



Town Hall Meeting

Negishi Theater
April 22, 6 p.m.

Ikego
Kyoto Tower
April 29, 6:30 p.m.

Wren relieves Kelly during CNFJ change of command

By MCSN Dominique Pineiro, CNFJ Public Affairs

Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan (CNFJ) held a change of command ceremony aboard *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) April 9.

More than 800 dignitaries, officers, American and Japanese staff, families and friends attended the event held inside the ship's hangar bay to bid farewell to Rear Adm. James D. Kelly and to welcome Rear Adm. Richard B. Wren.

Commander U.S. Pacific Fleet Adm. Robert F. Willard was the guest speaker as Wren relieved Kelly as commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan, commander Navy Region Japan and commander Naval Component U.S. Forces Japan.

"This morning we honor a lifetime of service by Rear Adm. Jamie Kelly and of course, Amy, both living national treasures in our service whose contributions to this alliance and the U.S. Navy has been priceless," said Willard.

Kelly's service in Japan has left an indelible mark on Sailors, their families and Japanese host communities, as many distinguished guests relayed in their remarks.

"Admiral Kelly also exemplifies himself as a good neighbor to enhance the relationship between the bases of U.S. naval forces and the local people and governments as well as the municipalities," said Vice Minister of Japan Mitoji Yabunaka on behalf of Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso. "Kelly was truly a role model for all U.S. service members as an 'ambassador in uniform'."

As Kelly took center stage one last time as regional commander, his words were a resounding statement of his command's mission. "It's not about me...it's about the captains and the commanders and the people who work for them," he said. "You are all rock stars...because you enable the fleet."



Rear Adm. Richard B. Wren make his first address as commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan to more than 800 guests during a change of command ceremony held aboard *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) April 9.

Photo by Yuji Kawabe

Willard awarded Kelly the Distinguished Service Medal for service as regional commander from September 2005 to April 2009. During Kelly's three and a half years, he played a pivotal role in marking the shift of the Navy's first permanently forward-deployed, nuclear-powered aircraft carrier and personally executed a series of strategic and tactical political and community outreach actions to build and foster a relationship of trust, confidence and acceptance with the Japanese government and its citizens. He is also credited for introducing the "Navy Burger" as a local speciality to Yokosuka.

"Today we also recognize and welcome Rear Adm. Rick Wren and Diane, who are no strangers to Japan...no flag officer is better-suited to assume command of CNFJ than Rear Adm. Rick Wren," Willard said.

The new regional commander expressed his enthusiasm for his new assignment as well, thrilled to be on his fourth tour in Japan. "Over the five years I've spent in Japan, I've learned to love the culture of Japan and most importantly understand and believe in the strength of our

alliance," said Wren. "I call this my dream job."

Kelly plans to retire to the state of Washington after a 37 year-career in the United States Navy.

Spring Festival draws more than 50,000 guests to CFAY

Story and photo by Ben Avey, CFAY Public Affairs

More than 50,000 guests were welcomed aboard Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) for the 16th Annual U.S.-Japan Spring Festival open base event April 5.

According to CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. Daniel Weed, this year's Spring Festival, which was formerly known as the Cherry Blossom Festival, was the most attended open base event in 64 years.

"I think that we were very fortunate this year," said Weed. "The cherry blossoms are in full bloom, that always attracts more people, but also because we have made strong, new friendships and greater connections with the city [of Yokosuka], so more and more residents are very excited about Fleet Activities Yokosuka."

While the belle of the ball will always be the cherry blossoms, guests were able to enjoy a variety of games, shows and cultural foods in the area around Kosano Park.

The Orient Express and the Far East Edition, two smaller musical groups which are part of the U.S. 7th Fleet Band, set the tone on the event main stage with festive pop tunes

geared towards the binational audience while the Yokosuka Country Dance and Music Association showed off their line dancing moves.

Complimenting the musical entertainment were sword dancers, baton twirlers and hula dancers who

wowed crowds with their unique and entertaining skills. More traditional on-stage entertainment included Japan Air Self-Defense Force Taiko Drummers. Rounding out the entertainment were rows and rows of air toys and carnival style games which enthralled kids and gave parents a few minutes to sit back and relax.

Away from the hustle and bustle around Kosano Park, guests were offered a unique opportunity to tour the Ticonderoga class guided-missile cruiser *USS Cowpens* (CG 63), and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Destroyer *Takanami* (DD 110). Both ships welcomed guests for a tour while Sailors answered questions, sold ship souvenirs and posed for commemorative photos.

Making its second appearance at an open base event, *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) continued to draw crowds to berth 12 where guests were allowed to walk onto the normally restricted pier and get a first hand account of one of the largest ships in the U.S. naval inventory.

"I think many people in Yokosuka who may have been concerned [about the arrival of *USS George Washington*] are very excited that *USS George Washington* is here for the protection and defense of not only Japan but the United States," said Weed.



Families enjoy a picnic under a canopy of cherry blossoms in Kosano Park at the 16th Annual U.S.-Japan Spring Festival aboard CFAY April 5. More than 50,000 guests were welcomed for this year's festival which included live musical performances, cultural foods, ship tours and a variety of games and activities for kids.

Main Gate closure

CFAY Carney Gate (main gate) will be closed April 22 and May 12 to ALL vehicle traffic due to a base exercise. All vehicle traffic will be rerouted to Womble Gate (back gate). Main gate pedestrian traffic will be limited to using only the overpass (boardwalk) entrance/exit.

