Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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Vol. LXI, No. 28 www.cnic.navy.mil/yokosuka July 16, 2010

CFAY wishes America happy birthday during 4th of July bash

By Dan Bowen, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) celebrated America's 234th birthday with live music, hot food, cold drinks, a giant futomaki, carnival style games, petting zoo and a dazzling fireworks show July 4.

An estimated 11,000 people showed up and helped give the celebration a small-town "Anywhere, USA" feel. Kids enjoyed a "Kid's Zone" with giant tricycle races, carnival style games, a petting zoo and other attractions at Kosano Park. The parking lot across the street from Kosano Park was set up to include a stage for live music and tables and chairs for dining. Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) and other organizations sponsored booths that dished out barbeque, yakitori and other summer-time fare throughout the day.

Fireworks light up the evening sky wrapping up the CFAY Independence Day Celebration July 4.
U.S. Navy photo by MC1 N. Ross Taylor

Although the celebration was distinctly American, the biggest difference CFAY residents noticed between celebrating Independence Day here versus back home is how Japanese residents join in the celebration.

"It's different because there are more Japanese nationals on the base who actually celebrate the independence of the U.S. with us," said Religious Program Specialist 1st Class Lama Munoz, who was at the celebration supporting the Navy Ball committee. "It's really cool; I like it."

According to Master Labor Contract (MLC) employee Makoto Hiramatsu, the day is a great way for Americans and Japanese to come together, celebrate and build a stronger bond between the two nations' residents on such a special day. The day was particularly special for his family as his son, Takeru, was celebrating his third birthday.

"We need to get together more and have these kinds of events because it's good for both Americans and Japanese," said Hiramatsu. "[Japanese] people should come and enjoy themselves. This is a lot of fun. It's amazing."

MWR also managed to merge Japanese culture into the event, while keeping with the American tradition of "bigger is better," by building the world's longest military futomaki, or sushi roll. More than 100 American and Japanese volunteers joined Officers' Club Assistant Manager Robert Fair to prepare, roll and eat the 147 foot long sushi roll.

"We just wanted to do something a little different for the MWR customer," said Fair. "We have a lot of Japanese that are on base for these events so I think it's good to introduce Americans to some Japanese food they maybe haven't had before. We live in Japan, after all."

July 4, also known as Independence Day, is celebrated in every U.S. state and territory in recognition of the approval of the Declaration of Independence by the Second Continental Congress July 4, 1776. The Declaration of Independence was used to explain the decision of Congress to separate from Great Britain to the citizens of the new country and the rest of the world.

Volunteers lay down the rice on the 147-foot long futomaki, or sushi roll, during the CFAY 4th of July celebration. The brainchild of Officers' Club Assistant Manager Robert Fair, the roll is the longest military sushi roll ever made. More than 100 volunteers helped prepare, roll and eat the record-breaking sushi roll.
Photo by Dan Bowen

The date of the legal separation of the United States and Great Britain is actually July 2, 1776, when Congress passed a resolution of independence that had been proposed in June by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia.

McCain arrives in Kagoshima

By Lt. j.g. Brian Hamilton,
***USS John S. McCain* Public Affairs**

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer *USS John S. McCain* (DDG 56), which is forward-deployed to Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, arrived in Kagoshima, Japan, for a port visit July 9.

The visit is a continuation of United States-Japan joint port calls being conducted throughout the year to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Treaty.

Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Ships *JDS Chokai* (DDG 176), *JDS Asayuki* (DD 132) and *JDS Sendai* (DE 232) are also participating in the port call.

"The hospitality shown to us here this morning is indicative of the strong relationship that exists between Japan and the United States of America," said Cmdr. Jeffrey Kim, *John S. McCain* commanding officer. "We are very proud to be able to join our Japanese friends during the Jieitai Minato Matsuri [Self Defense Force Port Festival]."

John S. McCain will host tours of the ship for local officials, as well as visiting Japanese sailors. The crew will also take part in a community outreach project, where *John S. McCain* Sailors will participate in a sports day with children. As an added feature to the visit, the U.S. 7th Fleet Band "Orient Express" will provide musical entertainment for Kagoshima citizens.

Cmdr. Jeffrey Kim, commanding officer of the guided-missile destroyer *USS John S. McCain* (DDG 56) receives flowers from a Japanese woman during a welcoming ceremony at Kagoshima, Japan July 9.
U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Brock A. Taylor

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Post-9/11 GI Bill transferability requires obligated service

For Sailors with children ready for college or with spouses desiring college, now is the time to ensure your Post-9/11 GI Bill transferability is properly set up.

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Japanese *Shirobai* conduct advanced motorcyle training

Japanese *Shirobai* (motorcycle police) teamed up with Cape Fox professional services instructors to conduct advanced motorcycle training at Yokomama North Dock July 2.

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