

THE IWAKUNI APPROACH

Issue No. 28, Vol. 1

Friday, July 25, 2008

Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan

Operations: C-12 air crew chiefs wanted

■ Qualify for secondary MOS after stateside training

LANCE CPL. ASHLEY M. HOWARD
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron C-12 Operations is looking for a few good Marines interested in gaining a secondary military occupational specialty as an air crew chief for a C-12 transportation aircraft.

The C-12 aircraft is responsible for the transportation of people and equipment to and from the states and throughout the Pacific hemisphere as well as assisting in humanitarian aid and disaster relief efforts.

"We've done deployments in the past to assist with mudslides in the Philippines," said Maj. Mike K. Jeron, detachment officer-in-charge of H&HS C-12 Operations. "But sometimes the deployments



The C-12 transporter aircraft is a seven-passenger plane capable of carrying its contents around the world. Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron C-12 Operations is currently looking for air crew chiefs to assist the pilot in maintaining the wellness of passengers and aircraft cargo. Photo by Lance Cpl. Ashley M. Howard

can be fun. How many Marines can say that they've visited five or 10 different countries in their four-year career?"

Air crew chiefs are made financially stable when on deployments and are given money for food and shelter.

"I spent a night in Okinawa with the C-12," said Lance Cpl. Jacqueline Diaz, H&HS combat photographer and qualified air crew chief. "I got back paid for all

of my expenses."

Personal requirements are essential in becoming a well-rounded air crew chief. Aside from a first class water qualification, Marines must be equipped to handle the rigors of being an air crew chief.

Diaz spent a total of three days in Pensacola, Fla., for an intense water survival

SEE ACC ON PAGE 3



Suicide prevention Looking out for those on left, right

LANCE CPL. NOAH S. LEFFLER
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

"No Marine is left behind."

It's a simple but powerful part of the warrior ethos instilled in all who wear the Eagle, Globe and Anchor, and it applies just as much in garrison as on the battlefield.

The Marine Corps regrettably lost 33 of its own to suicide in 2007, the highest number in three years. Marines are reminded this isn't just another statistic.

"For each branch, (suicide) is either the number two or number three leading cause of death in the military every year," said Lt. Cmdr. Denis Cox, Marine Aircraft Group 12 group chaplain.

"It is a constant source of leadership challenge - how to deal with that, how to confront that," he added. "Senior leadership is aggressively challenging the leaders of the Marines and sailors to address that issue."

According to Cox, the trend over the past 10 years has been to bring the responsibility of suicide prevention to the lowest possible echelons of military leadership.

Essentially, those best equipped to identify a potential threat are the peers working alongside or living with the troubled service member.

"For instance, if I am a platoon commander and I'm trying to do something about suicide in my platoon, and there is an individual ... that is at risk of committing suicide, who is going to know that first?" Cox

SEE PREVENT ON PAGE 3

Legal Assistance outlines services

STATION JUDGE ADVOCATE
CONTRIBUTION

Many of you are familiar with the wide array of services available at your local Legal Assistance Office. Perhaps you have had a will generated for you at the Law Center or had your tax return prepared by one of our dedicated volunteers. Maybe we have turned around a quick power of attorney for you while you waited. Or maybe you have asked for help with one of our other core competencies like family support, paternity, immigration, taxation, divorce or consumer law.

No matter the nature of your legal issue, it is always best to stop by the Law Center for some free, confidential advice. There is no comprehensive list out there detailing

every possible service we can provide. The number of issues we deal with are infinite, and just about every client that comes to the law center has a unique dilemma. The clerks in our office are eager to help you, and have been trained to maintain a very liberal policy when in-taking new clients. (I cannot recall ever turning away a Marine or Sailor who came to us seeking help.)

The Legal Assistance Office is intended to promote increased readiness of the active duty component of the Naval Service and to enhance the morale and quality of life for military personnel, family members, and other eligible clients. The Department of the Navy wants you to be focused on your mission. The Law Center helps provide that focus by assisting you with the routine legal issues facing today's

service member that can distract you from mission accomplishment.

Though we are prepared and equipped to assist you on almost any issue, there are just a few things we cannot do. For example, there is no civil law judge here in Iwakuni, so we cannot represent you in court by making a personal appearance on your behalf. This inability has repercussions for those clients seeking a divorce, looking to change a last name, or seeking to modify a child's custody arrangement. Though we can give plenty of advice on any one of these subjects, we cannot bring clients with these issues to a complete resolution from here in Iwakuni.

If you have an issue like this, we can

SEE SJA ON PAGE 3

INSIDE IWAKUNI



**Veteran
recounts
Okinawa
battle**

4



**Sam & Ham
take trip to
Tsunoshima**

6-7



**Golfers
battle rain,
each other**

12



**Commanding Officer/
Publisher**

Col. Michael A. O'Halloran

Public Affairs Officer

Maj. Guillermo A. Canedo

Public Affairs Chief

Master Gunnery Sgt.
John A. Cordero

Editors

Sgt. Josh Cox, Managing
Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Combat Correspondents

Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler
Lance Cpl. Joseph Marianelli
Lance Cpl. Ashley M. Howard

Webmaster

Yukie Wada

Community/Media Relations

Hiroko Soriki
Hiromi M. Kawamoto

Administration

Hiro Sumida

"This weekly newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the military services stationed overseas and their families. Its contents do not necessarily reflect the official views of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the U.S. Marine Corps, and does not imply endorsement thereof."

Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office of Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan. All queries concerning news and editorial content should be directed to the Public Affairs Office, Building One, Room 216, MCAS Iwakuni, Japan. Call 253-5551.

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.

PSC 561 Box 1868
FPO AP 96310-0019
Phone 253-5551
Fax 253-5554

CORPS SAFETY

101 Critical Days of Summer

Local traffic safety

SUBMITTED BY
THE STATION SAFETY OFFICE AND PMO ACCIDENT
INVESTIGATION DIVISION

When driving in Japan you have to be extra cautious because the majority of us grew up in the United States driving on the right side of the roadway.

Now that you are in Japan and driving on the left, things are a lot different.

I still turn on my windshield wipers when I am trying to signal to make a turn.

One on the biggest things to remember when you are driving in the local area is to slow down, plan your route and always scan the area for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcyclists.

When you are driving, and especially when you are turning left, you need to ensure that there is not a pedestrian, bicyclist or motorcyclist to your left and in your blind spot.

Before you turn, look over your left shoulder to make sure you are not going to run someone over.

If you are unfortunate and are involved in an accident off-base, you can call the Provost Marshal's Office or you can let the Japanese Police call PMO so the appropriate investigation can be conducted.

One thing I am sure of is that we all miss the higher speed limits in the states and in Japan. The speed limit is much lower, so one thing you need to be aware of are the cameras off base.

If you are caught speeding by one of these cameras the Japanese Police will contact PMO to find you to report to traffic court.

It is very important to obey the speed limits on and off

base.

If you are off base and you are not caught by a camera but you are stopped by the Japanese Police, they may pull you over from behind or they may get in front of you and have you pull in behind them.

If you are pulled over it is very important to remain calm and do not get belligerent with the Japanese Police.

The most important thing above all is to obey the law.

Tips for safe driving in Japan

- Be extra cautious
- Slow down, plan your route and always scan the area for pedestrians, bicyclist, and motorcyclist
- Ensure there is not a pedestrian, bicyclist or motorcyclist to your left or right and in your blind spot.
- Before you turn, look over your shoulder to make sure you are not going to run someone over.
- If you are involved in an accident off base, you may call PMO or you can let the Japanese Police call PMO so the appropriate investigation can be conducted
- Beware of the cameras off base
- It is very important to obey the speed limits on and off base.
- If you are pulled over, it is very important to remain calm and do not get belligerent with the Japanese Police.
- The most important thing above all is to obey the law

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

STEP RIGHT UP

Lt. j.g. Robert Mills
STATION CHAPLAIN

A few weeks ago, I witnessed a couple of events that impressed me very much.

The first was during a change-of-command ceremony.

The day was warm and the ceremony was long. At some point during the proceedings, my attention was drawn to a member of the color guard.

He was no longer standing at perfect parade rest as he had been for much of the ceremony. He was tipping dangerously to his right and was looking like he was about to fall down.

It was clear that the "lights were going out" for this Marine. The Marine next to him managed to assist him with one hand, while skillfully maintaining an iron grip on the Japanese colors at the same time. Help was quickly summoned and the injured Marine was immediately relieved, given medical attention and another Marine instantly took his post.

Later I found out that he had received some terrible news from home just before he marched out that day.

The combination of hot sun and concern for his family was too much.

What impressed me though, was how his fellow Marines were there to hold him up. The Marine beside him literally held him up for a few minutes, but the medical people were quickly there to assist him, his chaplain followed up and gave him care throughout the day, and other Marines were willing to quickly step in to replace him in a highly visible, front-and-center position.

The other event was taking place at nearly the same time.

A Marine had an accident and was severely injured. A large group of Marines and Sailors came around this young man to give him excellent care.

While he was in the hospital in critical condition, there were Marines who stood a post near his room 24/7 until his family arrived to take over his personal and emotional care.

Dozens, if not hundreds of people

pitched in to help in a very difficult situation—just to take care of one of our own.

And that is what impresses me so much. We are only on this earth for a short time. We have choices to make.

We can be selfish and focus solely on pleasing ourselves, or we can decide that we will come alongside others who are suffering and try to relieve some of their pain. I am very happy to be a part of an organization which places so much emphasis on helping each other. The Marine Corps Motto is "Semper Fidelis"—"Always Faithful."

Just like these Marines and Sailors were faithful and stepped up to help those who were hurt, our God also stepped right up to help all of us while we were hurting too.

The Christian Scriptures say in Hebrews 10:22, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, because He who promised is faithful." I want to encourage you to step right up to help those around you—God did it for you!

Air crew chief spots available

ACC FROM PAGE 1

course and one week in Norfolk, Va., learning about the C-12, Diaz said.

"We want Marines who are aggressive, anxious to learn and capable of working alongside officers and other high-ranking Marines," Jeron said.

Marines also have to be flexible with their work schedule because many times Marines have called their command to say they will be gone for another week, said Jeron.

Air crew chiefs assist the pilot by maintaining comfortable and safe passengers as well as safe cargo in the back of the seven-passenger C-12.

C-12 Operations needs Marines who are comfortable telling an officer to put his seatbelt on and can take charge when the pilot is maneuvering the aircraft, Jeron said.

The position is not limited to Marines with specific jobs. Marines from all types of occupational fields have participated in the opportunity to become air crew chiefs.

"It's a great opportunity to travel," said Diaz. "You also get to see what goes on behind the scenes in order to get a plane up in the air."

Suicide prevention is everyone's responsibility

PREVENT FROM PAGE 1

asked.

His answer: "The person who's closest to him, the person who wears the same rank as he does. ... It's going to be the person on his left and the person on his right."

Though there are many suicide risk indicators, Cox said troubled military personnel often show at least one of five common signs: extreme highs and lows in a person's mood or a steady increase in depression; increasing or heavy drug or alcohol abuse; traumatic change in a personal relationship such as a break-up or divorce; job dissatisfaction; and actual talk of suicide.

"These are the risk indicators to look for in your friends," he said.

"If you see them, it's your responsibility to do

something about it."

According to Cox, the best way to intervene is to simply ask if there's a problem.

"Look them in the eye and say, 'Are you thinking of hurting yourself? Are you considering suicide?'" Cox said. "You're either going to get laughed at ... or you're going to get that long pause, that three-second delay before they answer."

If a person is identified as a possible suicide risk, immediately locate help via a chaplain, health care professional or Marine and Family Counseling Services.

Secondly, inform the person's chain-of-command so they can provide the proper means of support.

For more information on suicide prevention, log on to www.usmc-mccs.org/suicideprevent or call the Marine Corps Community Services Military OneSource 24-hour hotline at 253-3100.

Law center defines realistic expectations

SJA FROM PAGE 1

put some powerful tools at your disposal, but ultimately it is on the service member to take these suits into a court of competent jurisdiction, or hire civilian counsel who can represent you, in order to achieve resolution.

We strive to find creative solutions to these problems unique to the practice of law in the military. Marines excel at overcoming limitations, and there are several

tools at our disposal we use to circumvent our geographic hurdles.

Under the Expanded Legal Assistance program, some legal assistance attorneys are able to provide in-court representation to certain categories of clients who cannot afford private attorney's fees.

Unfortunately, the Iwakuni Law Center is not a participant in the program due to our geographic isolation from any court having jurisdiction over the affairs of service members stationed here. Nevertheless,

this remains an excellent option for some of our junior Marines in need of good representation. Help might just be a phone call away. Your legal assistance attorney may be able to arrange for you to be represented by another attorney working from an office within CONUS. Just ask.

Virtually every state bar association strongly encourages its member attorneys to volunteer their time on a no-fee, pro-bono basis. If we cannot find you a military attorney under the Expanded Legal

Assistance Program, finding a pro-bono attorney is our next logical alternative. Most law schools in your state will also host a service of this kind, as do many veterans groups. Your legal assistance attorney can find you representation within CONUS who will work pro-bono if cost is an issue.

No matter what your issue, always ask for advice at the Law Center, but do so with a realistic expectation that a limited number of issues cannot be solved here on base.



Forty-five Marines, sailors and families from the station gather for a photo after a Kintai Bridge clean-up. Clean-ups like this have been taking place throughout the summer. Photo courtesy of Cpl. Daniel Sanner

LIVING BY HIS FATHER'S WORDS

LANCE CPL. DANIEL A. FLYNN
OKINAWA MARINE

“War is not only shooting and killing, but saving lives.” These were the last words Terry Tsubota's father spoke to him before he left for war. And the spirit of these words would guide his actions then, as they do today.

Terry Tsubota was 22 years old when he was drafted into the U.S. Army to serve as a Japanese translator during World War II.

He was born in Pahoa, Hawaii, July 28, 1922 to a Hawaiian mother and Japanese father. Growing up, Tsubota attended a Japanese American High School where he learned to speak English and Japanese.

Following the invasion of Pearl Harbor, Tsubota would leave his job at a local grocery store and fight for the United States — as his father would have him.

Tsubota underwent basic training in Halemanu, Wahiawa, in central Awahu. After graduating and completing translator school, he embarked on a journey that would lead him directly into the Battle of Okinawa.

Tsubota initially embarked aboard USS Osage (LSV-3) for Guadalcanal. Upon arrival, he was assigned to 4th Marine Regiment, 6th Marine Division. It was with these Marines that Tsubota would share the hardships of war.

His unit soon boarded USS Catskill (LSV-1) and headed west to Okinawa.

According to Tsubota, he was one of only five translators to come ashore on Okinawa during the battle. One of the main duties of the translators was to help clear caves of Japanese soldiers in the waning days of the battle.

Tsubota's and other translators would stand at the mouth of a cave where enemy combatants were believed to be hiding and, with a loud speaker, order those inside to surrender.

But remembering the words of his father, Tsubota often dared to go a bit further and entered the caves. He would try and persuade anyone in the cave to surrender to avoid being killed.

According to Tsubota, following the demand for surrender U.S. forces would systematically destroy the caves with explosives to prevent Japanese soldiers from escaping or using the complex cave network to mount a counter attack.

In recounting one event, Tsubota said he arrived at a cave and knew immediately there were people inside because of how quiet it was. He said caves would usually buzz with the sounds of insects if empty.

Tsubota removed his blouse to prove he was unarmed and entered the cave not knowing the impact his actions would have on the lives of the innocent people inside.

While inside, Tsubota recalled hearing the explosions of nearby caves being destroyed. He knew if there was anyone inside the cave, they would have to be brought out quickly.

It was then Tsubota discovered approximately 20 civilians in the cave pretending to be dead to escape what they believed would be certain death if discovered by the American soldiers.

After Tsubota pleaded with them to come out, convincing them they were safe, they exited the cave. One small girl who was so scared she could not move, had to be carried out, he said.

But not all Tsubota's stories end as well. Even now, 63 years later, he still has a bit of trouble reliving some memories.

“A week after the surrender of Okinawa...” Tsubota begins to say, but then pauses and glances back at two swords, one slightly discolored from blood, before continuing.

“Me and a friend decided to go look for souvenirs,” he said. “Since most of the people were searching the beaches we decided to look somewhere else.”



Terry Tsubota would not be alive today if not for a solitary compassionate choice he made during the Battle of Okinawa, where he served as a U.S. Army translator attached to Marines. Photo by Lance Cpl. Daniel A. Flynn

He and his friend soon came across a seemingly empty cave.

Tsubota went into the cave, and around the first bend, discovered the body of a Japanese soldier. The soldier had taken his own life by impaling himself with his sword. Tsubota decided to take the sword. However, before bending to grab it, he put his hands together and said a prayer for the fallen soldier.

As he stood up with the sword in his hands, he felt the tip of another sword press against his back.

A Japanese Naval Officer in the cave had watched him remove the sword from the soldier's body and was now confronting him. The officer told Tsubota the only reason he did not kill him was because he had prayed for his comrade.

The officer ushered Tsubota out of the cave with his sword still at Tsubota's back. Once outside, the officer faced Tsubota and surrendered his own sword. The officer then said he needed to relieve himself and disappeared down a nearby path.

After waiting ten minutes, Tsubota and his friend started down the path the officer had walked searching for him.

They found the path ended at a cliff leaving little doubt as to the fate of the Japanese soldier.

Today, both swords hang on Tsubota's living room wall, resting behind a pane of glass on green felt, framed in a wood case adorned with gold trim.

Tsubota spent two years in the Army before getting out and working with the civil service as the first interpreter for Air Force units on Okinawa.

In 1947, Tsubota married his wife Kiyko who later bore one daughter and two younger sons.

After 46 years and two months of government service, Tsubota retired on Jan. 8, 1993.

Today, Tsubota keeps himself busy by practicing the art of glass blowing in a work shop he constructed at home. With self-built machines, Tsubota says he has all he needs to keep himself busy in retirement while also making a little extra money selling the finished product.

And even to this day, he makes his way to every Battle of Okinawa memorial ceremony he can in respect of the hundreds of thousands who lost their lives in the fighting.

Perhaps he also goes in honor of his father's wisdom — that war is not only about death, but life — knowing that more would have died, were it not for his efforts, and the efforts of other translators, to call into the darkness of the caves and lead those inside to the light.



Petty Officer 1st Class Damon Johnson, Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 14 aviation weapon systems specialist, leads a group of passengers onboard an MH-53E Sea Dragon helicopter before a local familiarization flight April 10. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

FAM flights get service members out of office, into air

LANCE CPL. NOAH S. LEFFLER
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

“How’s everyone doing?”

the co-pilot asks, but the only response is a dead static hiss over the inter-communication system.

“I think they’re all sleeping back there. Maybe we should wake them up,” replies the pilot slyly. Suddenly, the helicopter banks hard right, then left, then abruptly drops, giving the startled but grinning passengers a momentary feeling of weightlessness.

Although many may think such an in-flight experience is limited to a select few, one unit here is bringing the ride and scenic views to service members regardless of rank, flight experience or military occupational specialty.

Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 14 is offering familiarization flights showcasing the aerial capabilities of their MH-53E Sea Dragon helicopters.

The FAM flights are a way for a lot of people to see another side of the air station and something outside their normal jobs, said Petty Officer 1st Class Damon Johnson, an HM-14 aviation weapon systems specialist. “It gives them a different idea of what goes on in the air,” he added.

Each flight begins with a briefing where passengers learn the MH-53's safety features and procedures. After the crew's pre-flight check, service members board the aircraft and take off for their roughly two-hour flight. According to Lt. Cmdr. J. D. McBryde, HM-14 officer-in-charge, while the flight cannot showcase the Vanguard's airborne mine sweeping, neutralization and destruction capabilities, it offers an experience many won't soon forget.

The FAM flights are a look at the whole process — everything from the brief to the landing pattern, McBryde said.

“It also gives us a good view of the local area,” he added.

After a recent flight, Cpl. Joshua Podolec, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 hydraulics mechanic, said seeing the sunset view of local islands, feeling a few aerial acrobatics, and experiencing the end result of his daily work made for a unique and rewarding opportunity.

“It was definitely a different kind of ride,” Podolec said. “I’ve never been on a helicopter before.

You got to see all the little islands and the maneuverability aspects of the helicopter,” he added. “The helicopter was able to maneuver a lot different than how an airplane feels. (Going) up, down, left and right — you don't really feel that on an airplane. Plus, I got to see where all my (hydraulic) lines go that I make.”

For more information on getting on an HM-14 FAM flight, contact Lt. J. C. Muse at 253-4840.



Petty Officer 2nd Class Milo Miller, Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 14 aviation weapon systems specialist, gives the thumbs up to an MH-53E Sea Dragon before a local familiarization flight. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler



Lt. j.g. Andrew Watts, Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 14 communications officer, takes an MH-53E Sea Dragon helicopter over a group of islands during a local familiarization flight. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

Tsunoshima Driving Directions

Courtesy of Information, Tours & Travel and Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

1. Take the Sanyo Expressway from Iwakuni bound for Shimonoseki and Fukuoka. The expressway will automatically merge with the Chugoku Expressway.
2. Exit at Mine IC and turn left on Route 435.
3. Take a right at the Route 191 junction.
4. Turn on Route 275 and follow the signs to reach Tsunoshima Island. To get to the campground, cross the Tsunoshima Bridge and stay left on 275 until you see the sign for the Kita Nagto Coast Quasi-National Park.



Designated a cultural asset by Shimonoseki City, the Tsunoshima lighthouse has been guiding ships for over 130 years. For a small fee visitors are welcome to enjoy the view from the top of the 141-foot landmark. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler



To reach Tsunoshima island visitors must cross the second longest no-toll bridge in Japan. Drivers can park in the turnouts halfway across the bridge to snap photos or take in the view. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

Summer in Japan

Sam & Ham set sights on Tsunoshima

You're leaving Japan within the month and you have an upcoming four-day weekend — what's the best way to make the most of the time off and go out with a bang?



Petty Officer 2nd Class Travis Pullen holds an okoze caught from a seawall on Tsunoshima Island July 14. The island offers an abundance of piers, seawalls and beaches for anglers of any experience. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

LANCE CPL. NOAH S. LEFFLER
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

It was the question my closest remaining friend here since our days in the joint reception center, Petty Officer 2nd Class Travis Pullen, and I were pondering one Wednesday evening. We first considered the popular party spots – Tokyo, Osaka and Fukuoka – as well as the more culturally traditional areas such as Kyoto and Hagi. All sounded good, but were they really where “Sam and Ham” wanted to have their last Japanese adventure?

After several hours of deliberation we reached an agreement on our vacation destination. “Dude, let’s go to the beach.”

Dude, let’s go to the beach

It was settled, although with more than 6,000 miles of coastline, Honshu has a lot of sand and surf to offer. It was going to be a tough decision.

Enter Hiromi Kawamoto, my trusted friend, translator and advisor to all things Japanese. She recommended Tsunoshima Island located about three hours away on the Sea of Japan side of Yamaguchi Prefecture. I had never heard of it, but when she showed me pictures of beaches rivaling those in Okinawa, I knew exactly where we were headed.

My next stop was the Information and Referral Office where Hiroe Ruby kindly provided me with directions, maps and information on accommodations. At this point I have to thank Hiroe-san for all her assistance. Without it we would have been lost in the sauce.

The following Sunday afternoon we set out, and I’m pleased to say the drive was half the fun of our trip. Most notable was the scenic leg of Route 435, which winds through the rural mountainsides of Yamaguchi, and the Tsunoshima Bridge, which at 1,780 meters is the second longest no-toll bridge in Japan.

Driving across the bridge I could immediately see why it and the island have been the setting for numerous Japanese films and commercials. Tsunoshima

is painted from a palette of lush green foliage, soft white beaches and clear blue sea that left its two newest visitors speechless.

Things only got better when we reached Kita Nagto Coast Quasi-National Park. We were greeted by our unofficial ambassador Katasyuki Nakano, self-proclaimed “Ohama Beach Master.” With a smile he led us to our campsite, a small grassy knoll overlooking the shore. Katasyuki-san knew just as well as we did that it was the perfect place to

unwind, and we quickly got to the task of setting up camp.

Since I’ve been in Iwakuni I’ve written a number of “out the gate” features where I try to detail everything a reader can experience at a particular location. While on Tsunoshima we spent the better part of one morning fishing, swam in the sea, took a driving tour of the island and visited the Tsunoshima Lighthouse. All this was eclipsed by the first thing we did after pitching the tent, however: we unfolded our chairs, toasted the trip and took in the beauty around us. This is how I spent the majority of my time on Tsunoshima - sitting there watching the receding tide take with it any stress I may have brought along.

Sun, suds and a good bud – it was the perfect way to cap off my time in Japan.

Although bungalows and the nearby Nishinagato Resort are available for high rollers, those wishing to enjoy a similar relaxing weekend needn’t spend an arm and a leg. Camping spots are 2,000 yen per tent per night, with a 500 yen beach cleanup fee per person. Tolls on the Sanyo Expressway are 2,900 yen each way. With our rental vehicle and free gear obtained from IronWorks Gym Outdoor Recreation, we spent less than \$250 on the two-night trip.

To help plan your next getaway, contact the Information and Referral Office at 253-4917.



Camp sites at Kita Nagto Coast quasi-national park are a perfect vantage point for taking in the scenery of Ohama Beach. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

AROUND THE CORPS

Weapons Company 2/5 conducts sustainment training in Kuwait



Light Armored Vehicle Scouts with Weapons Company, Battalion Landing Team 2/5, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, advance toward an objective during a live fire Military Operations in Urban Terrain exercise in Northern Kuwait. Weapons Company came ashore to Kuwait in late June to conduct sustainment training, ensuring vital war fighting skills are not lost. Kuwait provides open space for the company to practice combat driving skills and ranges to conduct live fire exercises. The Camp Pendleton, Calif. based 15th MEU is comprised of approximately 2,200 Marines and Sailors and is a forward deployed force of readiness capable of conducting numerous operations, such as Non-combatant Evacuation Operations, Humanitarian Assistance Operations and a wide range of amphibious missions. The 15th MEU is currently conducting sustainment training in Kuwait. Photo by Cpl. Stephen Holt

Less restrictions lead to in-depth training

CPL. STEPHEN HOLT
15TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait — Marines and sailors with Weapons Company, Battalion Landing Team 2/5, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, recently honed crucial infantry skills in the sands of Kuwait.

For the past two months, Weapons Company was aboard USS Peleliu (LHA-5) and USS Pearl Harbor (LSD-52), but came ashore to Kuwait in late June to conduct sustainment training, ensuring vital war fighting skills are not lost.

The Kuwait sustainment training package provided Weapons Company, primarily a vehicle mounted unit in humvees and light-armored vehicles, with open desert space for driving and shooting, explained 1st Lt. Matthew Lampert, the Light Armored Vehicle platoon commander.

"Before we got off the ship we started planning. We want to use the desert environment to our advantage by doing a lot of long range shooting and long range driving," said Lampert, a 28 year-old native of Big Sky, Mont.

One of the main objectives for Weapons Company was to practice their driving skills in the wide-open spaces of Kuwait's desert.

With the space provided, the Marines were able to maneuver their vehicles in to essential combat formations while also exercising the related tactics, said Sgt. Eduardo Chaidez, Light Armored Vehicle crewman.

"It's great out here because the terrain and open desert

allows us to maneuver freely and set up vehicle formations and to exercise vehicle tactics. While training back in the States you only get a few square kilometers to train in, but out here we can get a few hundred square kilometers to work with," said Chaidez.

Few places in the United States mirror the conditions and environment of a Middle Eastern desert, added Chaidez.

Back at Camp Pendleton the terrain is very different and is filled with vegetation and hills. At Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif. the environment is rocky. However, here the desert is exactly how one might expect it to be, said Chaidez, a 29-year-old native of Sylmar, Calif.

A second key advantage to training in Kuwait's vast spaces is the flexibility to conduct training that is normally not permitted at Camp Pendleton. Of the skills practiced, the Marines were able to shoot using a simulated street curb as cover and shooting while lying on their backs. This type of flexibility added a lot of value to the training the Marines were getting, explained Sgt. Mike E. Ray, a section leader with Combined Anti-Armor Team 1.

Non commissioned officers, like Ray, played a key part in supervising and mentoring the younger Marines.

"It's nice to get here and build our own training packages that can hone skills to the specifications we feel are important. We're able to build the course of fire from the ground up and tailor make the training based on our needs. This allows us to identify weaknesses and deficiencies and build courses to help correct them."

Because there are fewer units training in Kuwait than

in the United States, Weapons Company has more time to remediate shortcomings rather than rush off the range to make way for another unit, said Ray.

Furthermore, while training in Kuwait the company is completely submerged in the Arabic culture.

"It's great to get these younger Marines out here to see camels, actual Arabic writing and people who live in the Middle East," added Ray.

For the younger Marines who have never deployed, the realism of training in Kuwait helps build their combat mindset.

In addition to training in a country that shares a border with Iraq, younger Marines, like Pfc. Jason Xiang, a LAV scout with Weapons Company, are enduring the harsh desert conditions of the Middle East for the first time and learning that surprise sand storms and temperatures in excess of 120F are normal in this region of the world. However, this all adds to the new confidence the younger Marines carry with them.

"I can't get over how hot it is, but I feel that if I were called to Iraq in the future, I'd feel a lot more comfortable going because I've spent time in the Middle East and feel that I know more of what to expect," said Xiang, a 19-year-old native of San Francisco.

The Camp Pendleton, Calif. based 15th MEU is comprised of approximately 2,200 Marines and Sailors and is a forward deployed force of readiness capable of conducting numerous operations, such as Non-combatant Evacuation Operations, Humanitarian Assistance Operations and a wide range of amphibious missions. The 15th MEU is currently conducting sustainment training in Kuwait.

Community Briefs

Registration for Session 1 and 2—University of Maryland University College Asia

Session 1 (Term 1, face-to-face class):

Registration runs till Aug. 22
Term dates are Aug. 25–Oct. 18.
Online education registration runs until Sept. 1

Session 2 (Term 2, Face to Face class):

Registration runs until Oct. 24.
Term dates are Oct. 27–Dec. 20.
Online education registration runs until November 10.

For a listing of classes, please visit www.umuc.edu/myumuc/ and scroll down to the Asia homepage and click schedule of classes.

For more information, call UMUC Iwakuni at 253-3392 or visit www.asia.umuc.edu

Budget for Baby Class – Navy Marine Corps Relief Society

Are you financially ready for your new baby? NMCRS is offering a Budget for Baby Class on Aug. 22, noon to 1 p.m. Feel free to bring your lunch.

The class provides valuable information on budgeting for you new baby.

In order to be eligible, attendees must have recently had a baby or are expecting within six months. All attendees will receive a junior sea bag with a coordinated set of bedding and clothing, a baby book, and a handmade blanket and sweater set. Call 253-5311 to sign-up.

Volunteer leader seminar - Club Beyond

Club Beyond (CB) is a faith-

based program that reaches out to Christian and non-Christian teens aboard MCAS Iwakuni.

CB has seen 70 percent of the 200+ high school and junior high students participate in their youth group meetings over the past two years. Each year we need six to eight volunteer leaders for the upcoming school year. The local CB director will have a training seminar Aug. 23, 2 p.m. in Yujo Hall.

To register or for more information, contact the CB director at 253-5183 (work), 080-3474-8856 (cell), or e-mail IwakuniCB@gmail.com.

Upcoming Marine Corps Family Team Building events

July 29, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Adult and Child CPR by certified Red Cross Instructor.

10 participants maximum. For both upcoming classes, call Marine Corps Family Team Building for more information and childcare availability at 253-3754.

Operation Homefront Military Spouse Scholarship

Operation Homefront is proud to announce the CinCHouse.com scholarship for spouses of uniformed services members to attend a post-secondary university, college, accredited trade school, certificate program, vocational school or community college.

Deadline for submission is extended to Aug. 15. The

scholarships will be awarded to recipients on Aug. 30. Visit <http://www.operationhomefront.net/spousescholarship.asp> for details.

Become a Volunteer Victim Advocate

Volunteers are specially trained men and women who provide immediate assistance to victims of spouse abuse and sexual assault. Pre-registration is required. Training is Aug. 25-29, 6 - 9 p.m. Please call the Victim Advocate Coordinator at 253-4526 to register.

Mammograms

The Branch Health Clinic Iwakuni will be conducting mammograms through an on-site van from Aug. 4 to 8.

To schedule this service, please call central appointments at 253-3445 so that it can be arranged through your primary care doctor. Once the order is requested by your primary care doctor, appointments will be made by Radiology.

Vacation Bible School

Friendship Trek 2008
Aug. 4 – 8, 5:30 – 8 p.m. The trek is open to ages 3 years (potty trained) to 8th grade.

Come join the adventure with games, crafts, music and God's Word.

For more information on registering or volunteering, contact Station Chapel at 253-3371.

"Robin Hood" Audition - MCCS,

Youth and Teen Programs
July 28, 10 a.m. – noon, at Sakura Theater. Those auditioning should arrive at 9:30 a.m. and plan to stay for the full two hours. Some of

the cast members will be asked to stay for a rehearsal immediately following the audition. Approximately 50 roles are available for local students.

All students (grades entering 1st grade through 12th grade) are encouraged to audition. No advance preparation is necessary. Most students rehearse approximately 4.5 hours each day, Monday through Friday. Performances are scheduled for Aug. 2, 3 p.m. (matinee show) and 7 p.m. (evening show) at the Sakura Theater.

For more information, call MCCS, Youth / Teen Programs at 253-5549 or Resource and Referral at 253-4141.

"Robin Hood" is part of the Missoula Children's Theatre's unique international touring project and is presented at MCAS Iwakuni by Children, Youth and Teens Branch.

Gospel Choir Members

Recruiting for Gospel Choir members to sing at a Christmas concert at the Sinfonia Iwakuni Concert Hall (1,200 seats) is now taking place. Please call 090-4104-1541 (cell) for additional information.

Girl Scout Summer Clubs 2008

Base Camp: July 28 – Aug. 1, 12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. at the Girl Scout Hut. For more information or to sign up, please call 253-2159.

PTO needs volunteers

M.C. Perry Elementary School Parents and Teachers Organization (PTO) needs volunteers to help through the summer to plan events and fundraisers for the fall. Please call 253-3327 for more information.

Sakura Theater

Friday, July 25, 2008

7 p.m. Sex and the City (R)
Premier

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

7 p.m. Hancock (PG-13)

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

2 p.m. Wall-E (G)
7 p.m. Wanted (R)

Saturday, July 26, 2008

1 p.m. Wall-E (G)
4 p.m. Sex and the City (R)
8 p.m. The Strangers (R)

Thursday, July 31, 2008

7 p.m. Sex and the City (R)

Sunday, July 27, 2008

1 p.m. Hancock (PG-13)
4 p.m. Wall-E (G)
7 p.m. Sex and the City (R)

Sex and the City

A New York writer on sex and love is finally getting married to her Mr. Big. But, her three best girlfriends must console her after one of them inadvertently leads Mr. Big to jilt her. Playing at the Sakura Theater this week.

Monday, July 28, 2008

7 p.m. What Happens in Vegas (PG-13) Last Showing

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.

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

THE IWAKUNI APPROACH Classifieds

Automobiles

1994 Nissan Cedric

\$2,400 OBO. JCI runs until Sept. 2009. Car runs great, has a clean interior, and only has 82,987km. If interested call 080-3465-3909 (cell).

1992 BMW

Asking for \$2,000. 4-door sedan with 92,000 plus km. JCI runs until May 2009. Series S25i, black leather interior, bucket seats, CD player, sun roof, aluminum wheels including the spare, anti-lock brakes, power windows & locks, A/C, tires more than 75 percent tread, comes with signature BMW first aid kit and built-in tool kit, plus many extra brand new parts. New parts include rotors, brake pads and miscellaneous items. For more information, call 253-6902 (work) or

253-2383 (home).

1999 Mazda Demio

Automatic vehicle with 26,797 miles. Includes power windows, steering, mirrors and keyless entry. Car also features CD/radio player, A/C and heater. Car is small but very spacious fitting five passengers. Road tax paid for 2008. JCI runs until October 2008. \$3,000 OBO. Call 253-7653 (home) for more information.

1996 Honda Odyssey

\$3,000 OBO. JCI runs until January 2010. 7 passengers. Call 253-2941 (home).

1997 Mitsubishi RVR

JCI runs until May 2010. Runs great including 4-wheel drive, A/C and heat, AM/FM stereo, CD, power windows, doors, locks, keyless entry, three-door, four-passenger, hatchback car. Nonsmoking owners. Asking \$2,700 OBO. Call 253-2124, 253-4606, or 080-6612-9195 (cell).

1995 Subaru Domingo

Low fuel/low maintenance. Perfect for Iwakuni. Seats six and great for driving and parking off base. Needs JCI renewed. \$2,500 OBO. Call 253-5301 (work) or 253-2265 (home) for more information.

Job openings

Become a Crew Chief

If you want to explore the world and venture in the skies, become a crew chief with H&HS C-12 Ops. Must have a 1st class or better swim qualification. For more information, call 253-4022.

Miscellaneous

Items for sale

Adult ladies bike—16 speed with or without child seat only ridden a few times.

Girls bike—for 7-9 year olds in good shape.

Girls three-wheeled scooter—good first scooter for 3-4-year-old.

Best offer for all three. E-mail to potwic@gmail.com 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.

Mess Hall Schedule

MONDAY

Cream of Broccoli Soup, French Onion Soup Baked Chicken and Rice, Yakiniiku (Steak and vegetables), Steamed Rice, Lyonnaise Green Beans, Mashed Potatoes, Peas and Carrots, Chicken Gravy, Dinner Rolls, Peanut Butter Cookies, Chocolate Cream Pie, Whipped Topping, Banana Cake with Butter Cream Frosting
SPECIALTY BAR: PASTA BAR

TUESDAY

Minestrone Soup, Tomato Soup, Pork Ham Roast, Shrimp Scampi, Potatoes Au Gratin, Steamed Rice, Glazed Carrots, Broccoli Combo, Cheese Biscuits, Brownies, Spice Cake with Butter cream Frosting, Coconut Cream Pie
SPECIALTY BAR: TACO BAR

WEDNESDAY

Chicken and Rice Soup, Cream of Broccoli, Chili Mac, Grilled Cheese, Tempura Fried Fish, Macaroni and Cheese, Oven Glo Potatoes, Broccoli Polonaise, Peas and Mushrooms, Dinner Rolls, Chocolate Drop Cookies, Florida Lemon Cake, Lemon Butter Cream Frosting, Blueberry Pie
SPECIALTY BAR: BBQ

THURSDAY

Chicken Noodle Soup, Cream of Mushroom Soup, Apple Glazed Corn Beef, Teriyaki Chicken, Rissolo Potatoes, Noodles Jefferson, Succotash, Fried Cabbage, Hot Mustard Sauce, Chicken Gravy, Cornbread, Pecan Brownies, Pineapple Upside Down Cake, Chocolate Cream Pie
SPECIALTY BAR: DELI BAR

FRIDAY

Vegetable Soup, Beef Noodle Soup, Beef Cordon Bleu, Lemon Baked Fish, Parsley Butter Potatoes, Steamed Rice, Steamed Carrots, Herbed Broccoli, Dinner Rolls, Ginger Molasses Cookies, German Chocolate Cake, Coconut Pecan Frosting, Pumpkin Pie
SPECIALTY BAR: HOTDOG/SAUSAGE

Wondering where your money is?

Contributed

It has been three weeks since you came by the TRICARE office and received the information on how to file a claim.

You sent your claim in the mail and now you are wondering, "Where is my money?"

The answer is at your fingertips, just logon to www.

tricare4u.com and register as a beneficiary.

With this account you can check patient eligibility and what amounts, if any, have been applied to your deductible and cost share.

You can also conduct a claim search and view the status, amount paid and an Explanation of Benefits (EOB).

As a registered user you can also contact customer service for assistance.

If you chose not to register online and would like to know the status of your claim, you can call WPS Claims Customer Service at 1-(608) 301-2310/2311.

Please contact your local TRICARE office for any assistance needs.



For more information, contact the station inspector's office by calling 253-3428.

Real Madrid fights hard



Baldemar Pardo, (right) Real Madrid defender, fights off an aggressive Postal player during their playoff game July 16 at the north side athletic field. Postal lost to Real Madrid when the game went into overtime. Photo by Lance Cpl. Ashley M. Howard

LANCE CPL. ASHLEY M. HOWARD IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron's Real Madrid stomped Postal's Postal 9-5 during a playoff soccer game that ended in overtime at the north side athletic field July 16.

Sweat beaded off the heads of the players as both teams played with aggression and determination.

The game started with a casual goal off the left foot of Real Madrid center Fernan J. Hernandez, followed by a goal from Postal center Patrick B. Henigan.

The score tied up, Hernandez quickly landed two additional goals against Postal, giving them the lead in the game.

With fans yelling motivational chants, Real Madrid's right forward Mason K. Sherwood plowed through Postal offense and scored, ending the first half in favor of Real Madrid 4-1.

Postal came into the second half fully charged as forward Adrian M. Denney landed a goal less than two minutes into the second half.

"It was a war zone during the second half," said Postal defense Victor G. Ramos.

Following Denney's lead, Postal continued to dominate the second half

when Henigan snuck in two goals on Real Madrid's goalie Forist Brockway.

"Throughout the season we've gotten cocky," said Brockway.

After an upsetting miss by Hernandez, Postal's right forward Anthony K. Farquharson accidentally bounced the ball off his chest into his own goal.

Down by one and approximately five minutes left in the game, Denney fired an explosive shot straight into the Real Madrid goal, evening the score and sending the game into overtime.

"I thought the game was over," Ramos said. "I don't know how we came back, I'm just glad we did."

Overtime began much like the first half with a goal from Real Madrid's left forward Juan Bravo and another goal from Sherwood.

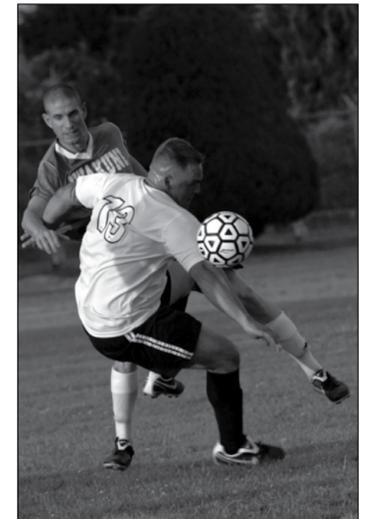
Alex A. Garciasilva, Real Madrid forward, shocked his teammates with a goal as he kicked a corner-kick.

The fans helped a lot, said Brockway. It was almost like they played a mind game with the other team by cheering us on so much.

Postal made numerous attempts at scoring on Real Madrid during overtime, but they could not stop its defender, Baldemar Pardo, from kicking the final goal of the game.

"We did our best, we just got outplayed," Ramos said.

"Now that's how you play Real Madrid ball," said Brockway after the game.



Real Madrid's right forward, (left) Mason K. Sherwood, breaks through Postal's defense during their playoff game July 16 at the north side athletic field. Real Madrid remained undefeated in the intramural season playoffs after beating Postal 9-5. Photo by Lance Cpl. Ashley M. Howard

Japanese-American Goodwill Tournament



Troy Ruby attempts a seven-foot putt during the Japanese-American Goodwill Tournament at Torii Pines Golf Course July 19. Heavy afternoon showers brought the tournament to an early end. Photos by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

LANCE CPL. NOAH S. LEFFLER
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF



Dan Linnabary watches his ball take flight after teeing off during the Japanese-American Goodwill Tournament at Torii Pines Golf Course July 19.

Golf enthusiasts from aboard the air station and out the gate came together to take part in the Japanese-American Goodwill Tournament at the Torii Pines Golf Course July 19.

More than 70 participants hit the links at the 8:30 a.m. shotgun start for the full-handicap, best-ball-of-four competition, although a heavy afternoon shower cut the 18-hole format down to nine, much to the chagrin of many golfers.

"I was highly upset because I shot very well on the back nine," Stephen Regonini said jokingly, who was rained out after his 17th hole.

It wrapped up very well, though. Torii Pines manager Paul Hahn always puts on a good tournament, he added.

Placing first with a score of 20 were Simeon Cadavos as well as Chad and Mike Iwata. The three relied on solid shooting as well as resilience to the inclement weather.

"We played really well despite the sudden onset of rain," said Cadavos, who managed to birdie his last hole during the downpour. "We did pretty well in the front nine, and everybody was sinking their pars."

Hahn, who moved the tournament from winter to summer three years ago, said the annual pairing of Japanese and American golfers owes its large turnout to the warm weather and camaraderie amongst the golfers. This could be seen in the Officers Club dining room as the soaked but smiling participants gathered for a steak dinner and exchange of beer and sake.

"Seeing so many people enjoy the golf course, that's key because if you get them out there they're going to have a good time," Hahn said. "Here we are in a foreign country, and we're getting our host nation to come aboard, (take part) in friendly competition and enjoy some of America's food.

"I think it's a win-win."



W. Sakamoto sinks a putt during the Japanese-American Goodwill Tournament at Torii Pines Golf Course July 19.