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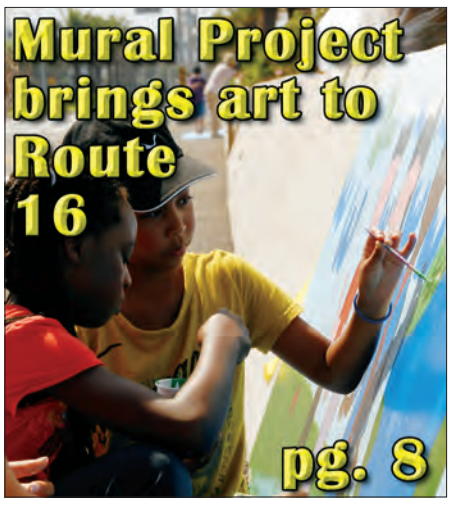

CFAY chief staff officer retires after 33 years of naval service

By Mark Elrod, CFAY Public Affairs

After serving 33 years in the U.S. Navy, Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) Chief Staff Officer Cmdr. Emil J. Salansky, ceremoniously retired at the Fleet Theater Aug. 7.

"Unfortunately, this is one of our bittersweet responsibilities, because we have to farewell a shipmate who has served honorably and well for 33 years," said CFAY Commanding Officer Capt. Daniel Weed, who was the guest speaker for the retirement ceremony.

Salansky, who is from West Leisenring, Pa., attended Laurel Highlands High School and graduated in 1976. Shortly after, he enlisted in the Navy as a deck seaman and reported to *USS John F. Kennedy* (CV 67).

In 1981, while stationed at Commander Naval Military Personnel Command in Washington, D.C., Salansky married the former Diana Louise Gaydos of Uniontown, Pa.

In 1986, he was promoted to chief petty officer, and was commissioned into the officer ranks as an ensign in 1987.

During his career, Salansky received 15 personal awards, 22 unit awards and served at 12 different naval commands.

Most recently, he served as chief staff officer for CFAY, for which he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star in lieu of his fifth award.

"Being the executive officer (XO) of the commander in chief's installation excellence award winning base, the best base in the world, was a great honor," said Salansky.

While serving as chief staff officer for CFAY, Salansky played a major role in facilitating the arrival of the only U.S. Navy forward-deployed nuclear powered aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73).

"A successful career looks impressive on paper, but it is the character and integrity of the man that bears greatest scrutiny," said Weed. "E.J. (Salansky) has devoted countless hours and personally sacrificed time with his family and friends to accomplish the mission."

Although throughout his career Salansky had many accomplishments, it is not so much the job that he will miss most.

"It's the people that I will miss the most," Salansky said. "I believe the mark of a good leader is one who does something every day to positively affect someone else's life.

"We all may accomplish this task in different ways, but it all leads to just one phrase… commonality of purpose. If your intentions, words and actions positively affect somebody, you will build a winning team and acquire great respect from those team members."

Salansky's personal character and belief in commonality of purpose have established him as a member of naval service that will be missed.

"He has searched deep within himself to devote and dedicate himself to a higher purpose… that higher purpose to go beyond the mundane and achieve the sublime," said Weed. "His devotion and dedication are sure to last long after he has headed out to the open sea of retirement, and hopefully, relaxation."

Though the ceremony was held Aug. 7, Salansky's official retirement begins Nov. 1.

CFAY Chief Staff Officer Cmdr. Emil J. Salansky speaks during his retirement ceremony held at the Fleet Theater Aug. 7. Salansky retired from the U.S. Navy after 33 years of service.

Photo by Yuji Kawabe

George Washington Carrier Strike Group arrives in Manila

By MC2 John J. Mike, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

The *George Washington* Carrier Strike Group, along with its more than 5,000 Sailors, arrived in Manila, Republic of the Philippines Aug. 11 for a scheduled port visit.

USS George Washington (*GW*) (CVN 73) is making its first visit to the Republic of the Philippines and is currently anchored in Manila Bay. This marks the first U.S. aircraft carrier in more than 13 years to make a port visit here.

More than 250 *GW* Strike Group Sailors plan to stay busy by spreading goodwill through a variety of scheduled community relations (COMREL) projects.

"COMREL activities help show our solidarity with our allies in the Republic of the Philippines and provide opportunities for our Sailors to return some of our blessings and share our cultural heritage with our neighbors," said *GW* Chaplain Cmdr. Dennis Young.

Young said the Sailors will have a chance to participate in 12 different projects, which include the delivery of medical supplies, hospital visits, light construction work, painting, public health education as well as working in a number of schools.

"The U.S. and Philippines have enjoyed a long-standing relationship that has endured many years and historical events," said Young. "That spirit of partnership will be displayed in all of our COMRELs as our two countries work together and learn from each other to help local beneficiaries."

Rear Adm. Kevin Donegan will lead a group of *GW* Carrier Strike Group personnel during a wreath-laying ceremony Aug. 13 at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial, in honor of service members who died while serving in World War II.

"The significance of our visit is huge," said *GW* Operations Officer Cmdr. Anthony Calandra. "The operational and social interaction is an enormous opportunity to strengthen our alliance, and we hope *GW* visiting the Republic of the Philippines becomes a normal occurrence."

Calandra said the *GW* visit, being the Navy's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier, can serve to further strengthen the working relationship between the two nations, who work together to maintain stability throughout the region.

"The U.S. and the Republic of the Philippines have a long history of cooperation, and we hope our visit helps to foster that relationship," Calandra said. "We are two independent nations working together which leads to greater peace and stability in the Pacific region."

(Right) Commander Battle Force 7th Fleet Rear Adm. Kevin Donegan greets Commandant of the Republic of the Philippines Coast Guard Adm. Wilfredo Tamayo during a visit aboard *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) Aug. 10.

U.S. Navy photo by MCSA Rachel N. Hatch