



the **KINTAI**
shimbun

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Oct 25, 2007

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Bilateral training goes swimmingly for Marines, Japanese Rangers

by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler
Shimbun staff

American and Japanese service members “pooled” their talent during a morning of amphibious bilateral training at the Iron-Works Gym pool Oct. 18.

From Oct. 18 to Oct. 19, Rangers trained with SRT in different combat scenarios preparing for the upcoming Exercise Active Shield VIII, an annual bilateral exercise pairing U.S. and Japanese forces.

Marines from the Provost Marshal’s Office Special Reaction Team and Rangers from the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force’s 46th Infantry Regiment used the indoor pool to condition and practice tactics employed in a waterborne assault.

There are three ways Rangers penetrate into an enemy area: overcoming rough terrain, rappelling from a helicopter and an amphibious attack, said JGSDF 2nd Lt. Kazuhiro Yamachika, 46th Infantry Regiment Ranger platoon leader.

“The training is very significant for the (third) purpose,” he added. “This is an important way of infiltrating enemy territory.”

After swimming several laps and getting comfortable in the water, the wet warriors paired up and practiced holding their breath while submerged for increasing amounts of time, some lasting over one minute.

For Lance Cpl. Esteban L. Plata, PMO military policeman and native of Madera, Calif., breath control was a key element in completing the day’s training.

For their next task the Marines and Rangers, armed with rubber M-16s, patrolled the shallow end of the pool while maintaining low visibility. Upon Yamachika’s command, the service members would disappear underwater and silently pop back up with only the upper half of their faces and rifles exposed.

The final portion of the day’s training consisted of familiarization with flippers and

snorkels as well as diving techniques. After a lesson on the proper usage of the equipment, the service members swam laps and retrieved a rubber M-16 submerged 15 feet underwater in the pool’s deep end.

“They had two different models of snorkels,” said Lance Cpl. Francisco Muniz, PMO military policeman and Seagraves, Texas, native. “One was a newer model, and it almost sucks the air out of you, so it took some getting used to.”

“(The JGSDF) are hard chargers,” he added. “They’re obviously good to go in the water.”

Though the Rangers and Marines have different missions, the skills honed and camaraderie forged during the training will ensure a good working and personal relationship.



Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

Japan Ground Self-Defense Force 2nd Lt. Kazuhiro Yamachika, 46th Infantry Regiment Ranger platoon leader, instructs members of the Provost Marshal’s Office Special Reaction Team on proper snorkel usage at the IronWorks Gym indoor pool Oct. 18. The Marines were participating in bilateral training with rangers from the JGSDF’s 46th Infantry Regiment in preparation for Exercise Active Shield VIII.

“The JGSDF bring a different point of view, a different way of doing things,” said Gunnery Sgt. Terrell A. Lambert, PMO Special Enforcement Branch staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge. “Our main job is close-quarters battle whereas their job is more along the lines of long-range reconnaissance. We’re kind of taking some of the things they do and incorporating them to make our close-quarters battle better.”

VMA-214 posts new sergeant major, bids bittersweet farewell to Christovale

by Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez
Shimbun staff

Sgt. Maj. Derek A. Fry took his post as squadron sergeant major of Marine Attack Squadron 214 as Sgt. Maj. Derrick Christovale relinquished the position in a post-and-relief ceremony at hangar 281 on the flight line here Oct. 19.

During the event, Fry took his place as the squadron sergeant major and said farewell to its cherished 25-year leatherneck who is on his way home to Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Arizona, where the squadron is based out of.

Marines, families and friends witnessed as the outbound sergeant major handed over his sword and spoke of his time as the senior enlisted Marine.

“Because of these Marines I have been appointed over, I have become a better sergeant major; I have become a better Marine

in my time here,” said Christovale, native of Wayne, Mich. “Having been a part of a squadron that is so rich in tradition and history like the Blacksheep is something I will be able to carry with me for the rest of my life.”

After the marching of the colors, Christovale was awarded a meritorious service medal for outstanding service while with the Blacksheep. He then expressed his confidence in the new sergeant major to take the reins as the enlisted head of the Blacksheep.

“Everyone must know that this is a tough

spot to fill, but I know that Sgt. Maj. Fry is the correct man for the job,” said Christovale.

“Still, he has working for him an outstanding group of staff noncommissioned officers and officers.”

Christovale concluded by expressing his enthusiasm toward living near his family and working at MCAS Yuma where he will stay until assuming duties at Camp Pendleton, Calif., with Combat Logistics Regiment 1 in November, and what he will miss here.

“The Marines in this unit are what I will miss the most,” said Christovale. “I feel that

iron has sharpened iron here and we have all benefited from each other. I am happy to pass on such a diverse and hard-working group of Marines to Sgt. Maj. Fry.”

Fry, who has been serving the Corps since July 1986 and recently ended his tour as the 1st Battalion, 8th Marines Headquarters & Service Company first sergeant says he plans to smoothly continue what Christovale has worked for since his introduction with the squadron in November 2004.

“This bittersweet farewell should lead to a seamless transition,” said Fry, a Muskogee, Okla. native. “Sgt. Maj. Christovale left some big shoes for me to fill, but I am learning a lot from these Marines I’m working with.

“They have welcomed me just like any Marine should be welcomed into a unit, and from the ceremony I can see that they look sharp and are disciplined. I like that,” laughed Fry.



Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Sgt. Maj. Derek A. Fry assumes his duties as the new sergeant major of Marine Attack Squadron 214 after the squadron’s post-and-relief ceremony at hangar 281 here Oct. 19. Fry says he plans to smoothly continue what Christovale has worked for in his time with the squadron.

Energy Conservation Week enlightens Iwakuni on ‘watt’ to do to save power

by Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez
Shimbun staff

Station members are participating in Energy Conservation Week from Oct. 22 to Oct. 28.

The Department of Defense wide informative campaign educates participants through local demonstrations and competitions about different energy and money-saving tactics to be used in homes and workplaces here.

There’s more in it for participants than just a better understanding of how compact fluorescent lighting will save money in the long run.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Gerald K. Ridley, station energy manager, says if the station can save the most money out of all Marine Corps and Navy bases, there’s a cash prize in store.

“Iwakuni ended up winning a Secretary of the Navy Gold award in 2003 for saving the largest amount of money and energy,” said

the Chicago native. “The money was used to pay for better equipment ... that would use less power and ultimately save more money.”

To promote the contest and educate at the same time, Ridley has coordinated a number of events, shedding light on the issue.

“We hosted a field trip for M.C. Perry High School Monday to Yanai Power Plant,” said Ridley. “The kids had a really educating experience, learning useful tips on saving power that they can apply at home.”

Ridley coordinates multiple promotional events, including a five-kilometer run, to reach out to Iwakuni’s athletic crowd about the issue. Takanari Kaneda, Provost Marshal’s Office security guard, says it’s a very productive way for Iwakuni members to learn about the campaign.

“We have very limited resources in the long run, so it would only make sense to educate people on how to conserve it for the future,” said the Shunan City native. Ridley has also set up informative display

booths around the air station. Aside from giving away free souvenirs and pamphlets about Energy Conservation Week, Ridley is also available to enlighten his guests about the brighter side of compact fluorescent light bulbs.

“People have to know that although these fluorescent bulbs cost a few dollars more, they consume less amounts of power and end up paying for themselves in the money they save,” said Ridley, holding a tray filled with fluorescent bulbs resembling glass curly fries. “Also, kids can touch the bulbs, and it won’t burn their hands. They’re safe.”

These bulbs won’t burn children’s hands or your wallet, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. A recently-published fact sheet from the EPA states that



Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Capt. Jason M. Kut, property control officer, leads the pack of runners during the Energy Awareness Adult 5-kilometer run on the sea wall here Oct. 24. Participants of the run were educated about different energy and money-saving tactics to be used in homes and workplaces as part of Energy Conservation Week.

if every American home replaced just one bulb with a compact fluorescent light bulb, it would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes for a year, equaling more than \$600 million in annual energy costs.

“Basically, incandescent is inconceivable,”

Corps seeks Marines to post history

by Sgt. Brian J. Griffin
Marine Corps Recruiting command

The Marine Corps is looking for hard-charging Marines to tell America who they are by posting their stories at <http://our.marines.com>.

The web site is part of a new initiative called America's Marines. The project is intended to bring the Marine Corps to the public by allowing people an opportunity to learn more about some of the men and women serving the nation.

"The America's Marines campaign is designed to deepen the connection between the Marine Corps and the American people," said Capt. Salvatore Nigro, action officer, America's Marines campaign.

The campaign consists of a new television

commercial, video documentary, and the interactive Web site where Marines can upload videos, photos and stories about their experiences serving.

There have also been opportunities in select cities for supporters to visit the filming locations for the new commercial to meet the Marines and see the production process.

"There have been hundreds of people who have come out to the sites we have filmed at so far, showing their support and sharing their stories on the Marine Corps," Nigro said. "And that's what we wanted; we wanted people to come to these locations and talk with us, shake our hands, and meet the Marines who have made a conscious decision to serve their country."

The television commercial, scheduled for release in early 2008, features the Marine

Corps Silent Drill Platoon in settings across the United States.

"We chose to use the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon as the face of the campaign because of their iconic image. They are true ambassadors for the Marine Corps," Nigro said. "They embody our core values of Honor, Courage and Commitment and are a living, breathing demonstration of pride and discipline."

The commercial will show what seems to be an endless line of Marines stretching from coast to coast, beginning in Rhode Island and ending in California.

"The line symbolizes the idea that Marines protect every inch of the nation and the freedoms we enjoy. What we wanted to do is show the nation who is serving to protect our freedoms," Nigro said.

The America's Marines campaign is new by design, according to Marine Corps officials who developed the campaign concept with their long-standing advertising partner, J. Walter Thompson.

"This campaign has been more than a year in the making and is slightly different than Marine Corps commercials of the past," said Carl Warner, J. Walter Thompson. "Those were strictly commercials. This is a true campaign. It's really about the interaction, the filming, and the Web site."

To upload your story or learn more about America's Marines, visit <http://our.marines.com>.

Jane Wayne Day: Marauder spouses get down, dirty

by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler
Shimbun staff

Trading chenille for camouflage and their station wagons for a 7-ton, a group of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 spouses dropped their purses and picked up pistols during their first Jane Wayne Day Oct. 17.

The day is designed to give the wives a feel for the range of activities their husbands are involved in on a daily basis and the skill necessary to complete them.

“This is my first military experience and my first Jane Wayne Day, so it’s an eye-opener,” said Nhung T. Etter, wife of 1st Lt. Kei Etter and a native of Memphis, Tenn. “I guess I’ve had a chance to see the physical side of (my husband’s job), the training part, and not just the administrative stuff.”

The day began as the ladies donned flak jackets and Kevlar helmets for a ride in a 7-ton truck from Crossroads Mall to MALS-12 headquarters. There they split into two groups and headed to the Indoor Small-Arms Range and Tactical Operational Flight Trainer (TOFT).

At the range, spouses were taken to the ISMT (Indoor Simulation Marksmanship Trainer) where they tested their coordination on the M-9 pistol simulator. Though the weapons didn’t fire live rounds, they aimed, recoiled and sounded like the real thing. Many were surprised to find hitting black wasn’t as easy as simply pointing and squeezing the trigger.

“It was very intense,” said Bre McGeachy, wife of Chief Warrant Officer James B. McGeachy. “It’s so quick. Everything is timed so quickly that you barely have time to react.”

“My husband shoots expert and I have no idea how he does it, especially with the pistol,” said the Simi Valley, Calif., native. “I definitely have a healthy respect for being able to train, to do something and do it well. If you get a medal for (shooting), you’ve definitely earned it.”

At the TOFT, keeping a fighter jet in the air was something the ladies found to be similarly difficult. Surrounded by an array of lights, buttons and gauges while sitting in the cockpit of a F/A-18 simulator, several participants got a “crash course” in Pilot 101.



Jamie M. Henderson, a native of Pensacola, Fla., shoulders an M-16 service rifle at the Indoor Small-Arms Range during Jane Wayne Day Oct. 17.

Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

“There’s so much visual information, (instruments) telling you where you’re at and where you’re going,” said Gwen M. Byrd, wife of Staff Sgt. Sean D. Byrd and New Bern, N.C., native. “There’s a lot of work to flying that you could never imagine.”

Before breaking for lunch, the spouses were treated to a military working dog demonstration at the football field on the station’s north side. Marines from the Provost Marshal’s Office demonstrated the power and

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JANE, FROM PAGE 7

discipline of one of their aggressive German shepherds.

“I’ve never seen anything like that,” Etter said. “The dog was so obedient. It attacked, but it listened to the handler and let go when it was told.”

Jane Wayne Day concluded with a trip to the flight line. After touring the air traffic control tower, the ladies tried their hand at directing incoming and outgoing aircraft in the ATC tower simulator.

Lance Cpl. Alexander McIntyre, MALS-12 motor transport chief and North Yorkshire, England, native, helped coordinate the day’s events and hopes the experience proved not only entertaining but informative as well.

“We wanted to expose them to something different than what they’re normally used to ... and give them familiarity on what their husbands go through on a daily basis,” he said.

Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 spouses get ready to shoot M-9 pistols in the Indoor Simulation Marksmanship Trainer at the Indoor Small-Arms Range during Jane Wayne Day Oct. 17.



Cpls. Agustin G. Garcia and Jeremy A. Hernandez, Provost Marshal’s Office military working dog handlers, demonstrate the ferocious capabilities of their working dogs for a group of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 spouses during Jane Wayne Day at the football field on the station’s north side Oct. 17.

The Circle Just Got Bigger

by Sgt. D. J. Hercher
Contributing writer

Being a role model and leader is nothing new to any Marine Corps non-commissioned officer. However, as a young Marine private first class, my circle of responsibility was micro-cosmic compared to the circle of responsibility I have now, and with more rank comes more responsibility – the circle just keeps getting bigger and bigger with time.

Realizing the weightiness of this new promotion and after sitting in nearly two days of classes and being shoveled information by the pound, I paused momentarily and asked myself, “How am I going to remember all this? Am I ready to be a Staff NCO? Will I live up to and exceed the expectations of my leadership? Will my actions as a Staff NCO honor the legacy of those before me?” After all, it’s a whole new world ... or is it?

Being one of the 37 sergeants aboard Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni who were recently selected into the staff noncommissioned officer ranks, I found myself sitting in

the Staff NCO Indoctrination Course here asking myself, “Am I ready?” Hosted by MCAS Iwakuni’s senior enlisted leadership, this year marked the 2nd year the new staff sergeant selects were sat down in a formal setting and given the tools needed to help us sharpen the edges of our leadership skills so that when we make the transition from NCO to SNCO we are comfortable and confident in our abilities.

For me, life has been a whirlwind ever since the day I saw my name on that SNCO MarAdmin 581/07, as I am sure is completely normal. The excitement of being selected, the influx of congratulatory e-mails and phone calls is overwhelming. But I remember one e-mail in particular from a Marine I do not know. The e-mail read, “Great job, this is a great credit to you as

the selection board has not selected you for promotion based on past performance, but based on exhibited potential to become a great SNCO.”

Remembering this e-mail, my anxiety quickly subsided. After all, this is what we as Marines do already. We take care of each other. The SNCO indoc was just a reminder, rather a refresher to say, “Hey, these are the tools and resources available to you as a leader of Marines.” That’s when it clicked. It’s not about me or if I think I’m ready. If the Marine Corps selected me, then the Marine Corps is telling me “you’re ready.”

Much of the information taught complemented the Sergeant’s Course, covering subjects such as leadership, mentorship, financial management, core values, sexual harassment, communication with your Marines, but it was taught from a perspective of how we as new Staff NCOs can be the cornerstone for our Marines when they need

help.

After all, that’s mostly what SNCOs are – problem solvers. Ask not what the Corps can do for you, but what you can do to make the Corps better. Instructors did remind us though not to fall into the trap that many Marines are guilty of, taking the time to take care of our Marines but forgetting to take care of ourselves and our careers. This was addressed by not only the lecture method but also by conducting a gunnery sergeant panel, a master sergeant/first sergeant panel and a master gunnery sergeant/sergeants major panel where Marines could sit down with each panel and ask whatever came to mind. Coming from a broad spectrum of military occupational specialties (MOS), the questions asked were different, which kept the class both interesting and informative. The course also gave us the added benefit of networking with counterparts from other MOSs.

In addition to the various classes, some issues



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currently plaguing the air station were also talked about, issues that directly impact how civilians outside the Marine Corps view us. We were simply reminded to read and take heed the words on our SNCO creed. That

when we find ourselves walking down the streets of Iwakuni, or any street in any city, to remember we are United States Marine Corps staff noncommissioned officers, and with that title we are held to higher standards and must uphold ourselves as such. To be proud of who we are and keep ourselves

and our fellow Marines accountable to the values of a U.S. Marine.

I congratulate all the Marines who were recently inducted into the staff noncommissioned officers ranks and challenge you to preserve the legacy of our Marine Corps. To

strive to become great leaders, mentors, and most importantly, to carry the Marine Corps through the next decade or two before the torch is passed on.

Hercher is the production chief at Combat Camera here.



Age old festival still brings buzz to Iwakuni

by Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez
Shimbun staff

Three blocks of downtown Iwakuni were closed off to motorists as more than 95,000 people gathered for the 51st Annual Iwakuni Festival Sunday.

The annual festival hosted an opening parade, traditional-style dance performances, a downtown bazaar of souvenirs and good eats, and participation from uniformed station members.

A 900-yen cab ride down Route 188 to the Fuji Grand Mall put festival goers in a front-row seat for the 10 a.m. opening ceremony and brass band parade that kicked off the festival.

Several local schools paraded down the decorated strip with horns and percussion, charming the audience into an undying applause.

“I love to see the youth of Iwakuni performing proudly with each other,” said Takashi Fukuda, festival goer and Iwakuni native. “Each child looks forward to the moment where he can parade down our city streets like he’s seen in the past.”

For more than half a century, the Iwakuni festival has wowed locals and foreigners seeking exposure to home-grown culture. Lance Cpl. John F. Zuniga, a military policeman, says the event gives the Japanese locals a chance to see that station members are very interested in Japanese culture.

“For two years I have come here and seen an amazing cultural bridge,” said the San Pedro, Calif. native. “Marines come out here pressed and dressed in their best to show the Japanese that we’re here for them and we appreciate their welcoming attitude.”

Zuniga operated the English conversation booth with four other Marines, giving Japanese participants a free



Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

A local intermediate school band parades down a closed-off section of Route 188 with brass and percussion instruments as part of the 51st Annual Iwakuni Festival Oct. 21.

chance to practice their English-speaking skills and vice versa. Next to Zuniga was the photo booth, an opportunity for festival goers to have their picture taken with a clean-cut leatherneck or sailor.

“I look forward to dressing up for the photo booth,” said Cpl. Jeremy A. Hernandez, military policeman and Austin, Texas native. “You can tell that you just made someone’s day and all you have to do is stand here and look pretty while watching the dance performances all day.”

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IWAKUNI, FROM PAGE 11

Behind the booths rumbled a giant concert stage in a cleared parking lot where observers could watch local dance companies perform traditional and modern dances with encouraged crowd participation. Among the performances was one special demonstration by Marines using techniques from the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program.

“The movements are impressive because it seems they are very controlled,” said Ando Hirotaka, festival goer and Iwakuni native, while observing the demonstration. “They

seem very powerful and yet well trained.”

In the surrounding areas of the stage were different food stands selling local dishes for agreeable prices.

“There’s a lot of food out here to get your hands on,” said Hernandez. “With just a pocket of change, you can pretty much pay for breakfast, lunch and dinner.”

A 6-ounce plate of okonomiyaki, directly translated as “what you liked, grilled,” sold for 600 yen while smaller treats such as yakitori, similar to an Ameri-

can shish kabob, sold for 200 yen.

“I’d like to direct your attention to the free biscuits,” said Toru Seuehiro, baker and Iwakuni native, pointing to a booth at the head of a nearly 100-yard line of people that wrapped around two city blocks.

Seuehiro says he has given away free biscuits at the festival for several years.

“I always love serving at the Iwakuni Festival,” said Seuehiro. “The weather is always perfect and you get to party and drink with your whole neighborhood, and their neighborhood.”

Several brass sections from surrounding schools muster in front of the concert stage during the opening ceremony at the 51st Annual Iwakuni Festival Oct. 21.



H&HS shuts down MAG-12 in annual Fall Classic

by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler
Shimbun staff

Aggressive play fueled by a longstanding friendly inter-unit rivalry helped carry Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron to victory over Marine Aircraft Group 12 during the 16th Annual Fall Classic Flag Football game at the North Side football field Friday.

The game was one in a series of spankings H&HS has delivered since 1992, MAG-12 winning only three of the past 16 match ups.

Interceptions proved to be the chink in MAG-12's armor as the Ready Group struggled to overcome H&HS's airtight defense in the first half.

Running back Esteban Ramirez began the H&HS assault when he intercepted the ball at MAG-12's 20-yard-line, and several plays later quarterback Micah Parsons quickly ran it in for the game's first touchdown.

"That interception just turned up our volume," said H&HS wideout Jason Brown, an Indianapolis, Ind., native. "After the

interception our defense really stepped up and shut them down."

MAG-12's next possession was once again cut short when Ricky Hines, H&HS defensive back, intercepted the ball with five minutes left in the half and sprinted 40 yards for the touchdown, putting them up 14-0.

The onslaught continued as H&HS's Steven Guess demoralized the Ready Group with yet another interception. Following a steady drive down the field, a short pass to H&HS tight end Eric May set the score at 27-0 for halftime with seconds left on the clock.

Down but not out, MAG-12 knew they had to muster some big plays in order to overcome the four-touchdown deficit.

"During the half, I told them that if we could stop (H&HS) and score we would definitely put the stake in their heart," said MAG-12 coach Roland Hyacinthe. "The first half we were overconfident and (H&HS) did score a lot on us, but when they saw us come out in the second half it really put them on their heels and gave them the fear of us coming back to take the ball game."



Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

Derrick Hart, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron linebacker and native of Greenville, N.C., evades two Marine Aircraft Group 12 players vying for his flags during the 16th Annual Fall Classic Flag Football game at the North Side football field Oct. 19.

H&HS must have felt the first tinge of fear as MAG-12 safety Ross Cooley intercepted an extra-point conversion pass and ran it

back downfield for three points, finally putting MAG-12 on the board with 12:30 left in

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the game.

Finally having found their second wind, MAG-12 continued to rack up points with two touchdowns and an interception.

“The morale went up high at that point,” said Cooley, a native of Detroit. “We started producing points and really using our offense.”

MAG-12 kept up the momentum with another interception and touchdown by

Cooley, putting them only 10 points behind H&HS at 33-23.

Their efforts were too little, too late however, as H&HS managed to stave off the Ready Group for the remainder of the game.

“We weren’t expecting to do everything we did in the first half because a lot of the first half was attributed to turnovers on (MAG-12’s) part,” said Derrick Hart, H&HS linebacker. “But we just knew we could hold out with the lead we’d built. There was no way they could outscore us in the second half.”

Though the game was marked by an endless

stream of trash talk, there was no love lost as everyone walked away sportsmen, happy for the opportunity to come and represent their unit.

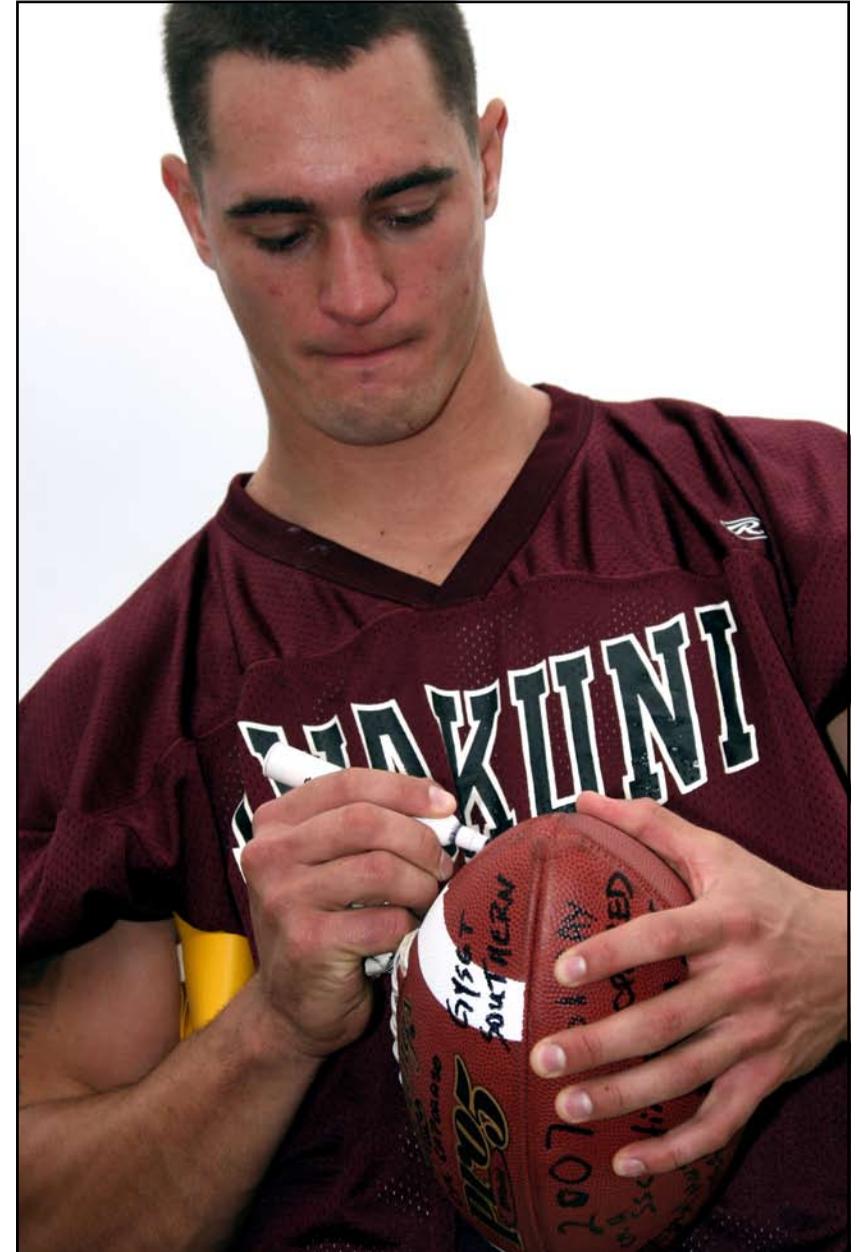
“It’s a friendly rivalry. We’re all brothers and sisters in the service,” Hart added. “This just shows we can come together on a united front and do anything ... sports are no different.”

Micah Parsons, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron quarterback, signs the game ball given to H&HS senior enlisted, Sgt. Maj. Jerry Bailey, during the 16th Annual Fall Classic Flag Football game at the North Side football field Oct. 19.

A pass by Micah Parsons, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron quarterback, is nearly deflected during the 16th Annual Fall Classic Flag Football game at the North Side football field Oct. 19.



Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler



Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

Sgt. Frank A. Barbara, exchange Marine and native of New York City, wraps up the stars and stripes as Sgt. Stephen J. Benjamin, military policeman and native of Orlando, Fla., lowers the flag during the evening colors ceremony Wednesday. The colors are raised every morning and lowered every evening to remind us of the sacrifices made by all service members past and present, and to remember why we serve.

The colors are currently flying at half-staff in honor of retired Adm. William Crowe Jr., former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and ambassador to Great Britain, who died Oct. 18 at the Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland. Adm. Michael Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, described Crowe as a “true hero, distinguished naval officer, diplomat, leader and mentor (who) served both Presidents Reagan and Bush.”



Cpl. Luke Blom

Landing Support Marines provide outpost with vital supplies

by Cpl. Wayne Edmiston
2nd Marine Logistics Group

Is it worth the time and risk? If there is risk, how can we mitigate it? This question is asked of battlefield commanders before every mission. This situation is no different.

The risk: The roads of Iraq are long and sometimes improvised explosive device laden. If a commander can think of a safer and more effective way, the Marines of 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward) will find it and execute.

In the case of Combat Outpost Timberwolf, a remote location very difficult to get to by road, the sky is the perfect delivery method.

The mitigation: Helicopter lift mission.

However, the landing support specialists of Combat Logistics Battalion 4 don't strategize, they execute. That means getting the adrenaline rush of having a 73,000-pound aircraft flying just 6 to 8 feet above their head as they connect vital supplies to the bottom of the hovering behemoth.

In the case of Timberwolf, it can take more than a day of

driving to arrive there and about a day to return. Sending it via helicopter saves time, effort and possibly lives.

"It takes a while for a convoy to do it, but for us to do it takes about 30 minutes," said Sgt. Roy A. Gutierrez, the commander of the helicopter support team and Bronx, N.Y., native. "We resupply them so they can stay in the fight."

Before they can begin connecting the supplies, there is a long process of preparation.

In addition to visually and physically inspecting the slings and nets to ensure a secure load, the Marines must coordinate with the helicopter squadron transporting the supplies to the outpost.

This requires a clear understanding of when the load will be lifted and how heavy it is. Only then can they perform a lift, explained Cpl. Benjamin R. Flores, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the helicopter support team and Missoula, Mont., native.

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Cpl. Benjamin R. Flores guides in a CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopter in preparation for a supply lift. The landing support Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 4 ensure equipment is safely loaded underneath the helicopter before it flies to its destination.



ATC, FROM PG. 16

The landing support Marines must guide the inbound helicopter and brace themselves for the 150 mile per hour wind that gushes past as they connect a grounding wire to a hook dangling from the overhead aircraft.

The “ground,” as he is called, is the first player in a series of quick actions in the hurricane-like conditions.

“Having a (helicopter) right above your head is a real rush,” Flores continued.

But even in the midst of all this, Flores said the 300,000 volts of static electricity running through the hook and hurricane-like winds puts one concern above all else.

“Safety is the number one thing underneath the bird,” Flores said. “You have to keep a constant eye on what is going on and make sure nothing happens to your Marines.”

Once it’s grounded, a Marine connects the load and yells a command to clear everyone away from the bottom of the helicopter, ducking dangling wheels and dodging whirling rotor blades as they rush from the landing zone. They do this while watching the load to make sure the legs of the sling stay tight and the load looks like a compact cube.

For many of the Marines, getting underneath the actual helicopter is their favorite part. But not for Gutierrez, he prefers the end of the lift.

“Knowing the lift is in the air is the best part.” Gutierrez said. “When everything is said and done, watching the (helicopter) fly away.”

Gutierrez then analyzed his Marines’ performance, looking for ways to improve.

“They did a good job today,” Gutierrez explained. “Good safety all around and everything went as planned. There are a few things we can tighten up, but we completed the mission and that’s what counts.”

For these Marines, the satisfaction lies in knowing that one convoy is relieved of having to make the long trip to COP Timberwolf. A half hour flight in exchange for a day of driving: mission executed, mission complete.

A group of Marines watch as a CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopter flies inbound to pick up a load of supplies. The landing support Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 4 ensure vital supplies get out to units at various combat outposts. Combat outposts like COP Timberwolf rely heavily on helicopters to airlift vital supplies to their position.





Kenji Edamatsu
Hiroshima

“We turn off the sauna heater (at the Single Marine Program Hornet’s Nest) for about three or four hours to help save energy. We also turn off some of the lights during our peak hours to keep (energy usage) down.”

Lance Cpl. Julian P. Jones
Memphis, Tenn.

“If you’re not using something, turn it off. Say you’re on the computer, for instance; turn off the TV. You can only concentrate on one thing at a time, so there’s no sense in abusing the energy.”



Once again it’s Energy Conservation Week, a time when residents here are encouraged to think green and reduce waste. The air station is doing its part by turning off living quarters’ air conditioning and replacing barracks incandescent light bulbs with more efficient compact fluorescent bulbs. This week we hit the streets to find out...

What are some ways station residents can help conserve energy?



Staff Sgt. Derek P. Istre
Laffeytte, N.J.

“We use laptops and computers every day at work, and when they’re not being utilized we turn them off and power them down. During the daytime we don’t need too much light as far as the hangars are concerned, so we keep the lights off there too.”

Cpl. Matthew H. Kozak
Berwyn, Ill.

“If you’re not home, you don’t need the lights on. Just shut down whatever you’re not using. Make sure you’re not partying with electricity.”





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