

WOMEN IN COMBAT
 These women have guns | P.5
FEATURE



COBRA GOLD 2009
 See Marines take the beach | P.6,7
FEATURE



GYMNASTICS
 Find out how to get balance | P.11
SPORTS



IWAKUNI APPROACH

Issue No. 9, Vol. 2 | Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan

Fitness expo helps keep community in shape

LANCE CPL. DANIEL NEGRETE
 IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Semper Fit Health Promotions hosted its 2009 Health and Fitness Expo at the Ironworks Gym here Feb. 28.

The event showcased a variety of health and fitness programs available for the community.

"We're doing this to increase people's awareness," said Alma

S. Dickinson, health promotions director. "It's a chance for people to see what they're doing right, what they're doing wrong, and how they can do better."

The expo featured demonstrations from Semper Fit's group fitness programs, information booths and a special section dedicated to teaching children healthful eating habits.

"It's important for kids to learn

early on what kind of foods they should eat and what kind of foods they should avoid," said Darci J. Kruse, health promotions secretary. "It's the habits they pick up early on that set the stage for their eating habits later in life."

The children were given bananas, pretzels, raisins, cheerios, chocolate chips, and peanut butter and shown how to make a "banana bug."

The "banana bug" is a good example of the type of snack kids should eat, said Kruse. Not only is it fun for them to make, but eating a banana bug is far healthier than eating a Twinkie, candy bar or bag of chips.

The expo also geared itself toward educating adults on how to maintain a healthful lifestyle.

SEE **EXPO** ON PAGE 3

Update: New air terminal progressing

PFC. CLAUDIO MARTINEZ
 IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

The new air passenger terminal under construction on the flight line here is slated to be completed in the fall of this year.

The new air terminal, which will have a variety of new features comparable to civilian terminals, is being constructed to better serve the military members and civilians arriving and departing the station by aircraft.

Kevin Walsh, air transportation division manager said the present air terminal is inadequate to provide good quality service to the people of the station.

The existing air terminal, which routinely handles large military and commercial aircraft with heavy passenger loads, was constructed in 1974 and has exceeded its 25-year life expectancy.

Currently, when a large aircraft arrives at the present 10,280-square-foot facility, passengers are required to remain on the



PFC CLAUDIO MARTINEZ

The new 44,800-square-foot air terminal under construction is slated to be finished by fall of 2009. The new air terminal will offer a baggage claim area, customs and immigration office, and waiting area along with many more features.

aircraft because the terminal does not have an adequate holding area.

The current air terminal also lacks a separate space to check passengers' passports to provide them with an entry stamp.

"The new one is going to make things a lot easier, not only for the general public but for the deploying units, too," said Walsh. "Instead

SEE **TERMINAL** ON PAGE 3

NMCRS to become full-service office

LANCE CPL. SALVADOR MORENO
 IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society here is transitioning from an emergency office to a full-service office scheduled to be complete by May of this year.

Beginning Sunday, active duty service members were encouraged to generously donate to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief

Society during the annual call for contributions.

The mission of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society is to provide financial, educational and other assistance to service members and their family members.

Every case is different, but some of the circumstances that

fall under emergency aid are food and shelter, vehicle repairs, household set up, medical and dental expenses, funeral and emergency transportation, and other miscellaneous occurrences.

"What we are is a 105-year-old

SEE **SOCIETY** ON PAGE 3



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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

'Dear Abby'

LT. CMDR. ALLEN R. KUSS
COMMAND CHAPLAIN

"Dear Abby" is a regular read for me. Besides showing our human weaknesses, it also reveals on many levels our strengths and striving for goodness.

In a recent article, a contributor wrote in about having lost her joy and how people stopped including her in regular activities and communication. She said, "Being treated as if I had some sort of contagious disease has been as bad as losing my job."

Active duty or civilian, we are all aware of the continuing economic troubles which are causing more and more pain to

people we know and love.

The article brought to the foreground our responsibility and need to reach out to those who are struggling.

There are many things that can have us recoil from others: illness, a marriage ending of someone close to us, unavoidable unemployment or legal trouble or military non-judicial punishment to list only a few.

When others are going through difficult times, our first reaction might be to say nothing rather than cause possible embarrassment or avoid contact because we feel powerless to assist them.

These are natural emotions to experience but our concern, our friendship and our love for our extended family compels us to go beyond silence.

Our families and friends back home want and need our support,

our phone calls and our e-mail messages as much as we need the support and contact of those around us, if not more.

We are crucial to one another's emotional and psychological well-being even when we are separated by distance. The need to be included in activities and conversation when we are enduring personal struggles is also vital here in Iwakuni.

There should be no reason for anyone to feel unsupported, marginalized or abandoned as long as each of us keep our eyes, ears and minds open to the needs of others.

We live in uncertain times and when we share in the struggles of our families and friends we lighten the load they are carrying.

The golden rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Final flight leaves captains drenched



Maj. Stephen Blackmarr, Capt. Jeff W. Mueller, Capt. Clayton R. Penton, and Capt. Christopher Tousant strike a pose after Mueller and Penton were hosed down after completing their final mission here. Mueller and Penton flew on their last flight with Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242 Feb. 26. Both Mueller and Penton will transfer to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar to serve for Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101.

Corps Question

Q. When are the Iwakuni public pools going to re-open?

A. The outdoor pool is scheduled to open April 23. The indoor pool has been inspected and the necessary parts are ordered. Presently, there is no definitive date on when the indoor pool will be re-opened.

Submit your Corps Question by e-mailing iwakuni.pao@usmc.mil.

Fitness expo demonstrates techniques to healthful living

EXPO FROM PAGE 1

Personnel from the Robert M. Casey Branch Health Clinic were at the event to perform cholesterol exams on members of the community who were interested in learning their current health status.

"High blood pressure and cholesterol are silent killers," said Lt. Molly P. Hurda, a nurse here. "If you know what your numbers are early on, you can start making changes to your lifestyle before it becomes too late."

Community members lined up to get their cholesterol exams and their results were handed to them within minutes.

"The exams offered here at the expo gave community members a good indication of whether or not they should make an appointment with us to get a fasting lipid panel for more accurate results," said Hurda.

For those who missed the expo and are interested in learning more about the available classes may call 253-5051. Schedules are also available at the Ironworks Gym or can be accessed on www.mccsiwakuni.com

a real slap in the face," he said. "I attribute them to my most recent eating habits and how I rarely eat breakfast before starting my day."

In addition to cholesterol exams, health promotions staff also administered body fat assessments.

After performing the exams, explanations were given on how to maintain or improve body fat results.

Group fitness instructors demonstrated some of the more recent additions to the fitness classes available at the Ironworks Gym.

These classes include Zumba or Latin dance cardio, cardio kickboxing, "step it up," bale, Yoga and Bosu battle.

"They are free to all community members and are a great way for people to get fit and healthy," said Jeramie O. Johnson, Semper Fit fitness coordinator.

For those who missed the expo and are interested in learning more about the available classes may call 253-5051.

Schedules are also available at the Ironworks Gym or can be accessed on www.mccsiwakuni.com



Kapani Kirkland, an 8-year-old resident here, makes a "Banana Bug" at the 2009 Health and Fitness Expo held at the Ironworks Gym here Feb. 28. Aside from addressing health-related topics amongst adults, the expo featured a special section dedicated to teaching children healthful eating habits.

Sun spots cause AFN TV and radio outages

STAFF SGT. DUSTIN A. DUNK
AMERICAN FORCES NETWORK

Twice a year American Forces Network TV and Radio experiences complete outages due to sun activity.

AFN is again moving into the period of sun outages now through March 13.

Sun outages occur when satellites "eclipse" the sun and their signals are overpowered by solar radiation.

This spring's sun outages started on Feb. 28 with mild outages; they'll continue getting more severe from Wednesday through Monday and then will subside, totally disappearing after March 13.

Local sun outages occur at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni when the sun is at its highest point in the sky; however, because of the number of satellite hops it takes for the AFN signal to arrive in Japan, local viewers and listeners will see temporary disruptions of their TV and radio signals a few times during peak sun outage days.

AFN loss of signals could last as long as 15-20 minutes at a time; however, most outages will be less than five minutes.

The outages will affect on base as well as off base residents.

New terminal offers host of modern comforts to travelers

TERMINAL FROM PAGE 1

of having to be bused over to a hangar to do customs and immigration, they will be able to do it all in the new terminal."

According to information provided by station facilities, not only will the new air terminal have customs and immigration offices, the new 44,800-square-foot facility will also be outfitted with a baggage claim area, waiting and arrival areas, television lounge, a dining area with a kitchenette, and also a mother's room with a crib area.

"It's just going to be a really nice modern facility compared to what

we presently have," said Walsh. "It's going to be really nice to have a facility that we can honestly say is going to be comfortable for the people coming in and going out."

In order to provide better services to the military members and civilians who will utilize the terminal, the new facility will also include automatic teller machine capabilities, toilets and showers, a lost and found office, and a security office.

"When we are dealing with customers, their first impression of Iwakuni is going to be the terminal when they arrive here," said Walsh. "We want to make that a lasting impression."

Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society provides help to service members

SOCIETY FROM PAGE 1

charity designed for financial and educational support to active duty and retired sailors and Marines, as well as their families," said Kim Lumpkin, Director Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Iwakuni.

During 2008, there were 77,754 Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society cases worldwide, resulting in financial assistance of \$44.2 million.

Of the 77,754 cases there were 61,294 cases that used \$42.7 million of the \$44.2 million for emergency aid.

When a Marine or sailor comes in and requests aid, volunteer's first sit down with

them and formulate a spending plan to show them where their money is going and how it is spent.

"We give you resources and advice on changes you might want to make if you have a lot of debt or if you're trying to reach a certain financial goal," said Lumpkin.

If more help is needed than just the education, employees or volunteers of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society can help point one in the right direction.

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society employs about 237 people part-time and full-time, and has approximately 3,600 volunteers.

"We really value our volunteers and their

compassion to service members," said Lumpkin.

"No matter what is going on in service members' lives, we want them to know they can come in and they will receive the best service available to them from the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society," Lumpkin added.

Volunteering at a local Navy-Marine Corps Relief office can be a rewarding experience. While helping clients solve their emergency needs, one can enhance job skills as well.

For more information on the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, how to volunteer or to donate call 253-5311 or visit room 148 in the station chapel. It is open Mondays through Fridays from 8 a.m. to noon.

Gates: U.S. military could help Mexico fight drug cartels

DONNA MILES
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE



TECH. SGT. JERRY MORRISON

Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates delivers his remarks during a Pentagon press briefing with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Michael Mullen on Feb. 26.

WASHINGTON, (March 2, 2009) — The United States could increase its military support to help Mexico fight drug cartels that pose an increasingly alarming security risk, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said yesterday.

"I think we are beginning to be in a position to help the Mexicans more than we have in the past," Gates said during an NBC "Meet the Press" interview. "Some of the old biases against cooperation between our militaries and so on, I think, are being satisfied."

Drug-related violence has soared in Mexico since President Felipe Calderon dispatched the federal army to confront the well-armed and -financed cartels. So far in 2009, an estimated 1,000 people have been killed.

"The cartels are retaliating," Gates said yesterday. "It clearly is a serious problem."

The United States could support the effort through training, reconnaissance and surveillance support, intelligence cooperation and other assistance, Gates said.

The secretary praised Calderon's courage in standing up to the cartels and police corruption in a way that previous presidents wouldn't. "One of the reasons it's gotten as bad as it has is because his predecessors basically refused to do that," he said.

Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, shared Gates' growing concern about Mexico last week during a Pentagon news conference.

"Mexico is certainly more of a concern to me," Mullen said. He announced plans to visit Mexico on the last leg of this week's trip to Latin America.

Mullen noted the spike in drug-related violence in Mexico that has increased dramatically in the last year. "We're looking for ways to assist them in terms of addressing this kind of threat," he said.

The chairman pointed during a Feb. 5 address at Princeton University to successes the United States has helped Colombia to achieve over drug cartels and narcoterrorists that had

controlled much of the country. The U.S. military provided primarily training assistance, but other interagency efforts also supported efforts taken by the Colombian government and military.

"I think the Colombian example is a great example of a very broad program that wasn't just military to support a friend at a time when, effectively, they were very close to a failed state," Mullen said.

Mullen said the same kind of support could

help Mexico. "We've offered that," he said. "It takes engagement — not high-end military activity."

The days of looking east and west more than north and south to assess security threats are long over, he told the Princeton audience.

"We do need to pay a lot of attention to our neighbor and the security issues and the economic issues that are associated with not just Mexico, but with Latin America," he said.

THE WING MAN IWAKUNI MARINES AND SAILORS AT THE TIP OF THE SPEAR



LANCE CPL. DANIEL NEGRETE

Cpl. Jovanie Gonzalez

Cpl. Jovanie Gonzalez, a native of Denver, Colo., and 2006 graduate of South Tech High School, is currently serving here where he works as a C-12 transport aircrew man. As an aircrew man, Gonzalez is responsible for the overall safety of the passengers. He also assists the pilots by performing routine tasks such as ensuring the weight and balance of the C-12 is within standards and that the aircraft is adequately fueled before take-off. During his service as a C-12 transport aircrew man, Gonzalez has traveled to 17 different countries. He is the son of Marisol and Felipe Gonzalez of Denver.



LANCE CPL. CHRIS KUTLESA

In honor of Women's History Month, female Marines from here pose for a photo after sharing their experiences with one another on what it means to be a woman in the Marines. From left to right: Master Sgt. Sherri L. Stevenson, power plant division chief, Lance Cpl. Jacqueline Diaz, combat photographer, Sgt. Kaylenne M. Holmes, career retention specialist, Cpl. Rachael Moore, American Forces Network broadcaster, Gunnery Sgt. Tansey D. Olson, staff non-commissioned officer-in-charge of installation personnel administration center new joins.

Women's History Month: Women's roles on the battle field

LANCE CPL. CHRIS KUTLESA
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

The past...

In Ancient Egypt, China and Greece, women fought alongside men in wars for reform, justice and land. During World War II, warring nations hurting for manpower turned to their female citizens. In the United States, women were asked to support the war effort behind the scenes working in logistical positions. The Soviets, however, took a more forward approach and deployed a total of 800,000 women into battle with 70 percent of them seeing combat.

In the last 100 years, women in the United State and around the world have fought for equal civil rights. With the constant struggle to prove men and women are equal, the lines have become more blurred than ever. Men and women's roles in the household, workplace and society have transformed the modern world. With almost no stone left unturned, the last restriction women face is the fact they cannot fill ground combat-arms military occupational specialties.

Current conflicts in Iraq have made it necessary to utilize women due to the cultural and religious rules of the region. Since men are not allowed to search Iraqi women at security checkpoints, it has become necessary to employ female service members to conduct body searches at security check points. The recent surge in women with

rifles may have some people asking: Why can't women fight in combat alongside men?

The argument and reasoning

Countries like Canada, France, Germany and Israel already allow women to serve in combat roles. History shows women can and will fight, leaving some asking, why not allow women to engage in combat if they really want to. Oppositions argue that in a combat environment things like female presence would be a distraction and harmful to unit cohesion. Maybe the argument's answer has nothing to do with opinions and emotions but more with science. According to various online medical studies, women on average have 25-30 percent less aerobic capacity and 45-50 percent less upper body strength. With the female skeletal systems being less dense than males, the argument quickly becomes less of a civil rights case and more an issue of physical logistics.

On Feb. 26, a group of women Marines gathered to take the photograph that would accompany this article. Before any shots were taken, the Marines were asked whether or not women should be allowed to fight in battle like men.

Putting it all into perspective

"It's not appropriate for us to answer questions like that," said Master Sgt. Sherri L. Stevenson, power plant division chief. "As a Marine, it's not our job to debate

whether things are fair. It's our job as Marines to stay the course and follow our duties."

On that note, the group of women shared what it meant to be a woman Marine and why they joined in the first place.

"I wanted to one-up my brother who is in the Navy, so I joined the Marine Corps," said Cpl. Rachael Moore, broadcaster with American Forces Network.

Sibling rivalries clearly were not the only reason the women joined. They joined, like anybody else, to be a part of something bigger and to challenge themselves, in a way only the Marine Corps can.

"It's important to remember those initial reasons why we all joined," said Sgt. Kaylenne M. Holmes, career retention specialist for Headquarters and Headquarter Squadron.

Why they all joined was very similar, but when they joined was a different story.

The group of women, diverse in age as they were in rank, compared thoughts on what training was like in the Corps when they all joined. In a matter of just 15 years, it was amazing to hear how the Marine Corps had changed.

When Stevenson joined in the early nineties, women were just getting on the rifle range and were still restricted to wearing skirts in dress uniform.

"I'm glad that we can wear trousers now," said Stevenson. "But I also appreciate the fact that the Marine Corps, unlike the other services, allows us to

still look like ladies."

It's fascinating to consider the prospect of being a Marine and a lady at the same time. Though these roles seem to be polar opposites, this group of women mix them quite well, finding a balance in what it means to be a woman and a Marine. As they continue the discussion, Stevenson interjects, "Oh, I've got to go. It's my daughters birthday," making it all the more clear on how much they really have to juggle.

Before all the ladies dispersed, Holmes brought up one last point.

"We all joined knowing what we were getting into," said Holmes. "We all understood that there would be sacrifices. None of us here have been to battle so we can't exactly say how we would react, but we have confidence in how we have been trained. Like every other Marine, we have trained to be a rifleman. If the situation ever comes down to me being in combat, I know what to do."

When the discussion came to an end, a unanimous expression of satisfaction came from the Marines with the work they do in the Marine Corps. Whether they are on the front lines or not doesn't really matter. What matters is that they are trained like every other Marine. They may not be physically the same as men, but as Marines, they are built the same. Just like their male counterparts, they understand the true meaning of honor, courage and commitment.



PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS GABRIEL S. WEBER

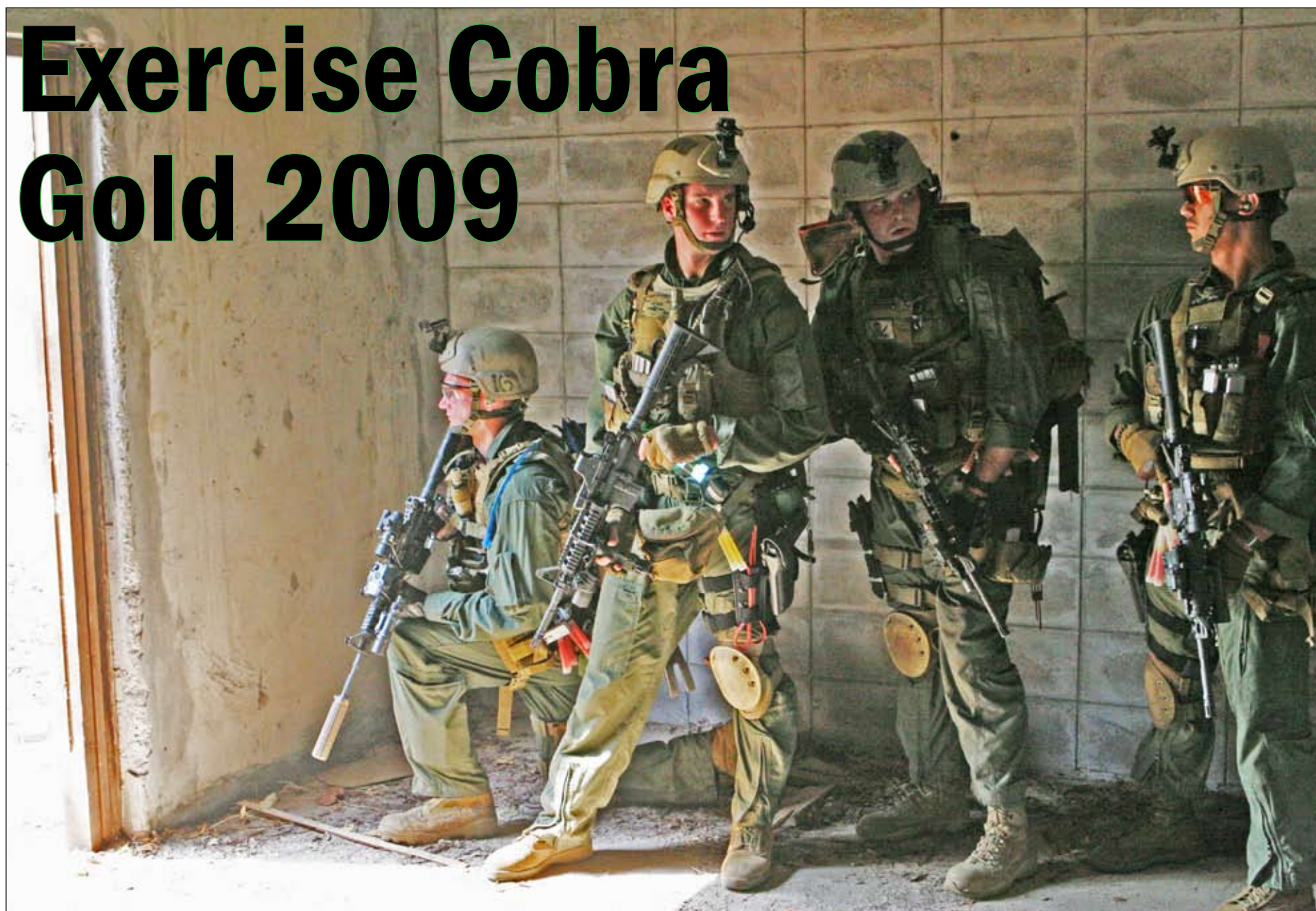
Cpl. James Anderson (left) from Aurora, Colo. and equipment operator constructionman Diton Parker from Paris, Mo., both assigned to Combat Logistics Regiment 3 of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, lend a helping hand during a community relations activity at Banklong Sai Elementary School as part of Exercise Cobra Gold 2009. Cobra Gold is an annual Kingdom of Thailand and U.S. co-sponsored military exercise designed to train U.S. and partner humanitarian projects with participants from Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, Thailand and the U.S.



CPL ANDREW S. AVITT

Sgt. Blake Flannery, team leader with DRP, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, posts security by a door while his team clears a room of hostile targets and contraband such as unexploded ordnance and weapons Feb. 9 during Exercise Cobra Gold 2009. Cobra Gold is a regularly scheduled joint/coalition multinational exercise hosted annually by the Kingdom of Thailand, and it is focused on improving military-to-military relationships among its participants.

Exercise Cobra Gold 2009



CPL ANDREW S. AVITT

Cpl. Nate Meier, Cpl. Tyler Hinkley, Cpl. Mathew Kuden and Cpl. Christian Rauwerda are set up in an exfiltration stack next to the exit of a building providing security and taking cover until the Deep Reconnaissance Platoon with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit is ready to move during an emergency assault exercise Feb. 9 during Cobra Gold 2009. Cobra Gold is a regularly scheduled joint/coalition multinational exercise hosted annually by the Kingdom of Thailand, and it is focused on improving military-to-military relationships among its participants.

MARINES PARTICIPATE IN MULTINATIONAL EXERCISE

LANCE CPL. CHRIS KUTLESA
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Exercise Cobra Gold came to a close Feb. 17, after two weeks of training in the Kingdom of Thailand.

Marines and sailors from Iwakuni participated in the exercise which focused on building working relationships with allied countries while training for real-world situations.

The multinational exercise started Feb. 4 and included approximately 7,000 United States service members along with 4,000 other participants from Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and Thailand.

Marines trained in tactics ranging from amphibious assaults to aerial attacks. The culmination of the exercise was a land assault held on Feb. 13. Temperatures reached a high of 102 by 10 a.m. when the exercise kicked off. Helicopters circled off the shore as they provided security for amphibious vehicles cutting across the choppy ocean. Thai and United States Marines emerged from the underbellies of the vehicles as they came ashore. In the mock attack the Marines pushed forward providing security for each other while gaining ground.

"I thought it went great. Amphib landing is one of the toughest things there is, and I've seen a number of them," said Lt. Gen. Keith J. Stalder, commander of Marine Forces Pacific, in an interview with the Stars and Stripes. "The one this morning couldn't have gone better from everything I saw."

Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242, also known as the 'Bats,' flew in multiple large force exercises. Marines, along with the United States and Royal Thai Air Force, flew more than 20 jets deep during the training.

"An exercise like this helps multinational forces practice air-to-air combat," said Capt. Conor S. Jarvis, squadron weapon system officer for VMFA(AW)-242.

Marine Wing Support Squadron-171 spent ten days there participating in several bilateral training exercises, most involving live rounds. After heading north to a camp, the unit joined the Thai in predeployment training. They moved from stations, practicing maneuvering and call commands. They first practiced firing using techniques they learned in the Marine Corps and then switched to using methods used by the Thai military.

"It was cool to see how they engaged the target," said Sgt. Theodore O. Ramlal, light section noncommissioned officer-in-charge for motor transportation company. "It was some of the best training I have done because it was modern day training for real world situations. It was fun, I just wish we had 100,000 more rounds to fire."

At the 2009 Cobra Gold Press Conference, United States Ambassador Eric G. John explained why the exercise is important. "There is no better exercise than Cobra Gold to keep our militaries ready to respond to the real-world priorities of peacekeeping, stability, reconstruction and humanitarian assistance relief efforts for the 2004 tsunami and last year for Cyclone Nargis demonstrated that multinational responses to regional crises are likely to be the norm in the future, and the ability of regional partners to assist those in need was a direct product of the multilateral training that takes place in Cobra Gold."

Cobra Gold not only served as a training exercise, but also an opportunity for United States service members to reach out to the community.

Before and during the exercise,

Marines joined Lt. j.g. Robert E. Mills, a station chaplain here, and provided assistance to local orphanages and schools.

"During an exercise like this it's important to do things for the local community" Mills said. "Getting service members out into the community, painting basketball courts and planting trees helps people see we really are interested in helping those in need."

A total of nine events were conducted, involving everything from planting fruit trees to playing games with orphans.

The highlight of the community trips was a ramp that was built to provide disabled students access to the second level classrooms.

Before the ramp was built, it took 45 minutes to transport disabled students to class via a single person elevator.

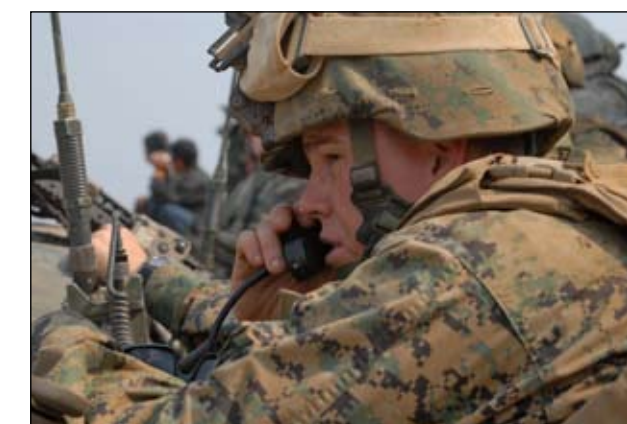
"The least we can do is give our time to these kids who have nearly nothing," said Mills. "You know it's a good community relations event when you have Marines start crying."

The exercise came to a close, successfully fulfilling its initial intentions of building a stronger working relationship while training for real-world situations.



CPL ANDREW S. AVITT

More than 500 Royal Thai and U.S. Marines gather together after a successful amphibious assault demonstration during Exercise Cobra Gold 2009. Approximately 7,000 other U.S. service members participated in the exercise through the Kingdom of Thailand. Cobra Gold 2009 is a bilateral exercise focusing on military interoperability training and strengthening the long-standing partnership between the Royal Thai and U.S. Armed Forces.



SGT. 1ST CLASS JASON SHEPHERD

A Marine forward observer calls for fire during the combined arms live fire exercise Feb. 16. The exercise was a part of Exercise Cobra Gold 2009 that took place in Thailand.



LANCE CPL. DANIEL A. FLYNN

Lance Cpl. Matt Foster with Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242 plants a tree with several children from an orphanage. The Marines and sailors who volunteered were deployed in support of Exercise Cobra Gold 2009 which is a regularly scheduled joint/coalition multinational exercise and is the latest in the continuing series of U.S.-Thai military exercise designed to promote regional peace and stability.

CORPS NEWS

HIGHLIGHTING MARINES AND SAILORS AROUND THE GLOBE



CPL. Corey D. Stewart, a vehicle commander with 4th squad, Security Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 2, provides security during a seven-day long convoy from Al Asad, to Sahl Sinjar and Al Taqaddum, Iraq, Feb. 8-15, 2009. This was the longest convoy accomplished by the battalion since they arrived in country Sept. 2008.

CLB-2 makes long haul to remote location of Iraq

CPL. M. M. BRAVO
2ND MARINE LOGISTICS
GROUP

SAHL SINJAR AIRFIELD, Iraq — The sun had barely peaked over the horizon as a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle, affectionately known as the Battle Wagon, and more than 30 other vehicles carrying Marines, civilian contractors, and one interpreter, rolled out of Al Asad early Sunday morning, Feb. 8, 2009.

The Marines of 4th squad, Security Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 2, were headed north through the sands of Iraq to Sahl Sinjar on a seven-day convoy to deliver supplies to Marines operating on the isolated region of Iraq's Ninewa province. This was the longest convoy 4th squad has conducted since they arrived in country in Sept. 2008.

Sahl Sinjar Airfield is tucked away in a remote corner of Iraq near the Iraqi border of Syria.

After dropping off supplies in Sahl Sinjar, they continued to escort the civilian truck drivers back to Al Asad and immediately headed further south to Camp

Al Taqaddum to continue the mission.

Sgt. Roger D. Rice, the 4th squad convoy commander, said that since August 2008 when they arrived in Al Asad, Security Company has made the convoy to Sahl Sinjar five times, but this was the longest in both distance and time spent in the Iraqi countryside.

"The overall length of the trip is unusual," Rice explained. "For seven days [we] retrograded tanks from [Al Asad to] here, to TQ. It's the longest run the battalion has done. Assets were needed to be brought up [to Sahl Sinjar] that weren't available in AO [Area of Operation] North, only in the West and East."

"They had a need up here and CLB-2 had the assets to deliver and were still able to carry on their mission back in Al Asad," Rice continued.

Master Sgt. Todd S. Chamberlin, the staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge of CLB-2 in Sahl Sinjar, explained the logistics unit's current role in the area.

"Our mission is to provide support for surrounding units," Chamberlin said.

The majority of units CLB-2

supports are infantry units who work hand-in-hand with the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police forces.

Their support includes convoy operations, security and providing logistical support to various command operating posts nearby.

"The ultimate goal is turning the control of Iraq over to the Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army," said Chamberlin.

Chamberlin discussed the positive outcome of the significant decrease in insurgent attacks.

"The quiet state we're in shows how far we've come and how far the Iraqi Army has come," he said.

Sgt. Daniel L. Moore, a squad leader for Military Police Company, CLB-2, said his team provides security for the entire airfield, which includes going into surrounding villages to conduct foot patrols.

"The fact that we can reach out to the villages shows presence to the local population," he said. "It's been quiet for a while but we are 100 percent ready if anything were to go wrong."

The trip to Sahl Sinjar was a successful operation due to the consistency of the Marines of

Security Company.

Rice said his Marines prepared well for the trip and did an excellent job despite the hardships and stress of a long convoy through a combat environment.

"It's really hard on the Marines, spending eight to 10 hours a day in the truck," Rice said. "It's hard on your body and after seven days, you're exhausted. [But] they know it's going to be a long run."

Rice said traveling into a different AO is a huge deal. The atmosphere and the terrain are different, which causes the Marines to be extra alert and constantly aware of their surroundings.

"You're not completely in the dark but you don't know what to expect," he said. "There's always a higher risk traveling into unknown areas."

Rice explained that by running convoys so much in their own AO, they learn the terrain, the traffic, the people, and even where garbage cans might be placed.

"They trust us to travel a lot of miles with millions of dollars in assets, to go into an AO we've only been in once. I think CLB-2 puts a lot of trust in us."

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

New Dental Sickcall Hours

Starting March 2, dental sickcall hours will be from 7 to 10:30 a.m. Mondays through Fridays. If you have any questions, please call 253-3331.

Jazz, Jesus and Japan (Christian Concert)

March 22, 5 – 7 p.m. at the station's chapel. Presented by MCAS Christian Non-Denominational Chapel Community. Featuring Ken and Bola Taylor and local guest performers. For more information, contact the Station Chapel.

Registration for Central Texas College

Registration for Central Texas College is going on from March 2 until March 20 and classes

begin from March 23 until May 17. Distance learning and traditional classes are available. For more information, contact Central Texas College (building 411, room 109) at 253-3288 or e-mail iwakuni.jpn.pfec@ctcd.edu

St. Patrick's Day Meal at Mess Hall

Food Service will be serving a special meal in celebration of St. Patrick's Day March 17 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at both South side and North side mess halls. The cost is \$4.25 for Comrats, family members and civilians. Family members of E-4 and below pay \$3.65.

Menu:
Special Irish beef stew
Classic fish and chips
Corned beef and cabbage
Beer batter fish fillets

Irish potato casserole
Irish heritage cabbage
Simmered green beans
Irish spicy corn bread
Irresistible Irish soda bread
Irish cream bundt cake
Chocolate cookies
Cherry pies

"Pista Sa Nayon" Town Fiesta

May 30, at the Club Iwakuni Ballroom, doors open at 5 p.m. Dinner and show starts at 6 p.m. Please come join the Fil-Am community in celebration of our 14th Annual "Pista Sa Nayon" Town Fiesta. We will have dinner, cultural Filipino performances and a dance to end the evening. Tickets are \$35 which includes an international buffet menu. For more information, call 253-6084.

New Spouse Volunteer Recruitment Brunch

March 6, 9:45 a.m. at American Red Cross Office, building 1100. This will be a great opportunity to meet other spouses and to learn about volunteer opportunities. Brunch will be provided. This is open to all spouses aboard MCAS Iwakuni (children are welcome). For more information, contact the American Red Cross at 253-4525.

Blanket sale - M.C. Perry High School

M.C. Perry High School PTO is selling the Japan blanket. It is of great quality and absolutely

gorgeous! For sale at the high school for \$50. For more information, contact M. C. Perry High School at 253-4503.

CPR course

American Red Cross adult and infant and child CPR courses will be held March 11 at 5 p.m. The cost is \$40. The first aid course will be held March 17 at 5 p.m. Both classes are held at the American Red Cross Office. The cost is \$30. This is open to everyone aboard MCAS Iwakuni. There is a maximum limit of 10 people per class. For more information, contact the American Red Cross at 253-4525.

4-Man Scramble Golf Tournament

The Fil-Am Iwakuni will sponsor the 4-Man Scramble Golf tournament on April 18. Showtime is at 11:30 a.m., shotgun starts at noon. Prizes for closest to the pin and longest drive. Trophies for 1st and 2nd place teams. Free Lumpia, Adobo, rice and drinks. Proceeds will be donated to a children's orphanage charity in the Philippines and to a local Iwakuni orphanage. \$29 for non-member, \$19 for member. Green fee included. Open to all personnel. For more information, call 253-6084.

Image Makers National Photography Contest

Do you have any shutterbugs around the club, school or home? If so, this is the contest for you. Local exhibit will be displayed at Club Iwakuni Ballroom "A" on March 17. Participants must have

been club members for at least three months before the contest.

Age categories are divided into the following: 9 or younger, 10-12 years old, 13-15 years old, 16-18 years old.

Photographs must be entered in one of the following categories: Color process, black-and-white process, alternative process (pinhole cameras, Polaroid transfers, photo screen-printing, photo etching and photogram), digital (photos must be taken with a digital camera and images may not be manipulated), photo essay ("Be a Photographer").

Photographs must not exceed 8 by 11 inches. For more details, contact MCCS Youth and Teen Center at 253-5549.

Tax center open

The Tax center at the law center (SJA), opened up for service Feb. 2. No appointments will be made, all clients are walk-ins. If there are any questions regarding what Marines and sailors will need to prepare taxes, please contact the law center (SJA) at 253-5591 or 5592.

Branch Health Clinic Announcement

The Robert M. Casey Branch Health Clinic will be adding a new service. A pediatrician will be visiting on March 18. Please contact central appointments at 253-3445 to set up a referral through your primary care doctor.

Chapel Services

Roman Catholic

Saturday 4:30-5:15 p.m. Confession
5:30 p.m. Mass
Sunday 8:30 a.m. Mass
9:45 a.m. Religious Education
Tues - Fri 11:30 a.m. Weekday Mass
Wednesday 6 p.m. Inquiry Class for adults

Protestant

Saturday 9:30 a.m. Seventh-Day Adventist Sabbath School
11:00 a.m. Seventh-Day Adventist Devine Worship
Sunday 9:30 a.m. Sunday School, Adult Bible Fellowship
10:30 a.m. Protestant Service
11 a.m. Children's Church
6 p.m. Awana (Bldg. 1104)
6:15 p.m. Adult Bible Study (Capodanno Hall Chapel)
Wednesday

Church of Christ

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

Latter Day Saints

Weekdays 6:30 a.m. Youth 12-17 Activities

Teen Programs

- High School Meetings (Club - grades 9-12)
- Junior High Meetings (Club JV - grades 7-8)
- HS&JR Bible Studies
- Retreats
- Service Projects
- Missions Trip
- Special Events Volunteer Training & Mentoring
- Parent Support Group

Call at 253-5183 or potwic@gmail.com.

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

SAKURA THEATER

Friday, March 6, 2009

7 p.m. Not Easily Broken (PG-13)
Premier
10 p.m. The Unborn (PG-13)
Premier

Saturday, March 7, 2009

1 p.m. Bride Wars (PG)
4 p.m. The Unborn (PG-13)
7 p.m. Gran Torino (PG-13)
10 p.m. Not Easily Broken (PG-13)

Sunday, March 8, 2009

1 p.m. Marley & Me (PG)
4 p.m. Not Easily Broken (PG-13)
7 p.m. The Unborn (PG-13)

Monday, March 9, 2009

7 p.m. The Spirit (PG-13) Last Showing

Tuesday, March 10, 2009

7 p.m. Bedtime Stories (PG) Last Showing

Wednesday, March 11, 2009

7 p.m. G.I. Jane (R) Free Admission

Thursday, March 12, 2009

7 p.m. The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG-13)

General Admission: Ages 12+ are \$2.50/ Ages 6-11 are \$1/ Children ages 5 and under admitted free. For more information, visit www.mccsiwakuni.com or call 253-5291.

253-5291

CLASSIFIEDS

Automobiles

2000 Subaru Legacy B4

4-door sedan in excellent condition. Twin turbo 265 horse power dual overhead cam Boxer engine. Sequential-shifting Tiptronic automatic transmission. All wheel drive. JCI to end of Nov. 2010. 8 speaker stereo system with CD and tape player. Airbags for driver and front seat passenger. Trap door between back seat and trunk for stowing extra long items (skies). Newly installed: Timing belt, water pump, brakes and brake drums, windshield. Asking \$3,000. Call 253-3181 (work) during Monday to Friday, 7 a.m. - 4 p.m., 0834-88-2551 (home) after 5 p.m., from Monday to

Friday and all day Saturday and Sunday, 090-9151-8959 (cell) for anytime.

1989 2-dr Pajero

4WD, 2 years. JCI until Dec. 2010. Good shape. \$2,000 takes it! Call at 080-6732-9709 (cell).

1996 Toyota Hilux Surf

3.4L gas engine, push button 4WD. Heat and A/C work great. Perfect for skiing, snowboarding, camping. This SUV is in amazing condition. JCI Good until Feb. 2011. Comes with roof rack, stereo, amplifier and subwoofers. For more information, please call at 253-5781 (work), 253-7272 (home), or 080-3715-4633 (cell). Asking \$4,800, call to make offer.

1993 Toyota Lite Ace

4-door passenger van. Seats 7. Front and rear sun roofs. Free battery included (\$150 value). JCI expires Sept. 2010. Asking \$1,500. If interested, call 253-2508 (work).

1999 Nissan Cube

Bright Yellow. 5-door/4 passenger. Automatic. Great car. Makes people smile! JCI expires Jan 2010. Asking \$2,900. If interested, call 253-2508 (work).

1999 Mitsubishi Chariot Grandis

Automatic. 4-door. Seats 7. Great A/C and heat. Power windows/locks. AM/FM stereo. CD/cassette player. JCI good until August 2010. Asking \$3,500. Please call 253-2031 (home) or 090-8406-8890 (cell).

1998 Delica

Seats 8. Automatic. Diesel. 4WD. A/C & heat for front and back - back has it's own controllers. Excellent for outdoor activities. Great for long trips. Seats fold down for lots of storage space. Front seat turns around, and seats also lay down to make a bed great for camping. Power windows. Car runs great and well maintained. Oil changed regularly. Asking \$ 4,000 OBO. We are moving to the States and need to sell ASAP! Serious callers only please! Contact 253-2156 (home) or 253-6358 (work).

1990 & 1993 Skyline GTRs

This is essentially a two for one sale. The grey GTR is the one for sale and second blue GTR has been parted out, you get both of them. This is the twin turbo, all wheel drive, all wheel steering model. Too many parts and upgrades to list. All parts are located on base. \$9,000 firm. Starting price for GTRs off base is around \$8,000. For more information,

call 080-3474-8856 (cell) or email to potwic@gmail.com.

1995 Mitsubishi Diamante

Car needs a new transmission (\$2,000 estimate including labor from base repair shop, or install it yourself at the auto hobby shop). V-6 with low miles. Metallic charcoal silver with alloy wheels, crystal clean interior, grey leather, full power, new CD player and speakers (\$500 installed out in town). JCI expires in Feb. 2010. The price has been reduced to \$800 - OBO. For more information, call 253-2356 (home).

1997 Mitsubishi Legnum wagon

2.0L V-6, AWD, 4-speed auto w/ "manu-matic". Power windows and sunroof. 117,000km, JCI until Oct. 2009. Clean interior and great family car with lots of space. AWD perfect for skiing and snowboarding trips. Comes with roof rails and extra set of rims. \$2,000 OBO. For more information, call 253-3139 (work) or 080-7540-1844 (cell).

Miscellaneous

Drum Set

GP Percussion GP200, 5-piece, 3 stands, forest green, approximately 2 years old. Asking for \$200. For more information, call 253-2040 (home).

Dog for Good Home

8-month-old Shiba Inu, great family dog, completely housebroken, \$500. For more information, call 253-2040 (home).

Job Announcement

Job Opening

Regular part-time position available with the Marine Corps Distance Learning Program. 30 hours a week at competitive salary. Customer Service experience and basic computer skills a must. U.S. citizenship is required. Please email resume to phillip.grant@prosoft.tv or call 090-7377-0847 (cell).

Job for WIC Overseas Iwakuni

Opportunities are available for a temporary, full-time nutritionist/dietitian/nurse in the Women, Infants, and Children Overseas Program in Iwakuni. Temporary position begins August 3 - October 2, 2009. Position requires a BS in Nutrition, Nursing or Home Economics. Experience in prenatal, maternal or infant nutrition desired. Registered Dietitian preferred. Experience in WIC desirable. Must have driver's license. Must be a U.S. citizen. For immediate consideration, please e-mail your resume and cover letter to Virginia.Johnson.ctr@misawa.af.mil or fax to 226-9585. You may also come to the Iwakuni WIC office in building 411 or call us at 253-4408.

Facilities department family housing charrette

LT. J.G. TIMOTHY NELIS
CONTRIBUTED

The facilities department is hosting combined North side and family housing area development plan charrettes and would like to invite station personnel and family members to participate.

The charrette is a design workshop where requirements, ideas and opinions of residents and other station personnel are discussed and incorporated into design solutions.

The focus will be the detailed layout of facilities across the North side and family housing areas, including BEQs and community buildings such as schools and retail. Participation is needed to achieve the best housing, barracks and facilities for

MCAS Iwakuni personnel and residents.

Spouses and BEQ residents are encouraged to participate.

The charrette will be held in the Torii Pine Community Center (Chapel) community room. Meeting times are 1 - 4 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday during the week of March 16 - 20 and a BEQ resident meeting at 9 - 11 a.m. on March 17. This will be followed by an out-brief April 3 from 9 - 11 a.m.

The charrette team will be working out of the 3rd floor conference room of building 360 with an open-door policy throughout the entire week, so feel free to stop by on your schedule.

For further information contact Lt. j.g. Timothy Nelis at timothy.nelis@usmc.mil or 253-3399.

Beginner gymnastics



LANCE CPL. SALVADOR MORENO

Students of the Beginner 1 gymnastics class conduct warm-up stretches with their coach Feb. 26 at the IronWorks Gym. Gymnastics is a sport involving the performance of exercises requiring physical strength, flexibility, agility and coordination developed over time.

Children tumble into fun

LANCE CPL. SALVADOR MORENO
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Mothers and daughters attended a weekly one-hour beginners gymnastics class held at IronWorks Gym Feb. 26

The Beginner 1 class is held at IronWorks Gym every Tuesday and Thursday from 2:45 to 3:45 p.m., where boys and girls go from start to finish learning gymnastics.

During the class, the girls enjoyed learning the proper ways to stretch and work out. They also learned how to work with one another and build friendships.

Gymnastics is a sport involving the performance of exercises requiring physical strength, flexibility, agility and coordination developed over time.

Enrolling in the Beginner 1 class is as easy as going in and watching the class, and if you like what you see, you can sign up at the IronWorks front desk. Once you have signed up, it is \$8 per class.

"We start with the basics in Beginner 1, whether it is a forward roll or backward roll to cartwheels and balancing movements. Our main goal is fun for the kids, that's number one," said Kelly Kelemen, gymnastics coach.

During the Feb 26 class, there were five young girls who attended and got to experience the open environment and comfort of the gymnastics world.

The average age of the Beginner 1 class is 2-6 years old. The age range varies because some children can begin in Beginner 1 and move up to an intermediate class within a few classes.

"It all depends on how fast their learning progresses," said Kelemen.

The class sizes grow through spring and summer. Right now there are 10-15 children in the beginners' classes, but with the seasons changing they are expected to get bigger.

The children attending the class are given the basics of what they need to do to progress to the



LANCE CPL. SALVADOR MORENO

Beginner 1 gymnastics instructor Kelly Kelemen guides a student on the balance beam Feb. 26 at the IronWorks Gym. The beginner 1 gymnastics class is held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:45 to 3:45 p.m. The class teaches students the basic fundamentals of gymnastics.

intermediate or advanced levels.

The classes are held year-round, but do take breaks during the holidays and other various events.

Once a year, there is a spring exhibition that the children are encouraged to participate in.

They are able to show what they have learned throughout the year, whether it is a routine or

specific skill they have mastered.

After the exhibition the children are given an award like a medal or a plaque.

"The most beneficial thing for a program like this is children have a place to do these types of things in a safe environment and a way where you can show them the right way and safe way to do it," said Kelemen.

Youth basketball championship

Pistons smack down the Heat's uprising in final, repeat championship game

Aramis Alexander, an 11-year-old Pistons center, shoots a free throw after being fouled during the third period of play in the youth league 10-12 year old championship game between the Heat and the Pistons Feb. 26 at the IronWorks Gym. The championship game was a rematch of the Feb. 24 championship game between the two in which the Heat won in overtime 27-18. Being that the Pistons had lost only one game in the double-elimination tournament, the two teams had to rematch for another championship Feb. 26. This championship game ended in overtime as well, but this time it was the Pistons that came out on top 23-20.



LANCE CPL. SALVADOR MORENO

Commander's Cup Challenge

Joseph J. Hill, Marine Corps Community Services youth sports coordinator, measures distance after a competitor drives a ball down range using a yardage finder during The Longest Yard competition held at Penny Lake here Feb. 27. The yardage finder is a set of binoculars with a yardage reader on it.



LANCE CPL. SALVADOR MORENO

H&HS tees off, swings for Cup

LANCE CPL. SALVADOR MORENO
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

The Commander's Cup Challenge 2009 kicked off with The Longest Yard competition held at Penny Lake here Feb. 27.

The Commander's Cup Challenge is open to different units here to compete in various events which in turn leads to a unit receiving the Commander's Cup.

The Longest Yard was the first of the competitions. It is a driving competition in which teams of five members each drive five golf balls as far as possible.

After a player drives their balls down range, the distance is measured using a yardage finder. The yardage finder is like binoculars with a yardage finder in it.

"I take about five to six readings and use the most consistent reading that comes out," said Joseph J. Hill, Marine Corps Community Services youth sports coordinator.

After each player drives and the distance is measured, the

player with the highest score from each team is put up on the board as the team's high score to be measured against the other teams.

The top two highest team drives in the competition receive first and second place respectfully. They receive trophies and money toward their unit party fund.

Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron secured first place in the competition with a winning drive of 284 yards that earned it a trophy and \$100 towards its unit party fund.

Marine Support Squadron 171 took second place with a drive of 279 yards, earning it a trophy and \$75 toward its unit party fund.

Taking third place with a 270 yard drive was Marine Aircraft Logistics Squadron 12.

Each Commander's Cup event has points that can be won. Just showing up to an event earns team points, even if the team doesn't win.

At the end of the Commander's Cup Challenge, the points are added up to decide which team



LANCE CPL. SALVADOR MORENO

Lance Cpl. Kevin Quintana, a motor transportation operator, hits his last of five balls during The Longest Yard competition held at Penny Lake here Feb. 27. The Longest Yard was the opening competition of the Commander's Cup Challenge.

wins the Commander's Cup. "It is important to attend every event in the Commander's Cup. The overall winner is the team with the most points," said Ben Singleton, Marine Corps Community Services coordinator.

The weather conditions of the competition played a part in how well the competitors performed.

"I felt I did alright, but with

the cold out here, I couldn't hit at my full potential," said Lance Cpl. Kevin Quintana, motor transportation operator.

Many competitors in The Longest Yard did well. All seemed to be shivering at the tee, but at the end of the day it was Gunnery Sgt. Troy Ruby who stole first place for H&HS with his 284-yard drive.

Longest Yard competition results

Five team members from each unit competed to see which team could drive the longest golf ball.

Unit	Longest drive distance
Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron - Headquarters	284 yards
Marine Wing Support Squadron 171	279 yards
Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12	270 yards
Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron - Operations	247 yards
Branch Health Clinic	236 yards
Combat Logistics Company 36	232 yards

Schedule of upcoming events

March 20 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.	The 300	The ultimate test of strength, endurance and speed. Teams of two will compete together in a timed event for points, money and glory.	IronWorks Gym
March 10 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.	National Nutrition Month	Show up to learn about an important health topic. Have at least five members of your team sign in to earn 10 points.	Crossroads Lobby
April 10 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.	Sumo Bashi Tournament	Team members will compete in a double elimination Sumo Wrestling tournament.	IronWorks Gym
April 14 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.	Kid's Health	Show up to learn about an important health topic. Have at least five members of your team sign in to earn 10 points.	Crossroads Lobby