CFAY co-hosts 10th annual country music dance party

Story and photo by Fumiyo Sato, CFAY Public Affairs

The Yokosuka Country Music and Dance Association and Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) co-hosted the 10th annual Country Dance Party in the CFAY auditorium Feb. 22.

More than 150 people gathered from Yokosuka, Yokohama and Tokyo. The auditorium was filled with Japanese participants wearing country-western outfits complete with cowboy boots and hats.

"Our association was founded to liven up the Yokosuka community through country dance and music," said Tsuneyo Okamoto, president of Yokosuka Country and Dance Association. "We think country dance helps promote a more friendly relationship between Japanese and Americans."

The Country Dance Party originally started by the Yokosuka Chamber of Commerce in 2000. The Yokosuka Country and Dance Association has been hosting the event since 2002.

The participants danced to more than 40 songs, which included not only American music but also Japanese. "Music and dance is universal, and we want people to know that they can do country style dance to any songs," said Nobuko Okamoto, acting director of the association.

In the past decade, some members of the association have improved their dance technique which gave them the confidence to go to Nashville for dance competitions, according to Okamoto.

The participants also enjoyed watching dance demonstrations and a small dance class session to learn new steps.

CFAY Chief Staff Officer Emil Salansky, Jr. attended the event and expressed his appreciation to Okamoto who helped organize the dance party.

"I know that many of you have been looking forward to this event as I have been looking forward to it, and I know it will be successful," Salansky said. "I want to thank you all for coming here to enjoy with us on the base and show us a real country dance."

The Yokosuka Country Music and Dance Association and CFAY co-hosted the 10th annual Country Dance Party in the CFAY auditorium Feb. 22. More than 150 people from Yokosuka, Yokohama and Tokyo participated in the event.

"For Yokosuka residents, Americans have been our neighbors for years," Okamoto said. "We would like people to learn the good part of American culture through country dance and music. We would like to continue our activities for friendship and health. We are very appreciative of the U.S. Navy for opening this area for us."

The Yokosuka Dance and Music Association will be doing country music dance performances at the Yokosuka Spring Festival in April.

Kinnick celebrates African-American history with stirring program

Story and photo by Ja'la Wourman, Kinnick High School student

As February was coming to an end, students and faculty at Kinnick High School (KHS) celebrated African-Americans throughout history during their African-American History Month program, held at the Benny Decker Theater Feb. 27.

(Left) String ensemble students Joseph Steadly, Mikaela Castle and Gabrielle Amaya relax before playing at the Kinnick High School African-American History Month program at the Benny Decker theater Feb. 27. The afternoon event included several musical selections, poetry readings, a movie presentation and a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

This year, KHS students focused on the struggle of African-Americans throughout history with the main theme being "A Celebration of African-Americans Past and Present."

The afternoon event included several musical selections, poetry readings, a movie presentation and a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

KHS Music Teacher Jonathan Parker was a huge part of the planning process and helped make the event a success. According to Parker, his main reason why he felt it was important to contribute to the program was to, "spread awareness of other's culture and to celebrate diversity, which Kinnick demonstrates greatly."

The national theme this year was "The Quest for Black Citizenship in the Americas." President Barack Obama proclaimed February as National African-American History Month Feb. 2. In his proclamation, Obama stated, "The Quest for Black Citizenship in the Americas is a chance to examine the evolution of our country and how African-Americans helped draw us ever closer to becoming a more perfect union."

Historian and author, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, who founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, started the first ever Negro History Week in February 1926. He picked this special month to pay tribute to the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglas who were key figures to African-Americans. If it were not for Woodson, National African American History Month would not have become a tradition we celebrate every year in February.

KHS Principal Lorenzo Brown was happy for the great turnout to the celebration. "I think the bar was set very high for all future assemblies and that will be the expectation level, that or above," said Brown at the conclusion of the program.

Teachers and faculty members weren't the only ones who felt the program was a success; students also had some great things to say as the day came to an end. Daniel Steadly, a senior at KHS who participated in the program said, "The program was important to me... I feel this year people appreciate it, and I hope this starts a tradition that will continue on after I am gone."

With the standards set so high, celebrating and acknowledging various cultures and national holidays is something that KHS will continue to do in the future. This year started a tradition that hopefully will be recognized by fellow students and community members who wish to join in and celebrate diversity.

Navy revises tracking of Sailors health

By Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

Commands may now access the Deployment Health Assessment (DHA) Program instruction online the Navy recently announced. OPNAVINST6100.3 cements the requirements for periodic assessments prior to and after deployments.

"When leadership takes an active role in making sure that the assessments take place then we know we are really taking care of Sailors physical and emotional needs," said Fleet Master Chief Mike McCalip, Office of the Chief of Naval Personnel.

Sailors are required to undergo a Pre-deployment Health Assessment (Pre-DHA), form DD 2795 no earlier than 60 days prior to the expected deployment date. Then when the Sailor returns from deployment a Post-Deployment Assessment (Post-DHA), form DD 2796 should be completed as close to their homecoming date as possible, not earlier than 30 days before the expected redeployment.

To make life easier, Deployment Health Assessments are all submitted electronically by a nurse, corpsman or medical technician. If a service member gives positive responses to some questions, the assessment may be bumped up for review by a physician, physician's assistant (PA), nurse practitioner (NP), or independent duty corpsman (IDC). The PDHRA can only be done by a physician, PA, NP, or IDC.

For more information, review OPNAVINST 6100.3 available on the Navy Personnel Command Web site at http://www.npc.navy.mil/channels/.