welfare Association in Kotbuki-cho, Yokohama Japan Sept. 18.**

WEST cont. from page 1

West did not discuss personal accomplishments during his retirement remarks, instead focusing on thanking family, friends, shipmates and mentors who helped shape him into a leader and the memories he'll take with him of his years of service.

Retired Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Rick D. West delivers remarks during the MCPON Change of Office ceremony at the Sail Loft at the Washington Navy Yard Sept. 28. MCPON Michael D. Stevens replaced West as the 13th MCPON. Stevens was selected while serving as the U.S. Fleet Forces Fleet Master Chief.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Kiona Miller

"There is simply no way I can mention you all. Just know that if you are here today, you played some part in the success that I have enjoyed," said West. "It has been an honor and privilege to serve our great Navy for nearly 32 years and especially to serve as MCPON for the last four. Thirty-two years is a long time, but when you are talking about the end of a fantastic journey, it was just a "flash of time." I've never had a "bad command" because I feel commands are what you make of them and how you choose to seize the opportunities."

"The thing I'm going to miss the most is, by far, the people and the energy and innovation of our Sailors and families. The 'engine' that truly drives our Navy is our people. Our Sailors are what makes our Navy the best that's ever sailed the world's oceans," said West.

MCPON (AW/NAC) Mike D. Stevens took the helm of the enlisted force as the Navy's 13th MCPON after receiving the ceremonial cutlass from MCPON West.

"I was honored to pick MCPON 13," said Greenert. "It was not an easy task. MCPON Stevens is a proven and effective leader. This is a guy ready to lead our Navy and I look forward to your insight and perspective."

Stevens, a native of Montana, joined the Navy in 1983 and most recently served as Fleet Master Chief for U.S. Fleet Forces Fleet Master Chief in Norfolk. His previous Command Master Chief tours included U.S. 2nd Fleet, Helicopter Sea Combat Wing Atlantic, Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 14, and Naval Air Station Pensacola.

MCPON Stevens thanked Admiral Greenert for his trust and faith in his selection as MCPON.

"I am both humbled and honored to have been provided this magnificent opportunity to lead and serve our Sailors, their families and our government civilians as the 13th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy," said Stevens.

Stevens thanked West for his service, leadership and friendship and spoke to the Navy, saying he is excited about the future and looking forward to serving the Navy as MCPON by working together to carry out the Navy's mission.

The MCPON serves as an advisor to the CNO and to the Chief of Naval Personnel in matters dealing with enlisted personnel and their families. The MCPON is also an advisor to boards dealing with enlisted personnel issues; is the enlisted representative of the Department of the Navy at special events; may be called upon to testify on enlisted personnel issues before Congress; and maintains a liaison with enlisted spouse organizations.