

A man in a military uniform is in a sparring stance, facing a German Shepherd dog. The man is wearing a tan short-sleeved shirt, dark pants, and a green beret. He has his right arm extended, holding a white protective cup. The dog is jumping towards him, mouth open. The background is a grassy field with a fence and a blue portable toilet.

the KINTAI
shimbun

Japanese Police witness Marine Corps justice

by Pfc. Kyle T. Ramirez

Station connoisseurs sample local vineyard

by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

Goal!

Youth soccer kicks off to a running start

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Sept. 20, 2007

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A military working dog pounces on 2nd Lt. Jay Woods, deputy provost marshal, during a demonstration for Japanese police officers at the provost marshal's office here Sept. 18. The police officers participated in an annual tour of the PMO facility and training exhibits.

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Japanese police witness Marine Corps justice



Pfc. Kyle T. Ramirez

Senior Japanese police officers participate in a simulated scenario using air-powered pistols at the simulation tank here Sept. 18. The simulations were part of an annual guided tour of the PMO facility and training exhibits.

by Pfc. Kyle T. Ramirez
Shimbun Staff

Japanese police officers were welcomed aboard the air station courtesy of the Provost Marshall's Office Tuesday to participate in a guided tour of its facilities and training exhibits.

"This has become an annual sort of tour. Although last year, there was not nearly the amount of Marines participating in the demonstrations we had set up," said Cpl. Michael A. Orozco, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron crime prevention chief and native of Bakersfield, Calif.

The tour kicked off with a brief introduction and welcoming speech presented by Col. Michael A. O'Halloran, station commanding officer, and a walk-through of PMO's different elements with Orozco.

"I wanted to show them how we run things over here on 'our side' because as two crime-fighting organizations in the same area, we end up working very closely toward the same mission," said Orozco.

Following the guided tour was a demonstration of the capabilities of military working dogs. The police officers were shown differ-

ent scenarios that a military working dog unit might encounter and how its presence is vital.

"I've never seen a dog act so calm and able to respond to commands like the one today," said Toru Seuehiro, senior police officer and native of Nagato City. "It makes me wish we were trained to work with such an animal."

The police officers later made their way to the pistol range here to witness some of its training exhibits. They were taken to an advanced simulation tank and shown how to operate its air-powered pistols. They were then taken through several scenarios that they might encounter as on-duty law enforcement personnel on the air station.

"The caliber of training Marines undergo is far more advanced than I have ever seen," said Kiyonori Kurata, senior police officer and native of Shimono Seki City. "During (Japanese police) training, we fire 9mm blanks at an imaginary target. We get told our scenario and it is not right in front of us to see. This method (simulator) provides visual feedback and a more realistic simulation."

The tour ended with a live-fire demonstra-



Pfc. Kyle T. Ramirez

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tion of the air station special response team at the pistol range here.

“Mostly, we do these tours to promote good will between our two jurisdictions,” said Orozco. “Being a good liaison is key. If they come here and see how we’re running things, they’ll know that we’re on their side as well.”

The police officers were all anxious for their chance to come aboard the air station according to Seuehiro. Each year, only a few senior police officers and those new police officers right out of school are able to participate in the tour. However, the number is quickly growing according to Orozco.

“This is an awesome environment. The training instruments are superb and every Marine seems to carry himself professionally,” said Kurata. “It seems that such an environment would make the job easier or maybe more enjoyable. I hope that if I don’t give my spot to someone else, I can return next year.”

The air station special response team demonstrates a live-fire exercise for Japanese police officers at the pistol range here Sept. 18. The demonstration is part of an annual tour hosted by the provost marshal’s office.

New system sinks CLAWS into task of eradicating flight line hazards



Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

Cpl. Ryan A. Pope, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron telephone systems/personal computer intermediate repairer and native of Union, Mo., requests the air traffic control tower here to remotely fire a cannon used to keep birds away from the flight line Sept. 19.

by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler
Shimbun Staff

Bang! A loud shot pierces the calm afternoon as a flock of egrets scatters toward Penny Lake. These birds were lucky the intimidating noise was nothing more than a small explosion of compressed propane. Even luckier, however, were the pilots, passengers and crews flying in and out of the air station today; just one of these feathered foreign objects could have potentially brought down their aircraft and injured those onboard.

The Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard (BASH) program, which usually relies on shotguns to purge the flight line of the winged pests, recently boosted its arsenal with six new “cannons” to humanely help rid the flight line of avian engine-destroyers.

The Cordless Land Air Wildlife System employs harmless noisemakers strategically placed around the airfield that can be remotely operated from the air traffic con-

trol tower.

“It’s not about eradicating birds; it’s about discouraging and dispersing birds from coming around the flight line,” said Mike K. Gingles, station game warden and Shreveport, La., native. “Killing is not the thing that you really want to do. You want to move them off and keep them off.”

A recent upsurge in the airfield bird population raised enough concern at ATC to rally funding and resurrect a once-failing system.

This year over 300 cattle egrets hatched across the river, and the cut grass near the flight line is a perfect place for birds to hunt for small animals and insects, Gingles said.

The ATC tower monitors the flocks grazing between taxiways and can activate one or more cannons to deliver a series of ear-shattering 120 decibel blasts while the device rotates a full 360 degrees. A set of

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Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler
Cpl. Ryan A. Pope, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron telephone systems/personal computer intermediate repairer and native of Union, Mo., inspects a cannon used to keep birds away from the flight line here Sept. 19. Six such cannons are currently being implemented under the new Cordless Land-Air Wildlife System.

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twin speakers mounted on each cannon also plays pre-recorded predatory noises such as gunshots and barking dogs, encouraging the birds to search for dinner elsewhere.

The cannons won't harm the birds, but they will startle them, said Cpl. Ryan A. Pope, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron ground electronics maintenance department technician and native of Union, Mo.

"The cannon makes a loud, resonating sound ... It's basically like an expensive potato gun," he added.

According to their Web site, the Naval Safety Center has logged approximately 20,000 birdstrikes resulting in two deaths, 25 destroyed aircraft and more than \$310,000,000 in damage since 1980. Such numbers can significantly impede the air station's mission and are the reason why ATC decided to bring the CLAWS system out of retirement.

CLAWS first came online around 1998, but was phased out more than two years ago as the cannons gradually required increasing amounts of upkeep, said Capt. Mike J. McCoy, ATC officer-in-charge and Salt Lake City native.



Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

Cpl. Ryan A. Pope, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron telephone systems/personal computer intermediate repairer and native of Union, Mo., stands by as a cannon used to keep birds away from the flight line here prepares to fire Sept. 19.

"Over time things just break. The cannons were in a state of disrepair," he added.

Although it is too early to determine CLAW's effectiveness, McCoy has high hopes and says everyone will be using lessons learned from the previous system.

"(The cannons) are helpful, and the biggest thing this time is they won't be left stationary," McCoy said. "One thing we know is if you leave them sit for a period of time the birds will get used to them."

Checkerboards check in: VMFA-312 arrives for 6-month stay

by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler
Shimbun Staff



Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

Aircraft mechanics from Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 312 work on an F/A-18A+ Hornet behind the squadron's hangar here Sept. 17.

Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 312 arrived here from MCAS Beaufort last week as part of the Unit Deployment Program.

Over the next six months the Checkerboards, whose mission is to conduct anti-air and offensive air-support operations, will lend their approximately 200 personnel and F/A-18A+ Hornets to supplement Marine Aircraft Group 12.

“We are an augment squadron; we’re here to perform any tasks MAG-12 deems necessary,” said Capt. Mark J. Simpson, VMFA-312 F/A-18 pilot.

The squadron will also utilize Japan’s diverse training environment both here and on deployments - such as one slated for Kadena Air Base in Okinawa - to enhance their warfighting capabilities.

“We’re going to be doing a lot of air-to-air and air-to-ground training, which is standard, that’s the fighter role,” Simpson said. “We’ll also upgrade the qualifications for certain pilots.”

“We’re going to be utilizing our resources a lot during the time we’re here,” he added.

First time Japan visitor Pvt. Seth T. Anderson, VMFA-312 aircraft mechanic, says he will continue to do his job much in the same manner as he did in South Carolina, though the new locale has required some adaptation.

“Fueling the jets is different, and with the different (hazardous material) regulations you have to be very safety oriented out here,” said Anderson.

“Everyone has been very friendly though,” he added. “I really want to get out and see the sights.”

Capt. Casey R. Dalton, VMFA-312 F/A-18 pilot, agrees with Anderson, saying the many cultural opportunities abounding in Japan will be welcome experiences for both himself and his fellow Marines.

“I probably speak for all the Marines here when I say I would definitely like to experience all that Japan has to offer while we’re here on the mainland,” Dalton said. “It’s good to experience, embrace and know what the culture’s all about.”

Marines survive CWSS course, become ‘lifeguards of the Corps’



Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

Students and instructors of the Combat Water Survival Course form an underwater formation during training here Sept. 13. The formation builds teamwork and increases students' confidence underwater, according to Sgt. Zachary Hemmerling, Marine Combat Instructor of Water Survival and native of Monroe, Wis.

by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs
Shimbun Staff

A select group of Marines demonstrated mastery of water rescue skills by graduating from the Marine Corps Combat Water Safety Swimmer Course and earning the title CWSS here Sept. 15.

The Marines survived more than 40 hours of training and are now qualified to assist Marine Combat Instructors of Water Survival during water survival qualification.

“They’re the lifeguards of the Marine Corps,” said Sgt. Nicholas Heier, MCIWS and native of Philadelphia.

During the course, the Water Survival Qualified Marines completed long-distance swims, perfected combat survival strokes and learned how to rescue victims of water-related accidents.

The core of the course was rescue training, during which the Marines learned how to safely approach a victim, escape an attacking victim and tow or carry a victim to safety.

During one training scenario, students were

tasked with rescuing a victim who was wearing full combat gear and who, under the weight of his gear, sunk 13 feet to the bottom of the pool. The student rapidly lowered himself to the helpless victim and methodically removed his gear before carrying him to safety above the water’s surface.

“You have to stay calm in that situation,” said Cpl. Jacob Rich, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron aircraft recovery specialist and native of New Braunfels, Texas. “It’s a lot about your presence in the water and your ability to reassure the victim that he’s going to be alright.”

The ability to confidently handle life-or-death situations is developed through long-distance swims in combat gear, underwater swims which increase in length as the course progresses, and regular rehearsals of rescue procedures.

“The course is a confidence builder,” said Heier. He takes average swimmers and gives them the skills needed to be confident in water.

Physical training also forms a substantial part

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Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

Sgt. Zachary Hemmerling, Marine Combat Instructor of Water Survival and native of Monroe, Wis., approaches Pfc. Ben Bressler, Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 legal clerk and native of Hudson, Ohio, during Combat Water Safety Swimmer rescue training here Sept. 13. During the weeklong CWSS course, students learned how to escape an attacking victim.

SWIM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

of the course in the form of “water aerobics.” Similar to the IT (incentive training) Marine recruits go through during boot camp, water aerobics is a relentless cycle of physical conditioning exercises. In combat gear, CWSS-

hopefuls swim laps and perform poolside calisthenics at their instructors’ discretion.

“If you want to save lives, you’ve got to be in shape,” the instructors exclaim to the Marines during a water aerobics session.

Though the Marines struggle (the intense exertion leaves them barely able to lift their arms or legs), they complete enough laps and reps to temporarily satisfy their instructors. After nearly 30 minutes of continuous exercise, they finish the last lap holding their teammates’ hands in a unified formation.

“We’ve definitely developed a lot of teamwork, especially since it’s just the three of us,” said Lance Cpl. Laura Schindler, H&HS personnel clerk and native of Allen, Texas. “It was tough, but we got through it together.”

In the end it was the Marines’ individual efforts which allowed them to pass the course’s final tests – demonstrate proper execution of several survival strokes, perform a flawless rescue and pass a written evaluation.

While the tests proved the Marines possessed the skills and knowledge needed to be a CWSS, they didn’t reveal the true reward of completing the course, according to Rich.

“It was all about heart. My confidence is through the roof.”

Upon graduation, the Marines also became American Red Cross Community First Aid and CPR certified.



Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

Sgt. Nicholas Heier, Marine Combat Instructor of Water Survival and native of Philadelphia, picks up a Kevlar during the Combat Water Safety Swimmer Course here Sept. 13. Three Water Survival Qualified Marines passed the course, qualifying them to assist MCIWS during water survival qualification.

Marines, families visit Tsuda Children's Home



Lance Cpl. Cindy G. Alejandrez
Luito Ishida, 9, a native of Hiroshima City, plays on a jungle gym during a party with Marines from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12, their families and friends Sept. 15.

by Lance Cpl. Cindy G. Alejandrez
Shimbun Staff

Along with their families and friends, Marines from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 visited Tsuda Children's Home in Hatsukaichi City Saturday.

It was the first visit the group of more than 15 station residents made to interact with the home's 29 young residents who are mostly victims of abuse, neglect at home or are orphans.

Tchaikawsky E. Samuels, 414 and 413 power plant work sections noncommissioned officer-in-charge and native of Brooklyn, N.Y., coordinated the event with the help of friends and family and threw a party together for the children, bringing along toys, blankets and snacks.

"I like to help out kids who are (less fortunate) because I know it means a lot to them," said Samuels. "I'm doing this because I remember when the fireman or military (member) would come and play with us."



Lance Cpl. Cindy G. Alejandrez
Children from Tsuda Children's Home play tug-of-war with Marines from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12, along with their families and friends Sept. 15.

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Lance Cpl. Cindy G. Alejandrez

Tsuda Children's Home residents pick out pizza slices to eat with Marines from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12, their families and friends during a visit Sept. 15.

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Midori Fujiwara, Tsuda Children's Home assistant supervisor and native of Hiroshima City, explained the children were thrilled to know they were having a party.

"While we were having them wait (to go out-

side) they were excited, anticipating to meet (the visitors)," said Fujiwara.

The day started-off with lunch as rows of cheese, sausage and pepperoni-topped pizzas were set out under a patio next to the children's playground. The youngsters inspected the toppings on the pizzas then formed a line

to get slices.

"The cheese pizza was delicious," said Ayumi Oda, a 17-year-old Tsuda Children's Home resident and native of Hiroshima.

After lunch the children teamed with the visitors to compete in a sports and math tournament. They played volleyball, competed in tug-of-war battles and did math worksheets. They were also handed raffle tickets for a chance to win a toy.

During the games the children checked their tickets as numbers were announced in hopes to get a toy.

"I know I am going to win a gift," predicted Teraoka Shota, 15-year-old Tsuda Children's Home resident and a native of Hiroshima, who later won a blue yo-yo.

The visitors were also having a fun time as team leaders during the competitions.

"It's going pretty well, we're having a good time," said Sgt. Jerrami D. Jones, MALS-12 test cell operator and New Orleans native. "I'm enjoying playing with the kids and getting outside my bubble for a little while."

Jones said it was his first orphanage visit but not his last. He plans to participate in more

I think how you treat children ... will reflect how they act as adults.

- Tchaikowsky E. Samuels

orphanage visits to give service members a good name in the community.

At the end of the tournament it didn't matter who won first place, all were awarded with a medal or ribbon, and children who had not won a prize picked through the remaining toys.

Fujiwara said she is looking forward to a future visit because of how much fun they had.

"When they were eating they were just staying with who they knew but when they started playing games and mixed (with their visitors) they had fun," added Fujiwara.

"I think that how you treat children ... will reflect how they act as adults," said Samuels. "If you show them that you care and it's important to do good things for others, they will carry that in to their adult life."

Station residents shop for Asian goods during Fall Bazaar

by Lance Cpl. Cindy G. Alejandrez
Shimbun Staff

Station residents gathered at the Northside MacDome to shop at the Fall Bazaar held Friday through Sunday.

The bazaar is an annual event put together by Marine Corps Community Services to sell furniture, jewelry, rugs Asian houseware items and clothes, among other things.

“The main purpose behind an event like this bazaar is to raise money so we can invest back into the community,” said John K. Ayers MCCS services officer and native of Culver City, Calif. “We had 43 vendors and we had a total sale of \$355,000.”

Ayers explained a percentage of those profits will go toward funding things such as MCCS events, services and possibly new projects aboard the air station.

Ayers said furniture items were the big sellers as well as the athletic jerseys, followed by jewelry and rugs.

“It attracted a lot of returning shoppers who had shopped at the previous bazaars, but

we also had an influx of new personnel so it attracted some new people,” said Ayers.

For the vendors the bazaar was a good opportunity to sell items which exemplify the craftsmanship and designs of their country.

“It is always interesting to see who buys the pieces because they were previously something that was passed down from generation to generation,” said Linda Lee, Li Bai Art and Antiques vendor and Singapore native.

“It is a really wonderful opportunity for us to bring our furniture for the military community,” added Lee. “The prices and selection here is the envy of buyers in the states.”

Romy R. Hester, a native of Corpus Christi, Texas, who has shopped at previous bazaars here returned to purchase items she saw during the spring bazaar because she was impressed by the superior rug selection.

“I bought three rugs last time from the same (vendor) because they’re great quality,” said Hester. “You can spill something on the rugs but if you add water to clean it, it will never stay.”



Lance Cpl. Cindy G. Alejandrez

Yoko I. Glenn, a native of Nagoya, Japan displays the earrings she is about to purchase at the Northside MacDome during the Fall Bazaar Sept. 14.

Ayers explained next years bazaar will feature most of the same vendors and will continue to mix the big furniture items with small trinkets.



Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs
Station residents sampled wines and grape juices during an Information Tours and Travel trip to Miyoshi Winery Sept. 15.

Station residents taste local fruit, wine during grape-picking, winery tour

by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs
Shimbun Staff

Many avid travelers recommend avoiding popular tourist attractions in favor of less-known “homegrown” establishments to better experience a foreign culture.

Several station residents followed that advice when they visited the Hirata Fruits Farm and Miyoshi Winery in Miyoshi City Saturday.

The residents picked grapes, tasted wines and enjoyed a Japanese-style barbecue lunch during the Information Tours and Travel trip.

The trip’s first destination was the Hirata Fruits Farm, which is located in the hilly countryside of Miyoshi City. In the farm’s vineyard the visitors picked bunches of large, seedless Pione grapes, which are sometimes called “black pearls” in Japan.

“I’ve never seen grapes this big or tasted ones this sweet,” said Cpl. Mitchell Hash, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 312 flight equipment technician and native of Charlottesville, Va. “This is a lot of fun.”

After locating the bunch of their choice, many of the Marines, sailors and family members found a cool, breezy spot below the umbrella of vines where they sat back, relaxed and savored the freshly picked fruit and peaceful atmosphere.

“It’s neat to go on these little back roads and go to these places that hardly anyone knows about,” said Hash, who arrived in Japan just a week prior to the trip. “It’s so secluded and really relaxing.”

After the downtime, some service members strolled around the farm grounds, where they visited a produce stand, perused the souvenir shop or gazed at other fruit trees.

“It was really interesting just to walk around and see all the fruit,” said Navy Cmdr. Sook Chai, 11th Dental Company Detachment dentist and native of Tampa, Fla. “The apple and cherry trees were beautiful.”

The trip’s next stop was the famous Miyoshi Winery. There visitors tasted a variety of red and white wines and non-alcoholic grape juices. While some of wines brought looks of sourness and disapproval to the patrons’ faces, others brought looks of pleasantness and approval.

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Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs
Cpl. Mitchell Hash, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 312 flight
equipment technician and native of Charlottesville, Va., tastes
wine at Miyoshi Winery Sept. 15.

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“The wine is very flavorful,” said Chai, who purchased a bottle of red wine. “It’s inexpensive as well.”

After wine-tasting, many visitors sat down at the winery’s Barbecue Garden restaurant where they cooked beef, pork, seafood and vegetables over an open flame.

“The food and service was great,” said Cpl. Daniel Casey, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron station commanding officer’s driver and native of Albuquerque, N.M. “The lunch was an added benefit to a pretty good trip.”

After lunch, some of the visitors picked up a few souvenirs before boarding the bus and heading home.

“It was a good experience just to get off base and enjoy the wine of Japan,” said Casey. “I’m looking forward to the next one.”

For directions to Miyoshi Winery or the Hirata Fruits Farm, contact Information and Referral at 253-4197.



Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs
Mia Sasaki, a native of Yanai, holds a bunch of grapes during a
visit to Hirata Fruits Farm in Miyoshi City Sept. 15.

Iwakuni Youth Soccer league hosts opening ceremony

by Pfc. Kyle T. Ramirez
Shimbun Staff

The Iwakuni Youth Soccer League's opening ceremony and games took place Saturday at the Penny Lake fields here.

The different activities included an opening colors ceremony with a live band accompaniment, an award ceremony, and the opening soccer games of the season.

The young music group comprised a brass ensemble that performed titles including "The Star-Spangled Banner" and the Japanese national anthem during the marching of the colors.

"It really feels good to come out here and show these children a little Marine Corps pride," said Robert A. Case, soccer enthusiast and Hollywood, Fla. native. "The kids see the marching of the colors and they feel a little more special about what they're doing out here today."

Following the marching of the colors, Gesse L. Gorst, Matthew C. Perry High School baseball team member and native of Atsugi,

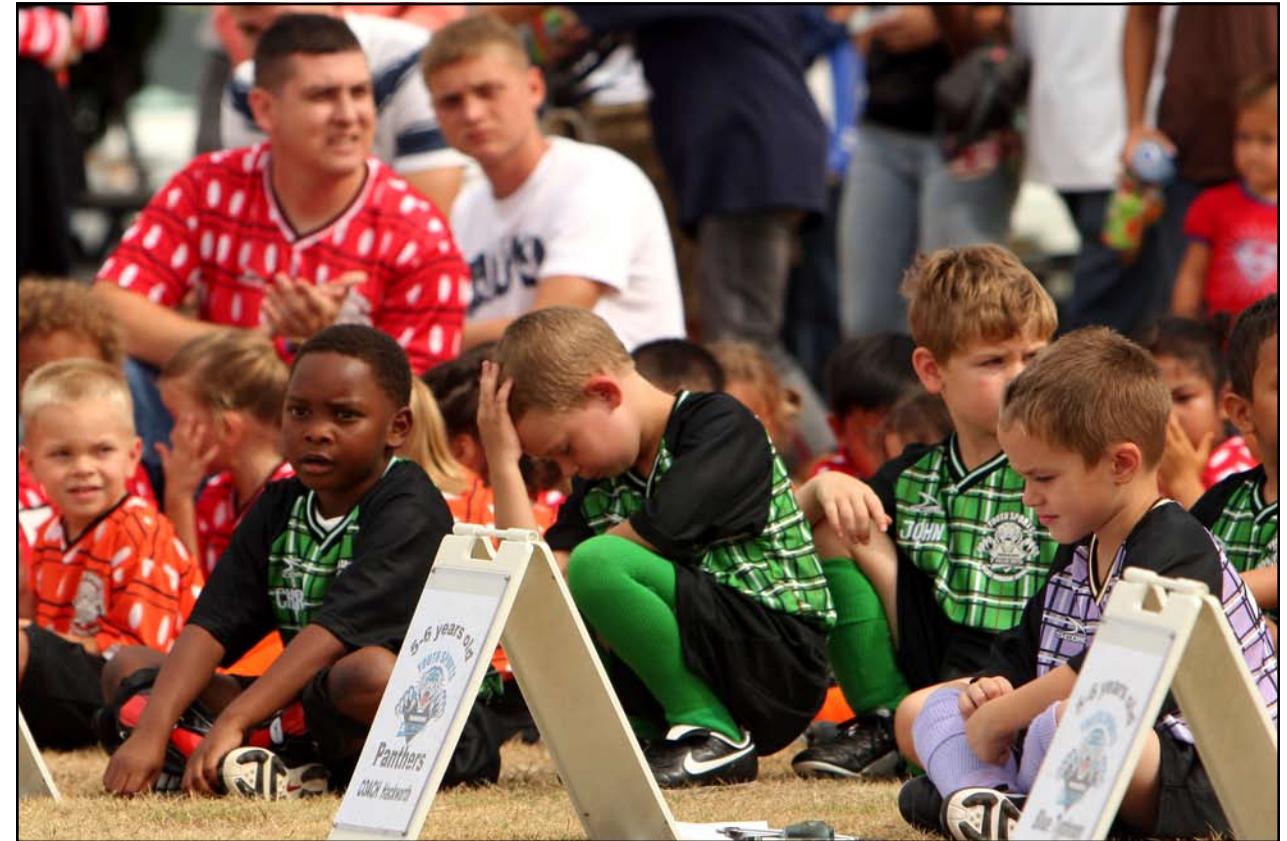
Japan, was recognized by Major League Baseball as the recipient of the 2007 Star Award. The Star Award recipient, nominated by the Youth Sports Division, is recognized as the most outstanding little league player in the pacific region. Gorst, 11, has been playing ball competitively since he was nearly 5 years old.

"Clearly, this is very exciting for me to receive this award," said Gorst, who dominated at the pitcher position last season. "I always imagined baseball taking me somewhere someday. It seems that my dreams are finally beginning to come true."

Gorst was presented a marble trophy and certificate by Youth Soccer League representatives before the introduction of the soccer teams.

The first game in the 7-9 year-old age bracket was between "The Champs" and "Galaxy."

"Because of their ages, no score was kept during this game," said Thomas A. Reyes, Galaxy coach and native of San Fernando Valley, Calif. "We've been training for this game for two weeks straight. The kids are



Pfc. Kyle T. Ramirez

Youth Soccer League participants wait eagerly for the kick off of the season during the opening ceremony at the Penny Lake fields here Sept. 15.

ready to play. They've already shown great improvement in their soccer skills in just a short amount of time."

Devin Williams scored a goal along with fellow teammate Jareem Wescot.

During the game, Galaxy team member

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“I knew we would take the game,” said Williams. “I had a good feeling coming onto the field this morning. I really like finally being able to play competitively.”

Although no score was kept throughout the games, Galaxy went home winners, according to Reyes.

“I love coaching this age group,” said Reyes. “It gives me a little experience for their age group when I start teaching academically in the future.”

The next set of games is set to commence Tuesday evening at the Penny Lake fields here.

Gesse L. Gorst, Matthew C. Perry High School Baseball Team member and native of Atsugi, Japan, is recognized by Major League Baseball as the recipient of the 2007 Star Award during the opening ceremony of the Youth Soccer League at the Penny Lake fields here Sept. 15. As Youth Soccer League representatives present him the coveted marble trophy, Gorst, 11, is recognized as the most outstanding little league player in the pacific region according to the Youth Sports Division.



HIT, IRAQ

TECUMSEH, OKLA., NATIVE SEES IRAQI PROGRESS

by Gunnery Sgt. Brenda L. Varnadore
II Marine Expeditionary Force (FWD)

Marines with infantry battalions have been rotating in and out of Iraq throughout the last few years; several are on their third or fourth deployment. Rapid deployment cycles cause Marines to overlook significant improvements in Iraq made since their last deployment. For one returning infantryman, the changes are apparent and appreciated.

Sgt. Joshua Treadway, a section leader and platoon sergeant with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 2, serving in Hit, Iraq, said he left a nondeployable billet training officer candidates tactics at Quantico, Va., because he wanted to help his fellow Marines after everything he had heard in the news.

“There is so much negative on TV, there is never anything positive,” said the Tecumseh, Okla., native. “Whenever you turn on the TV it is, ‘Oh, there were this many deaths or this abuse case.’ I want them to see when we are out there playing soccer with the kids or opening up new schools.”

Sgt. Joshua Treadway, section leader and platoon sergeant with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 2, poses for a photograph in Hit, Iraq. Treadway is serving on his second deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



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HIT, IRAQ

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Treadway said he wants the American people to know about all the great things he sees, stuff that never gets printed. He said his unit once gave the town \$100,000 so they could have running water, which he said is the good news story.

Treadway, the oldest of two brothers serving in the Marine Corps as infantrymen, said his first deployment to Iraq during 2004 made him believe what he heard, too. This encouraged him to get back to the infantry and deploy again. There was only one thing he needed to do before that, get his wife Jacki's approval.

"I explained to my wife why I felt bad and needed to come back and she understood," said Treadway. "She didn't want me to come back, but is very supportive and took it with a grain of salt. I am missing the holidays and both of the kids birthdays, but she realizes that I am not just touring around the country with a band trying to make it big, I am doing something worthwhile and she knows this."

A veteran of Operation River Sweep, the original entry into Fallujah during April 2004, Treadway was not sure what he was facing upon his second deployment. He also served in Hit and Baghdadi on his first trip, both once hostile cities in Al Anbar Province. He found himself astonished at the difference.

"Iraq is a hell of a lot better this time, I know that," said the Tecumseh High School graduate. "I would almost feel safe walking down the streets, almost feel safe. There really is no threat, well at least a visible threat. I know it is out there, but

they are doing really well at disguising it. I see people walking around and kids playing. Actually, down here in Hit, last time I watched the soccer field get hit with enemy rockets while there were kids out there. That was hard for me since my daughter Lily is 5 and my daughter Kaylie is 2 and if I lived here, that could have been them. Now, I see kids out there playing and I don't even think about things like that happening."

But, because the lack of imminent danger, Treadway said he finds keeping his Marines vigilant a priority. He has only four Marines who have not been deployed to Iraq before. The rest of his Marines were here less than a year ago, so the experience is still fresh for them, he said. Because of this, he finds his biggest challenge is fighting complacency.

"We have been out two weeks nonstop every day and nothing remotely even threatening has happened," Treadway said. "I know from experience that is when something happens. But, some of these guys they are like ... 'Oh we are not going to get hit.' I have heard two or three of them say that. So you have got to constantly keep on them about that because the minute they get that attitude, something happens."

His Marines do listen to his advice and appreciate his familiarity with Hit.

"We have been to Iraq before, but not to Hit," said Lance Cpl. Andrew Wilkin, infantryman with Jump Platoon, 1st Bn., 7th Marines. "He knows this city better than any one of us, even if he hasn't been here for a couple of years. He tells us what used to be the bad spots and where the insurgents

used to operate. He makes us stay vigilant."

Treadway said the improvements don't just include friendlier people and having less improvised explosive devices, but also the gear available to service members. He said he was blown away by the gear upon returning to the fleet, especially when he was issued an M4, a weapon he didn't even see his last time stationed with the infantry.

"Now we have a plethora of gear, so it took me a while to transition," said Treadway. "I remember doing a convoy from Camp Udari, Kuwait, to Al Asad with no door whatsoever and the only armor they had on the highbacks was those metal plates that go on the seats that we put on the sides. I see the stuff we are rolling out in now and it is mind blowing. (Air conditioners) in the humvees is not bad considering our AC was having no doors."

The gear has improved and the citizens of Iraq are now interacting more, but Treadway said there is something more important that has changed. The Iraq Army and police have shown tremendous improvement since he left in 2005.

"I was taken aback the other night listening to Congress during Gen. Petraeus' report because it is literally 100 times better this time than it was last time," he said. "For instance, now we go down to the sheik's house and everybody drops their gear. That would not have happened last time. It

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wouldn't have mattered if you were with the chief of police or the mayor or who you were with; there was a no kidding threat. Now there isn't a threat like that around these people. They have taken back their city."

Now the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi Police, have stepped up and have taken more control than they did last time and are actually doing their jobs, he said. During Treadway's last trip, his unit built 15 IP stations along the road between Hit and Al Asad, and every single one of them are gone. They are all blown up or destroyed. Now, he said he wouldn't go near one of the new IP stations if he was a bad guy, unless he was looking for a serious fight.

Treadway takes being deployed in stride. He said that being in Iraq is better than being in the states, wishing you were here making a difference.

"I have been saying all along to the people back in the states who haven't been here, 'You haven't seen us build the playgrounds.' They don't see that we are actually giving them an opportunity to step up. Now whether or not they do it is on them, but we are making an effort 110 percent and I definitely think we are doing a good thing and they are receptive to it. I am fully in belief if we pull out, you look at the people who have died and then this country, it would pretty much go back to the way it was. If we are going to do something, we need to finish it, no matter how long it takes. I think that is the problem we will have to overcome. Being deployed for Marines is a way of life, if not here, training exercises or somewhere else."



Cpl. Kyle J. Keathley

Sailors, Riverine Squadron One, 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit, enter the reeds on the edge of Lake Thar Thar in the Al Anbar Province of Iraq to conduct cordon and search operations July 15. The 13th MEU is deployed with Multi National Forces-West in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in the Al Anbar province of Iraq to develop Iraqi Security Forces, facilitate the development of official rule through democratic reforms, and continue the development of a market based economy centered on Iraqi reconstruction.



Lance Cpl. Christopher Villagracia
Newport Beach, Calif.

“Actually that incentive is not really for me because I planned to re-enlist no matter what. It’s just a nice little bonus to have. What’s getting me to re-enlist are recon or (explosive ordnance disposal) bonuses to change jobs.”

Lance Cpl. Wendell D. Brown
Minter City, Miss.

“It really doesn’t affect me. I think I would re-enlist anyways. I went to college and it really didn’t go as planned and this gives me something good to do every day.”



As an attempt to increase in size, the Marine Corps has made available more incentives to retain Marines. The latest incentive is explained in Marine Administrative Message 529/07, which gives active duty first term Marines re-enlisting for 48 months eligibility to receive 60 re-enlistment bonus points for their composite score. So we were wondering ...

How would the recent incentive affect you on deciding to re-enlist?



Cpl. Chris J. Marion
Wanaque, N.J.

“It wouldn’t necessarily affect me, because as for those \$10,000 or 60 points toward your composite score go by my time to re-enlist I’d already have picked up sergeant. That would really depend on your (military occupational specialty) for how important those 60 points are. Ten thousand dollars- three or four years is a long time. \$10,000 isn’t that much money if you split it up over that time period. I would say it isn’t really much of to impact my decision.”

Pfc. Brittany M. Bellew
Atlanta

“I would re-enlist. I was already planning on it but that’s more of an incentive to stick around. The money wouldn’t be my reason to stay. (About the 60 points) There are a lot of people who get out because they see they aren’t going to get promoted soon.”





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