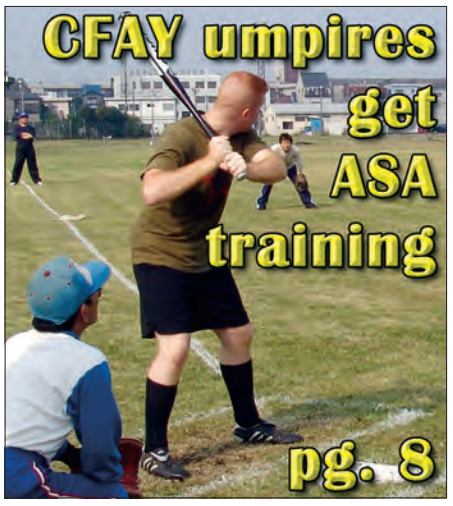
Serving Yokosuka for 50 years

Seahawk 海鷹 Umitaka

U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

Vol. LX, No. 12 www.cnic.navy.mil/yokosuka March 27, 2009



CFAY dedication ceremony honors Kelly

Building 3008 renamed the James D. Kelly Fleet Recreation Center

By Dan Bowen, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan (CNFJ) Rear Adm. James Kelly was given the surprise of his storied career March 24 with a dedication ceremony designating Building 3008, or the "Fleet Recreation Center" as it is commonly known, as the James D. Kelly Fleet Recreation Center.

The ceremony opened with Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Capt. Daniel Weed reading the official proclamation, which was immediately followed by the unveiling of the new sign in front of the building and a biographical plaque of Kelly which will be placed inside the facility. Commander U.S. 7th Fleet Vice Adm. John Bird then took the stage and spoke about the contributions Kelly has made during his time in Japan and what his efforts have meant to the naval community.

"Jamie Kelly never lost sight of the fact that a successful fleet requires top notch leadership ashore and a community both inside and outside the gate that is supportive," said Bird. "There's a sign hanging over Jamie's desk that says it all: 'We enable the fleet.' And Jamie has been as true to that slogan as any man I know."

Kelly has spent a combined seven years of command-level service in Japan. He has worked tirelessly to shape and improve the Navy's presence and the relationship with our host nation.

According to CNFJ Deputy and Chief of Staff Capt. William P. Cuilik, it is more than appropriate for Kelly's service to be commemorated aboard CFAY.

"Nobody has had this much impact on the FDNF (forward-deployed naval forces) and on this alliance between the U.S. and Japan than Adm. Kelly has," said Cuilik. "When the idea was proposed to the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), he immediately recognized that and latched on to that, which is why this dedication was approved."

Building 3008 was officially designated the James D. Kelly Fleet Recreation Center during an emotional dedication ceremony held aboard Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka March 24.

Photo by Yuji Kawabe

Unbeknownst to Kelly, the effort to have the recreation center renamed began six months ago with a letter recommending the name change sent to the CNO by Weed.

"The 'Fleet Recreation Center' or Building 3008, is the primary community support facility for the Sailors of the forward-deployed naval forces in Japan," said Weed in the letter. "It is fitting that this prominent facility and refuge for Sailors be named in honor of Rear Adm. James D. Kelly, a long time supporter of the Navy's presence in Japan and the sailors assigned to the FDNF."

An emotional Kelly was surprised and proud to have his name become a permanent fixture of the base he has spent so much of his professional career working aboard.

"I'm overwhelmed," said Kelly. "This Fleet Recreation Center has always been about us as Sailors, and particularly about the Sailors coming in off the ship that maybe don't have a great place to work out on the ship, or a great place to hang out and take college courses and plug the computer in, or sit down and do some Wi-Fi action or get in that single sailors lounge. To have your name in front of a place like this is stunning."

(Left) CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. Daniel Weed speaks with CNFJ Rear Adm. James Kelly and his wife, Amy Warrick, following the dedication ceremony for the James D. Kelly Fleet Recreation Center March 24.

Photo by Yuji Kawabe

CNFJ Rear Adm. James Kelly speaks during the dedication ceremony designating Building 3008 as the James D. Kelly Fleet Recreation Center March 24.

Photo by Yuji Kawabe