Blue Ridge arrives in Korea, takes part in Key Resolve/Foal Eagle

By MCSN Cale Hatch, *USS Blue Ridge* Public Affairs

The U.S. 7th Fleet flagship *USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) arrived in Busan, Republic of Korea (ROK) March 5 in support of Commander U.S. 7th Fleet and 7th Fleet staff, who are participating in the combined military exercise Key Resolve/Foal Eagle 2010.

A Korean sailor watches as *USS Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) arrives in Busan, Republic of Korea March 5. *Blue Ridge*, the U.S. 7th Fleet command ship, is participating in Key Resolve/Foal Eagle 2010, an annual command and control exercise, which involves an estimated 18,000 U.S. service members.

U.S. Navy Photo by MC1 Bobbie G. Attaway

While in Busan, *Blue Ridge* and embarked 7th fleet staff Sailors will be directly engaged in the annual exercise, which involves an estimated 18,000 U.S. service members. The exercise develops the ability of the United States military and South Korean forces to defend the Republic of Korea in field exercises and cyber scenarios.

"Every year, this exercise gives our Sailors an excellent opportunity to share not only military experiences and training with ROK sailors, but it also gives them the opportunity to share cultures" *Blue Ridge* Commanding Officer Capt. Rudy Lupton said. "We enjoy being deeply involved in the Korean community whenever we are given the opportunity, and look forward to visiting familiar places. This exercise allows us to do both of those things."

Blue Ridge, 7th Fleet staff Sailors and embarked Marines of the Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team, 1st Company will participate in several community outreach events. Volunteers will visit with elderly members of the community at the Blue Bird Senior Citizen's Center, take them for walks, sing songs with them, and enjoy conversation.

Separate groups of volunteers will visit Hee Rak-Wan Children's Welfare Facility and the Jinhae Hope Children's Home. Participants will help with the spring cleaning, play games with children and do yard work.

Sailors will have the opportunity to explore Korea on trips sponsored by Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) including the shopping district of Osan and the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), when not involved in the exercise.

"I've been here a few months but haven't had a chance to see Korea yet," said Intelligence Specialist 2nd Class Evan Volkema "I don't have too much time for liberty because of the exercise, but I'm excited to take the MWR trip to the DMZ. That's something I've always wanted to see."

The military exercises won't be the only way for Sailors to interact with Korean forces though. Several sporting events are scheduled between ROK athletes and *Blue Ridge* sports teams. The commands will also compete together in a 5K fun run.

Blue Ridge serves under Commander Expeditionary Strike Group 7/Task Force 76, the Navy's only forward-deployed amphibious force. *Blue Ridge* is the flagship for Commander U.S. 7th Fleet. Task Force 76 is headquartered at White Beach Naval Facility, Okinawa, Japan, with an operating detachment in Sasebo, Japan.

FFSC Yokosuka workshop explains Navy educational opportunities

Story and photo by MCSN Mike Mulcare, Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan

More than 50 command career counselors (CCC) and education service officers (ESO) participated in an education workshop March 9 at Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Fleet and Family Support Center.

The workshop teaches ESO and CCC personnel about the Navy College Web site, Sailor-Marine American Council on Education Registry Transcript (SMART), service Members Opportunity Colleges (SOCNAV), Navy College Opportunities Online, tuition assistance, College 101 for spouses and a host of other topics.

"Our goal here was to give a brief overview of programs to NC (navy counselor) and ESO [personnel] so they can use all the tools they have available to them and take them back to their commands to assist their Sailors," said Jon Way, an on base education service specialist and workshop instructor.

The seminar armed command representatives with information in the form of pamphlets, slide shows, video briefs, lectures and recommended reading material to help them as they help their Sailors in accomplishing career and educational goals.

"As NCs and ESOs, we have a lot of information gathered in different formats," said Navy Counselor 1st Class (SW/AW) David Delano, a Whidbey Island, Wash. native who serves aboard *USS Mustin* (DDG 89). "This consolidates the information, gives us any updates, and gives us the opportunity to see how we can better train Sailors so they can find the information for themselves."

The workshop, which is usually held once a year, also updates command representatives with pertinent changes in Navy educational programs such as WebTA, the Navy's new method for allowing Sailors to apply for tuition assistance on-line.

For Sailors like Delano, the class gave him a better understanding of educational benefits offered by the Navy and how he can pass that information along to Sailors at his command.

"This workshop is outstanding," Delano said. "This is something we need to be able to put forth, get the important and hard to look up information to Sailors - especially out here in the FDNF (forward-deployed naval forces)."

IT1 Nicholas Kivlehan gives a brief on Navy Credential Opportunities On-Line (COOL) during an education workshop at the Yokosuka Fleet and Family Support Center March 9.

The Chief asks:

"Did you know that on March 17, 1917, then Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels announced that females would be allowed to enlist in the U.S. Navy? Most of the 11,000 female enlisted worked in the nation's capital filling a variety of jobs including draftsman, interpreters, couriers and translators. Late in World War I, the Navy enlisted 24 African-American women who worked in the Navy Department building. If you didn't know, now you know." – MCC(SW/AW) Eric Hannah, CFAY Public Affairs