The Sullivans School takes aim at Sport Stacking world record

By Steve Parker, The Sullivans Elementary School Public Affairs

The Sullivans Elementary School Sport Stackers took aim at toppling the reigning world record of simultaneous Sport Stacking, as reported by the Guinness Book of World Records, in the school's multi purpose room Nov. 18.

The well-coordinated attempt is the school's local part of the 5th Annual World Sport Stacking Association (WSSA) Stack-Up, which included stackers from more than 22 countries representing nearly 1,800 schools and youth organizations all over the world.

The current world record stands at 276,053 simultaneous stackers. According to the WSSA, the organization who coordinates and promotes Sport Stacking activities worldwide, last year, stackers participated and beat the previous world record of 222,560. This year the organization is hoping for more than 300,000 participants.

Sport Stacking has been called a "track meet for your hands at warp speed." It is a fast-moving sport where students stack up and stack down 12 specially designed cups in different sequences as fast as they can.

According to WSSA founder and Chief Executive Officer Bob Fox, the Guinness event is a wonderful way to bring together Sport Stackers across the globe.

"Sport Stacking is an activity enjoyed by all ages and cultures," Fox said. "It promotes hand-eye coordination, fitness, teamwork, speed and lots of fun. This is the fifth year we've teamed up with Guinness World Records, and we're excited to have another shot at breaking a world record."

At Sullivans, the charge was led by teacher Kathleen Sevigny, who uses Sport Stacking in her classes.

"It is really a lot of fun, especially for kids that don't excel at other subjects, they can do speed stacking and they enjoy it," Sevigny said. "Kids also develop teamwork because we set up relays and they encourage each other."

Sevigny plans on starting an after school stacking club at the Sullivans in January. Interested parties should contact Kathleen Sevigny at 243-7336.

The Sullivans Elementary School is part of the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Pacific District. DoDEA Pacific provides a comprehensive pre-kindergarten to 12-grade education to the children of military and eligible civilian personnel serving throughout Asia. The 48 schools in DoDEA Pacific are comprised of more than 24,000 students and 3,100 full-time professional educators and support staff. The schools are geographically organized into four districts: Guam, Japan, Okinawa and South Korea.

The Sullivans Elementary School second-grade teacher Kathleen Sevigny teaches speed stacking to students in the school multipurpose room Nov. 18. The school's Sport Stackers took aim at toppling the reigning world record of simultaneous Sport Stacking, as reported by the Guinness Book of World Records.

Photo by Yuji Kawabe

Poll shows Sailors learning positive stress coping behaviors

By Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

The Navy's 2010 Behavioral Health Quick Poll (BHQP) results indicate an increased awareness of the Stress Continuum and positive coping behaviors; however, results also indicate an increase in perceived operational stress among Sailors.

The June 2010 poll was sponsored by the Navy Operational Stress Control (OSC) program and conducted by the Millington, Tenn., based Navy Personnel Research, Studies, & Technology (NPRST).

Aimed with the goal to assess fleet perceptions of stress and gauge effectiveness of programs designed to help Sailors identify and cope, the poll reached more than 2,800 randomly selected officers and enlisted Sailors online.

Capt. Lori Laraway, OSC program coordinator, said the poll gives leaders important information about Sailors' attitudes not available otherwise.

Similar in scope to the 2009 Behavioral Health Quick Poll, the main areas of focus were to determine the levels and types of stress, coping methods for dealing with stress, impacts of stress on job performance and awareness of suicide prevention mechanisms throughout the fleet.

New in 2010 were questions meant to determine Sailors' understanding of the positive impacts of stress and awareness of the available support resources.

Encouraging results of the poll as compared to last year include:

• Awareness of the Stress Continuum, an important tool for determining the many different types of stress, raised from 61 percent to 68 percent for enlisted and from 55 percent to 66 percent for officers.

• Most Sailors continue to report using positive methods to cope with stress, including "thinking of a plan to solve problems," "talking to a friend or family member," and "exercising or playing sports."

The pattern of results is similar to that found in 2009, while a larger, overall percentage reported using positive coping methods.

While awareness of stress and ways to navigate its negative impact have improved, Navy leaders are concerned with the reported increase in overall operational stress.

Eight of every 10 enlisted members and officers indicated "some" or "a lot" of work stress in 2010, an increase of eight percent and 10 percent respectively, from the 2009 results.

These increases are similar to findings in Department of Defense surveys and again point to the "lack of personnel in work groups to get the job done" as the number one stressor for both groups.

Family members, peers and friends are the preferred resources for reduction of stress, and use of these and all other available resources increased across all respondents. These results emphasize the importance of delivering targeted training and the relationship of social support and reported stress levels.

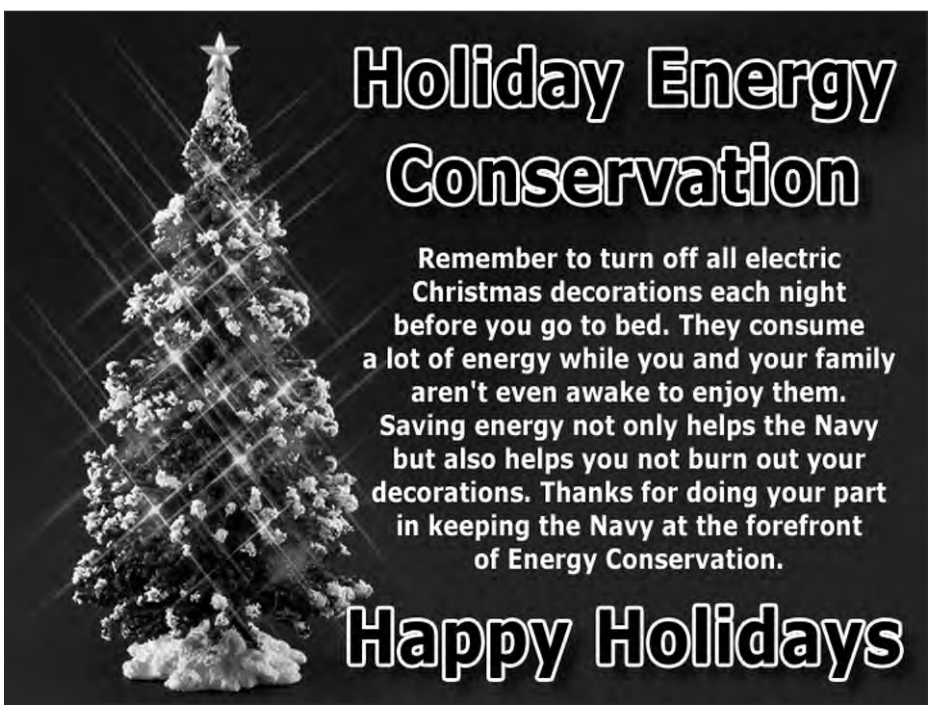
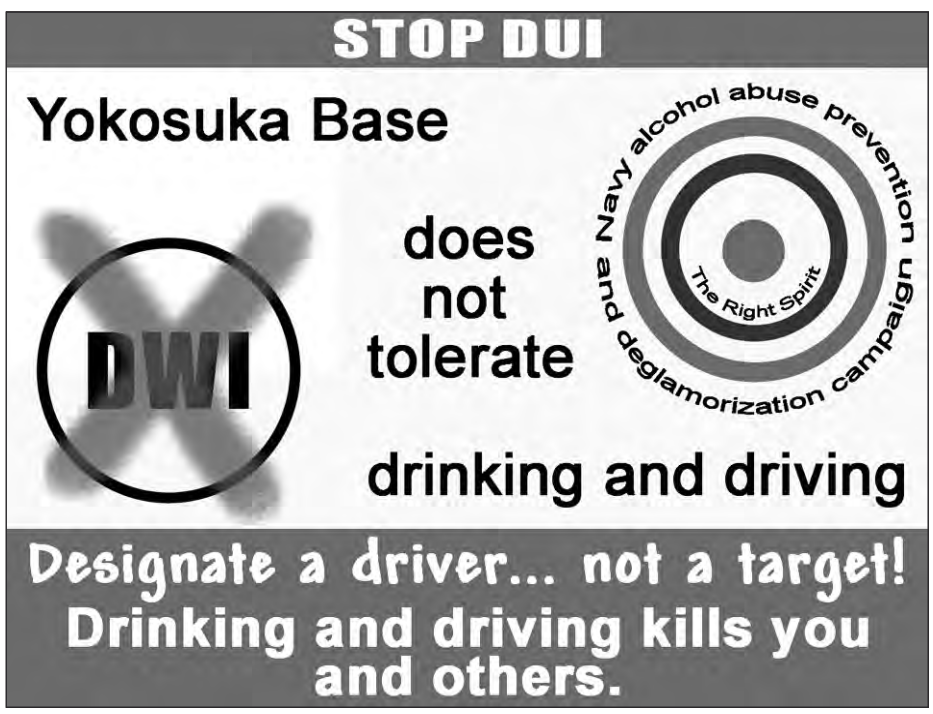
According to Carol Newell, who led the poll for NPRST, "Sailors with higher levels of reported stress also report fewer people in their social support network."

New for the 2010 poll were questions about perceived impacts of stress.

"Although more than one third had some negative outcomes of stress, nearly three quarters of officers and enlisted reported 'feeling pride from my accomplishments,' 'more confident about dealing with future stress,' and that they 'made a valuable contribution,'" said Newell.

These positive impacts of stress can be viewed as resilience building indicators.

NPRST researchers work closely with the Navy Operational Stress Control and Behavioral Health programs to measure program effectiveness and awareness.

Results of polls, training assessments, and focus groups - especially over time – continually inform the design of training and communication efforts.

For more information about the 2010 BHQP survey administration procedures, response rates and detailed responses, visit the Navy Quick Poll results site through a Common Access Card enabled computer at https://quickpolling.nprst.navy.mil.