Capt. Daniel L. Weed, Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka

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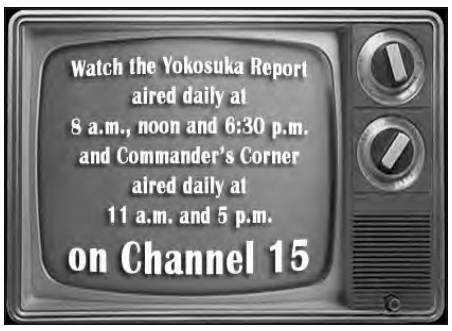
Action Line correspondence may be edited for length and readability. Your questions, suggestions and "Bravo Zulu" comments are appreciated. Address concerns with your chain of command or directly with the parties involved, at the lowest level possible. If you don't get results, send an e-mail to cfay.pao.watch@fe.navy.mil. We welcome your feedback, especially if it is of a general nature and can help others. To contact the Seahawk, call 243-5607/3003 or send an e-mail to: Seahawk-Umitaka@fe.navy.mil.



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Head's Up Yokosuka!

Community announcements/Action line

Rickert Drive Tunnel Repairs – The tunnels on Rickert Drive will be under repair Jan. 11 to Aug. 9. Usage will be reduced to single lane, two-way traffic during the day with total tunnel road closure in the evenings from Feb. 26 to May 17 and July 13 to 31. Alternate routing of traffic during the evening will be provided. Stock Yard area parking will be secured. Temporary fleet parking will be provided by Gridley Tunnel exit. Call Public Works Department Lt. Andrew Cline at 243-5062 for more information.

Second Hand Rose Temporary Closure – Second Hand Rose has temporarily closed its doors for relocation and donations cannot be accepted at this time. Families wishing to make donations are asked to hold on to those items until such time as to when they can be accepted. Please refrain from dropping off large items such as furniture and TVs at the previous location. The base has a designated bulk trash area for these items. Thank you for all your support. As soon as the new location is operational, another announcement will be made and those donated gently used items that are so appreciated will again be welcomed. Contact Yokosuka Officers' Spouse Club President Christie Wood at 241-2407 for more information.

College 101 for Spouses – Starting or continuing college? Navy College is offering a free course to help you in your pursuit of higher education Jan. 13 at 9 a.m. at the Fleet Recreation Center on the 3rd floor in room 353. Call 243-8131 or e-mail to cynthia.cross@fe.navy.mil to sign up or for more information.

COMPASS Spouse Mentoring Program – The next COMPASS Spouse Mentoring Program class will be held Jan. 25-27 in room 223 on the 2nd floor of the Community Readiness Center from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The class will cover seven different aspects of Navy life to include PCS, deployments, communication, finances, local insights, history and traditions, and benefits. Lunch provided and childcare reimbursed. Call Shelle Napier at 264-7270 for more information or sign up online at www.gocompass.org.

Navy College Office (NCO) Web Tuition Assistance (TA) Brief – The NCO WebTA process is now required as of Jan. 1. WebTA briefings are conducted every Thursday at 11 a.m. at the NCO located in room 333 on the 3rd floor of the Fleet Recreation Center. Command WebTA briefs can be arranged for groups of eight or more at your location. Contact NCO at 243-8131 or by e-mail to navycollege_yokosuka@fe.navy.mil for more information.

National Military Family Association (NMFA) Scholarship Fund – NMFA scholarship funds are awarded only to military ID card carrying uniformed services' spouses of active duty, retiree, reserve, National Guard and, or surviviors. Scholarships of up to $10,000 are awarded to obtain professional certification or to attend post-secondary or graduate school. To apply, submit your online application at www.militaryfamily.org/our-programs/military-spouse-scholarships/ between now and Jan. 31. Contact Navy College Office Senior Education Technician Cynthia Cross by e-mail to cynthia.cross@fe.navy.mil or call 243-8131 for more information.

Q: For more than a year we have been told that the playground across from Asuka Tower was going to be renovated. For more than six months the equipment was blocked off with green barricades and nothing was able to be used except for one swing. I called then and asked about the status of the upgrade and was told that there was a contract awarded for the work but the housing office was still waiting on actual work to begin. Shortly after that the green barricades were taken down but there was still one swing missing and the tire swing was gone. It has been in this state ever since. If nothing is going to be upgraded at the playground, at least return the swing and tire swing.

A: The Ikego playground you are referring to has been scheduled for a complete renovation. We had to close the playground temporarily while making some repairs to meet safety standards and ensure the safety of the children that play at the playground. Specifically, the seat swing had to be removed because it was too close to side supports; and the tire swing was removed because it had caused numerous injuries to children. After renovation, the upgraded playground equipment will have a new swing set. Due to the scope of the project, it was necessary to budget and plan for the work to be completed in 2011. We appreciate your comment and hope you will understand why we took measures to protect our children.

Q: Why was the Post Office on base closed for a command function during the busiest time of the year? They were closed on Friday, Dec. 4 at 11:30 a.m. Since the Post Office is already closed on Sunday, wouldn't this day have been a better day to schedule a command function?

A: The Yokosuka Base Post Office is a component of U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC), Yokosuka. The post office is run by FISC Yokosuka and the vast majority of postal workers are active duty Sailors. As indicated, FISC Yokosuka held an end-of-year all hands awards ceremony the afternoon of Dec. 4. The all hands function preceded the FISC holiday party, just as most commands throughout the Navy do during this time of the year. Postal personnel are part of the FISC Yokosuka team and earned the opportunity to enjoy this event with their shipmates. This change in schedule was pre-publicized in advance in the Seahawk, in fliers, posters, movie theaters, command channel and at Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan and Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Department Head meetings in an attempt to reach our customers. Regular business hours resumed Dec. 5. The Post Office provided extended hours for package pick-up on Christmas Eve until 8 p.m. Additionally, the Holiday Post Office finance closure dates were Dec. 25-27 and Jan. 1-3; however, the package pick-up window was open on Dec. 26 and again on Jan. 2 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We regret any inconvenience the closure may have caused. Thank you for your understanding.

Q: I really love the Grand Illumination and opening the base to our neighbors outside the gate, but tonight the traffic leaving the base was really, unbelievably bad. After a 12-hour shift, I had to sit in my car for over an hour without moving. I was back behind the commissary... not even near the gate. In the future, during events like this, can there be some easier way to move traffic out the gates?

A: Unfortunately there is no safe way to have traffic exit the main gate during major events such as the Grand Illumination. Traffic leaving the base is also affected by the heavy flow of traffic on Route 16. Every effort is made by the base and Japanese Police. Safety for pedestrians and vehicle traffic must come first. We apologize for any inconvenience you may have incurred.

Q: During recent visits to U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Yokosuka, I have repeatedly noticed that medical personnel, including physicians, nurses and corpsmen, are not wearing gloves in many situations that require them such as washing and dressing open wounds, administering vaccinations, starting an IV and performing physical examinations. Unfortunately, I have also noticed on several occasions that the hand sanitizers are empty and that hand washing facilities are few and not always conveniently located. In many instances I have also noticed that the glove stations in treatment rooms are empty. Since hand washing and hygiene are the number one way to prevent nosocomial infections (infections acquired in a medical treatment facility), this does not bode well for our community. Not only does it put patients at risk, but also the health care personnel and their families. Although patients can help by reminding and requesting that their health care providers wash their hands and wear gloves, this should not be the patient's responsibility.

A: USNH Yokosuka goes to great lengths to ensure the safety and well being of its patients. All hospital staff receives training in standard precautions to take to minimize the spread of infection. Proper hand-washing and the appropriate use of gloves are an important way to decrease unnecessary infections; however, gloves are not required for all patient encounters. The hospital is dedicated to decreasing the spread of any infections and is providing additional information about infection prevention. The hospital will investigate any reported concerns about its patient safety or quality of care practices. Anyone concerned about an aspect of his or her experience in the hospital is strongly encouraged to immediately contact the customer service representatives, whose names, pictures and contact information are posted on signs in each clinic and are available on the quarterdeck.