

THE IWAKUNI APPROACH

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Friday, December 12, 2008

Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan

Aces North training complete

Collaborative efforts help produce next wave of Fighter Combat Instructors

LANCE CPL. DAN NEGRETE
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE BASE TINDAL, Australia — Exercise Aces North 2008 ended Dec. 2 after nearly a month of aerial combat training scenarios practiced over the skies here.

Eleven F/A-18 Hornet jets from Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 121 participated in the exercise along with 305 Marine aircrew and supporting personnel from various installations across Marine Forces Pacific.

“The purpose of the exercise was to train the next wave of Australian Fighter Combat Instructors,” said Lt. Col. Joseph E. Maybach, operations officer for VMFA(AW)-121. “Aces North is the culmination of their six-month training course and equivalent to our TOPGUN or SFTI (United States Navy Strike Fighter Tactics Instructor program).”

Similar to TOPGUN, Aces North is designed to produce highly qualified jet-flying instructors that will return to their home units and squadrons as their newest tactical experts.

The exercise exposes the pilots to a myriad of

SEE ACES NORTH ON PAGE 3



An ordnance technician gives a thumbs-up to an F/A-18 Hornet crew during Exercise Aces North 2008. Photo by Lance Cpl. Jacqueline Diaz

Corps' forward deployed will receive station's care packages

MCCS gift-giving operation held for those in OEF/OIF

LANCE CPL. KYLE T. RAMIREZ
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

A cold and snowy morning didn't stop Marines and some volunteers from waiting outside the Crossroads Mall and Commissary here Dec. 6, encouraging donations for Corps' forward deployed.

Operation Comfort & Care Packages may seem similar to Toys for Tots, but this campaign stuffs the stockings of those participating in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The event, hosted by Marine Corps Family Team Building, gathers boxes of the most-requested items by those fulfilling individual augmentee billets on the station and ships them in to theater.

Among some of the items requested were portable compact-disc players and CDs, newspapers, magazines, all sizes of batteries and some hygienic items.

All of these creature comforts can go a long way, according to Lance Cpl. Victor g.

SEE COMFORT ON PAGE 3



Matthew C. Perry 2nd grade choir performs Christmas songs at the tree lighting ceremony here Dec. 5. Photo by Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Tree lighting declares holiday season

LANCE CPL. KYLE T. RAMIREZ
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Choirs singing, babies bundled in blankets, apple cider served with holiday cheer, it was all of a winter evening's atmosphere at the Cherry Blossom Triangle here Dec. 5 as the station hosted a tree lighting ceremony, commemorating the start of the holiday season.

Standing before a crowd of more than 450 locals with his wife and son, Col. Michael O'Halloran, station commanding officer, directed the plugging-in of

the station's Christmas tree, which consisted of more than a couple thousand bulbs, according to Marine Corps Community Services personnel.

The event, which has been held at the Cherry Blossom Triangle here for 10 years, draws a larger crowd every year. The Matthew C. Perry High School Jazz Band and the 2nd grade choir performed traditional Christmas music for the audience. Filipino pop-rock band, Live 8, also performed during the event. O'Halloran welcomed service members and guests to join in the holiday festivities.

SEE HOLIDAY ON PAGE 3

INSIDE IWAKUNI



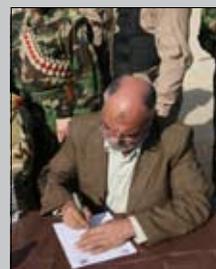
Marines remember Tarawa

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Toys for Tots kicks off in Iwakuni

6,7



Iraqi Gov't takes Haditha Dam

8



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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

'If only in my dreams'

CHAPLAIN A.R. KUSS
COMMAND CHAPLAIN

While I was growing up, one of the favorite recordings of my parents was "White Christmas" written by Irving Berlin and performed by Bing Crosby in 1942. It was not until my first year of theological graduate studies in Italy that reality and weight of the lyrics made an impact. This song prompted emotions that I remember well to this day — the dreaded emotions and memories that we call homesickness.

I have had homesickness many times over the years, to include most national and religious holidays, since I have entered military service. Intellectually I know I have survived and will again survive the pangs of missing loved ones and that I will have the creature comforts necessary to continue my mission. Homesickness still comes to visit me and those around.

Years of experience have taught me

some things about this phenomenon we call homesickness. It can attack suddenly or slowly at almost any given time. It reaches the physically strong, the intellectually gifted, the mature adult and does not discriminate its visit to the rest of us. A visit to medical will only have the staff give a nod of understanding and kind words. There is no medication for it.

Homesickness is the emotional and sometimes physical pain that comes with not being with family and friends we love. It is the pain we experience when we remember all the things and activities we have done and would like to experience again with our loved ones. This pain can cause us to weep, mess up our eating habits, disrupt our sleep and dreams and can even cause us to be sad for some time. Sometimes we may even feel like we are "losing it." Experience has taught me how to befriend homesickness.

Homesickness is based in love. We

miss those whom we love when we are not around them. We enjoy familiar sights, sounds and routines. We want to continue to spend time with those we love and make more memories because we love and are loved by them. This is normal, healthy and what life is all about: loving and being loved. Fortunately, life is also about change and growing to encompass new people and experiences. This is where the pain enters in. We must embrace both the past and the present.

Experience has taught me to accept homesickness as a reminder of how deeply I love my family and friends. It has taught me that I am wealthy beyond words because of what they mean to me and how they are part of my life. To deal with the pain, I return to that which will ease the pain. I phone family and friends. I look at pictures to prompt happy memories. Finally, I reach out to the people around me. I invite and accept invitations to movies, go on trips, go to out to eat, or gather people to play games. I allow my emotions to be emotions but not to define who I am or what I do with my life.

Letters to the editor...

Mother and son pay Marines heartfelt 'Thank You'



Nakamoto and her son

Hello.

I'm a mother with severely disabled son. My son had to undergo surgery and needed to be hospitalized. I took my son to the Hiroshima-Nishi Medical Center at 10 a.m., Dec. 4. After I parked my car, I was pushing my son in a wheelchair and heavily-laden carriage alone. Then a young

black man came up to me and he helped me push the carriage. I guess maybe he is a United States service member because a white man he was with was wearing a sweatshirt with a USMC logo on it. The person who helped me to push the carriage

full of stuff for the hospitalization seemed not to understand Japanese at all.

I said, "Arigato-gozaïmasu ('Thank you' in Japanese)."

But he looked confused. I should have said, "Thank you," to him, but I was thoughtless. I am so sorry this happened.

I always regret to hear about crimes committed by military and bad rumors about military.

We didn't have any conversation, but I fully felt and recognized his gentleness. It was a very heart-warming happening for me.

I was really pleased to see very kind military personnel.

Please tell him "Thank you so much for your help and kindness."

Best regards,
Tamayo Nakamoto

Corps Question

Q. If I live in family housing, what are some considerations I should take when putting up holiday decorations?

A. Holiday decorations are encouraged, but there are a few rules to remember. Don't put decorations on rooftops or use tape, nails, screws or other hardware to hang your decorations. For the remainder of December through Jan. 2, holiday lights are allowed. Lights must be turned off by midnight on Fridays and Saturdays. For every other day of the week, lights must be turned off at 11 p.m.

Aces North units reflect on RAAF exercise objectives

ACES NORTH FROM PAGE 1

combat scenarios involving both air-to-air and air-to-ground maneuvers.

"Aces North puts everything together for them in one exercise and forces them to integrate dissimilar elements (KC-130s, F-111 Strike Aircraft, and F-18 fighter jets) in large-scale force employment," said Maj. William B. Millett, VMFA(AW)-121 training officer. "The FCI (Fighter Combat Instructor) students take turns acting as the mission commander by devising a plan, briefing the other pilots

and executing the mission safely and lethally."

The purpose for having American support in an Australian exercise was to mimic a large-scale, coalition-style air operation.

This gave FCI students exposure to working with an ally, in this case the United States Marine Corps, and the opportunity to work with them as a team to accomplish their objectives.

"Throughout the exercise we accomplished several large-force employments with up to 30 to 40 aircraft airborne,"

said Millett. "Just having this ability to work with other squadrons in a large scale improves our capability to work with each other as allies."

Although the exercise was intended to produce top-notch Australian Fighter Combat Instructors, the Marine pilots benefited greatly from the exercise as well.

"It worked out for both of us," said Millett. "Our abilities and our means of executing a mission complimented each other very well, which is helpful to know when you're dealing with another ally.

All the pilots, including Marine pilots got increased proficiency from flying in the large-force employment events."

Exercise Aces North 2008 was successful in accomplishing all of its objectives and produced the next wave of RAAF Fighter Combat Instructors.

After having participated in Aces North, VMFA(AW)-121 will head out to Kadana Air Base and then to Korea to fulfill another exercise.

The squadron is temporarily based at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni as part of the Unit Deployment Program.

Finance expert: FDIC funds are backed by gov't, always insured

COMPILED BY BONNIE LEWIS
STATION FINANCIAL FITNESS
COUNSELOR

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation is an independent agency of the United States government that protects against the loss of insured deposits if an FDIC-insured bank or savings association fails. FDIC deposit insurance is backed by the full faith and credit of the United States government. Since the FDIC was established, no depositor has ever lost a single penny of FDIC-insured funds.

FDIC insurance covers funds in deposit accounts, including checking and savings accounts, money market deposit accounts and certificates of deposit. However, FDIC insurance does not cover other financial products and services that insured banks may offer, such as stocks, bonds, mutual fund shares, life insurance policies, annuities or municipal securities.

There is no need for depositors to apply for FDIC insurance or even to request it. Coverage is automatic.

To ensure funds are fully protected, depositors should understand their coverage limits. The FDIC provides separate coverage for deposits held in different account ownership categories.

NEWSPAPER CORRECTION

The Nov. 14 article titled, "Sugar Substitutes: a semi-sweet solution to a healthy smile," was written by Lt. Cmdr. Ron Citro with the 11th Dental Company Detachment, Robert M. Casey Branch Health Medical and Dental Clinic.



With burgers in hand, Marines inform visitors at Crossroads Mall of Operation Comfort & Care Packages while noting the most-requested items. Photo by Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Station hosts gift-giving campaign

COMFORT FROM PAGE 1

Ramos, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron postal worker.

"Sometimes a little care package is all they need to bring up the morale," he said. "That's why I'm out here doing this."

Aside from watching the first minor

snowing of the season, Marines and volunteers waited until the late afternoon for donations and were able to fill a few mid-size boxes with items from the Commissary and Marine Corps Exchange.

All of the items collected throughout the weekend were packaged and sent from the Southside Post Office here Monday.



Students of Matthew C. Perry High School perform at the M.C. Perry Winter Concert at the Station Chapel here Dec. 7. The Beginning Band, Jazz Band and Chorus performed during the event. Photo by Pvt. Ashley M. Howard

Christmas tree draws 450 to kick season off

HOLIDAY FROM PAGE 1

MCCS warmed participants with its more than 30 gallons of hot cocoa, 30 gallons of apple cider and at least 3000 assorted cookies.

The festivities continued on until the late evening, with more live performances, words from O'Halloran and at least \$5,000 in giveaways from MCCS.

Enrolling child in health care plan avoids claim problems

COURTESY OF THE
BRANCH HEALTH CLINIC

It is important to register newborns and adoptees in Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) to establish TRICARE eligibility for essential well-baby and pediatric health care. As long as another family member is enrolled in Prime, TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) Prime covers the following while overseas: newborns for 120 days beginning from the date of birth; adopted children for 120 days beginning from the effective date of the actual adoption; and pre-adoptive children for 120 days beginning on the date of placement of the court or approved adoption agency.

To register newborn or adopted child in DEERS please stop by your station DEERS office.



Cpl. David L. Davis, a Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 communications technician serving as a security guard here and Aircraftswoman Belinda M. Walters, a Royal Australian Air Force military working dog handler, train with "Zeus" using a rope designed to strengthen the animal's jaws and grip. Davis and two other MWSS-171 Marines are helping the Australians with security operations and serving as liaisons between Australians and Marines during Exercise Aces North 2008. Photo by Lance Cpl. Dan Negrete

Marines assist in working dog training

LANCE CPL. DAN NEGRETE
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE BASE TINDAL, Australia — The increased number of visiting service members and aircraft for Exercise Aces North 2008 here has prompted the RAAF base to increase its number of security personnel.

Select Marines from Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 are serving

alongside RAAF military police during the bilateral training exercise.

"Our No. 1 role here is to protect our aircraft," said Cpl. Tim J. Ring, RAAF military working dog handler and security patroller. "Any time an exercise takes place here, we require personnel from the visiting nation to assist us in security operations and to serve as liaisons between their military and ours."

Along with serving as an extra set of eyes and ears during patrols, the security

Marines have participated in training exercises dealing with RAAF military working dogs and their handlers. Since the Marines are still relatively new to the area, the working dogs are unfamiliar with them, making the Marines the perfect test subjects for a training exercise called man trailing.

During the exercise, the dogs can pick up the scent of a human and track him down without needing an article or sample of his scent with which to start.

The dog will simply recognize a human scent along a path or trail, and follow that scent until the animal reaches its source.

The RAAF security police use the Marine security personnel to act as infiltrators to the base or other key locations within the installation. The patrolling dogs and their handlers are tested in their ability to locate and assess the nature of the suspicious person and the threat they pose to the base.

H&HS

Pfc. Hughes R. D.
Lance Cpl. Kuchelmeister K. L.
Lance Cpl. Godin B. F.
Lance Cpl. Farquharson K.
Lance Cpl. Abbot G. S.
Lance Cpl. Gauna J.
Lance Cpl. Prout A. P.
Cpl. Ngabo J. R.
Cpl. Thompson A. L.
Cpl. Dobbs E. T.
Sgt. Herrington R. L.
Sgt. Norfleet M. J.
Staff Sgt. Cardenas M.
Staff Sgt. Jensen J. M.
Gunnery Sgt. Cashmore W. J.

MWSS-171

Lance Cpl. Armentrout Jr, P. A.
Lance Cpl. Baker C. W.
Lance Cpl. Ballom R. L.
Lance Cpl. Bertrand M. J.
Lance Cpl. Bricker T. S.

Lance Cpl. Dorion G. J.
Lance Cpl. Erickson T. J.
Lance Cpl. Holder P. J.
Lance Cpl. Holmes Jr, T. W.
Lance Cpl. Lee E. T.
Lance Cpl. Nguyen T. T.
Lance Cpl. Quintana K. J.
Lance Cpl. Scott D. N.
Lance Cpl. Sisco S. G.
Lance Cpl. Valle P. E.
Cpl. Chandler J. E.
Cpl. Cupid R. H.
Cpl. Farber J. L.
Cpl. Hoffpauir B. P.
Cpl. Mckelvey B. W.
Cpl. Morlet Jr, C. A.
Cpl. Rey P.
Cpl. Salsberry J. D.
Cpl. Smith S. R.
Cpl. Tucker T. D.
Sgt. Leyva B.
Sgt. Hull J. E.

MAG-12:

Lance Cpl. Sisouvong A. J.
Lance Cpl. Smith A. G.
Cpl. Garcia F. J.

MALS-12

Lance Cpl. Lisa N. Butler
Lance Cpl. Jonathan Paz
Lance Cpl. Matthew A. Bolthouse
Lance Cpl. Sean R. Briggs
Lance Cpl. Seth A. Sughrone
Cpl. Tyler K. Cooper
Cpl. Santiago Diez
Cpl. Zachary R. Schmitt
Cpl. Bradley W. Atwell
Cpl. Patrick L. Simmons
Cpl. Cody J. Brown
Cpl. Loren R. Taddeo
Sgt. Pieter H. Imhoff Jr.
Sgt. Ignacio Gamboa
Sgt. Joanne H. Lee
Sgt. Xuan O. Pham
Staff Sgt. Cristina Sacasa

VMFA-242

Lance Cpl. Brewer J. C.
Lance Cpl. Mata E.
Lance Cpl. Hall T. J.
Lance Cpl. Woody R. C.
Cpl. Van Gundy A. E.
Cpl. Trent J. T.
Cpl. Hiniker J. W.
Cpl. Pugaorozco E.
Cpl. Arnett A. G.
Sgt. Pucket J. P.
Sgt. McSpadden M. J.
Sgt. Coriell M. A.
Staff Sgt. Buenopatino M.
Staff Sgt. Vadnais D. A.

CLC-36

Lance Cpl. Garlitz Jr, D. M.
Lance Cpl. Mood Y. L.
Cpl. Smith D. M.

December Promotions

Tarawa: 65 years later

STAFF SGT. BRIAN GRIFFIN
MARINE CORPS BASES JAPAN

TARAWA ATOLL (December 5, 2008) — More than six decades have passed since Roy Robinson first set foot on the sandy beaches of Betio, in the Republic of Kiribati, part of the Tarawa Atoll. Today Betio bears little resemblance to what it used to be, or what it was to Robinson 65 years ago. Just past his 18th birthday, Pfc. Robinson, a rifleman assigned to 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, was on one of many Higgins Boats that landed on Red Beach Two in 1943.

All Robinson remembers about Betio's landscape are the Japanese fortifications that once lined the coast.

"I can't believe this is Tarawa," Robinson said with a grin. "We've got to be on the wrong island. Because the only thing here last time was sand, trees and pill boxes."

Robinson's memory, along with his hearing, has faded a bit over the last 65 years, but the former Marine's thoughts drifted back to a place described by him in three simple words.

"It was Hell!" he said. "All we could think about was what the hell are we doing here and how do we get off this place."

Thinking back, Robinson said there were a few things he knows helped him through the battle.

"Brotherhood and camaraderie helped to get us through it," Robinson said. "We had to pay attention to our left, right, and front, but I knew they had my back," Robinson said, referring to the Marines charging forward from the rear.

Robinson was one of 35,000 Marines, sailors and soldiers who stormed the shores of Betio Nov. 20, 1943.

Exactly 65 years later, the Marines once again landed on Betio.

More than 30 Marines and sailors from the III Marine Expeditionary Force



Roy Robinson speaks with Lieutenant General Richard C. Zilmer about what he experienced 65 years earlier when he landed on Red Beach Two in a Higgins landing craft. Zilmer, the commanding general of the III Marine Expeditionary Force and commander of Marine Corps Bases Japan, travelled to Betio Island, in the Republic of Tarawa, to attend the ceremony commemorating the 65th anniversary of the battle Nov. 20. Photo by Staff Sgt. Brian Griffin

travelled to Betio, to pay tribute to the service members who battled there many years ago.

A ceremony commemorating the 65th anniversary of the Battle of Tarawa was held Nov. 20 at a small memorial standing in a nondescript field near the shores of Betio.

Nearly 1,000 local villagers, mainly children, flocked to see what all the pomp and circumstance was about as more than 100 distinguished visitors attended the ceremony.

Republic of Tarawa President Anote Tong, Adm. Timothy Keating, commander, U.S. Pacific Command, and Lt. Gen. Richard C. Zilmer, commanding

general for III MEF and Marine Corps Bases Japan, were among the guests in attendance.

"What began on that morning only 65 years ago and lasting for a terrifying 76 hours is what brings us here today," said Zilmer. "Today we meet here to commemorate the lives, the sacrifices, and the losses of those gallant young men who braved the horrors and savagery of modern day combat to overcome an enemy equally committed to victory."

Near the end of the ceremony, wreaths were placed at the memorial and Tong concluded by thanking the veterans who fought for his people.

"I salute those courageous young men

who served during that time," he said. "We are indeed honored to be a part of this commemoration to honor the memories of those brave men and to pay our respect to their courage and personal sacrifice for the people of Kiribati and humanity."

After the ceremony, Robinson departed to walk along the same sandy shores of Betio he landed on 65 years before. But it was different now.

The crackle of machine gun fire was replaced with the sound of waves breaking along the shore line.

There were no more working weapons of war there, and nature had reclaimed the land once dominated by pillboxes.



An 8-inch coastal defense gun mount sits on the point at Green Beach, rising above the sand with its muzzle pointed inland. Shrubs have overtaken the concrete and steel, and hundreds of red crabs race throughout the battlefield debris. Other than some graffiti and weathering over the last 65 years, the area remains as it was following the Battle of Tarawa. Photo by Staff Sgt. Brian Griffin



Celeste W. Rush, Matthew C. Perry schools educational technologist, explains the class' current lesson to Gary Leeling, Senate Armed Services Committee Staff director, during his special tour of the schools and station here Dec. 8. Photo by Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Thunder Run launches Iwakuni's Toys for Tots Program



Thunder Run participants, along with Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni commanding officer Col. Michael A. O'Halloran, pose for a group photo Sunday. More than 170 motorcycle enthusiasts supported the annual Toys for Tots event. Photo by Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Sgt. Josh Cox
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Iwakuni's Annual Toys for Tots Program officially launched Sunday during the 11th annual "Thunder Run," motorcycle rally and toy collection event.

About 170 motorcycles lined the station's streets to participate in the ride around the perimeter of the station in celebration of the Toys for Tots Program.

The campaign gathers popularity with each year thanks to motorcycle rally. The Single Marine Program counted 117 Japanese bikes coming from off base. SMP coordinator, Jay Stovall said part of the event's growth could be attributed good weather and rider's culture.

"You'd have to be a biker to truly understand, but when you're out there and you're part of the group it's pretty impressive," he said. "For four years now, we've had immensely cooperative

weather. Sometimes it seems like whenever we saddle up for the ride, the skies will part and the sun will shine just for us."

The grassroots support of the base motorcycle club may make up for the bulk of the turnout, but as one non-riding Japanese participant said during the event, coming to this type of charity event and celebrating with Americans is what keeps most coming back.

According to the Toys for Tots official Web site, "the mission of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots program is to collect new, unwrapped toys during October, November and December each year and distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to needy children in the community in which the campaign is conducted."

Riders and participants began donating toys to the campaign during the event. Marines and volunteers will wrap, classify and donate the toys to at least eight local orphanages for the holidays once the collection period has ended.



Toys for Tots participants drop some of the first toys into a collection box at the Single Marine Program Hornet's Nest here Dec. 7. Photo by Tsuneyo Muraoka — The Yomiuri Shimbun



(Above) Motorcycle riders line the streets of Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni during the annual Toys for Tots Thunder Run Dec. 7. (Left) "Aniki" of Hiroshima's Cherries Rock 'N' Roll and Twist Club dances during the Toys for Tots Thunder Run event here Dec. 7. Photos by Sgt. Josh Cox



Hiroshima Cherries dancers and musicians inspire an audience during their performance at the annual Toys for Tots motorcycle rally at the Single Marine Program Hornet's Nest here Dec. 7. Photo by Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

CORPS NEWS

HIGHLIGHTING MARINES AND SAILORS AROUND THE GLOBE



Major Gen. Martin Post, deputy commanding general for Multi-National Force-West, and Al-Kumanji Mawafek Mohammed, director of real estate, and several other members of the Iraqi government, sign the documents to officially turn the Haditha Dam back over to the Government of Iraq Dec. 3. The dam supplies almost one-third of Iraq's electricity and had been controlled by Coalition forces since 2003. Photo by Lance Cpl. Paul Torres

DAM STRAIGHT

Government of Iraq takes control of Haditha Dam

LANCE CPL. PAUL TORRES
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 5

HADITHA DAM, Iraq — Marines with Regimental Combat Team 5 finished the final demilitarization of the Haditha Dam located along the Euphrates River.

Major Gen. Martin Post, deputy commanding general for Multi-National Force-West, signed over the dam Dec. 3 to Iraqi government officials and thereby capped the turnover of dam operations and security.

Al-Kumanji Mawafek Mohammed, director of real estate, and several other members of the Iraqi government, along with representatives from the Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army, attended on behalf of the Iraqi government to sign the final paperwork.

"I just want to say thank you to all of the Marines who have been here over the years and say how much (Coalition

Forces) appreciated the leadership of the gentlemen who have been here the entire time running this facility and coordinating with the Marines and Coalition forces. They have done just a wonderful job during tough times to keep this facility up and running," said Maj. Gen. Post.

Coalition forces have been responsible for the dam since 2003, and during that time the dam housed thousands of military personnel.

"The dam was a piece of key terrain because of its position on the river and also because it provides around one-third of Iraq's electricity," said Master Sgt. Joe Lopez, 36, from Chicago, who is the staff non commissioned officer in charge of the Haditha Dam Mayors Cell, RCT 5. "Our presence here has also acted as a deterrent for people trying to smuggle things down the river."

The turnover of the dam comes as little surprise as Coalition forces continue to assume an over watch role and the Iraqis continue to take control of security

throughout the country.

"While the Marines and Coalition forces occupied the dam, we were only able to send workers in for the day shift," said Hassan Yahyah Hassan, who is a representative for the ministry of electricity as well as the overall director of the Dam.

"The removal of Coalition forces will facilitate the technical crew's movement within the dam. We only have around 100 personnel, but now we will be able to fill three shifts that will employ 460 personnel and will keep the dam running 24-hours a day."

Security for the facility, once a responsibility of Coalition forces, is now in the hands of the Iraqi Army and the police. The turnover of responsibility is a huge step for Iraqis and military members alike because it signified the increasing self-sufficiency of Iraq.

"We are leaving, but we are willing and prepared to support the Iraqi Army and other security elements if they need us," said Maj. Gen. Post.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Flu Shots/Mist Available

The Branch Health Clinic Iwakuni has now received the injectable form of the flu shot for children 36 months to 18 years old. You may receive the flu shot or flu mist at immunizations in the BHC Iwakuni. Immunization hours of operation are Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. to 4 p.m., and Wednesdays from 7:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. If you have any question, please contact immunizations at 253-6326.

Girl Scouts Holiday Party

Today, 2:30 to 5 p.m. in Community Room 589. Girls will meet their troop leaders immediately after school and walk over together. Enjoy a holiday snack, make a Christmas

ornament, play the Dreidel game, make a Kwanzaa woven bracelet. Hear holiday stories and songs - it's free. Make your calendar too. Complete the permission form and return to your leader as soon as possible. For more information, call 253-2402.

Hometown Extravaganza

Holiday Cheer-Leading Committee is presenting the 4th annual Hometown Extravaganza, Sunday at the Sakura Theater at 7 p.m. The event is open to all station residents. Cash prize towards a party for the first place unit. Call 253-6745 for specific details.

Volunteer Victim Advocate

Volunteers are specially trained men and women who provide

immediate assistance to victims of spouse abuse and sexual assault. Preregistration is required by today. Training is from Monday to Dec. 19, 6 to 9 p.m. Please call the Victim Advocate Coordinator at 253-4526 to register.

PTO Meeting

M.C. Perry Elementary School PTO will have a community meeting on Thursday at 7 p.m. in the school library. Please come and support our school. Your participation is essential to the organization's success. For more information, call 253-2180.

Children's Christmas Party

Dec. 21, 3 - 5 p.m. at Marifu Park in downtown Iwakuni. Join us and spread a good dose of holiday cheer! The event is free and is open to all community members. Holiday crafts, games, yummy sweets, caroling, and so much more! Make a positive impact on the lives of our host nation, be a holiday "cheer" leader! For more information or to be a volunteer,

call 090-1012-2289 (cell) or e-mail jackie@allenintl.com.

BHC Holiday Closure

The BHC Iwakuni will be closed at noon on Dec. 24 and 31, 2008. This is in conjunction with Dec. 25, 2008 and Jan. 1, 2009 and is in addition to the regular closing on the afternoon of first and third Wednesday of the month. The Urgent Care Clinic will remain open during these times. If you have any question, call the BHC Iwakuni at 253-5571.

Mammograms

The BHC Iwakuni will be conducting mammograms through an onsite van from Jan. 12 to 16, 2009. 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.

Operation Letters to Santa 2008

This operation allows children to write a special letter to Santa for Christmas. Bring letters with return addresses to either the Main Post Office (Bldg. 405) or Northside Post Office (Bldg. 1460) and Santa will reply.

UMUC Spring Term I Class
University of Maryland University College Spring Term I class schedule for face to face is now available. Registration runs from Nov. 17 to Jan. 18, 2009, and classes run from Jan. 19 to Mar. 14, 2009. Registration for online runs from Nov. 17 to Jan. 26, 2009 and classes run from Jan. 26 to Apr. 5, 2009. For more information, contact UMUC Iwakuni at 253-3392.

Family Housing Office

The Family Housing Division changed its customer service hours. The hours are 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Self Help will maintain its current hours as 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Mondays through Fridays.

Lost and Found

Provost Marshal's Office Lost and Found section receives many unclaimed items. If you lose something, please contact PMO at 253-5105.

Boy Scouts - 50 years of service

Troop 77 would like to welcome those interested in joining one of their weekly meetings. The meetings are every Monday 6 - 7:30 p.m. at Bldg. 1111. For more information, call Hut at 253-3505.

Chapel Services

Roman Catholic

Saturday 4:30 p.m. Confession
5:30 p.m. Mass
Sunday 8:30 a.m. Mass
9:45 a.m. Religious Education
Tuesday - Friday 11:30 a.m. Weekday Mass
Wednesday 6 p.m. Inquiry Class for adults

Protestant

Saturday 9:30 a.m. Seventh-Day Adventist Sabbath School
11:00 a.m. Seventh-Day Adventist Devine Worship
Sunday 9:30 a.m. Sunday School, Adult Bible Fellowship
10:30 a.m. Protestant Service
11 a.m. Children's Church
Wednesday 6 p.m. Awana (Bldg. 1104)
6 p.m. Bible Study (Capodanno Hall Chapel)

Church of Christ

Sunday 9:30 a.m. Bible Study (small chapel)
10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Latter Day Saints

Weekdays 6:30 a.m. Youth Activities

Jewish

Friday 6 p.m. Shabbat (small chapel)

Church of the United Christmas Inc.

Sunday 1 p.m. Worship Services
Wednesday 7 p.m. Bible Study

Teen Programs

For times, call 253-5183.

For information regarding divine services, religious education or any other command religious program or chapel activity, call the Marine Memorial Chapel at 253-3371.

Holiday Worship Schedule

Dec. 14

3 p.m. Catholic-Advent Pageant & Dinner

Dec. 24

5 p.m. Catholic-Christmas Vigil Mass
7 p.m. Protestant-Christmas Eve Service
11:30 p.m. Catholic-Carols & Midnight Mass

Dec. 25

9 a.m. Catholic-Christmas Day Mass

Dec. 31 New Year's Eve

7 p.m. Protestant- New Year's Eve Service

Jan. 1, 2009 New Year's Day

9 a.m. Catholic-Mary, Mother of God Mass

These services are in addition the Chapel's regular worship services. Call 253-3371.

Sakura Theater

Friday, Dec. 12, 2008

6 p.m. Australia (PG-13)

Premier

10 p.m. Max Payne (PG-13)

Premier

Saturday, Dec. 13, 2008

1 p.m. Beverly Hills Chihuahua (PG)

4 p.m. Secret Life of Bees (PG-13)

Premier

7 p.m. Max Payne (PG-13)

10 p.m. My Best Friend's Girl (R)

Sunday, Dec. 14, 2008

1 p.m. Max Payne (PG-13)

7 p.m. Holiday Extravaganza

Monday, Dec. 15, 2008

7 p.m. Secret Life of Bees (PG-13)

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2008

7 p.m. Eagle Eye (PG-13)

Last Showing

Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2008

7 p.m. Australia (PG-13)

Thursday, Dec. 18, 2008

7 p.m. Quantum of Solace (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.

THE IWAKUNI APPROACH CLASSIFIEDS

Automobiles

1994, Mitsubishi Delica
JCI good until Nov 2009. Excellent condition. Diesel, 4x4, seats seven. Asking \$3,000. For more information, contact 253-2683 (home) or 080-2469-4859 (cell).

1992 Toyota Lucida
Great family vehicle. Seats eight, AMFM stereo w/ CD player, tinted windows, AC works well. JCI good until May 2009. Asking \$1,500 or OBO. If interested, please call 253-2489 (home).

Miscellaneous

Baby girl clothes for sale
Must see cute baby girl clothes! Old Navy, Gap, Osh Kosh, Carters. Size from six months to nine months winter. 12 months to 18 months spring and summer.

Mess Hall Schedule

MONDAY

Cream of Broccoli Soup, French Onion Soup, Baked Chicken and Rice, Yakimiku (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 w/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 w/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, Rissole 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/POLISH SAUSAGE

Also have shoes, socks/tights, bibs, sweaters, coats. Excellent shape, lightly worn and free of stains. Will sell individually \$5 per outfit, shoes \$3 per pair of shoes, or will negotiate a price for all. For more information, email to dawn_larrabee@yahoo.com or call 253-2611 (home).

Pack-n-play for sale

Pack-n-play with changing table, vibrations, music and bassinet in excellent shape. Asking \$75. For more information, email to dawn_larrabee@yahoo.com or call 253-2611 (home).

Items for sale

- Step 2 children's playhouse. House is white with a pink door and purple roof. \$50.
- Couch. End sections are both recliners that have heat and massage. \$300.

If interested, please call 253-2489 (home).

Items for sale

All items like NEW.

- Fisher Price "Loving Family" Dollhouse with many extras \$75 firm
- Fisher Price "Loving Family" Talking Van \$15
- Fisher Price Tow Truck with Race Car \$9
- Tow Truck with Sports Car \$9

- Little Tikes Table with two Chairs \$20
- Razor 3-wheeled Scooter \$15
- Kolcraft "Music on the Go" Stroller \$75
- Safety 1st Bed-Side Rail \$7
- Thermos Gas Grill 2 Go \$75

Please call 253-2662 (home) if interested.

Jobs

Part time program coordinator

University of Phoenix is seeking a part time program coordinator. The working location is Iwakuni Education Center, salary is \$11/hour. Open until Jan. 9, 2009. Must be a U.S. Citizen or possess proper documentation to work for a US Company. For more detail, contact the University of Phoenix, Iwakuni office at 253-3335.

Dental Assistant needed

The dental clinic at MCAS Iwakuni is seeking one motivated Dental Assistant for a great opportunity in dental healthcare services. For more information, stop by Bldg 111 or call 253-5252 or 3331. Applications must be received no later than 4 p.m. on Dec. 15, 2008.

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

- The deadline for submissions is Monday at 4:30 p.m.
- The request is effective a week. If you want to extend a previously submitted ad for an additional week, notify the Public Affairs Office at 253-5551.

MARINE LOUNGE

///Upcoming events and programs///

///Pool Tournament///

Every Saturday, Sunday, and Holiday at 2 p.m., the Marine Lounge hosts its weekend Pool Tournament. Saturdays are Nine Ball tournaments and Sundays are Eight Ball tournaments. There is a \$5 entry fee. Cash prizes are awarded to first and second places.



Matthew C. Perry Elementary School 5th-grade students flood Daren the Drug Abuse Resistance Education lion and program mascot during their graduation ceremony held at Building One here Dec. 5. Three classes completed the program, which teaches young children about the dangers of drug and alcohol addiction as well as domestic violence. Photo by Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

SPORTS

Japanese, American runners Heat The Streets



A massive group of runners begin the Heat The Streets Run here Sunday. The goodwill event consisted of a 10K race and 5K walk. Photo by Pvt. Ashley M. Howard

SGT. JOSH COX

IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Avid runners and walkers raced to "Heat The Streets" during a Japanese and American goodwill run here Sunday.

The third annual Heat The Streets Run, consisting of a 10K run and 5K walk, attracted 117 runners and 30 walkers from on- and off-base.

"We're very happy to have the Japanese and Americans participate," said Tadamasu "Turbo" Vemura, a Semper Fit coordinator here. "The run is a good way to bring the community together as a whole station."

HEAT THE STREETS RESULTS

Men's ages 29 and under: 1st Nagashita, Takahisa 31:14 2nd Fujimura, Takashi 31:24 3rd Muranaka, Daisuke 32:00	Men's ages 40-49 1st Shibata Akira 35:19 2nd Hakoshima Shinji 35:40 3rd Tamura Hiroyuki 37:04	Men's 60 and better 1st Muranaka Shinichi 36:48 2nd Yamauchi Kazuki 40:09 3rd Okada Toshio 40:25	Women's ages 30-39: 1st Vike Feyedelem 41:29 2nd Marushira Hiromi 44:04 3rd Katayama Tomoko 44:45
Men's ages 30-39 1st Umeda, Takao 32:17 2nd Yamamoto, Makoto 32:56 3rd Moriguchi, Hirofumi 33:17	Men's ages 50-59 1st Nakamoto Hiroyuki 34:51 2nd Kai Shinji 35:45 3rd Nakayama Yasuishi 36:58	Women's ages 29 and under: 1st Fujimoto Ayaka 43:44 2nd Emari Traffic 46:59 3rd Molly Hurda 48:24	Women's ages 40-49; 50-59* 1st Doi Kumi 50:33 2nd Sakamoto Yukimi 59:24 *1st Nakamoto Mikako 52:01

BRIEFS

Basketball Camp Registration

The sign-up period runs until Dec. 15. Sign up for the 2008 Marine Corps Community Services Semper Fit and Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 Youth Basketball Camp. The camp will be conducted inside the IronWorks Gym Sports Courts from Dec. 27 to Dec.

31. The camp fee is \$25 per participant. The camp is for youth ages seven to 15 and is limited to the first 100 participants to sign up.

Youth Basketball Sign-up

The sign-up period runs until Dec. 24. Age divisions are: 4-year-olds, 5-to-6-year-olds, 7-to-9-year-olds, 10-to-12-year-olds, 13-to-15-year-olds. The fee is \$30 per child. Cheerleaders may sign up at \$30 per child. The sign-up period remains the same. If registering three

or more children, the third child is \$25. After Dec. 24, the registration fee will be \$40.

Coaches' Training will be conducted Dec. 17 and Dec. 18 at 5 p.m. in the Wellness Room at IronWorks Gym. Evaluations for 10-to-12-year-old division will be conducted Jan. 5, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. in the Sports Courts at IronWorks Gym. The season's opening ceremony will be held Jan. 19, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. in the Sports Courts at IronWorks Gym. The season's closing ceremony will be held Mar. 15, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. in the Sports Courts at IronWorks Gym.



Drop-box locations around station

Toys For Tots drop-boxes are in the following locations:

- All unit headquarters buildings
- The Marine Corps Exchange
- The Single Marine Program Hornet's Nest

■ The Marine Lounge

Gifts are being collected until Dec. 25. For information on how to participate in the gift wrapping or delivery of the toys, call the SMP Hornet's Nest at 253-4656.