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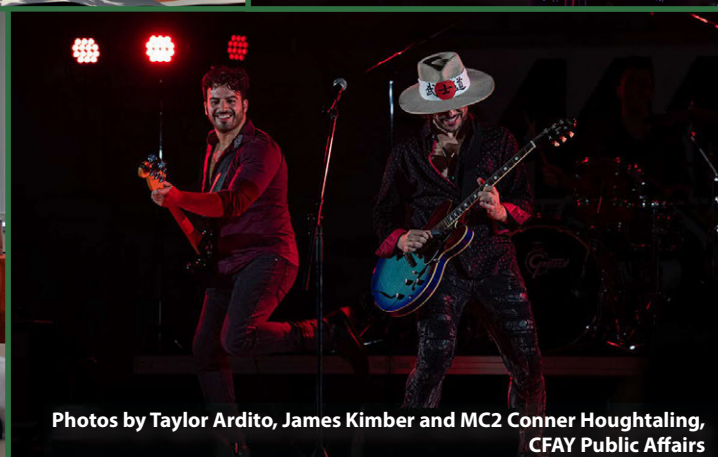
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This Week at Fleet Activities, Yokosuka



Photos by Taylor Ardito, James Kimber and MC2 Conner Houghtaling,
CFAY Public Affairs

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CFAY Celebrates 50 Years of Hosting U.S. Aircraft Carriers

Story by Garrett Cole, CFAY Public Affairs

This year marks a significant milestone for Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY), as it celebrates the 50th anniversary of hosting U.S. aircraft carriers. From the USS Midway (CV-41) in 1973 to the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN-76) today, CFAY has been an indispensable hub for American naval power in the Asia-Pacific region. These floating fortresses symbolize more than naval prowess. They're an emblem of American-Japanese cooperation and ensure regional stability.

"The history of aircraft carriers in Yokosuka starts with the USS Midway, followed by the USS Independence (CV-62), USS Kitty Hawk (CV-63), and the transition to nuclear-powered carriers with the USS George Washington (CVN-73) in 2008," says Chief Quartermaster Derek Goehmann of CFAY Port Operations, who witnessed these transitions. "The USS Ronald Reagan came to Yokosuka in 2015, and she's currently the only Forward Deployed Naval Forces (FDNF) aircraft carrier, essentially, the only one stationed outside the continental U.S."

The presence of carriers serves more than just military functions; it is also a sign of the strong partnership between Japan and the United States. "They brought carriers to the region to maintain a presence in the Indo-Pacific. Think about the significance of the USS Midway and its history; it was a significant step between our two countries working

together and ensuring the stability of the region," Goehmann elaborates.

Kyle Abernathy, Unaccompanied Housing Manager at CFAY, sheds light on the direct effects of the carrier's presence on unaccompanied sailors: "The USS Reagan will actually send 100% of all their bonified eligible sailors. They account for about a third of all occupancy of our unaccompanied housing, boosting our occupancy rates, which in turn drives funding and better living conditions. It's always a heavy lift for us when the carrier departs and returns, but it's well worth it because we get to help provide the sailors a better quality of life".

Esteban Abreu, CFAY Installation Housing Program Director, gives a broader perspective: "The arrival of the carriers has been great for the local housing economy because of the number of families and sailors that are authorized to live off-base. Business for most local restaurants, bars, and cafes drop more than 50 percent when the carrier pulls out."

The transition from conventional carriers like the USS Kitty Hawk to nuclear-powered ones signifies an evolution in naval capabilities. "No dates have been announced, but the USS Ronald Reagan will be replaced with the USS George Washington next year," added Goehmann.

"I think it's good to have a carrier here. The biggest benefit, obviously, being the response time to the area. With the carriers being forward-deployed, the transit time is quicker," Goehmann concludes, touching on the operational advantages for cruisers and destroyers that work within the carrier's strike group.

As Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka prepares to transition to its next aircraft carrier, one thing is clear – the aircraft carriers have become more than just ships; they are floating communities that serve as a testament to the enduring cooperation between Japan and the United States.



**HOUSING
TOWN HALL**
THURS. OCT. 19 | 5:30 P.M.
AOB/ICR Classroom

