

The 76er

October 2015

WELCOME TO SEVENTH FLEET

OPERATION TOMODACHI

Q&A WITH CMC HAKA



Congratulations



To The Navy's Newest Chief Petty Officers



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CMDCM Jason Haka

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MCSN MacAdam Weissman

PUBLICS AFFAIRS

Public Affairs Officer

Lt. Cmdr. Brian Wierzbicki

Media DIVO

Lt. Philip Chitty

Media DLCPO

MCC Ryan Wilber



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On the front cover:
Photo Illustration by MC3 James Mullen

On the back cover:
Photo by MC3 Ryan McFarlane
Photo Illustration by MC3 James Mullen

FILE NAME:

OPERATION TOMODACHI PATCH

Story by MC3 Nathan Burke

Every day the U.S. Navy's flight suit is worn with pride by thousands of Sailors. On the right arm of each Naval Aircrewman's suit is a circular velcro patch and a rare exception to the Navy's rules of uniformity - here Sailors place their patch of choice.

On his right arm, Ens. Kenny Sevenello, tactical action officer and anti-submarine warfare officer aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), wears the Operation Tomodachi Patch.

"I wear the patch because in my 15 years in the Navy, I've been on a lot of different missions to a lot of different places," said Sevenello. "Operation Tomodachi was one, if not the top one, that sticks out in my head because we played such a big role and Japan was my home at the time."

Operation Tomodachi was a United States Armed Forces emergency support operation to Japan providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief following the magnitude 9.0 offshore earthquake and ensuing tsunami on March 11, 2011. The aftermath



NORTHERN JAPAN (March 15, 2011) An emergency response team searches the wreckage of a coastal city in northern Japan in the wake of the 9.0-magnitude earthquake and subsequent tsunami as an HH-60H Sea Hawk helicopter from the Black Knights of Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 4 passes overhead.





NORTHERN JAPAN (March 15, 2011) Japanese citizens and US Navy Sailors unload supplies from an HH-60H Sea Hawk assigned to the Black Knights of Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 4, currently embarked to the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), at a coastal Japanese city affected by the tsunami caused by a 9.0 magnitude earthquake.

left more than 15,900 dead, 6,000 injured and 2,500 missing.

Numerous helicopter squadrons were stationed in Japan, including the “Chargers” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 14, the “Warlords” of Helicopter Anti-submarine Squadron Light (HSL) 51, and the “Black Knights” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 4.

“I was a Naval Air Crewman (Helicopter) 1st Class assigned to HSC-14 at the time,” said Sevenello. “I was an operations and training leading petty officer as well as a crew chief and search and rescue swimmer out of Naval Air Facility, Atsugi.”

“We kicked off by doing a mission up toward the Sendai region and were tasked to provide search and rescue support to a hospital where we believed there were still patients,” said Sevenello. “We found that the hospital was completely deserted. It was pretty eerie, but we got word that all the patients had made it out so we turned back.”

Sendai is the capital city of Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, and the second largest city north of Tokyo with a population of more than one million people. The coastal areas of the city suffered catastrophic damage from the earthquake and tsunami.

“A couple days later our command got the word that HSC-14 had to move up to Naval Air Facility Misawa and start flying missions out of Misawa. When I say the entire squadron, I mean every nook and cranny of the squadron.”

According to Sevenello, HSC-14 moved an estimated 300 personnel, 10 helicopters and all



YAMAGATA, JAPAN (March 14, 2011) Lt. Jacob King, assigned to the Chargers of Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 14, signs for fuel received from the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force at Yamagata Airport. HS-14, based at Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan, is conducting search and rescue missions in Miyagi Prefecture in support of Operation Tomodachi.



support equipment within one week.

With the objective of providing search and rescue support as well as material aid, the Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group was among the first to respond.

“We were initially loading up in Misawa, then as we dropped off supplies we flew out to Reagan, reloaded supplies and then went back out. We did an eight-helo go in the morning, fly between a 6 to 8-hour mission and then the next team would take over until sunset. We had food, water, medicine, paper plates, paper cups, blankets, clothes, you name it, we were transporting it.”

Sevenello added that HSC-14’s missions during Operation Tomodachi resulted in an estimated 500 hours of direct support and the delivery of more than 62,000 pounds of relief supplies.

“It was absolutely cold,” said Sevenello. “We were walking to the hangar in shin to knee-deep snow. We saw merchant ships that were a good ½ mile to ¾ mile inland. We saw passenger ferries on top of buildings. Towns were completely wiped out. With all that destruction, you’re landing in zones and you don’t know what to expect.”

According to Sevenello, the actions of the Japanese people during Operation Tomodachi left a resonating impression on him.

“I purposely chose orders to Ronald Reagan because I knew we were going to Japan. I absolutely loved my first tour in Japan.”



“What put the whole thing into perspective for me was how humble and how much the Japanese people helped each other. We would land, tell people what we had and they would tell us, ‘No, thank you very much. Take this to someone else who can use it. We have this stuff already.’ Landing zone after landing zone we saw a lot of people helping each other out. That was really cool.”

Sevenello continued to another memory that stands out during one of his last missions during Operation Tomodachi.

“In Japanese culture as I understand it, a sign of respect is the bow. And the deeper the bow the more respect it shows. There was an old guy who came out when we landed to drop supplies. He had tears and a smile and was just happy that someone was coming to help them out. We dropped the supplies off and as we were getting ready to take off he starts the bow. His head pretty much went all the way to his knees. He held it when we took off in the rotor wash

and everything, holding it until we were pretty much out of sight.”

According to Sevenello, he and his family look forward to returning to Japan.

“I purposely chose orders to Ronald Reagan because I knew we were going to Japan. I absolutely loved my first tour in Japan. That’s why I chose to come back. The decision wasn’t solely mine. My family absolutely loves Japan. When I told my wife I was up for orders, the first thing she asked was ‘can we go back to Japan?’”

Operation Tomodachi took place from March 12, 2011 to May 4, 2011 involving 24,000 U.S. service members, 189 aircraft, and 24 naval ships. The U.S. Navy alone delivered 260 tons of relief supplies to affected areas.

Ronald Reagan and its embarked air wing, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5, provide a combat-ready force that protects and defends the collective maritime interests of the U.S. and its allies and partners in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. ■

A GLOBAL FOR



FORCE FOR GOOD



STORY BY: MC3 RYAN MCFARLANE

With the hull swap complete and sea trials passed, America's flagship, the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) makes her way to Yokosuka, Japan to become the centerpiece of the 7th Fleet in the Pacific. To those who have operated with the 7th Fleet before, the term may be familiar, to others, the 7th fleet may be a mystery.

The U.S. Navy is divided into areas of operations (AOR) and within those AORs are separate fleets. In the case of the 7th Fleet, the Navy's presence is critical in maintaining peace and prosperity in the region for many different reasons.

The 7th Fleet's area of responsibility is the largest of the Navy's numbered fleets and covers more than 48 million square miles from the Kuril Islands in the north to the Antarctic in the south, and from the International Date Line to the 68th meridian, which runs down the India-Pakistan border. More than half of the global population lives within the 7th Fleet's borders.

The 7th Fleet encompasses some of the fastest growing and most dynamic governments and world powers on the globe. From the 7th Fleet's headquarters in Yokosuka, Japan, to India in the east, the people vary drastically, and so do the

"HE WHO CONTROLS THE SEAS CONTROLS THE WORLD."

-THEMISTOCLES



relationships. Included in the area are some of the world's largest militaries including the People's Republic of China, Russia, India, North Korea and the Republic of Korea.

The area within the 7th Fleet's borders contains a mix of mutual defense treaties and conflicting interests, making it an unpredictable and potentially volatile area.

Not only do some of the largest military powers reside in the 7th Fleet's AOR but so do some of the fastest growing economies. Ninety percent of commercial shipping transits through the waters of the 7th Fleet, carrying goods to every corner of the globe.

Not only is the region politically tense, but the region itself is also home to many natural disasters. The eight deadliest natural disasters ever recorded have all occurred within the borders of the 7th Fleet.

In a fashion that matches the U.S. Navy's previous slogan "A Global Force for Good" the Navy is there for its allies in times of need. In 2011 when the Tohoku earthquake hit Honshu, Japan, the United States Armed Forces began Operation

Tomodachi to help allies in Japan recover from the devastation. The U.S. Navy alone delivered 260 tons of relief supplies to affected areas. Leading the relief efforts during the aiding of Honshu was none other than USS Ronald Reagan.

More recently the U.S. Navy provided support in the Philippines during Operation Damayan in the aftermath of Hurricane Yolanda in 2013. While providing relief for the Philippines and other surrounding areas, the carrier that was called in for aid was none other than USS George Washington, the previous flagship of Task Force 70.

Our mission in the U.S. Navy is not only that of a peacekeeping force, but also as a humanitarian aide for our allies overseas.

At any given time there are 80 ships, 140 aircraft and 40,000 Navy and Marine Corps personnel assigned to the 7th Fleet, everywhere from Guam to Japan to Korea and beyond, all standing ready to aid our allies or intervene with swift speed and unrelenting force. Welcome to the 7th Fleet. ■

SAILOR SPOTLIGHT

SAILOR SPOTLIGHT: getting to know

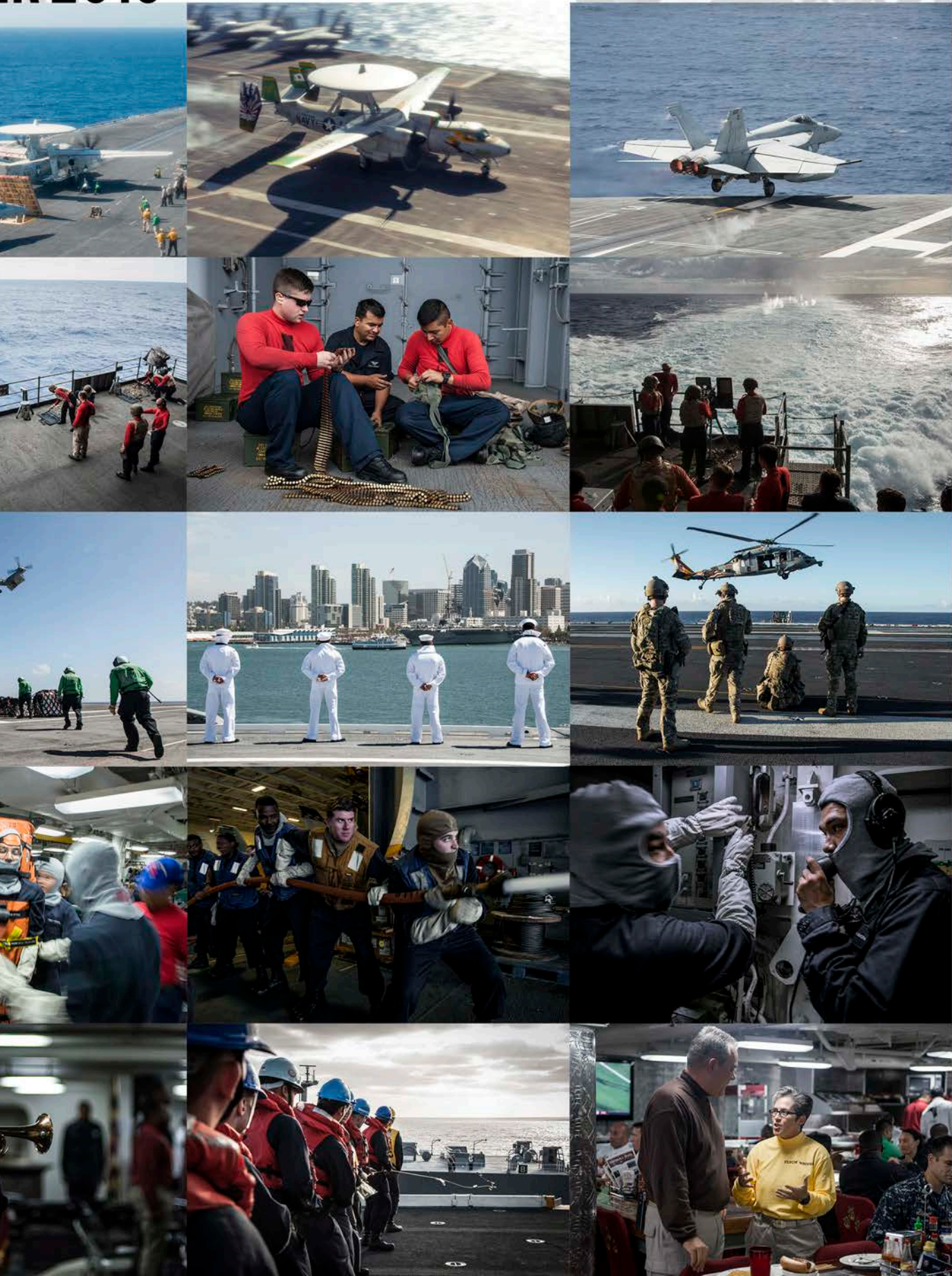
name: DEVIN C. GARNER rate/rank: AO³
department: WEPS division: G-3
daily grind: BUILD ORDNANCE
hometown: WAYCROSS, GA
inspiration: MY PARENTS
soundtrack (song): LOVE - MUSIC SOULCHILD
that special place: IN THE WOODS HUNTING
sports team: GEORGIA BULLDOGS
movie: MULAN
food: ANY SOUTHERN COOKING
can't live without: MY LITTLE SISTER
proudest moment: BECOMING AN OLDER BROTHER
dream job: MECHANICAL ENGINEER
best age, why?: 15, I WAS ABLE TO GET A JOB
hobby: PLAYING FOOTBALL
mentor: AOC COLLIER
the perfect day: BEING WITH THE ONES I LOVE



U.S. NAVY

THROUGH THE LENS SEPTEMBER







Q&A

WITH THE

CMC

CMDCM JASON HAKA

MC2 Kittleson: CMC Haka, please share your thoughts on how the hull swap went with USS George Washington.

CMC Haka: “Well, I thought the hull swap went outstanding. The ships pulled in to San Diego at North Island, and both crews executed the hull swap flawlessly. We got all of our Sailors across, and they were able to start working immediately. I was talking to the Pacific Fleet Master Chief [Susan] Whitman, she said that it went so smooth, that she didn’t even know that it was complete yet. It was a job well done by all hands.”

MC2: USS Ronald Reagan recently pinned 41 new Chief Petty Officers into the mess. Please share your expectations of them as the ship moves forward into its new assignment as the forward-deployed naval forces carrier.

CMC: “I’m absolutely proud of all 41 of our new Chiefs. They did a great job during the Phase 2 season, and I’m looking forward to serving with all of them in this new capacity. It’s all about the Sailors, you know? I demand and I expect that they put

their Sailors in front of them and train their reliefs. They’re deckplate leaders, and I expect that they won’t go to bed until they’re tired and the job is done. They’ve got a lot of big shoes to fill in a lot of roles, but most importantly, being that deckplate leader and technical expert, that advocate for the Sailor that makes sure that we develop our Sailors right to relieve us all one day.”

MC2: Please describe the importance of the role that USS Ronald Reagan plays in America’s military presence in the Indo-Asian Pacific region.

CMC: “Reagan is one of the newest Nimitz-class aircraft carriers. Probably the most technologically-advanced aircraft carrier around. With a blended crew, this is like a ‘dream team’ that’s been assembled together. We are the most awesome warship in the most important warship billet in the Navy, in Japan. So, it means a lot of great things: to show the flag of the United States and Naval power in this region of the world. And also, to show the support of our partners. I think it’s really a big deal for Ronald Reagan to come to Japan. Especially with all of the history from 2011, with Operation Tomodachi and the role the ship played in that event. It’s kind of like a small homecoming coming back to Japan. And a lot of the Japanese are really excited to see us pull into Yokosuka.”

MC2: As you return to Japan, what are you looking forward to seeing or doing most?

CMC: “I never would have realized, four years ago, when I went to Japan, that my wife and I would love it so much. It’s just an amazing place to live. There’s nothing bad about Japan. I want to get on a train, get up into Tokyo, and go find dinner. One of the things my wife and I like to do when we go out is to just jump on a train

and go find somewhere new – get off at a different spot and eat somewhere. Sushi, yakiniku (Korean BBQ) and ramen are our three favorites. Definitely, get into Tokyo. It's as simple as getting on a train at Disney World and heading over to Epcot. It's just that simple. So we're just really looking forward to getting back onto the train system and seeing the sights. It's a great, orderly society, the people are so friendly."

MC2: Please share some of your favorite places, sites or events.

CMC: "In Tokyo, we really like the Shibuya crossing area. It's probably the busiest crosswalk anywhere in the world. And you see thousands of people move five different directions at one time, which is very unique. We also like going up by Odiba, which is by the Tokyo teleport. It's really nice because you get a good view of the city and the Rainbow Bridge, which cuts into downtown. One of my personal favorite areas is the Ginza area, which is on the east side of town, and is a pretty technologically-advanced part of Tokyo with a lot of good shopping. You'll see a lot of modern things like you'd see in the States while you're there – stores that you're familiar with back home. And then there are the landmarks like Tokyo Tower and Skytree which are really cool and easy to get to. Once you get up high in the tower, you can really see the layout of Tokyo, even Yokohama, and Yokosuka on a clear day."

MC2: For the members of the crew who have never been to Japan, what do you recommend they do or see while the ship is in port?

CMC: "Get off the base! Get off the base and walk around Yokosuka. Get past "The Honch," that's just a crosswalk over Highway 16, go down "Blue Street" and see some of that area, and definitely try some of the cuisine. Get yourself a SUICA or PASMO card and jump on a train, like I said earlier,

go to Yokohama, go to Kurihama, Kamakura – you don't have to make it all the way out to Tokyo yet because it's a bit of a longer ride, but even Suzuki is a nice little area. Get off the base, go to the train station and check out what Japan has to offer. One, you'll find it is very simple to travel, and two, it's convenient, and three, you'll see a lot of great things. So get out and explore, take baby steps. They even mark the signs in English for you, and on the trains, they'll play a recording letting you know when you're back in Yokosuka."

MC2: What is the most important thing, in your opinion, that Reagan Sailors should keep in mind while on liberty in Japan?

CMC: "They should remember that everybody is watching us. We are in a fish-bowl, so to speak, in Japan. We are foreigners, in their country, and everyone is watching what we do. Just remember that we wouldn't allow a foreign navy to come put a base on United States soil, then let their sailors run amok – and the Japanese don't allow that either. It's real important that we conduct ourselves properly while on liberty and remember to be great ambassadors of the United States, to represent our Navy, the states that we are from, as well as our families back home, to set the right example. The Japanese people want to be our friends, they love having us there. They are great hosts and partners. There are a few people who have messed things up over the years, but overall our relationship is great, and we need to maintain that great relationship. Make your families proud, make me proud while you're out there on liberty – and have a great time."

MC2: Please share any pearls of wisdom you might have for the crew as we prepare to pull into our new home.

CMC: "We're really only going to

be in port for a short period of time. For the single Sailors who are coming to Japan, and qualify for housing, I highly recommend that while we are there, that you get yourself over to the housing office, take the brief and try to find a residence and get that all worked out. We have a pretty tight timeline, but you don't want to deal with it when we pull back in later this year, because we'll start running into the holiday season, Japan's Golden Week and other events, so there will be limited opportunities. So try to get established in the community while we're in port. Get your "DBIDS" (Defense Biometric Identification System — located at front-gate security) set up so you can get back on base without any hassle. Fall patrol is going to go by pretty quickly. We've proven before that we can knock out a couple of months at-sea with our eyes closed. So don't wait to get this stuff taken care of. When we come back, we're going to go into our leave period for a couple of months, then we're going to get hot-and-heavy with SRA, and the earlier you start getting yourself established in Yokosuka, the easier things will be when we return at the end of the year. And, on a final note, I'll say it again. Get off the base. There's so many great things the country of Japan has to offer. So go explore. They'll know you're an American, so if you get lost, they'll help you find your way back to Yokosuka. They might not be able to talk to you, but they'll at least be able to point you in the right direction. So don't be afraid. And there's a lot of people aboard the ship right now that have been in Japan. Link up with some of your shipmates and they'll show you around. I plan on showing some people around who are here for the first time. For those of you who've been here, pay it forward to your new shipmates. Take them around and show them some of the great things Japan has to offer."



CULTURE SHOCK WHAT'S DIFF

Japan, or Nippon as the Japanese call it, translates into “The land of the Rising Sun.” Japan is a central hub for technology, innovation and business. It is also a very popular tourist spot with plenty to see.

It’s no surprise that some people may be nervous about moving to a country on the other side of the world, with a vastly different culture than most of us are used to. Japan is a wonderful place filled with a mind-numbing variety of just about anything you can think of, with a distinct taste you won’t find anywhere else.

It’s easy to get excited thinking about everything you can do, but remember that you’re not in Kansas anymore, and there are plenty of differences you ought to be aware of.

Remember that as Americans, especially as military personnel, you are an ambassador to the U.S. and the Navy. You may not realize this, but your actions can and will have a huge impact on public opinion.

Simply minding your manners will go a long way. Americans are generally viewed as loud and rude, especially in Japan. There seems to be this widely held notion that Americans like talking too loud on trains or j-walking. By minding traffic laws and keeping conversations down on trains we can easily reverse this opinion and help strengthen ties between the U.S. and Japan, as well as make a few friends.

Other than general respect, there are a few things that commonly catch newcomers off guard: tipping, bowing, and eye contact.

Tipping is actually a cultural no-no. Excellent service is a Japanese cornerstone, so leaving a tip is typically frowned upon. You may end up with a cashier trying to give it back! Most large restaurants already have a gratuity



DIFFERENT?

Story By MCSN Matthew Riggs



charge, so there is no need to worry.

Bowing is also an important aspect to the Japanese culture. As Americans, it's understandable that we may not bow, but doing so shows an interest in the host nation's culture, and is a good way to impress the locals.

When bowing, your head should be down, and bend down as far as you are comfortable. Deeper bows imply deeper respect, but there is no need to go overboard. Just remember that when someone bows to a Japanese person, they have to bow back.

This leads nicely into the next topic, eye contact. As Americans, we tend to look people in their eyes when we're speaking to them. In Japan, however, this is quite intimidating. They prefer not to make direct eye contact as a rule, so don't take that as an insult.

As a SOFA sponsored military member, it's especially important to familiarize yourself with local laws. Remember to be mindful of your actions. Your actions not only reflect upon you, but the Navy as well. One stunt can land an entire command in trouble. Pay attention to legal briefs, and visit legal if you have questions.

If you ever need help while in town, check in with the local Koban boxes. Koban boxes are small police buildings regularly found throughout Japan, and are easily identifiable. Several policemen do know English, and can get you in contact with someone who does, if they don't.

The key to having a good time is simply getting out and exploring the area. Since you are already in a foreign country for a while, why not?

The most popular way to travel is by foot and using trains. Japan's train system may seem difficult to understand. Luckily, English assistance is usually available. It is also one of the best trains systems in the



world. If the arrival time says 12:13, it means 12:13. Train stations are found throughout Japan, and can take you practically anywhere.

The best way to travel by train is to purchase a prepaid train pass card. Japan has two different brands of train passes, 'SUICA' and 'PASMO'. Both serve the same function, so no need to worry about picking the right one. You can purchase these cards at the ticket booth. Upon leaving a station, your card will be charged depending on how far you have traveled, not necessarily by the station you entered. ■

THINGS TO DO IN JAPAN

Verny Park

The park features rose gardens, fountains, western-style arbors and cherry blossoms, making it a pleasant place all year round. The waterside boardwalk, also, is a pleasant place for a stroll and for enjoying the sea breeze.

Red Door Ramen

Located right outside the main gate of Yokosuka Naval Base, Red Door Ramen offers a convenient way to taste a wide variety of Japanese Ramen and local appetizers.

Mikasa Park

Mikasa Park's main attractions are the memorial pre-dreadnought battleship, Mikasa, and its multi-colored fountain complex. The park is among Japan's Top 100 City Parks.

Monkey Island/Sarushima

A small island located off Yokosuka, Kanagawa in Japan. It is the only natural island in Tokyo Bay. Swimming and camping facilities were built on Sarushima, and it is a popular fishing spot.



WARRIOR ETHOS



PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH

CVN 76

“When you can do the common things
in life in an uncommon way,
you will command the attention of the world.”

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER



USS RONALD REAGAN

SAILORS HELPING SAILORS. ONE TEAM. ONE FIGHT.