SRF-JRMC volunteers support Open Day at Shiratori-en

Story and photo by Keiichi Adachi, CFAY Public Affairs

U.S. Naval Ship Repair Facility and Japan Regional Maintenance Center (SRF-JRMC), Yokosuka employees and family members participated in the Kanagawa Prefecture, Miura Shiratori-en Open Day event Oct. 2.

During his opening remarks, Shiratori-en Director, Masayuki Onoda, said that SRF-JRMC has had a long volunteer relationship with Shiratotri-en.

"Shiratori-en has had SRF-JRMCs help in supporting the facility since the beginning with Nagasawa Gaku-en in 1963 through the new organization of Miura Shiratori-en," Onoda said. "We really appreciate what they have done for us like providing Christmas celebrations with presents, periodically maintaining outdoor landscaping and doing many other facility cleaning activities. We really appreciate it!"

SRF-JRMC employees and family members enjoy a day of hot dogs and fun at the Kanagawa Prefecture, Miura Shiratori-en Open Day event Oct. 2.
日本人の女の子とジャグリングをするボランティアと彼の息子の隣で、SRF-JRMCがホットドッグを販売する。

SRF-JRMC Commanding Officer Capt. Steven Stancy delivered his remarks during the opening ceremony.

"It gives me great pleasure to be invited to the Open Day ceremony today and to be able to celebrate with you," Stancy said. "Shiratori-en is a fantastic organization with many wonderful and dedicated people and beautiful facilities. Your work is very important and we appreciate and value all you do. One mark of a great society is the willingness of its people to help and care for each other. Shiratori-en is a shining example of people taking care of each other.

"SRF-JRMC is glad to be a small part of your mission. We have maintained an on-going friendship for 47 years, from the days of Nagasawa Gaku-en through the Miura Shiratori-en. This year also marks the 50th Anniversary of the Japan – U.S. Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security which was signed Jan. 19, 1960, which has allowed our two countries to provide stability, peace and prosperity to reign in this region of the world for the past 50 years.

"Our visit today gives us an opportunity once again to share the true feeling of friendship between our two countries and enjoy this Open Day festival with you the residents, your friends and families, and the wonderful staff and faculty. On behalf of everyone from U. S. Naval Ship Repair Facility and Japan Regional Maintenance Center, Yokosuka, we hope that your coming days will be healthy and prosperous," Stancy concluded.

"This is the first visit for me," said SRF-JRMC volunteer Youko Suzuki. "I usually don't have a chance to visit and see what the residents of Shiratori-en do day in and day out. Although we sell the same hot dogs during on-base events, I feel that here our customers are very different. Workers at Shiratori-en are taking care of the adults and children very well. Their job seems very tough."

Chief Fire Controlman (SW) Clayton Smith visited a children medical facility in Yokohama that is similar to Shiratori-en. He said that Shiratori-en appears to be doing a great job displaying patience and understanding for each resident.

"This was my first visit and I really enjoyed spending time and seeing the community come together and the smiles on the faces of the residents and their families," he said. "We appreciate that Shiratori-en allowed us to visit and thoroughly enjoyed meeting and talking with the residents"

As part of the Open Day festivities, SRF-JRMC personnel sold more than 350 hot dogs to help raise money which will be used to fund the annual Christmas party that SRF-JRMC sponsors for the facility residents.

Chief Fire Controlman (SW) Daniel Glatz's son Brannon has visited Shiratori-en twice. He likes to sell hot dogs and enjoys working and exchanging words with grown-ups. "When I sell hot dogs, I have a chance to use my Japanese to communicate with native speakers. That improves my speaking ability in Japanese. I am very glad to do that."

"This is the second time I've come here," said Navy Diver 2nd Class (DSW) Zachary Hanson. "It is a good opportunity to learn about Japanese culture. I have a good time interacting with the other volunteers and I enjoy being around people having fun."

According to Shiratori-en Local Support Division Director Shigeyuki Asai, he and his staff enjoy the partnership with SRF-JRMC.

"We see the SRF-JRMC volunteers as kind and good hearted people, we enjoy the American spirit they bring and the hot dogs taste good," he said. "They are so energetic and enjoy repairing and conducting lawn mowing. Our facilities are surprisingly clean and neat after a visit by the SRF-JRMC volunteers."

SRF-JRMCボランティア、三浦しらとり園オープンデーに参加

文・写真:安達慶一、CFAY広報課

10月2日、米海軍艦船修理廠及び日本地区造修統括本部（SRF-JRMC）の従業員とその家族のボランティアが神奈川県立三浦しらとり園で開催されたオープンデーに参加した。

オープニングセレモニーでしらとり園の小野田正幸園長がSRF-JRMCの長年に亘るボランティア活動について語り、こう続けた。「1963年に当園の前身の長沢学園の時代からクリスマス会のプレゼントをいただいております。定期的な芝刈り、その他施設の清掃など、この場をお借りして長年のご奉仕に深く感謝いたします。」

引き続き、SRF-JRMCを代表し司令官のスティーブン・スタンシー大佐がスピーチを行なった。「多くの献身的な教職員と立派な施設を誇るしらとり園のオープンデーにお招きいただき、心から感謝しています。お互いを思いやり、手を差し伸べる気持ちが理想的な社会を作ると私は考えます。そういった意味で、しらとり園は、お手本といえるでしょう。皆さんの有益なお仕事に深謝すると共に、私たちが多少なりとも皆さんに貢献できることに感謝します。長沢学園から三浦しらとり園へと替わる前から今日まで、47年間SRF-JRMCは交流を続けてきました。今年は1960年1月19日に結ばれた日米安全保障条約が50周年を向えた年でもあります。それは両国が50年に亘り、この地域に安定、平和そして繁栄をもたらしてきた歩みといえるでしょう。」

Members and employees of Shiratori-en and volunteers from the local community enjoy watching various community groups perform during the Open Day event.
オープンデーでしらとり園の園生と従業員、そして地元のボランティアは、様々なグループによる演奏や演技を楽しんだ。

スタンシー大佐はスピーチをこう締めくくった。「今日私たちは再び、両国の親睦を深め、園生、友達、家族そして素晴らしい職員の皆さんと一緒にオープンデーを楽しむ機会を持つ事ができました。横須賀艦船修理廠及び日本地区造修統括本部を代表して皆さんのご健康とご発展をお祈りいたします。」

SRF-JRMCの日本人ボランティアの鈴木ゆうこさんは訪問についてこう話してくれた。「普段、しらとり園で知的障害を持つ園生がどのように暮らしているかを目にする機会はまずありません。横須賀基地のイベントで同じ様にホットドッグを販売しますが、しらとり園でのお客さんは異なる気がします。園生たちを支援するしらとり園の職員皆さんは一生懸命です。彼らの仕事はとても重労働です。」

FCC(SW)クレイトン・スミスさんは以前、横浜にあるしらとり園に似た小児医療施設を訪問した経験がある。彼によると、園生への忍耐と理解を示すのは困難だが、しらとり園の教職員はその点においても優れているという。「初めての訪問ですが、園生やその家族の笑みを見れてとても楽しい時間を過ごしました。私たちは園生との出会いと会話ができたことに感謝しています。」

オープンデーの一部としてSRF-JRMCのボランティア、オープンデーでは350個以上のホットドッグを売り上げた。その収益はSRF-JRMCが毎年参加するクリスマスパーティで、しらとり園に還元される。

FCC（SW）ダニエル・グラッツさんの息子ブラノン君は今回２回目の訪問だ。彼はホットドッグ売りが好きでボランティアとの会話や販売の手伝いを楽しんだ。「ホットドッグを売る時はお客さんと日本語で話す良いチャンスです。日本語の上達にもなるし、日本語が使えてうれしいです。」

SRF-JRMC Commanding Officer Capt. Steven Stancy gives his speech while SRF-JRMC Friendly Society President Hiroshi Aoki translates during the Open Day event Oct. 2.
しらとり園オープンデーでスピーチをするSRF-JRMC司令官のスティーブン・スタンシー大佐と、その通訳を勤める親睦会会長の青木洋氏。

「今回の訪問で２回目です。日本文化を学ぶ良い機会です。他のSRF-JRMCのボランティアのメンバーと交流が持ち、彼らと共に楽しめました」とND2(DSW) ザッカリー・ハンソンさんは話してくれた。

しらとり園地域支援課課長の浅井茂幸氏が、しらとり園に於けるSRF-JRMCのボランティア活動の印象を紹介してくれた。「SRF-JRMCボランティアは親切で気さくです。アメリカっぽい雰囲気と美味しいホットドッグも楽しませていただいています。とてもエネルギッシュに芝刈りを楽しまれ、芝刈り機の修理までしてくれました。SRF-JRMCのボランティアが帰った後は、施設の周辺は隅々まで掃除が行き届き、驚くばかりです。