Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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Negishi Friendship Day offers entertainment, cultural exchange

Story and photo by Mark Elrod, CFAY Public Affairs

On a clear, sunny day in the Naka Ward of Yokohama, more than 5,600 people turned out to attend the Negishi Friendship Day held at Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Negishi Housing Detachment April 24.

The annual event is meant to serve as an opportunity for cultural exchange and a show of gratitude to the local Japanese people for their lasting cooperation with the U.S. Navy.

"The relationship between our two countries, at Negishi, is, I believe the closest anywhere in Japan," said CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. Daniel Weed, during the opening ceremony. "This has only been made possible by the generosity and goodwill, shown by you, to the thousands of Americans who have lived here over the years. [Which is] something we are always grateful for.

(Left) Yokohama Naka Ward Director General Naoshi Nakagami presents CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. Daniel Weed with a replica of a stained glass scene depicting Yokohama Naka Ward as a token of appreciation during the Negishi Friendship Day April 24.

The United States has had a presence in the Kanto region for quite some time and, though sometimes met with resistance, the American and Japanese citizens have grown to appreciate each others' culture.

"It's been 65 years since the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers first established an American presence here at Negishi," said Weed. "The intervening years have seen ups and downs in our relationship, but I can safely say that our two countries are now closer friends and allies than they have ever been. We cherish the wonderful Japanese [and] American friendship that has been going here in Negishi for more than 60 years."

According to Yokohama Naka Ward Director General Naoshi Nakagami, the annual event is a highlight for the citizens of the city.

"Every year the local community looks forward to this event," said Nakagami. "I am grateful for the Navy providing such an international exchange opportunity."

During the event there were food kiosks selling various Japanese and American foods, clothing, and toys, and carnival-type games.

Also, there were large inflatable toys for kids to play in and presentations from the Commander Naval Region Japan Fire Department for the children.

Additionally, there was entertainment for adults as well in the form of live music provided by CFAY Morale, Welfare and Recreation, the 7th Fleet Band Orient Express, the Yosakoi Dancers, the Heirku Junior High School Band and Tokyo Kiss, a Kiss tribute band.

Though the Negishi Friendship Day event will continue on, this year will be the last one for Weed.

"It is very sad to say that this will be my last Negishi Friendship Day as Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka," said Weed. "I would like to extend a special thanks to the members of Naka Ward and the city of Yokohama for sustaining a wonderful friendship during my tenure.

"To you, I pledge the closest continued friendship and cooperation even after my departure," Weed added. "We could not do our jobs without you. The excellent and longstanding Japanese and American relationship makes this city the best and a unique example of international partnership."

Nakagami closed out his speech by expressing his feelings about friendship day and Weed.

"I hope Negishi Friendship Day will continue to be held in the future. This event promotes better understanding and contributes to a deepened friendship," said Nakagami. "I personally, really appreciate Capt. Weed's support during the past years."

Yokosuka stage act teaches sexual assault awareness, prevention

Story and photo by MC3 Andrew Smith, Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan

A series of skits to inform others about sexual assault and sexual harassment awareness was performed by 35 members of the Yokosuka community at the Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Fleet Theater April 27 and 28.

The performance, labeled Sailors Changing Reality and Ending Myths or SCREAM, was staged in Yokosuka and featured two shows per day.

"We wanted to educate the general public about sexual assault awareness and prevention," said Theodore Joyner, sexual assault response coordinator for the base. "I hope that after watching this performance they will have a better picture of what constitutes sexual assault and maybe they will be more prone to get involved if they have the opportunity to step in and prevent an assault from happening."

Performers included Sailors from area commands. Crypotologic Technician (Technical) 2nd Class (SW) Matt Bovetz, a veteran thespian who has acted in other productions of SCREAM, hopes the show will empower others to take the right actions regarding assault.

"One thing I hope viewers will take away from our performance is to come forward if something happens to them or if they know an assault has taken place," said Bovetz. "Whether the complaint is restricted or unrestricted, something needs to be done."

Statistics indicate that one in six women and one in 30 men will be sexually assaulted at some point in there lives and more than 60 percent of these assaults will go unreported. An equally alarming fact is that every two minutes, someone in the United States is sexually assaulted and more than 70 percent of the victims know their assailant.

"Sexual assault can happen to anyone," Joyner said. "Men are also assaulted, but only rarely will a man report sexual assault."

While the subject is a somber one, members of the Yokosuka audience liked the show as a message delivery vehicle.

"It was a good performance," said Yuette Currie, who caught the first performance. "They did a good job of fighting stereotypes and showing viewers what sexual assault victims go through."

Sailors perform a skit during a Sailors Changing Reality and Ending Myths or SCREAM stage performance at the Fleet Theater April 27. More than 35 men and women, including active duty Sailors from the Yokosuka Base community acted in or contributed to the performance, which is aimed at informing the community about sexual assault awareness and prevention.

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CFAY Chapel of Hope hosts naturalization ceremony

During a naturalization ceremony held at the Chapel of Hope April 23, 68 foreign nationals took the Oath of Allegiance and officially became American citizens.

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City of Yokosuka commemorates achievements of *Kanrin-Maru*

Yokosuka city held a memorial ceremony April 24 to commemorate the great achievements of the *Kanrin-Maru*, the first official Japanese ship to visit the United States.

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