

THE IWAKUNI APPROACH

Issue No. 10, Vol. 1

Friday, March 14, 2008

Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan

Lancer CO gets hosed



Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 212 senior enlisted advisor, Sgt. Maj. Ricky Stroud, hoses down the Lancers' commanding officer, Lt. Col. Robert Boyles, on the flight line here March 7. Boyles was met by VMFA-212 members and given a wash down after his last local sortie with the squadron. Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

Survey could boost COLA for Iwakuni service members

LANCE CPL. NOAH S. LEFFLER
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

As the Japanese yen grows stronger against the U.S. dollar, service members and their families here may be feeling the effects when making a trip to the ATM machine or shopping out in town.

For a limited time, these residents have a resource to validate their spending habits with the declining exchange rate and possibly up their cost of living allowance.

The Pentagon's Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee is conducting an online living pattern survey to determine if changes are necessary to COLA paid to military members serving in Japan.

According to the Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee Web site, COLA helps to maintain buying power so those stationed overseas can purchase about the same level of goods and services as in the United States.

SEE COLA ON PAGE 3

'Bats' land in Iwakuni, become first two-seat Hornet squadron to be based permanently in Japan

LANCE CPL. CHRIS DOBBS
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Aircraft and personnel from Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242 continued to arrive here Monday as the squadron becomes the Corps' first two-seat Hornet squadron to be based permanently in Japan.

The "Bats," who have been based in Miramar since 1996, are relocating here as part of a Marine Corps Aviation campaign plan initiated in 2006, according to Lt. Col. Douglas S. Mayer, VMFA-242 commanding officer.

"The plan intends to alleviate the stress in the two-seat Hornet community that has been rotating through the Iraq theater, where this squadron has been twice in the last three years," Mayer said. "Also, it enables a permanent two-seat Hornet presence in the Western Pacific."

SEE BATS ON PAGE 3



The Bats of Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242 will officially become the first two-seat Hornet squadron to be permanently stationed in Japan April 1. The Bats' aircraft and personnel will occupy the space recently used by Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 212, which will transition to cadre status in accordance with the Marine Corps Aviation Campaign Plan. Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

INSIDE IWAKUNI



Oldest naval aircraft in service retires

5



Seabees, Marines gather for ball

6



Fallujah continues to rebuild

8



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The Iwakuni Approach welcomes Letter to the Editor submissions. Letters must include a full name and unit, if applicable. Anonymous letters and comments will not be published. Letters are the opinion of the writer only. Submissions may be edited for clarity and space. Letters can be dropped off at the Public Affairs Office or sent via e-mail to iwakuni.pao@usmc.mil.

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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Defining diligence

CHAPLAIN ALLEN R. KUSS
COMMAND CHAPLAIN

Diligence is an idea and word seldom used anymore. The Random House College Dictionary defines diligence as, "first, as a constant and earnest effort to accomplish what is undertaken; persistent exertion of body or mind—secondly, as care or caution."

Diligence is one of the qualities that make adults with children parents. It takes diligence to train, educate, mentor and give the necessary love which will enable future adults to be good citizens.

It is diligence which enables an inexperienced sailor or Marine to train as a warrior, to gain leadership skills and to become the leader that motivates others to accomplish the

mission.

The dictionary gives the antonyms of diligence as: carelessness, idleness, indolence, and laziness.

These characteristics are the undoing of any training, physical health or intellectual capability. They are the decay of the person or a society. Once we lower our standards of behavior, lower our expectations of right and good, we have begun our decay.

Effort and persistent exertion of mind and body are also part of the spiritual life.

Spiritual growth takes time. It takes a constant effort to find the time and the discipline to pray.

The study of sacred scriptures and understanding their content is necessary but not an easy read. The exercise of religion and the obligation of public worship challenges devout members to conform their lives to their beliefs.

Diligence describes one of the qualities we need for ourselves and our society.

Females admired for creative contributions



Female koto musicians from the local community send good vibrations to an audience at the Club Iwakuni ballroom here during the annual Women's Art/Women's Vision event March 11. As part of Women's History Month, the event recognized women's accomplishments and contributions to society especially in the area of visual arts. Guests walked around tables displaying works in painting, photography, textiles and graphic design with the traditional "cherry blossom" music filling the air. Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Friendship Day requirements

Submit unit or private organization consumable or non-consumable reports to the Provost Marshal's Office by March 28.

PMO cannot accept any reports after that date. Any unit or private organization intending to sell consumable or non-consumable items at Friendship Day 2008 must get approval from the Provost Marshal's Office. For more information, contact Customs and Immigration, Building 779. Call 253-5418 or 253-3303.

Hours of operation are from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.



"Morning Air Strike" — A live 3-hour radio show, featuring popular music, local guests, news, sports and recreation information. Mondays through Thursdays 6 – 9 a.m. and Fridays 6 – 8 a.m., except holidays on Power 1575.

COLA FROM PAGE 1

The questionnaire is designed to identify where and how consumers purchase goods and services, and the information obtained will help form the basis for prescribing a service member's COLA.

"Whatever (participants) put on the COLA survey, we send that data file out to the per diem committee," said David Naseer, assistant station COLA coordinator. "They use that file to determine how much COLA Iwakuni will get."

To ensure the survey accurately reflects average spending habits, Naseer reminds participants to take into account the recent period of reflection.

"We don't want these guys and gals to think, 'Hey, the past two weeks we weren't allowed off base, so our shopping pattern stays on base most of the time,'" Naseer said. "If they can just picture before the period of reflection and after the period of reflection,

that's what we're looking for."

The survey, which takes about 30 minutes to complete, is open to all service members who have lived in Iwakuni for at least three months and are accompanied by at least one status of forces agreement-sponsored dependent.

Station COLA coordinator Maj. Ron Gaines encourages all applicable families to take part, as historically such assessments have yielded positive results.

"Based upon the last (retail price survey) that was done last spring, we were one of the few places that did not receive a (COLA) decrease," Gaines said.

The end result will be determined by base participation, he added. The survey, which will be available until March 31, can be found by logging on to <http://www.perdiem.osd.mil/oscola/lps/japan/>. For more information regarding COLA, contact the station Inspector's Office at 253-5314 (assistance is available for Japanese speakers).

Total Force exercise tests station



Members of the Iwakuni Fire Department react to a suspicious powdered substance found within a package at the Post Office on March 11 during exercise Total Force 2008. Total Force 2008 is a station-wide exercise evaluating the defense and support of operations at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, during possible terrorist attacks and contingencies. Lance Cpl. Jacqueline Diaz

BATS FROM PAGE 1

VMFA-242 aircraft will now occupy the space recently used by Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 212, which flies the single-seat F/A-18C Hornet.

Having an additional operator in its aircraft gives the Bats greater capability, according to Capt. Tom Farrington, VMFA-242 weapons and sensors officer (WSO).

"You basically have an extra set of eyeballs to do everything," Farrington said, adding that the WSO mans the rear seat of the aircraft. "We're able to do a couple of other missions that the single-seat aircraft can't do."

Forward air control and reconnaissance are two such missions, Farrington added.

As 242 becomes fully operational and officially active April 1, the Lancers of VMFA-212 will assume a cadre status.

The Lancers will be inactive until the introduction of the new Joint Strike Fighter aircraft in approximately three to five years, according to Maj. David Kalinske, VMFA-212 aircraft maintenance officer.

"The term 'cadre' can be thought of as a temporary shut-down," Kalinske said. "When the first Joint Strike Fighter comes out, VMFA-212 will be one of the first squadrons to reactivate."

Several Lancers' pilots and many of the squadron's maintainers will be staying in Iwakuni, becoming members of VMFA-242.

Cpl. Jason Beltran, who recently became the VMFA-242 operations chief after being a Lancer for the past year, said the administrative part of forming the squadron will be time consuming.

"There's a lot of information that needs to be updated," Beltran said, adding that coordinating VMFA-242 aircraft movement from Miramar to Iwakuni was one of the more challenging tasks of the transition. "We have to get all the new personnel into the training system and get ready for a commanding general readiness inspection (CGRI) in mid-April."

While the move will likely be significant for those involved – especially the pilots and WSOs of VMFA-242, who have completed multiple tours in Iraq as part of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing and Marine Aircraft Group 11 during the past few years—many are looking forward to it.

"I'm excited," Farrington said. "It's an awesome opportunity."

News Briefs

St. Patrick's Day Meal

The North and South mess halls will serve a special St. Patrick's meal on March 17 at 11 a.m. Everyone aboard MCAS Iwakuni is welcome. Cost for commuted ration, family members and civilians will be \$3.85. For more information, call 253-5740.

2008 Japanese Culture Fest

March 30, noon to 5 p.m., at M.C. Perry School's library, cafeteria and staff lounge. Free. So much to see and do. Immerse yourself in the culture of Japan. For more information, contact Japanese American Society Iwakuni at 253-4744.

2008 Post Office Closures

5 May (Mon.) Closed Friendship Day
26 May (Mon.) Closed Memorial Day
4 July (Fri.) Closed Independence Day
1 Sept. (Mon.) Closed Labor Day
13 Oct. (Mon.) Closed Columbus Day

What loyalty meant to ancient warriors

CAPT. GIUSEPPE STAVALE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

There is a place you should visit the next time you are in Tokyo. It is a place that has a story to tell about Japan's past and bushido, or the way of the warrior. It is on what used to be the old Tokaido road. Literally translated to Eastern Sea Road, it served as the main road in, out, and through Edo (Tokyo) during the Edo period (1603-1853). Along what used to be the Tokaido road in the Takanawa area, Minato Ward, Tokyo, there are many old shrines and temples that are concentrated there. It is in this area that Sengakuji or Sengaku Temple is located.

Sengaku Temple is popular due to the unique people buried there and their story of bushido. First, it should be pointed out that this is not a Shinto shrine. It is a Buddhist temple and therefore it is common to have people buried on the temple grounds. Shinto shrines do not have people buried on the shrine's grounds. The story of Sengaku Temple is better known as the 47 Ronin or 47 Samurai. Ronin is a Japanese term meaning masterless samurai.

On Jan. 30, 1701, the incident which brought the 47 Ronin's popularity and association with Sengaku Temple occurred, known as the Ako Incident. There are many versions of the incident which only vary in details. The idea of the incident is as follows.

A daimyo or lord of a clan, named Asano Takumimonami from a village called Ako, was called to the Shogun's castle in Edo and charged with hosting imperial envoys from the imperial capital of Kyoto.

He was tasked with consulting the highest ranking protocol officer of the court, Kira Kozukenosuke. Kira was known to be difficult to deal with and described as conceited and very arrogant.

Kira and his wife were from influential families related to the imperial line and therefore exercised influence within the shogunate, the Shogun's governing body of officials.

Sources said Kira expected to be compensated with bribes from Asano for the trouble he was going through in teaching Asano the proper protocol when dealing with imperial guests from Kyoto. Sources also said that Kira mocked and provoked Asano, but Asano, being a good samurai, would not allow himself to become angered and inadvertently act without a clear head. Various sources are consistent and report Kira as being full of pride due to his pedigree and taking himself very seriously. He looked down on others, especially people such as Asano, who, even though he was a daimyo, came from the rural parts of Japan and was seen as a backward and unsophisticated person from the country. Kira disliked people from the country and demonstrated his disgust toward Asano, who is portrayed as a good and faithful servant to the Shogun and being a quintessential example of bushido. His patience wore thin on the above date when Kira attempted to dishonor Asano by asking him to do the unthinkable and replace Kira's sandal on his foot after Kira reportedly faked a stumble. Some accounts of the story report that Asano made the mistake of walking down steps ahead of Kira. This offended Kira who then purposely stumbled, blamed Asano for it and ordered Asano to pick-up Kira's sandal and place it back on his foot. A true warrior would never touch another person's foot as this would ruin his reputation and honor. This task was that of a servant, not that of a warrior.

Defending his honor, Asano drew his sword within the castle grounds, which was forbidden by law, and attempted to kill Kira but failed. Some reports say that Kira was attended to by his own guards and that Asano had to deal with them also. He managed to lightly cut



Sengaku Temple, a Buddhist temple in Tokyo, is popular due to the unique people buried there and their story of bushido. On the Sengaku Temple grounds is Ako Gishi Memorial Hall, dedicated to the 47 ronin. Capt. Giuseppe Stavale

Kira on the face and shoulder, but Kira and his guards ran off. The Shogun's castle, where this incident occurred, is the Imperial Castle today. Among the Imperial staff, this incident is known as the "The Pine Gallery (Corridor) Incident."

Sources explain that even though the Shogun knew Asano was provoked, he had broken the Shogun's law by drawing a sword within the castle grounds. An investigation was conducted that day with a judgment and sentence also handed down the same day. Asano was to commit seppuku (suicide) by disembowelment outside the castle grounds in a garden. He was also stripped of his title as lord, and all his land and homes were confiscated.

At that time, there was an equal punishment law where someone found guilty of a crime should receive the same injury he caused. Asano's followers and supporters saw this sentence as unjust and not proportionate to the crime. They also protested that a thorough and adequate investigation needed more time. Furthermore, they protested that his death sentence was one for a felon and not proper for a daimyo who was provoked and whose actions many thought were justified. Asano reportedly confessed to all he was accused of and regretted nothing except failing in killing Kira. Asano committed seppuku at Minato Ward's Sengaku Temple and was buried there.

Kira knew that Asano's men would seek revenge, and increased his guard force and paid for spies and informants. Asano's loyal gishi, or retainers, were samurai. The term samurai means "one who serves" and were recognized to be career warriors who aspired to living a life dedicated to Confucian-based teachings and scholarly virtue.

These samurai were now masterless or ronin and hatched a long-term plan for Kira to become complacent and then strike. The leader of the 47 ronin was Oishi Kuranosuke, who divorced his wife and sent her to her hometown for protection, later turning into a drunk and moving in with a prostitute. Other ronin followed similar disguises as Kira's spies and other informants reported that Asano's former samurai were no longer a threat.

Then, 23 months later on Dec. 14, 1702, they attacked Kira at his house in Edo. His guards and even his son fled and Kira was found hiding in a storage shed. A horn was sounded, which was the signal that he was found, and he was given the opportunity to take

his own life. He refused and begged for his life, which angered Oishi who then chopped off his head and threw it in a bucket.

The ronin then took his head to Sengaku Temple where they washed it at a well, which is still there, and presented it in front of Asano's grave as an offering of justice and a vendetta carried out.

The ronin then immediately turned themselves into the shogunate where they were held for a while until the Shogun decided what to do with them. Public support for their warrior spirit, filial obligations of loyalty and chivalry was in the ronin's favor.

The Shogun himself was reportedly torn and conflicted with the situation as he also empathized with the ronin and what they did for their master. Famous philosophers of the time weighed-in on the argument, and one very influential Confucian philosopher, Ogyu Sorai, argued that the rule of law had to be upheld if others were to obey it and the country ruled without it falling into chaos.

According to reports available at Sengaku Temple grounds, 46 ronin (not 47, as one was allowed to live because he did not actually participate in the killing of Kira) were sentenced to death and committed seppuku on Feb. 4, 1703, other sources stating that the date of execution was March 20, 1703. Nevertheless, all the ronin were buried next to Asano at Sengaku Temple.

The 47th ronin was buried there after he died of natural causes at an old age.

After their death, dramas started to be played at theaters commemorating the incident. To this day, kabuki theater often plays Chushingura (The Story of the Loyal Retainers), which is the story of the 47 ronin. There is an annual festival at the temple on Dec. 14 to commemorate the vendetta served on Kira.

On the Sengaku Temple grounds is Ako Gishi Memorial Hall, a memorial hall dedicated to the 47 ronin. Entrance fees are as follows: adults pay 500 yen, junior high and high school students pay 400 yen, elementary school students pay 250 yen, and groups over 30 people pay 400 yen each. The hall is small but has an annex on the grounds where there are wooden statues of the 47 ronin carved centuries ago. The hall is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily and closed only two days a year March 31 and September 30.

For more information on booking a trip, contact the Information Tours and Travel office at 253-4377 or call the grounds at 03-3441-5560.



The Marine Corps' oldest KC-130 Hercules aircraft (front), also known as the 573, and a brand new KC-130J Hercules from Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 152, fly in formation Feb. 13. The 573 was the oldest naval aircraft in service until it was retired to the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group "Bone Yard" at Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Ariz., Feb. 23. Lance Cpl. Kristofer R. Atkinson

Marine Corps' oldest aircraft retired from service

Marine Aerial Refueling Squadron 152 receives new model replacement

LANCE CPL. RYAN WICKS
MCB CAMP BUTLER

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION FUTENMA, OKINAWA, Japan (March 7, 2008) — The Marine Corps' oldest C-130 Hercules departed from Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 152 on Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to be retired in the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group "Bone Yard" at Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Ariz. Feb. 23.

The C-130, also known as the '573' by its crew, arrived at what was VMR-352 in 1961 and has operated since then.

The primary mission for 573 was air refueling and assault support. It was the oldest naval aircraft in service, according to Lt. Col. Dwight Neeley, the commanding officer of VMGR-152 Marine Aircraft Group 36, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

The aircraft was used many times for crucial missions in the last few decades of American history, according to retired Master Sgt. Nick Decandia, a KC-130 flight

engineer with the squadron. It was involved in the Vietnam War, more specifically Khe Sanh and Danang.

"We used the 573 to do air drops to distribute supplies and ammo over Khe Sanh," Decandia said. "In between those (missions) we would land, pick up the wounded and dead and bring them back to Danang. We did this seven or eight times a day."

Neeley said the 573 was also essential in recent operations.

"We have used the 573 in every overseas humanitarian assistance program in the past four years," Neeley said. "The 573 had over 28,000 flight hours recorded. It was a real workhorse."

Despite being the oldest aircraft in the hangar, 573 was one of the better planes available, according to

Staff Sgt. Shelly Henderson, a flight engineer with VMGR-152. "As time went on, it took a lot more to keep her running, but she didn't need any more maintenance than the newer planes. She's got a lot of power."

The 573 was retired to make room for the Marine Corps' newest C-130J model. The 573 is scheduled for preserved status. It could be brought back again

for more use or sold to another country.

"I think it has a very sentimental value," Neeley said. "It stands as a testament to all of the thousands of Ma-

lines who kept it running for all these years. It has seen four different generations of Marines."

"It's just like leaving a child behind," said Henderson. "It's pretty amazing and overwhelming to go through the bone yard seeing all the old aircraft there. A trip to the bone yard is like a trip back in American history. It got emotional when we went through there; even the guys teared up a little."

The plane's crew flew from Okinawa to Tucson, Ariz. to retire it. Once they arrived, they taxied the plane into the Bone Yard. Before the plane was sealed up, they each got to sign the 573, displaying to whom it used to belong.

'573' Fast Facts:

- Joined VMGR-152 in 1961
- The primary mission for '573' was air refueling and assault support
- It was the oldest naval aircraft in service
- It was involved in the Vietnam War, more specifically Khe Sanh and Danang
- '573' was used in every overseas humanitarian assistance program in the past four years

'Can do' sailors celebrate 66 years of service



The enormous cake is presented at the 66th Annual Seabee Ball at the Club Iwakuni Ballroom here March 7, feeding more than 150 service members and family members. The event celebrated 141 years of service for the Civil Engineers Corps and 66 years of the U.S. Navy construction battalions. Photos by Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez



With the assistance of Sgt. Maj. Robert E. Mastriano, sergeant major of Marine Corps Bases Japan, the youngest and oldest Seabees of Iwakuni make the first ceremonial cuts into the construction battalion's cake.

"It's said that the greatest generation is the World War II generation, but the greatest generation has been replaced by the 'can do' generation of the Seabees."

- Sgt. Maj. Robert E. Mastriano
Sergeant Major of Marine Corps Forces Japan

Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Seabee's, Marines and fellow sailors brought their best to the 66th Seabee Ball and the 141st Anniversary of the Civil Engineer Corps at the Club Iwakuni ballroom March 7.

The evening event commemorated the service of the station's civil engineers and construction battalion personnel and their colorful history as builders in the armed forces.

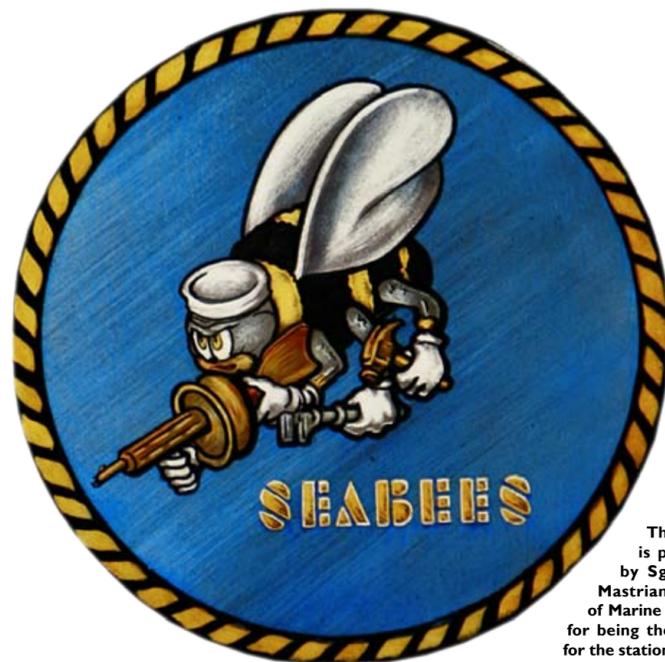
The night kicked off with an honoring of prisoners of war and those missing in action.

The guest speaker was Sgt. Maj. Robert E. Mastriano, sergeant major of Marine Corps Bases Japan. During his speech Mastriano told several moving stories of the Seabees' courageous contributions to historic American wars from dispersion of food and water to needy Marines during a brutal 1945 battle on Iwo Jima Island to constructing a runway in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

"It's said that the greatest generation is the World War II generation," Mastriano said. "But the greatest generation has been replaced by the 'can do' generation of the Seabees."

Following Mastriano's speech, the Seabees recognized their oldest and youngest and made the first cuts into their massive cake.

The audience was then invited onto the main floor as the builders carried on their fun yet peculiar nail-driving contest on a set of wooden blocks.



The youngest Seabee is presented a trophy by Sgt. Maj. Robert E. Mastriano, sergeant major of Marine Corps Bases Japan, for being the youngest Seabee for the stations construction battalion at the 66th Annual Seabee Ball at the Club Iwakuni Ballroom here March 7.



AROUND THE CORPS

War-torn city rises from ashes, devastation

REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 1
1ST MARINE DIVISION

FALLUJAH, Iraq (March 6, 2008) — Just mentioning of the city of Fallujah conjures up images of a devastated city ripped apart by the horrors of war.

It was November 2004, there were an estimated 2,000 insurgents infesting the city prepared to fight to the death and it was the Marine Corps' job to facilitate this.

After bitter house-to-house fighting the Marines took the city.

In the battle's wake laid a city in ruin. Numerous buildings turned to rubble, the streets littered with debris, any form or city infrastructure such as water and power eliminated. It was total devastation.

The Fallujah of today still holds the scars of war.

Bullet holes pockmark numerous buildings throughout the city.

Yet, out of the ashes of fiery combat a city of hope has begun to arise.

Fallujah is far from perfect if you look at it in terms of American standards, but considering where it was a few years ago, the city is thriving.

"The city has heart and soul; it's headed in the right direction," said Lt. Col. Christopher Dowling, battalion commander, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1.

One of the largest contributors to the turn around is the will of the people.

According to Dowling, the people of Fallujah are critical in setting the conditions for change.

"They need to be willing participants, and the people of Fallujah are willing participants."

Another indicator to the success of a

city is its economic development.

Now years later on the same streets that saw the most violent combat, vendors sell their goods. Fishmongers haggle over the price of the day's catch, a child sells ice-cream, old men sit around and drink tea and trucks loaded with produce pass under the same bridge where the mutilated bodies of American contractors once hanged.

In the very streets that Marines and insurgents once clashed, caravans of cars, trucks, and even horse and tractor drawn wagons move the residents of the city about their daily business.

According to Dowling it has been a slow and methodical process and the success in the city today is due not only to the current Marines and Iraqi security forces who protect the city, but also the numerous soldiers, sailors, Marines and Iraqi forces that have come before paving the way for the city's revival.

The fight for the city and the events leading up to today have been costly, explained Dowling.

"The streets of Fallujah are filled with the blood of sailors, soldiers and Marines."

And according to Dowling, the success of the city today is a "tribute to those young men."

Fallujah is a city at the brink, the potential for it to erupt into chaos is still present.

Yet, thanks to the valiant efforts of the soldiers, sailors, Marines and Iraqi forces who have served here with distinction, that potential becomes less and less every day.

Moreover, the willingness of the people of this once war-torn city to rise up from the fiery ashes of combat and make this city work shows that this city's future remains bright.



Lt. Col. Christopher Dowling, commanding officer, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, talks with a local fishmonger in the Andaloos market district of Fallujah. This area, once the site of a large scale urban battlefield, is now a thriving marketplace. Official USMC photo



A truck loaded with goods drives onto the infamous "Blackwater" bridge. The bridge, once the site where insurgents hanged the bodies of mutilated American contractors, now acts as a gateway into a thriving marketplace. Official USMC photo



A local resident shops for goods at the Andaloos market. The market has begun to thrive as the city of Fallujah becomes more peaceful. Official USMC photo

Community Briefs

"Big Voice" warning for NBC or other attack

When the station loudspeaker sounds off, the message needs to be clearly passed on to as many personnel as possible within a timely manner. For more information, call 253-3315.

Mothers of Preschoolers

MOPS is now meeting through May at Yujo Hall every first and third Thursday from 9:30-11:30 a.m. For more information, call 253-2885.

MOPS needs help

The newly organized program is still in need of helpers for our MOPPETS children's program. There is a small commitment

of only six meetings: two hours twice a month, 9:30-11:30 a.m., the first and third Thursdays through May. If you can be a helper for our teachers, please call 253-2990 or 253-2884.

Want to fly cheap?

Representatives from the air terminal will teach residents how to effectively fly Space Available directly from Iwakuni. The brief is March 19 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in Yujo Hall, behind the Marine Memorial Chapel. Call Marine Corps Family Team Building at 253-3754 to reserve a seat. Child-care will be arranged upon seat reservation.

Aviation Ordnance Golf

Tournament

April 11, at Torii Pines Golf Course, show time 11 a.m., shotgun start at 11:30 a.m. 4-man best ball, 1st, 2nd, 3rd place prizes, chipping and putting contest, longest drive and closest to pin contest. \$2.00 mulligan, and free hamburgers and hot dogs. Everyone who signs up will receive a "Golf ball and Tee" set. \$20.00 plus green fees. Sign up at Torii Pines Pro Shop. Open to all. For more information, call 253-6131.

St. Patrick's Day Meal

March 17, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at both mess halls. Everyone aboard MCAS Iwakuni is welcome. Cost for commuted rations, family members and civilians is \$3.85. See Mess Hall Menu on page 10. For more information, call 253-6740.

Overseas Cost of Living Allowance Survey

COLA is a supplement de-

signed to equalize purchasing power between active duty members overseas and their CONUS-based counterparts. The Living Pattern Survey is one of the surveys that are used to determine COLA. During March, accompanied service members and their spouses are encouraged to fill out the survey at www.perdiem.osd.mil/oscola/lps/japan/. For more information, please contact the Station Inspector's Office at 253-3428/5314/3033.

Investigation information

The Provost Marshal's Office is looking for information concerning an assault that occurred between Building 360 (Facilities) and Building 365 (JMSDF headquarters) between 2 and 3 a.m. March 1. If you have any information concerning this crime, please contact PMO at 253-3303. To report the crime anonymously, call 253-3333.

PAY YOUR ROAD TAX AT PMO
APRIL 16, 17 & 18, 2008
0900-1500
Japanese Tax Officials will be here at PMO!
To pay road tax, you will need your title & payment in the form of yen.

Bring the following information to receive your new decal:

- ❖ Japanese Title
- ❖ Secondary Insurance
- ❖ JCI Insurance
- ❖ 2008 Road Tax Receipt
- ❖ SOFA License & AFID Card
- ❖ Your vehicle

If you have any questions please contact PMO Pass & Registration at 253-3161.

ALL PAYMENTS MUST BE IN YEN!!

Parking will be located in the Chapel Parking Lot.

Chapel Services

Roman Catholic

Saturday 4:30 p.m. Confession
5:30 p.m. Vigil Mass
Sunday 8:30 a.m. Mass
9:45 a.m. Religious Education

Protestant

Sunday 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Protestant Service
1:00 p.m. Spanish Fellowship
Wednesday 6:00 p.m. Awana (Bldg. 1104)
6:00 p.m. Bible Study

Church of Christ

Sunday 9:30 a.m. Bible Study
10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Latter Day Saints

Weekdays 6:30 a.m. Youth Activities

Islamic

Friday Noon Prayer

Jewish

Friday 6:00 p.m. Shabbat

Teen Programs

For times, call 253-5183: high school meetings, junior high meetings, HS and JR Bible studies, retreats, service projects, mission trips, Special Events Volunteer Training and Mentoring, Parent Support Groups

For information regarding divine services, religious education or any other command religious program or chapel activity, call the Marine Memorial Chapel at 253-5218.

M.C. Perry Accredited

DR. BOB FUNK
M. C. PERRY HIGH SCHOOL

M. C. Perry Elementary School and M. C. Perry High School received their much-coveted accreditation from the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), resulting from a visit by a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) Team from NCA CASI during the week of Feb. 24-29. This accreditation review is very similar in importance to what Marine units experience from the Inspector General's inspections that all units periodically face.

The team, comprised of two educational consultants from NCA CASI and several principals and teachers from other DoDDs Pacific schools, visited both schools and examined how their systems and processes contribute to student performance and educational effectiveness. To earn and maintain accreditation, schools must meet NCA CASI standards for quality schools and engage in a continuous process of school improvement by demonstrating an ongoing self-assessment and internal review process - in other words, to show that the air station's schools are striving to be the best they can be on behalf of the students and families that they serve.

The QAR Team engaged the entire school community during its visit, observing teachers and students in the classroom and speaking with students, teachers, principals, parents, and other school community members individually and in groups. From their observations and conversations, the team members identified numerous strengths that the schools shared. However, the one that must be shared with the air station community is the degree to which the QAR Team recognized that the schools and their partners in the community - students, parents, Marines, sailors, and

civilian workers - have worked to make the schools such a valued and important part of the Iwakuni community.

Good schools cannot operate independently of the community they serve. The QAR Team was very impressed with the efforts of the schools to include students, parents, and other interested parties in planning school events and making decisions about school policies. This emphasis on shared responsibilities and communications was the evidence they were looking for to ensure that the entire school community is part of the school improvement process. The air station and MAG-12 chain of command is directly responsible for much of what the school is able to accomplish because of the leadership and support that they provide to the schools. The amount of time that active duty military members and civilians voluntarily give to the school and the activities that units on base organize and conduct for the schools was clearly evident to the QAR Team.

M. C. Perry schools are staffed by dedicated and caring teachers, educational aides and cafeteria workers who strive to make the air station's schools an educational environment that upholds their mission statements and achieves their school improvement goals. The principals, Gail Anderson and Shelia Cary, sincerely appreciate the parental and community support that was so important in showcasing their schools to the QAR Team and earning their accreditation. The schools do not have another accreditation visit for five years, but the school improvement process never stops, and both principals invite parents and other community members to remain active partners with the schools. But most of all, they especially thank the teachers and students for showing the QAR Team what good schools this air station is fortunate to have.

THE IWAKUNI APPROACH Classifieds

OTHER ITEMS

Lost – IPOD and jackets

8GB black IPOD : Can identify with serial number registered online, reward offered for return of IPOD. 2 jackets : 1 (red) and 1 (green), sizes L and XL, both have gray lining and have hoods. On the back both have OKINAWA, JAPAN. Please call 253-2221 (home).

Living room set for sale

Ashley set includes; couch, love seat, over stuffed chair and ottoman fit for two adults. Must see! The set is a taupe color and in great shape. Asking \$650.00 for everything OBO. Please call 080-3411-4477 (work) or 253-2107 (home) for more information.

Lab Retriever needs a good home

Pure Breed JKC registered Lab Retriever looking for

a home. Will give Skip away to a good family. Micro chipped, has all shots, registered on base, includes kennel. Leaving shortly must find a home. 5 year-old male, great disposition and friendly with kids. Had him since puppy. For more information, call 253-2230 (home).

Twin bed and mattress for sale

Twin Bed and full-size mattress for sale Twin mattress, box spring, and frame in good condition for \$30. Full-size mattress (only, no box spring) in good condition for \$20. Call 253-2388 (home) for more information.

To submit an advertisement request, follow the classifieds link on the station Web site and open an advertisement request form. Submit the form via e-mail to iwakuni.pao@usmc.mil or in person at the Public Affairs Office, Building One, Room 216.

AMC CANCER RESEARCH CENTER
Prescription for Preventing Cancer

- Eat a nutritious diet containing lots of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes.
- Exercise for thirty minutes at least four times per week.
- Supplement your diet with a good multi-vitamin and mineral formulation

AND

- Do Not smoke, drink more than 2 alcoholic drinks per day, visit indoor tanning salons, or overcook meats.

AMC Cancer Research Center
1600 Pierce Street
Denver, CO 80214
1-800-321-1557 • www.amc.org

a CFC participant
PROVIDED AS A PUBLIC SERVICE.

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
Don't accept defeat. Fight childhood cancer.

800-822-6344 • www.stjude.org
A CFC Participant - Provided as a Public Service.

MAKE A WISH
Share the power of a wish®

A CFC participant. Provided as a public service.

GuideDog Foundation
For The Blind, Inc.
1-800-548-4337
www.guidedog.org
A CFC participant. Provided as a public service.

Mess Hall Menu

MONDAY, March 17

Classic fish and chips, corned beef and cabbage, Irish beef stew, beer-batter fish fillets, Irish potato casserole, Irish heritage cabbage, simmered green beans, spicy corn bread, Irish soda bread, Irish cream bundt cake, chocolate cookies, cherry pie. Special beverages: green grog, Somewhere Over the Rainbow.

TUESDAY, March 18

Cream of Potato Soup, Chicken Noodle Soup, Southern Fried Chicken, BBQ Beef Cube, Steamed Rice, Buttered Pasta, Black Eye Peas, Creole Squash, Corn Bread, Chocolate Chip Cookies, Spice Cake Double Layer, Butter cream Frosting, Lemon Meringue Pie, Specialty Bar: Taco Bar

WEDNESDAY, March 19

Cream of Broccoli Soup, Vegetable Soup, Tempura Fish, Pepper Steak, Steamed Rice, Oven Glo Potatoes, Glazed Carrots, Club Spinach, Brown Gravy, Dinner Rolls, Peanut Butter Cookies, Devil's Food Cake, Butter Cream Frosting, Specialty Bar: BBQ

THURSDAY, March 20

Minestrone Soup, Cream of Chicken Soup, Creole Macaroni, Fried Shrimp, Fettuccini W/ Alfredo Sauce, Grilled Cheese Sandwich, Tempura Vegetables, Peas and Carrots, Dinner Rolls, Sugar Cookies, Strawberry Shortcake, Whipped Topping, Vanilla Cream Pie, Specialty Bar: Deli Bar

FRIDAY, March 21

Clam Chowder Soup, Minestrone Soup, Braised Beef and Noodles, Baked Fish, Mashed Potatoes, Fried Cabbage, Mix Vegetables, Chicken Gravy, Dinner rolls, Banana Bread, Dutch Apple Pie, Shortbread Cookies, Specialty Bar: Hot dogs/ Polish Sausage

Sakura Theater

Friday, March 14

7 p.m. The Pirates Who Don't Do
Anything: A Veggie Tale (G)
Premiere
10 p.m. Semi-Pro (R)
Premiere

Saturday, March 15

1:00 p.m. Spiderwick Chronicles (PG)
Last Showing
4:00 p.m. The Pirates Who Don't Do
Anything: A Veggie Tale (G)
7:00 p.m. Semi-Pro (R)
10:00 p.m. Vanage Point (PG-13)

Sunday, March 16

1:00 p.m. The Pirates Who Don't Do
Anything: A Veggie Tale (G)
4:00 p.m. Semi-Pro (R)
7:00 p.m. Vanage Point (PG-13)

Monday, March 17

7:00 p.m. First Sunday (PG-13)

Tuesday, March 18

7:00 p.m. Sweeny Todd (R)

Wednesday, March 19

7:00 p.m. One Missed Call (PG-13)

General admission: Ages 12+ are \$2.50 / Ages 6-11 are \$1 / Children ages 5 and under admitted free
For more information, visit www.mccsiwakuni.com or call 253-5291.

MOVIE RATING SYSTEM GUIDE

G: All Ages Permitted. The film contains nothing most parents will consider offensive for their youngest children to see or hear. Nudity, sex scenes, and drug use are absent; violence is minimal; snippets of dialogue may go beyond polite conversation, but do not go beyond common every-day expressions.

PG: Parental Guidance Suggested; Some material may not be suitable for children. The film may contain some material parents might not like to expose to their young children. Explicit sex scenes and drug use are absent; nudity if present, is seen only briefly; horror and violence do not exceed moderate levels.

PG-13: Parents Strongly Cautioned; Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13. The film rated may be inappropriate for pre-teens. Parents should be especially careful about letting their younger children watch. Rough or persistent violence is absent; sexually oriented nudity is generally absent, some drug use may be seen; some profanity may be heard.

SAKURA THEATER POLICY - Patrons must be at least 10 years old to view a "PG-13" movie unaccompanied. Patrons under 10 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian throughout the entire movie.

R: Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian; The film rated contains some adult material. Parents are urged to learn more about the film before allowing their children to see it. An R may be assigned due to, among other things, profanity, theme, violence, sensuality, or its portrayal of drug use.

SAKURA THEATER POLICY - Patrons must be at least 17 years old to view an "R" movie unaccompanied. Patrons under 17 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian throughout the entire movie.

Marines debut running suit

Wounded warriors aboard National Naval Medical Center receive suit first

LANCE CPL. BRYAN G. CAREFREY
HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS

BETHESDA, Md. (March 4, 2008) — The Marine Corps officially unveiled its new running suit for Marines assigned to the Wounded Warrior Regiment at the National Naval Medical Center here Feb. 29.

Marines from the Wounded Warrior Regiment, to include those at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, were the first to receive the new gear, according to guidance set by Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James T. Conway.

"(The running suits are) the first ones off the sewing machines and we gave them to you," said Col. Gregory Boyle, commanding officer of Wounded Warrior Regiment. "It demonstrates to the American people where the commandant's priority is."

According to Boyle, the Wounded Warrior Battalions at Camp

"Our commandant believes the continued emphasis on physical fitness and esprit de corps is important enough to have a one-time initial issue of the running suit."

— Lt. Col. A.J. Pasagian
program manager of Infantry Combat Equipment

Lejeune and Camp Pendleton will receive the gear next.

"All Marines will be in the new running suit as soon as possible; widespread distribution is set to begin by October 2008 with a mandatory possession date of around October 2009," said Lt. Col. A.J. Pasagian, program manager of Infantry Combat Equipment, Marine Corps Systems Command.

Marines assigned to recruiting commands and recruit depots will be issued the running suit next, followed by the remainder of the Marine Forces, according to Marine Corps Systems Command.

The new running suit will become standard issue in the seabag in addition to what is currently provided. The running suit does not replace the existing green physical training uniform and is compatible with other PT uniform items, according to Pasagian.

Retailed at \$112, the running suit is the first newly-released gear that Marines do not have to pay for out of pocket, said Pasagian.

"Our commandant believes the continued emphasis on physical fitness and esprit de corps is important enough to have a one-time initial issue of the running suit," added Pasagian.

Marines who received the new gear immediately noticed a difference between the old cotton sweat suit and the new fabric of the running suit.

"I really like it. It's very comfortable and better than I expected," said Lance Cpl. Derrick L. Sharpe. "It's breathable, lightweight and could be worn in any weather condition."



Sgt. James Bone, Cpl. Ray Hennagir, and Cpl. Matt Bridges model the new Marine Corps running suit Feb. 29 at the National Naval Medical Center. Staff Sgt. Leo A. Salinas

The running suit is made of lightweight, moisture-wicking, quick-drying, water-resistant materials. Features include underarm and back venting solutions, a fold-down collar, full-length zip-through jacket and reflectivity. The lining is anti-microbial, which prevents odor and bacteria.

Marine Corps Systems Command solicited the opinion of all active and reserve Marines through a series of online surveys. Marines were participants in every aspect of the development of the new running suit, to include design and color.

The Marine Corps Uniform Board is currently finalizing regulations for wear of the running suit. Up-to-date information can be found at www.marcorssyscom.usmc.mil/sites/mcub/.

Marine Corps running suit specifications

- Marines from the Wounded Warrior Regiment, to include those at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, were the first to receive the new gear
- The Wounded Warrior Battalions at Camp Lejeune and Camp Pendleton will receive the gear next
- Widespread distribution is set to begin by October 2008 with a mandatory possession date of around October 2009
- The new running suit will become standard issue in the seabag in addition to what is currently provided
- The running suit does not replace the existing green physical training uniform and is compatible with other PT uniform items
- The running suit is made of lightweight, moisture-wicking, quick-drying, water-resistant materials
- Features include underarm and back venting solutions, a fold-down collar, full-length zip-through jacket and reflectivity
- The lining is anti-microbial, which prevents odor and bacteria



Nick Bischof is one of several athletes living aboard the air station who plays for more than one team competitively. The hectic schedule, Bischof said, is a rewarding one.
Photos by Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez



Mixed lineup could mean promising future for soccer player

LANCE CPL. KYLE T. RAMIREZ
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

More than 300 children from Iwakuni's flourishing youth community participated in its Youth Soccer League in 2007, rivaling both local and distant opponents and making their mark in the community's established circle of teams.

But what happens when some serious competitors require more from their career as a young athlete and venture outside the gates to satisfy their ambitions?

The answer could be found by following around one of several individuals who find themselves playing hopscotch between teams on weeknights, switching uniforms and oftentimes game faces in the name of skill progression.

Nick Bischof, 14, was quick to gear up for the opportunity when he learned he could kick for a local club team called Estrada, although he recalled having doubts about his productivity with the all-Japanese team.

"I didn't know how much I would be

(Above) Estrada is an ages 13 to 15 team that practices sometimes more than four times a week from the Penny Lake fields here to indoor soccer fields in Iwakuni city. The team currently sports four American players, all who joined up in the past six months. (Right) The Americans playing for Estrada often admit they are clueless to the instructions being given by their coaches. They respond to a series of code words that announce plays and field maneuvers during games and practices.

able to learn with the language barrier there," Bischof said. "The friends I made seemed to be excited to have Americans playing on their team."

Demanding practices four times a week with the year-round team gave Bischof plenty of exposure to his teammates. Even with six years of Bischof's field experience, teaming up with his new colleagues still presented an imbalance in skill level. Naturally, the 13 to 15 age group team had its remedies, according to Bischof.

"We had no choice but to work around the obvious challenges," he added.

The team developed a series of code words that announces plays and maneuvers while staying secretive to the opposing team. Even when it seemed that communication was par, Bischof noted some remaining difficulties even after six months with Estrada.

"You could say that I had been trained differently," said Bischof. "The Japanese players usually become competitive from a very young age and are taught to be extremely aggressive. The practices are always tougher than game day."

A 15-minute trip to a dimly-lit local indoor soccer field on Thursday nights would reveal Estrada's intense training



habits. It also shines light on the day-to-day interaction of some Japanese and American families who are more than willing to let their children indulge in what they believe in. Bischof's mother, Beth Terrasse, said she hoped the team would teach him a little about the game and the culture itself.

"At first we were worried my son would be lost in translation on the field, but as far as we know, it hasn't been an issue," Terrasse said. "The families of Nick's teammates also had their own way of making us feel welcome to the team."

The team's parents follow certain courtesies, some of them bringing tea and snacks for other spectators and family members. Kiyoshi Matsumoto said he invited the American athletes to play on the Estrada team with his son, Takuya, for the same reasons Terrasse did.

"It is really interesting to see them communicate and learn from each other; this is what I wanted to see in my son," Matsumoto said. "My son can have conversations with his new friend and speak better English."

In a little more than six months time, Estrada now has four Americans on the team. Each of them play for the seasonal

Youth Soccer League here while two also play for the Matthew C. Perry Samurai.

It's not uncommon for Bischof to finish practice at the fields behind Matthew C. Perry High School and change in the back seat while being transported to a new field to meet with his Estrada teammates. Sometimes his endurance takes the backseat, but he says his grades do not. With just above a 3.0 grade point average, Bischof finds himself staying up until the late hours of the night finishing assignments for the next day.

"I get tired, but this is what I want to do," Bischof said. "My friends are going through the same thing, so we all know how hard it is."

Bischof's mother says she is enthusiastic about her son's endeavors. Although the Youth Soccer League requires higher participation fees than on-base organizations, Terrasse said it's a small price to pay for her son's experience.

"It costs about 5,000 yen every month to participate in this league, but that doesn't include uniform costs and accessories," Terrasse said. "It's all more than worth it when I see my son making new friends, getting better at soccer and learning the culture first hand."