



**the KINTAI**  
shimbun

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by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

## **Deployed Marines not forgotten in Iwakuni**

by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

## **Special Olympic's bowlers spend day with Iwakuni sailors, Marines**

by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

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**Nov. 30, 2007**

**Col. Michael A. O'Halloran, Commanding Officer, MCAS Iwakuni**

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Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Lance Cpl. Michael S. Fitzpatrick, Company G, Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit forward observer, and Lompoc Calif., native, scans the surrounding location in Nihonbara training area, Okayama Prefecture, Japan Nov. 15 during Exercise Forest Light 1-08.

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## Iwakuni Polic Increased Enforcement

Iwakuni Police Department has increased enforcement of motor vehicle operators not making the temporary stop at railway crossings in Iwakuni and will issue tickets to violators. They are also concerned about vehicles parking illegally. They have recently focused their patrol units on these issues and are closely watching for violators.

They are not concerned about any particular demographic and they are not trying to warn MCAS Iwakuni personnel in an adversarial manner. Due to the friendly relationship between MCAS Iwakuni and local authorities, they simply want to inform us of their increased efforts to crackdown on violators and help us take notice in order to avoid a 9,000 yen ticket for not stopping at railway crossings and 15,000 yen ticket for the illegal parking.

## Vets Offered Scholarships

Wesleyan University will offer new scholarships to military veterans. School officials said there are only perhaps two students in the 2,900-member student body who have a military background. Two alumni of the school have endowed up to 10 new scholarships, which will be offered to vets beginning next year.

## Camp Lejeune Water Study

If you lived or worked on Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune between 1957 and 1987, you may have been exposed to contaminated drinking water.

The United States Marine Corps encourages all those who resided on the base prior to 1987 to register at the official Camp Lejeune water study website to receive updated information and notifications regarding the ongoing water study.

The Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR), a federal public health agency, is conducting this study to determine whether any potential health risks are associated with exposure to the impacted drinking water. The projected completion of the study is expected mid-2008. At that time the Marine Corps will notify former residents with the results.

## Toys for Tots Kickoff

The Single Marine Program will host the Toys for Tots kickoff at the Hornet's Nest at noon Dec. 2.

The motorcycle club will conduct a Thunder Run around the base. Food and drink will also be provided. SMP is currently looking for Volunteers to assist with the ceremony and man the toy boxes.

## The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

A christmas pageant put together by the community for the community will be held at the Sakura Theater Dec. 13 and 14 at 7 p.m., Dec. 15 at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. and Dec. 16 at 2 p.m.

The pageant is open to everyone.

## SNCO Evening Dress Survey

All Marines may have an impact on changes to the Marine Corps staff noncommissioned officers' evening dress uniform by taking a survey at <https://www.hsissurveys.com/usmc/sncosurvey/>.

A proposed modification to the SNCO evening dress jacket includes eliminating the bowtie and replacing it with a "standing collar and an open silhouette to provide a distinctive Marine Corps appearance apart from other services," according to the survey Web page. Those who take the survey will be able to voice their opinion to keep the current uniform or adopt the proposed changes.

# Station's top cooks display skills at Chef of the Quarter Board

Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs  
Shimbun staff

The station's top food service specialists created meals of their choice and competed against their peers during the Chef of the Quarter Board at the R. G. Robinson Messhall here Nov. 21.

During the board, the four specialists were evaluated based on their food service knowledge, time management, meal preparation, presentation and taste by messhall staff and a panel of six guest judges.

The competitor's meals included steak tenderloins, stuffed flounder creole, oriental chicken, Spanish rice, loaded baked potatoes, macaroni and cheese, fried apples with raisin and nut filling, banana bread and apple pie a la mode.

"I think we all cooked the food to the best of our ability," said Lance Cpl. Ruslan Gulak, competitor and native of Chisholm, Minn. "Now it's up to the judges to decide."

After serving the guests and responding to questions about how they prepared their meals, the cooks stood anxiously behind their

dishes. Meanwhile, the judges savored each bite with discerning concentration.

"It's restaurant quality," said Master Sgt. Don Miller, Installation Personnel Administration Center staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge, and Cleveland native.

"It's fantastic," added Miller, who said his favorites were the baked potatoes, fried apple dessert, flounder and macaroni.

While all of the meals had delectable entrées, sides and desserts, only one cook could be voted the best of the best. Sticking to American staples, Lance Cpl. Tremaine Flagg's steak tenderloins, baked macaroni and cheese, deviled oven fries, southern fried okra and yellow cupcakes stirred the judges the most.

"I wanted to make something I already knew how to make and just keep it simple," said Flagg, a native of Charlotte, N.C., who, with the win, earned a spot in the Marine Corps Bases Japan Chef of the Quarter Board. "I guess I did a pretty good job."

Along with being nominated for the MCBJ



Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

Lance Cpl. Justin Rutledge, food service specialist, responds to questions about how he prepared his meal during the Chef of the Quarter Board at the R. G. Robinson Messhall here Nov. 21.

Chef of the Quarter Board, Flagg will be awarded a certificate of commendation.

"I'd love to hold one of these every quarter," said Master Sgt. Rita M. DeSanno, food

service staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge and Brooklyn, N.Y., native. "I think (the competition) is great. It gives (the food service specialists) a chance to showcase their skills."

# Changes made to Article 120 under UCMJ - ‘Rape, sexual assault, and other sexual misconduct’

Cpl. Lendus B. Casey  
Shimbun staff

Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, formerly known as “Rape and carnal knowledge,” has been amended by Congress as part of the fiscal year 2006 Military Authorization Act and has been in effect since Oct. 1, 2007.

“Rape, sexual assault, and other sexual misconduct” is the new name of the recently revised article. It includes 14 sexual crimes under Article 120, some of which were previously listed under Article 134 - the “General” article.

“These changes modify the framework under which you can be punished for a sexually related crime,” explained 1st Lt. Michael W. Aniton, Station Judge Advocate chief trial counsel and Atlanta native.

The updated Article 120 expands the charging options for military commanders. While maintaining “rape” as the top charge under Article 120, the new statute creates

several new offenses involving adult victims, including “aggravated sexual assault”, “aggravated sexual contact”, and “abusive sexual contact.”

Two important factors provide guidance in distinguishing between these offenses, according to Aniton. First is the nature of the sexual misconduct. The new law differentiates between “sexual acts” and a lesser form of contact called “sexual contact.”

Second is the type of force applied to consummate the offense. The statute provides 5 methods by which sexually related crimes can be committed: 1) using force to compel submission or prevent resistance by using or suggesting that a dangerous weapon will be used or by physical violence, strength, power or restraint, 2) causing grievous bodily harm, 3) threatening death, grievous bodily harm or kidnapping, 4) rendering another person unconscious, or 5) secretly or forcibly administering a drug or other intoxicant which renders the victim unable to resist.

Sexual acts committed with one of these five theories of force are “rape”. Sexual contact, on the other hand, which is committed with one of these same five methods, is the offense of “aggravated sexual contact”.

The new Article 120 also breaks down the offense of carnal knowledge into a number of different offenses involving child victims. The offenses involving child victims generally mirror the new charges available in cases with adult victims.

Furthermore, the revision to Article 120 includes the Article 120a, “Stalking,” a crime previously not punishable under the UCMJ.

Although the new law is currently in effect, the updated Manual for Courts-Martial containing the changes will be published in Spring 2008.

The 14 crimes now listed under Article 120 of the UCMJ are:

*Rape*

*Rape of a child*

*Aggravated sexual assault*

*Aggravated sexual assault of a child*

*Aggravated sexual contact*

*Aggravated sexual contact with a child*

*Abusive sexual contact*

*Abusive sexual contact with a child*

*Wrongful sexual contact*

*Aggravated sexual abuse of a child*

*Indecent liberty with a child*

*Indecent act*

*Indecent exposure*

*Forcible pandering*

# MEU, Japanese mortarmen refine their skills

Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez  
31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

NIHONBARA TRAINING AREA, Okayama Prefecture, Japan – Through the thick morning fog the silhouettes of six mortarmen could be seen waiting for the call for indirect fire.

Though no mortars would be launched during this training event, the mock call for fire came from a small group of forward observers from Company G, Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, training with soldiers from the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force 15th Regiment, 14th Brigade, Japanese Middle Army (JMA).

As part of Exercise Forest Light 1-08, U.S. and Japanese mortarmen and forward observers trained together Nov. 15 to exchange indirect fire knowledge of what U.S. Marines sometimes refer to as “death from above.”

During the early-morning training scenario, Cpl. Jason Arellano, forward observer team chief with the battalion’s Company G, along with the rest of the Fire Support Team

(FiST), walked his Japanese counterparts through a basic call-for-fire mission. Holding a fire plan sketch improvised and drawn on a Meal Ready to Eat food wrapper, Arellano explained the first steps toward calling in an indirect fire attack.

“Once we’ve established a target, we send its grid coordinates to the mortar team and we should be able to see an attack in less than a minute,” said the Chicago native.

A forward observer will use either a Global Positioning System (GPS) or basic land navigation techniques to find coordinates for a target. Since locating a target and its coordinates is deliberate work, a team of forward observers must scout out a location, usually under the cover of darkness or improvised camouflage, before any other friendly personnel have arrived to provide support, according to Arellano.

“Outlaw mortars. Outlaw mortars. This is Team 1. Standby for (current position),” was the first transmission sent back to the mortar gun line, signaling the start of the practice mission.



Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Cpl. Michael A. Trevino, Company G, Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit mortarman and Santa Rosa, Calif., native, along with Lance Cpl. Rudolfo Hernandez, Company G, BLT 2/1, 31st MEU mortarman from Chicago, demonstrate the preparation of a mortar for a mission in front of fellow mortarmen from the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force 15th Regiment, 14th Brigade, Japanese Middle Army, here Nov. 15 during Exercise Forest Light 1-08. The exercise is a semi-annual bilateral training event aimed at fostering interoperability between U.S. and Japanese ground forces while increasing infantry-related readiness.

*SEE MEU ON PAGE 6*



Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Cpl. Michael A. Trevino, Company G, Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit mortarman and Santa Rosa, Calif., native, along with Lance Cpl. Rudolfo Hernandez, Company G, BLT 2/1, 31st MEU mortarman from Chicago, demonstrate the preparation of a mortar for a mission in front of fellow mortarman from the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force.

**MEU CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5**

Sgt. Travis D. West, the company's 60mm mortar section leader, replied to the radio message and prepared his Marines to fire rounds down-range under the curious eyes of fellow Japanese mortarman. West explained to the Japanese team the American protocol for a hasty mortar immediate suppression.

"After we set up our gun line and receive our coordinates, we'll fire a round off to see if we need to adjust our position and we'll also use the mortar's kick-back to ground our base plates," explained the Sulphur Springs, Ind., native.

Upon hearing West's statement, quiet whispers were heard over the group of Japanese mortarman.

"The American method of grounding their base plates seemed very dangerous," said Sgt. Shoji Fukuchi, JGSDF mortar team leader. "The usual Japanese method is to dig a hole in the ground large enough for a base plate and ground it ourselves."

To dispel any reservation from the Japanese, the Marine mortarman demonstrated their method of base plate grounding by having one Marine stand on the metal plate and another pretend to drop a round in the



Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

2nd Lt. Teruki Kawahara, an interpreter for soldiers from the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force, explains the usage of a fire plan sketch improvised and drawn on a Meal Ready to Eat food wrapper Nov. 15 during Exercise Forest Light 1-08.

mortar. Fukuchi said the new method might be one that the Japanese mortar team will adopt in the future.

Mortarman have been innovating new techniques to improve the accuracy and setup time of mortar weapons for centuries, according the BLT mortar gun line. The opportunity for two nations to combine tactics and refine their techniques as mortarman and forward observers is one that Fukuchi says he will remember.

"It's interesting to think about the American mortarman going through the same training I went through," Fukuchi said. "We're able to communicate about our profession without speaking each other's language."

Exercise Forest Light 1-08 is a semi-annual bilateral training event aimed at increasing interoperability and infantry-related readiness between both U.S. and Japanese ground forces.

# 'You're not forgotten': Marine spouse ensures deployed troops feel remembered, supported

Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs  
Shimbun staff

A Marine spouse here did her part to ensure service members stationed here currently deployed to combat zones feel remembered and supported.

Jessica Arroyo collected donations from station residents and filled 100 boxes with magazines, newspapers, books, food and candy which will be sent to deployed troops this week.

"I'm happy to do it for the families, and obviously the Marines," said Arroyo," who added that being a Marine wife has given her insight into how the spouses of deployed service members feel.

Arroyo's husband deployed shortly after the two were married when she was pregnant with their first son. The support she received from the community made the deployment easier for her, she said.

"People would come up to me and they

would just say, 'thank you'," Arroyo said. "I would go to tears. It was nice to know that someone else was appreciative of what he was doing. So this is my way of saying 'thank you'."

With boxes supplied by Marine Corps Family Team Building, a list of names and a few pictures of the troops, Arroyo collected donations in front of the commissary Nov. 15-17. Popular donations included tuna salad kits, crackers, beef jerky, drink powders and candy. Also, the station commissary, seven-day stores and library staff donated their leftover newspapers, magazines and books.

"The community was very gracious," Arroyo said. "They loved to see that we were supporting people that were gone from here."

Arroyo spent the better part of three days putting the boxes together and loading them with the goods. The last steps were filling out individual customs forms and enclosing



Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

Jessica Arroyo and her son, Nicolas, place reading material and other goods into boxes at Yujo Hall here Nov. 26. Arroyo filled 100 packages which will be shipped to service members stationed here who are deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

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**SUPPORT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7**

a personal thank you card in each box from Matthew C. Perry Elementary School students.

A few service members stationed here who recently returned from deployments are quick to testify the importance of mail from home.

“It was great to see that people supported us out there,” said Sgt. Patrick J. McFarland, Marine Aircraft Group 12 embarkation chief and native of Muskogee, Okla., who has deployed twice to Iraq. “It was great getting mail; getting a package was even better.”

Arroyo hopes the packages will communicate the message that their family, friends and community support them.

“Iwakuni remembers you. You’re not forgotten.”



Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

The station commissary, seven-day stores and library staff donated their leftover newspapers, magazines and books to support troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 100 boxes will be shipped to service members stationed here who are deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

# Station welcomes Christmas season with annual tree lighting

**Cpl. Luke Blom**  
Shimbun staff

Thanksgiving Day leftovers were freshly stowed in refrigerators and most had to wear their belts a little looser, but station residents closed the book on Thanksgiving and switched to full-blown Christmas spirit Saturday when the station Christmas tree was lit for the first time this year.

The annual event, held by Marine Corps Community Services, brings the community together to celebrate the beginning of the Christmas season as the station Christmas tree at Cherry Blossom Triangle is unveiled.

Whether they came to talk to Santa Claus, enjoy free hot cider and cookies, ride the holiday train, countdown the tree lighting, win money in the MCCS raffle or just share some Christmas cheer with fellow station residents, more than 300 people crowded into the venue for the festivities.

“My favorite part of the event was the lighting of the tree and hot chocolate,” said Alex Perkins, MCCS assistant intramural sports coordinator and native of Ocala, Fla. “It’s great to see the base come together to show support for the holidays.”

“Music Stamp” serenaded the crowd with multiple sets of everyone’s favorite Christmas carol classics, giving a fitting soundtrack to the event.

“I really liked the band this year; they did a great job,” said Gunnery Sgt. David Burke, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron administration chief and native of Mitchellville, Md.

While the event was geared for all ages, the kids are the ones who probably enjoyed it the most, according to Burke.

“I’ve got four kids and all of them had a pretty good time,” said Burke. “They really liked the train ride and the giveaway, even though they didn’t win anything.”

Although the Burkes didn’t win anything in the raffle, many others did. MCCS gave away \$1,000 in exchange gift certificates as well as the grand prize – a round trip ticket for two to Guam.

When the winning number was called, Perkins was shocked to be the big winner.



A station resident takes a photo of her family in front of the station Christmas tree at the Cherry Blossom Triangle here Nov. 24. More than 300 station residents gathered at the Cherry Blossom Triangle for the annual Tree Lighting Event.

Cpl. Luke Blom

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“I am really excited; it has been about 10 years since I’ve been (to Guam). This time I will be taking my wife and daughter with me,” said Perkins.

Following the raffle, Col. Michael A. O’Halloran, station commanding officer, led the crowd in a countdown for what everyone came for – the lighting of the station Christmas tree.

“It was great,” said Burke. “We got to see all of our friends, the kids saw Santa and it got everybody in the Christmas mindset. It was a nice official Christmas kickoff.”

As the event was winding down, O’Halloran had one last message to all the station residents in attendance.

“Thank you very much for coming out everyone; this was really great.”

One of the lead vocalists of Music Stamp tosses fake snow into a crowd of children during the annual Tree Lighting Event at the Cherry Blossom Triangle Nov. 24. More than 300 people showed for the event, which Music Stamp headlined with numerous sets of Christmas classics.



Cpl. Luke Blom

# Special Olympic's bowlers spend day with Iwakuni sailors, Marines

Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs  
Shimbun staff

A Special Olympics bowling team from Hiroshima bowled several games with family members and station Marines and sailors at the bowling center here Sunday.

The purpose of the visit was to give the athletes the chance to bowl in an international atmosphere, according to Frank Thornton, head coach and native of Honolulu, Hawaii.

“There’s no one for these guys to bowl with,” said Thornton. “They’re not as accepted in Japan. Nine out of 10 Japanese don’t know what Special Olympics is.”

Sixteen athletes, whose ages ranged from 11 to 43, and their family members joined approximately 20 Marines and sailors during the event. During three friendly games, the athletes and volunteers took turns bowling and congratulating each other which cheers, smiles and high-fives.

“I’m really having a lot of fun,” said Duke Thornton, 12, Special Olympics bowler and native of Hiroshima. “It’s a good

opportunity to meet new people.”

While the visit was a rewarding experience for the athletes, it was also valuable for the volunteers, according to Sgt. Larry Thompson, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 embarkation chief and Liberty, Ind., native.

“It feels good to be able to help someone who isn’t as fortunate,” said Thompson. “It’s great to see them enjoying themselves.”

Though the games were strictly “for fun,” the athletes’ competitive side came out on several occasions. One player would cross his arms and look down in disappointment after a poor roll, then raise his arms and smile after rolling a strike or spare.

“(Yoshihisa) didn’t want to quit. He really took it to heart,” said Thompson. “Seeing their competitiveness was the best part.”

After bowling, the team stopped for lunch at the Crossroads Mall before heading home.

“It was really great,” said an enthusiastic Thornton, who hoped to arrange a swimming, soccer and bowling meet the next



Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

Yoshihisa Shitanda, 17, Special Olympics Nippon Hiroshima bowler delivers a ball down the lane at the station bowling center here Nov. 25. Sixteen athletes visited the station and played several games with friends, family members and U.S. service members during the visit.

time the team visits. “We’re planning on coming back six months from now.”

The visit was organized by Thornton, whose father is a retired Marine who was stationed

here in the late ‘70s. Though the team has only been together for a little more than a year, one of its goals is to qualify for the Summer Olympic Games in Greece, said Thornton.



Lance Cpl. Roger A. Grimes, Company G, Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit forward observer and Grand Blank, Mi., native, explains to soldiers from the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force 15th Regiment, 14th Brigade, Japanese Middle Army, how to scout a location and call for indirect fire while concealing his location in Nihonbara training area, Okayama Prefecture, Japan, Nov. 15 during Exercise Forest Light 1-08. The exercise is a semi-annual bilateral training event aimed at fostering interoperability between U.S. and Japanese ground forces while increasing infantry-related readiness.

# Haditha booming thanks to Marines of past, present

**Cpl. Ryan M. Blaich**  
II Marine Expeditionary Force

It may be impossible to predict history as it is happening, but some of the battles fought in Iraq are certain to become legendary. Generations from now, school children will learn of the heroes who fought in Fallujah and Ramadi, battling in extreme conditions when their country needed them most. Haditha, another Anbar city once caught in the grip of yesterday's violence, is now becoming a city of progress and transition.

Without question, Haditha is known for its fierce battles. Many have given their lives in an attempt to reclaim peace in this northern area of the province. It was in this city that six Marines were killed in an ambush during 2005. Days later, 14 Marines died when their armored vehicle was struck by a roadside bomb. The city was a hotbed for terrorists where Marines confronted their enemy in the streets, houses and farm lands. But if there was ever a place that could paint the picture of the progress being made in Anbar, it's here.

A battalion of more than 1,000 Marines recently moved into Haditha. Most of

them are reservists from New Orleans' 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment. Others are attachments from Houston's 1st Battalion, 23rd Marines, or active duty Marines from various commands throughout the Marine Corps. Regardless of where they came or their status, their mission is clear.

"The main effort now is continuing to train the Iraqi security forces so we can transition into Iraqi control," said Lt. Col. Kevin Garrard, Company L commander.

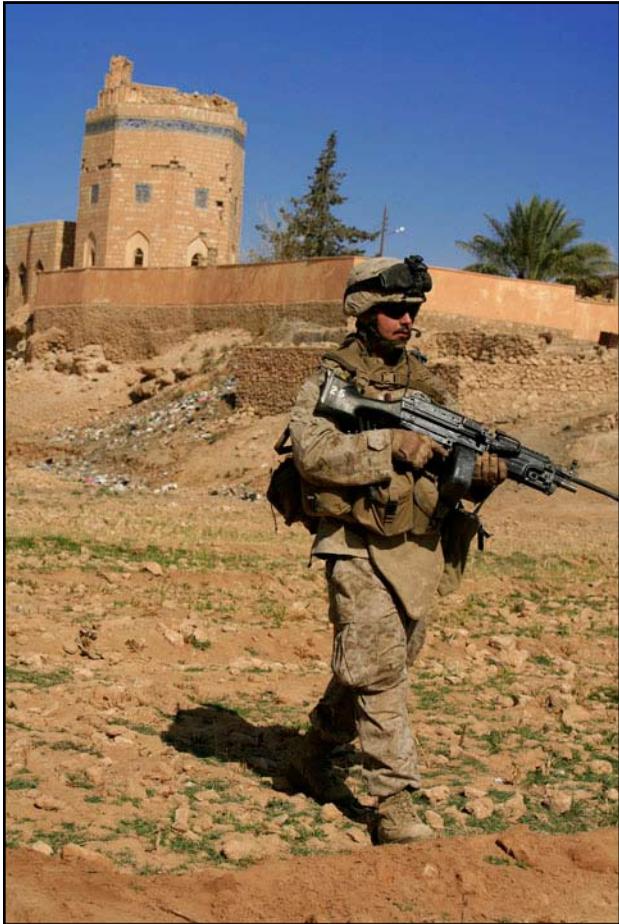
Many parts of Anbar have already seen the transfer of command from coalition forces to Iraqi Army forces. Recently, the 7th Iraqi Army Division, the newest division in Iraq, took control of its area of operations, which includes Haditha. Marines here are getting ready to slow down operations and assist their Iraqi counterparts. This is the focus for much of the Marines in Iraq. The days of house-to-house fighting seems to be a part of Anbar's past, making deployments of today much different from those just last year.

"A year ago, we were fighting in the streets every day, (evacuating) Marines who were wounded in action," said Garrard. "Now, the Marines patrol the streets and the

people are talking about problems, which are nice problems to have. 'Hey, can we get the roads paved,' it sounds kind of like our neighborhoods back home. The problems are problems that every city has in the world. They're not the problems of a city in the midst of a civil war."

Haditha is located on the western edge of the Euphrates River, covered in palm trees and flat, green pastures. More than 70,000 Iraqis call this city home. These days, it looks and feels like any other city; people here travel by taxi, walk the markets at dusk, cheer at local soccer matches on weekends and play in school yards during the day. The landscape is everything but a chaotic battlefield.

The problems no longer lie in the shadows or in suspicious vehicles, but rather in rebuilding mosques, getting the townspeople comfortable with their policemen, making sure fresh water runs to each home, turning a city devastated by bombs and bullets into a livable community for the people here.



Cpl. Ryan M. Blaich

Lance Cpl. Jeremiah Burchell, an infantryman with 1st platoon, Company L, 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, patrols pass a mosque destroyed by terrorists several months ago.

**CORPS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13**

“It’s not the normal kind of combat operations,” said 2nd Lt. Steven Dobb, the 1st platoon commander for Company L. “It’s more of a peacekeeping role almost, because the insurgency is not here anymore and what we are trying to do now is build a community.”

Dobb’s platoon patrols the northern end of the city, near the dam. His Marines walk the winding streets of Haditha’s neighborhoods every day. They meet with locals, hand out supplies and get the Iraqi police comfortable with citizens of different tribes. The community is growing and the progress is easy to see.

“The people here are trying to turn it around,” said Lance Cpl. Michael Mathes, infantryman, 1st platoon, Company L. “Every day we come out here on patrol, we see them either trying to rebuild the streets or the sewer lines. They always have some kind of project going on to try and better this place.”

The most evident sign of stability here lies just south of 1st platoon’s outpost and the newly opened water treatment plant. Construction workers continuously move earth, swing hammers and lay rock,

fashioning a neighborhood for Haditha’s newest residents.

“With all the rebuilding going on south of us, it looks like the people want to keep the security up, want to keep this a safe place,” said Dobb. “They feel safe enough to bring their families here and they’re investing a lot of money into this place.”

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*“Peace and security equals prosperity for these people, and in an extended way the prosperity of Iraq equals security for America. The parents of these Marines should be proud of these Marines and the job they’re doing.”*

- Lt. Col. Kevin Garrard  
Company L commander

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It is not easy to understand how far Haditha has come unless its past is understood. The sounds of bombs and mortars have been replaced by car horns and school children. The images of modern homes and open-air markets have replaced bullet holes and exploding vehicles. This is why the Marines came and why they are still here.

“I think all of the Marines look at the



Cpl. Ryan M. Blaich

A Marine from 1st platoon, Company L, 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, is greeted by local children as he patrols through the northern end of the city. Marines interact daily with residents, which show the growing peace and trust in the area. There has not been an attack here on coalition forces in more than two months.

progress that is being made and feel like they’re an important part of the future of Iraq,” Garrard said. “Peace and security equals prosperity for these people, and in an extended way the prosperity of Iraq equals

security for America. The parents of these Marines should be proud of these Marines and the job they’re doing.”



**Sgt. Chrystal S. Readen**  
Washington D.C.

“I would say the old one looks better. I think it looks classier. (The new one) looks like you walked out and just buttoned up the one button like you think you’re superfly. The first one is more professional.”

**Master Sgt. Dale W. Durfee**  
Big Rapids, Mich.

“I already went online and voted for the old style. It keeps (Staff NCO’s) distinct, keeps us from looking like officers. Everything else is different – the Alphas, the Dress Blues – so the evening dress should be as well.”



Bowtie or standing collar and open silhouette? The Marine Corps wants your opinion on the new proposed changes to the men’s Staff Noncommissioned Officer Evening Dress Uniform. By logging on to <https://www.hsishveys.com/usmc/sncousurvey/>, all active duty, reserve, retired and former Marines can vote on their favorite style. This week the Kintai Shimbun hit the streets to find out ...

## Which Staff NCO Evening Dress do you prefer?



**Lance Cpl. Kenneth A. Diaz**  
Orlando, Fla.

“I’d definitely go with the (old one). I don’t like the way the (new one) is all open. The first looks more like a tuxedo, it looks more professional to me.”

**Staff Sgt. Lamont McIntosh**  
Baltimore

“Keep the old one, (the new one) looks lame. I would prefer to wear the old one. I’m all about old traditions, so I’d stay with the old way.”





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