



**the KINTAI**  
shimbun

## **MAG-12 gears up for Wolmi-Do Fury**

by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

## **60th Toys for Tots campaign takes spin in Iwakuni**

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## **IronWorks offers variety of programs to help residents stay in shape**

by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

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**Dec. 7, 2007**

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

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Paul S. Hudson, station environmental trainer and native of Odessa, Texas, leads a pack of motorcyclists through the streets of the air station in support of the 60th annual Toys for Tots campaign kickoff at the Hornet's Nest here Dec. 2. The campaign collects and distributes toys for needy youngsters in the local community.

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## Open letter from the station CO

Iwakuni Marines, families and air station community:

This is the first in a series of letters that I have asked to be published in the Kintai Shimbun online newspaper and posted in common areas in an effort to provide you feedback from our first Town Hall meeting in November. My goal is to encourage open communication and to respond to those issues that you have expressed concern about.

From my perspective, the Town Hall meeting was a success. It gave me an opportunity to hear some of your concerns directly. I take all of your concerns very seriously and require my staff to find the best possible solution to all grievances. Some problems are not under our control or in our power to fix. However, my staff and I will make every effort to effect positive changes where we can and as long as they fit into the priorities of readiness, vigilance and quality of life that I have outlined.

The first issue I want to address with you is the noise level coming from Club Iwakuni to surrounding housing (particularly on

weekends and particularly effecting Building 655, the mid-rise next to the air station front gate). In an effort to reduce the noise, we have increased security patrols by military police, posted courtesy signage at the club, and increased enforcement. We're also looking into sound-proofing/mitigation options. The essential and immediate solution is for club-goers to be aware of their surroundings and to exercise common courtesy—I intend to help them along in this regard as required.

Club Iwakuni is there for Marines and the air station community to enjoy. It is especially important to our young Marines who work long hours and need a place on base to socialize. However, as you enjoy the atmosphere of the club, it is important at all times to observe good order and discipline. I expect all Marines and their guests to comport with accepted standards of behavior. Especially, I charge Marine leaders to ensure that appropriate behavior is enforced at the Club and throughout our community. The Command Sergeant Major and I will routinely inspect Club Iwakuni to ensure these standards are met and will take appropriate action when it is necessary. I



**Col. Michael A. O'Halloran**  
Station commanding officer

encourage other commands and all leaders to follow suit.

Please call the office of the Provost Marshal at 253-3303 or 253-3055 when you witness any misconduct on or off base that should come to my attention.

## Iwakuni Police Increase Enforcement

Iwakuni Police Department 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.

## Holiday Worship Schedule

The station chapel will be hosting a few extra services here starting Dec. 16 due to the holiday season.

The services are:

Dec. 16: 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Children's Christmas Program (During Protestant service)

Dec. 17-21: 7 - 7:30 p.m.

Catholic Sinbang Gabi (Gift Mass) (Small Chapel)

Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve

5 - 6 p.m.: Catholic Christmas Vigil Mass

6:30 - 8 p.m.: Protestant Christmas Eve Service

Midnight - 1 a.m.: Catholic Midnight Mass

Dec. 25 - Christmas Day 9 - 10 a.m.

Catholic Christmas Day Mass

Dec. 31 - New Year's Eve 10:30 p.m. - 1 a.m.

Protestant "Watch Night" Service

Jan. 1 - New Year's Day 9 - 10 a.m.

Catholic Mass, Mary, Mother of God

These services are in addition to the regular worship services. For more information, call the Station Chapel at 253-3371.

## The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

A christmas pageant presented by the Iwakuni Civic Theatre 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 Best Christmas Pageant Ever" is a story based on the book by Barbara Robinson. It is open to everyone.

## Spouse Tuition Aid Program

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society is offering Spouse Tuition Aid (STAP) to spouses of active duty Navy and Marine Corps personnel accompanying the service member overseas with a grant of up to 50 percent of tuition cost, not to exceed \$350 per term for undergraduate students or \$400 per term for graduate students. Enrollment may be full or parttime. Call NMCRS for the required forms to apply for STAP and to make an appointment prior to Jan. 4, 2008. An award in one term is no guarantee of future awards.

Any spouse of an active duty Marine or sailor who is seeking his or her first degree (undergraduate or postgraduate) or a certificate in a specialized area who has accompanied the service member overseas is eligible to apply. For more information call 253-5311.

# MAG-12 gears up for Wolmi-Do Fury

Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler  
Shimbun staff

Service members from Marine Aircraft Group 12 departed by air and sea for Okinawa Prefecture this week.

Personnel from Marine Fighter Attack Squadrons 212, 312 and 314, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 and Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 will utilize the air-to-air ranges and training opportunities not readily available here during Exercise Wolmi-Do Fury 2008.

“I deem it crucial that deployed units maximize the use of the ranges and airspace available in Okinawa to conduct basic air-to-air, close air support, strike coordination and reconnaissance, armed reconnaissance and air interdiction,” said MAG-12 Commanding Officer Navy Capt. David B. Emich.

According to Maj. Glenn Takabayashi, VMFA-312 operations officer, Okinawa’s isolated location allows pilots to prepare for a variety of scenarios with minimal interference from commercial jet routes.

“The airspace is easier to get in and out

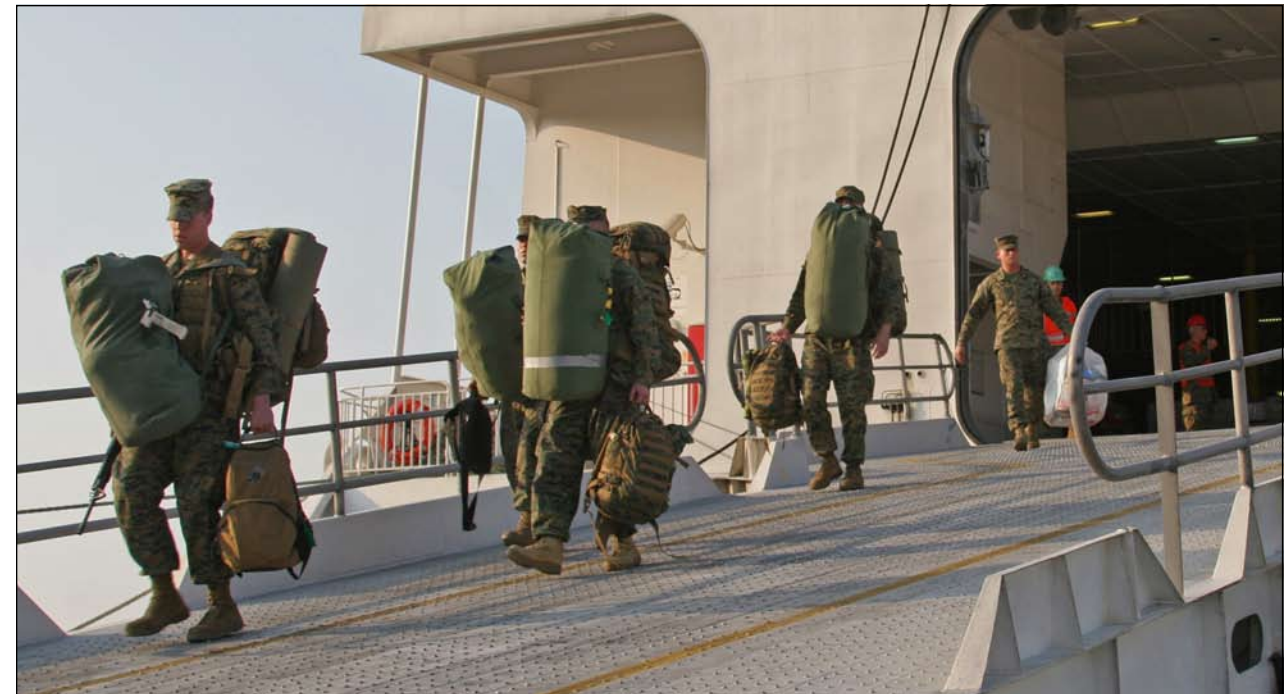
of, it’s bigger and allows us to train more efficiently and effectively,” said the Santa Ana, Calif., native. “Lastly, it works out down there because there are more air-to-surface ranges. ... For Western-Pacific training, it’s not bad for air-to-ground. In a 100-mile radius of Iwakuni there is no place to drop bombs.”

The pilots will also coordinate with Marines on the island’s central training area to simulate what Takabayashi describes as the “bread and butter” of the Marine Corps tactical air community.

“Wolmi-Do Fury is going to allow us to do some urban close air support training with ground Marines – a tactical air control party,” he said. “We can check in overhead and they can go through all the command and control (procedures).”

A large part of the mission during WDF will be the delivery of live ordnance, and a group of about 20 MALS-12 and MWSS-171 Marines are ready to build the bombs rocking Okinawa’s ranges.

“There’s a big variety of ordnance (the squadrons) can request, and some of those



Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

Marines participating in Exercise Wolmi-Do Fury 2007 disembark the High Speed Vessel at the Naha Military Port in Okinawa Dec. 2.

are GBUs (guided bomb units), LGBUs (laser-guided bomb units) and CADs (cartridge actuated devices),” said Staff Sgt. Jaime A. Salazar, MALS-12 aviation ordnanceman and native of Beeville, Texas.

“This is an excellent opportunity for (the ordnance Marines) to learn how to do this job. For a lot of the Marines ... we don’t

have the opportunities for them to build up here because it is live ordnance and there are no ranges,” he added. “It gives them a better feel for their MOS (military occupational specialty) when a lot of these guys are new from the schoolhouse and it’s their first time building live ordnance.”

# Wolmi-Do Fury finds America's Squadron 'ready to rumble'

Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler  
Shimbun staff

KADENA AIR BASE, Japan – At first glance things appear to be running normally at Marine Wing Liaison Kadena Hangar 3 here. Pilots and ground crews go about their business amidst the roar of turning jet engines as busses shuttle personnel to and from the airfield. Behind the building, however, sits something out of the ordinary: 13 olive-drab and tan military tents surrounded by a triple layer of coiled concertina wire.

Though it may look like the Air Force's 18th Wing is hosting a refugee camp on the flight line, it's actually Site 1, the handiwork of the hard chargers from Marine Wing Support Squadron 171.

A detachment of about 70 MWSS-171 Marines and sailors are working in Okinawa in support of Exercise Wolmi-Do Fury 2007.

The exercise, which allows Marine Aircraft Group 12 to hone its operational capabilities while improving interoperability with the Air Force, requires many moving parts. The members of America's Squadron wear

numerous hats in order to meet the needs of the deployment's upbeat tempo.

"Our role is to provide limited aviation ground support services," said Maj. Grant C. Killmer, Wolmi-Do Fury's MWSS-171 detachment officer-in-charge and native of Federal Way, Wash. "(This) includes aircraft and ground refueling, ... Explosive Ordnance Disposal, air base commandant functions including internal camp communications, engineering services, material handling, motor transport, security and law enforcement, and we provide some limited medical support – in this case two corpsmen."

MWSS-171 began their training by setting up and securing Site 1, which serves as "home base" for many units during the exercise. Though the service members working and occasionally sleeping at Site 1 sacrifice some small comforts in the field-like setting, Killmer, who works out of the site's Aviation Ground Support Operation Center tent, feels the experience gives Wolmi-Do Fury an added touch of realism.

"It shows our ability to operate independently using pretty minimal assets



Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

(From left) Sgt. David J. Swaney, MWSS-171 tactical data networking specialist and native of Kelseyville, Calif., and Cpl. Joseph Killian, Marine Aircraft Group 12 aviation information systems specialist and Birmingham, Ala., native, utilize their technical savvy at Site 1 during Exercise Wolmi-Do Fury 2007 at Kadena Air Base Dec. 3.

from the base," said Killmer.

now doing their jobs in locations spread out

Though many MWSS-171 participants are

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**WOLMI CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5**

over the base and Camp Foster, all played an important role in laying the groundwork for the exercise by setting up Site 1. According to Lance Cpl. Timothy J.A. Harper, MWSS-171 motor transportation mechanic, it's not uncommon for America's Squadron to utilize an array of military occupational specialties and ranks in accomplishing such a mission.

"Everybody helped out each other. If anyone needs help, they'll get it," said the Waynesville, Mo., native. "Nobody's lazy in 171."

Communication is the essential function MWSS-171 provides for the exercise. The Marines launched a network between squadrons and command units via internet, Secure Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPERNET) and telephone lines.

"The first step is establishing your internet, which is setting up all your switches and wiring so all your local computers can connect to each other," said Sgt. David J. Swaney, MWSS-171 tactical data networking specialist and native of Kelseyville, Calif. "From there you have to set up an external connection. Once you receive an external connection you can link your servers online."

Though linking up nearly 600 service members can be a daunting task, Swaney says it's a mission he and his fellow Marines are well-prepared for.

"My whole purpose here is to be able to set a network up from scratch," Swaney said. "Our network is self-sufficient."

According to Killmer, the experience of working in a different environment and cooperating with another branch of service will ultimately make America's Squadron's service members more proficient in their jobs and ready to tackle future deployments.

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*"It just exercises the system. It can be painful at times trying to make things work, but we get the bugs worked out. It makes things that much easier when we go on to some of the major exercise we do in Korea and throughout Asia."*

**Maj. Grant C. Killmer**  
Wolmi-Do Fury's MWSS-171  
detachment officer-in-charge

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"They get to see what it's going to be like to integrate with the Air Force units and to



Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

The task of transporting troops, ordnance and equipment during Exercise Wolmi-Do Fury 2007 falls into the hands of a small team of Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 motor transportation mechanics

understand how they operate," said Killmer. Korea and throughout Asia."

"It just exercises the system," he added. "It can be painful at times trying to make things work, but we get the bugs worked out. It makes things that much easier when we go on to some of the major exercise we do in

# Iwakuni police exercise promotes strong bond with station's PMO

Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez  
Shimbun staff

Personnel from the Provost Marshal's Office observed an annual security exercise conducted at the port in Iwakuni City Nov. 28.

Witnessing the exercise increased the station's confidence in the tactical adeptness of the local law enforcement, according to Staff Sgt. Trenton J. Sweeney, military policeman.

Japanese Coast Guard (JCG), Iwakuni Police and Yamaguchi Prefecture riot specialists teamed up to search a docked vessel, apprehend armed terrorists and extract a suspicious package as part of the bilateral training. Sweeny said Marines were invited to witness the training by the JCG in an effort to coordinate tactics and observe how they operate.

"This builds a better bond between the law enforcement agencies," said Sweeny, a native of Buffalo, N.Y. "Last year, we ran a similar exercise scenario during Exercise Active Shield where we had an illegal boat in our port. Our Japanese counterparts were

invited for the same reason."

The tactical procedures demonstrated were closely narrated from a safe distance away for Marines and local authorities observing the exercise. The narration provided an inside description of the action taking place and informed the Marines of the Japanese protocol. By examining Japanese terrorist or disaster response procedures, the Corps' becomes better equipped to working side-by-side with its host nation in such an event, Sweeny said.

Chief Petty Officer Hiro Kobayashi, JCG chief operations coordinator from Iwakuni City, said the exercise confirms the two agencies' interoperability and, to local officials including Marine personnel, the proficiency of the reaction team and their procedures.

"Today's exercise was carefully practiced many times in the past," Kobayashi said. "Our team's performance, including the command staff, was excellent. This demonstrates our ability to respond to such scenarios."



Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

Under the eyes of Marines and Iwakuni local officials, Yamaguchi Prefecture riot specialists board a vessel in search of armed terrorists as part of an annual bilateral training exercise at the Iwakuni Port Nov. 28. The exercise is conducted to foster interoperability between the Japanese Coast Guard and local law enforcement, polishing procedures to be utilized in the adverse event of a terrorist attack. Marines were invited to the event to take note of the Japanese protocol and to become familiar with its tactics and procedures should such a calamity require the side-by-side efforts of both Marines and Japanese defense agencies.

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Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

In front of Marines and Iwakuni local officials, an armored Iwakuni City policeman demonstrates the procedure for disposing of a suspicious package found on a criminal after being evacuated from a vessel during an annual training exercise at the Iwakuni Port Nov. 28.

***POLICE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7***

In the event of a terrorist attack or natural disaster, Japan-based Marines would likely assist in the defense and rehabilitation process that immediately follows, Sweeny said.

There are certain situations that both defense agencies could benefit from working

together on, according to Capt. Giuseppe A. Stavale, station provost marshal and Cincinnati, native.

“Many of their practices are the same as ours; however, in situations such as locating a bomb, we have military working dogs. ... It’s something that would probably be very useful to them in that event,” Stavale



Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

A Yamaguchi Prefecture riot specialist jams a simulated terrorist into a wall of riot shields with a torso stick, demonstrating to Marines and Iwakuni local officials the procedures for apprehending an armed terrorist during an annual training exercise at the Iwakuni Port Nov. 28.

said. “In other situations having to do with our harbor, where we have limited defense assets, their help would also be a necessity. We learn to combine our strengths in order to limit our weaknesses.”

The opportunity for Marines to familiarize themselves with the reaction procedures of their host nation is one Sweeny says is

absolutely necessary.

“We feel confident that the (JCG) knows how to do their job in this situation,” said Sweeny. “They know how to carry out their tactics in a way that we can follow as a military organization operating in a foreign country. We will continue to learn from each other through events like this in the future.”

# 60th Toys for Tots campaign takes spin in Iwakuni

Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez  
Shimbun staff

The throaty rumble of more than 130 motorcycles paraded through the air station with toys fastened to their storage racks to be delivered at the 60th annual Toys for Tots campaign kickoff at the Hornet's Nest here Sunday morning.

The chorus of choppers sounded in lieu of Santa's sleigh bells this Christmas season for needy children across the Pacific, to whom the gifts will be donated.

The worldwide event, conducted by Marines, collects and distributes donated toys in an effort to deliver a message of hope to needy children, according to the Toys for Tots Web site. Sgt. Maj. Randolph L. Mitchell, station sergeant major, said that the Iwakuni community greatly benefits from the event in that friendships are created not only through the spirit of giving, but through the local bike-riding population.

"There is not a more fitting event for the American and Japanese biker communities to get together than to show their support for the needy children in the area," said

Mitchell, a Rochester, N.Y., native. "We have bikers that have traveled here from as far as Osaka just for this event. This year we're fortunate enough to have a beautiful sunny day, so we're seeing the largest turnout for this event in Iwakuni history."

Sunday's crowd ballooned to nearly 200 supporters, donating approximately 150 individual toys, both surpassing the charity drives in recent years. Mike K. Gingles, president of the Iwakuni Biker's Club and native of Shreveport, La., said it took quite a bit of coordination to rally the large crew onto the air station, but the club's efforts were for a worthy cause.

"Whatever we can do to bring Christmas to these children in need, we're going to," said Gingles. "The more bikers we can gather here, the more toys we're going to obtain. This event not only shows the local community that we care about their children, it's also become an annual opportunity for bikers to get together and do what all bikers love to do: ride."

One participant, Clinton J. Hurda, Marine



Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez  
Motorcyclists from Iwakuni City arrive at the Hornet's Nest here Dec. 2, bearing gifts for the 60th Toys for Tots campaign, an annual event that collects and distributes toys for needy youngsters in the local community.

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**TOYS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9**

Corps Community Services outdoor recreation manager and native of Mineral Point, Wis., said he saw the parade of motorcycles ride by from inside his office window, grabbed his gift and gear, and joined in the procession.

“Every biker speaks ‘bike language,’ you could say,” said Hurda. “Whenever you see an opportunity to get together and share that passion for biking, you’re going to see a lot of us hop on for the ride.”

Participants have a passion for biking that has brought them back for the seventh year in the club’s history. By investing in a Christmas toy for a child, they’re also investing in their community, according to Hurda.

“This community obviously benefits from this event,” Hurda said. “There’s no doubt that I’m going to see all these faces, and probably more come next year.”

The gifts collected here will be donated to local orphanages in Iwakuni City and also orphanages in surrounding countries as far as Thailand and South Korea, a distribution opportunity exclusive to Iwakuni, according to Mitchell.

Campaign contributions are still highly encouraged. Families are invited to deliver their gifts to donation box locations including the first floor of Building One, Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 headquarters Building 128, Hornet’s Nest, Marine Lounge and the Marine Corps Exchange (MCX) entrance. Marines wearing the dress blue uniform will be greeting gift givers at the MCX entrance Friday through Sunday, this weekend and the next.

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*“This community obviously benefits from this event. There’s no doubt that I’m going to see all these faces, and probably more come next year.”*

- Clinton J. Hurda  
Marine Corps Community Services  
outdoor recreation manager

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The gifts donated are scheduled to be wrapped by volunteers Dec. 13 and 14 at the Hornet’s Nest. On Dec. 15, a portion of the gifts are scheduled to be delivered to the Garden of Light Orphanage in Iwakuni City. For information on how to participate in the gift wrapping or delivery events, contact the Hornet’s Nest by calling 253-3585.



Lance Cpl. Kyle T. Ramirez

More than 130 motorcyclists, some wearing decorative Christmas costumes, dismount their choppers to attend the 60th annual Toys for Tots campaign at the Hornet’s Nest here Dec. 2. The event collects and distributes toys for needy youngsters in the local community.

# Around the World in 16 Days

**Sgt. Cristin K. Bartter**  
Shimbun staff

Last spring Headquarters Marine Corps and NAVAIR ordered Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni to deliver one of its UC-12 aircraft to the United States to complete an aircraft conditional inspection and receive a Proline Glass cockpit upgrade modification. As a UC-12 transport aircrewman I honestly didn't think it would result in the trip of a lifetime. Being all too familiar with Semper Gumby, I continued to live in disbelief – this was obviously too good to be true.

The trip was originally planned to fly through Russia, Alaska and into the lower 48 states covering about 7,000 nautical miles and taking approximately seven days. As politics and luck would have it, roughly two weeks prior to departure, the Russian embassy denied our landing rights and we were forced to re-plan the trip the long way around the Earth - 15,000 nautical miles, 15 countries and 16 days.

Let me take you through our voyage from

start to finish – around the world in 16 days.  
**Mission:** Return the C-12 to Greenville, S.C., by 4 p.m., Nov. 26.

**Crew:**

**Aircraft Commander**

**Lt. Col. Gary “Static” Kling**

**Co-Pilot**

**Maj. Ronald “Rawhide” Gaines**

**Crewchief**

**Sgt. Cristin “Pocahontas” Bartter**

**Mechanic**

**Angel “Shiny Head” Rosario**

**Day 1 (Nov. 12) – From Iwakuni to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, then Clark Air Base, Philippines.**

For this crew, flying to the P.I. is not too out of the ordinary.

**Day 2 (Nov. 13) – From Clark Air Base, Philippines to Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia, to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, then Phuket, Thailand.**

Thailand is by far one of my top 10 favorite countries. On one side of the street you



Sgt. Cristin K. Bartter

MCAS Iwakuni – On the cusp of our journey, we set out to travel around the world in 16 days.

may see a monk praying, while on the other side there are things you will only see in Thailand. If you don't know what I'm talking about, come see me.

**Tip:** Enjoy a nice run along the shoreline; you'll see more in a 30-minute romp than a

whole day of tourist-induced walking.

**Day 3 (Nov. 14) – From Phuket, Thailand, to Port Blair, India, to Chennai, India, then Mumbai, India.**

*SEE WORLD ON PAGE 12*



Sgt. Cristin K. Bartter

Seeb, Oman – The setting sun creates the perfect backdrop as the British Nimrod Squadron, stationed in Seeb, Oman, work to the day’s end.

***WORLD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11***

India. Not exactly my favorite country, too say the least. But hey, you can’t win them all. Whatever you do, don’t brush your teeth with the water or you’ll end up like Angel and me – praying to the porcelain goddess for days.

Day 4-5 (Nov. 15-16) – From Mumbai, India, to Seeb, Oman, then Abu Dhabi, United Arab of Emirates.

Oman was a great stop, short and sweet. We were supported by a British Nimrod Squadron who is stationed there in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. While awaiting fuel, we enjoyed (key word:



Sgt. Cristin K. Bartter

Cairo, Egypt – After landing in Cairo, we went out to see the Great Pyramids. I still can’t believe we were given the opportunity to visit one of the seven Ancient Wonders of the World.

enjoyed) MRE’s. For all of you diehard ‘Anti-MREists’ who have stated “I would much rather eat my own arm than indulge in an MRE.” I’ve got two and a half words for you – Chicken ‘n’ Salsa.

Just a tip for all those who plan to visit Abu Dhabi in the near or distant future - bring along someone with long hair and female

features; you won’t get a cab any other way. We, the crew, have all agreed we’d still be in UAE, hungry, otherwise.

Day 6 (Nov. 17) – From Abu Dhabi, UAE, to Kuwait, then Cairo, Egypt.

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Sgt. Cristin K. Bartter

We got the opportunity to fly 6,000 feet over the Swiss Alps.

***WORLD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12***

Kuwait was another great fuel stop. Once we landed in Ali Al Saleem we got to check out hardened aircraft shelters that were destroyed by laser guided bombs during the Gulf War in 1991.

Alright folks, if you aren't already green

with envy, this is when the tables begin to turn in our favor. Before we launched this mission we all had agreed on one thing – we were going to the Great Pyramids. We didn't care if we had to sell Angel's organs on the black market – we were going to the Great Pyramids. Upon touchdown in Cairo we went through customs, I was attacked by a toilet (they have super-soaker devil



Sgt. Cristin K. Bartter

Keflavik, Iceland - Giving up a hearty Thanksgiving dinner didn't matter much to us as we dropped 10 years of age while soaking in the Blue Lagoon, a geothermal spa in Iceland.

toilets), we dropped our gear at our hotel and proceeded immediately to the pyramids. Once we got there we were surprised with the deal of a lifetime. Not only were we going to see the pyramids, but we were going to them via camels. After a half hour camel ride (and camel race) to the base of one of the seven Wonders of the Ancient World we were provided Egyptian cuisine while watching

the Great Pyramid's light show. Seriously, in retrospect, I still can't wrap my mind around the fact that I can sit here, capable of marking that check in the box - mission complete.

Day 7 (Nov. 18) – From Cairo, Egypt, to

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Souda Bay, Greece, then Naples, Italy.

Italy was, as the locals would say, “Magnifico!” The food, the wine, the people ... absolutely incredible! If I had a choice to eat a certain cuisine for the rest of my life I would choose Italian food.

Day 8-9 (Nov. 19-20) From Naples, Italy, to Stuttgart, Germany.

After flying 6,000 feet over the Swiss Alps we were able to enjoy two words – German Beer. Need I say more?

Day 10 (Nov. 21) From Stuttgart, Germany, to Edinburgh, Scotland.

While in Edinburgh, we were given the opportunity to visit the Edinburgh Castle which is home to the regimental museum of the Royal Scots and Royal Scots Dragoon Guards. During our tour of the castle we took advantage of the chance to see the Honours of Scotland, the Crown jewels and regalia. Even though the weather was gray, we were so grateful to enjoy this stop.

Day 11 (Nov. 22) From Edinburgh, Scotland, to Stornoway, Scotland, then Keflavic, Iceland.

Giving up a hearty Thanksgiving dinner didn’t matter much to us as we dropped 10 years of age while soaking in the Blue Lagoon, a geothermal spa in Iceland.

Day 12 (Nov. 23) From Keflavic, Iceland, to Narsarsuaq, Greenland.

Think of the most beautiful landscape you can imagine – glaciers, fjords, icebergs and National Geographic kind of scenery. I would be lying if I didn’t say flying into Greenland tops them all. A picture may be worth a thousand words, but even these don’t do Greenland justice.

Surprisingly enough, Narsarsuaq, Greenland, has a long military history. The airfield was actually built by the American Department of Defense as an army base and during its prime was home to approximately 4,000 people. It has been estimated that more than 10,000 aircraft were ferried through the airport during World War II.

Initially, we weren’t planning on getting too familiar with Greenland, but due to weather we ended up calling it a night in the, now, much smaller town of Narsarsuaq, home to approximately 120 people. Welcome to “ship life.” Being the only guests of the Narsarsuaq Hotel, it felt a bit like the movie “The Shining.”



Sgt. Cristin K. Bartter

Narsarsuaq, Greenland – Think of the most beautiful landscape you can imagine – glaciers, fjords, icebergs and National Geographic kind of scenery. I would be lying if I didn’t say flying into Greenland tops them all. A picture may be worth a thousand words, but even these don’t do Greenland justice.

Day 13-14 (Nov. 24-25) From Narsarsuaq, Greenland, to Goose Bay, Canada, then Andrews AFB, Washington D.C.

Landing into Goose Bay was such a relief.

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*WORLD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14*

As beautiful as Greenland was; it was confirmation I'm not too savvy with "ship life." In fact, I was so excited we made it to Canada (even in a blowing snowstorm) that I did the moonwalk on the icy flight line.

Talk about a double-whammy, not only did we make it to North America, but we made it to the United States in one piece!

Day 15 (Nov. 26) From Andrews AFB, Washington D.C., to Greenville, S.C.

We made it! Not only did we make it, but we were early.

Day 16 (Nov. 27) Greenville, S.C., to Chicago, Ill., to Tokyo, Japan, then Iwakuni, Japan.

I have never experienced bittersweet as ruthlessly as I did this day. It felt great to be home, but being home also meant the end of our around-the-world journey ... well, we'll see about that.

There always is next year.



Greenville, S.C. – We, "The Flying Gypsies," made it! Not only did we make it, we were early.

Sgt. Cristin K. Bartter



# Thrills and spills: A first-time snowboarder's experience

Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs  
Shimbun staff

The winter season is here and like many Marines and sailors will do, my friends and I headed for the slopes.

We visited Mizuho Ski Resort, which is located about an hour and 45 minute drive from the station. It was the first weekend the resort was open this season, and the run was produced with artificial snow.

Being from Florida, I had never done anything in the snow. When I heard people talk about the difficulties they had their first time snowboarding, I thought to myself, "I'll have no problem." With a little bit of skateboarding and surfing under my belt, I figured snowboarding would be cake. I was wrong!

The first thing I had difficulty with was the snow's slickness. As soon as I got up, the board either slid out from underneath me or one of the edges would dig into the snow causing me to lose my balance and fall right on my butt. When I did get up and start going straight, I would zip off straight ahead

at full speed. Frightened at how fast I was going, I panicked and gladly fell to stop myself.

Naturally, the first ride was a long one. The course was a little more than a mile and half long and felt narrow, hard and fast to me. I spent most of the ride on my butt and the rest of it exhausted off to the side trying to get out the way of the more experienced snowboarders. About an hour passed before I finally reached the bottom.

After all that hard work, I needed a long break.

The second time down I was able to slide down the slope by facing forward and leaning back, keeping my weight on my heels. I drove the edge of the board into the snow to gradually slide down the hard, crusty slope. That was pretty easy to do, but very tiring on the lower back and legs.

I tried to mix in some turns and weave back and forth across the course like many of the Japanese made look so easy, but once again I got going straight and took some tumbling spills and flew off the course.



Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

A snowboarder makes his way down the slope at Mizuho Ski Resort Dec. 2. The resort recently opened for the winter season.

By the end of the day and four or five runs later, I could comfortably make it all the way down without falling too much or running

into anyone. But if I wanted to really enjoy it, I knew I would have to work on my

*SEE SNOW ON PAGE 17*

*SNOW CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16*

turning and maneuvering.

After rehearsing and visualizing the moves I needed to make to carve in and out on the course, I was prepared to make serious progress in my evolution as a snowboarder on day two. With a little help and encouragement from a more experienced friend I was well on my way to enjoying myself on the slopes.

I made a noticeable improvement overnight. Now I was comfortable sliding down the slope not only forward but backward as well and gained the confidence to turn at will. While I still took a lot of spills, at least I was beginning to get it. By the third run, I was carving back and forth in slow, controlled movements.

The reality of my amateurishness was never far away however. A few times I got going full-bore straight ahead before reaching an uncontrollable speed. As I began to tumble head over heels, I figured the next thing I would feel would be my wrist or ankle breaking. A few of those body-rattling spills could have been why I felt like I had been in a car accident the day after.



*SEE SNOW ON PAGE 18*

Snowboarders and skiers make their way down the slope at Mizuho Ski Resort Dec. 2. A day lift pass at the resort costs 5500 yen.

Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

*SNOW CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17*

I got up determined to continue to improve. I'd occasionally try to follow a better snowboarder but usually for only a short time before bailing out and coming to a grinding halt on the hard surface.

At the end of the visit, a friend and I went down the slopes several consecutive times. We took pictures of each other on the way down and worried less about falling. As I pulled up alongside him at the bottom of the slope, I stopped and flopped on my back looking at the sky lit by the fading sun. Exhausted, I was glad to be finished and ready to head home.

On the way back as I stared at the road in front of me, I imagined it was the slope and pictured myself weaving back and forth on it. Though I was tired, I had and still have the urge to get back on a board. I can't wait until next time!

Information, Tours and Travel can provide information regarding local ski resorts and has several trips scheduled for January and February. Free gear rentals are available from Outdoor Recreation at IronWorks Gym. Vehicle rentals are also available from Typhoon Motors located on North side next to the Single Marine Program Hornet's Nest.



Mizuho Ski Resort is located about an hour and 45 minute drive from the station in the outskirts of Hiroshima. The resort has multiple runs for beginner to advanced snowboarders and skiers.

Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

# Celebrating Christmas in the workplace

Master Sgt. Robert E. Raines  
Contributing Writer



Master Sgt. Robert E. Raines

appropriate at work when it comes to the Christmas season. Should you say “Happy Holidays” vice “Merry Christmas”? Should you display Christmas decorations at work? Should you offer holiday greetings? What if someone gives you a gift and you don’t give one in return? All these questions revolve around the fact that everyone has a different perception about what Christmas time is all about and how they want to

To participate or not to participate, that is the question. For many people celebrating the Christmas season at work can be a touchy subject. The fact that the holiday can mean different things to different people, as well as the fact that some people don’t observe Christmas, can lead to some uncomfortable situations in the workplace.

Oftentimes, it may be difficult to know what is

share the season with others.

Many commanders encourage a general atmosphere of holiday spirit, but you have to take into consideration your personal situation before you decide on how you will approach the Christmas season at your workplace. Whether you celebrate Christmas or not, most workplace get-togethers often center on cohesion and community. Many organizations tend to operate on reduced manpower over the days of Christmas and New Years. This means that winter holidays can be enjoyed by everyone, regardless of religious implications.

In the end, regardless of belief and religion, Christmas time at work often becomes a time of coming together. The way you express your holiday cheer is really up to you to decide based on your individual culture.

*Editor’s note: Any questions concerning this article should be forwarded to Master Sgt. Robert E. Raines, station equal opportunity advisor and native of Detroit, at 253-4186*

For many people celebrating the Christmas season at work can be a touchy subject. The fact that the holiday can mean different things to different people, as well as the fact that some people don’t observe Christmas, can lead to some uncomfortable situations in the workplace.



# IronWorks offers variety of programs, classes to help service members, families stay in shape during holiday season

Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs  
Shimbun staff

Cold weather and hectic schedules can make staying physically fit during the holiday season a challenge.

To combat the tendency to sit around huddled in a warm room and the temptation to put off physical fitness goals until the new year, fitness experts at IronWorks Gym have some tips to help everyone stay active and in shape this winter.

“Try to fit in short, simple workouts when you get free time,” said Ingrid Williams, station fitness coordinator and native of Chicago. “It doesn’t have to be much, just 20-30 minutes of walking or simple aerobics.”

Along with staying active, diet, of course, is one of the keys to staying in good physical health.

“Don’t starve yourself,” Williams said. “Eat small meals throughout the day. That way

you’re not tempted to overeat.”

When station residents do get together for holiday festivities, Williams suggests they plan simple activities, such as Charades (a word-guessing game where players act out words or phrases) or group walks to stay active during the event.

“Avoid sitting around the entire time,” said Williams. “Anything you do is going to be helpful in burning off those extra calories.”

One of the best ways to stay motivated and in-shape is through group activities, according to Barb Roman, fitness instructor and native of Boston. From Strength, Wellness, Education and Aerobic Training (SWEAT) to yoga, Gut Busters, martial arts, and gymnastics classes, the gym has something for everyone.

“Everyone feeds off each other’s energy,” said Roman. “If one person gets excited about exercising then everyone gets excited. Working out doesn’t have to be work; it can be fun.”



Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

Barb Roman, fitness instructor and native of Boston, instructs students during a Kidfit class at IronWorks Gym here Dec. 4. One of the best ways to stay motivated and in-shape is through group activities, according to Roman.

By staying active Marines, sailors and their families can ensure a happy and healthy holiday season, according to Williams.

“If you get up and do something you’re going to feel a lot better about yourself.”



Chief Petty Officer Michael Jensen, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron builder chief, shakes hands with Bob Funk, Matthew C. Perry High School assistant principal, after presenting a \$1,500 check made out to the school on behalf of the Iwakuni Chief Petty Officer Association at the Marine Memorial Chapel Thursday.

The chiefs raised the money with various fundraisers throughout the year, including a recent Italian ceramics bazaar that earned \$400 toward the donation.

“It’s a lot of money, and we really do appreciate what they’ve done,” said Funk. “The chiefs really have come through this year for us.”

The money will be used to purchase needed academic and athletic equipment, Funk added.

# 3/5 Marines meet unexpected man of the house



Pfc. Brian Jones

Marines with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 6, descend a stairwell of a Fallujah resident's three-story home, Nov. 15.

**Pfc. Brian Jones**  
**Regimental Combat Team 6**

Marines stopped and knocked at a courtyard gate. A little girl answered the door with an anxious look on her face.

“Is the man of the house in?” asked Sgt. Ysac M. Perez, a squad leader with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 6.

As if on cue, a little seven-year-old boy appeared and owned up to the title. The Marines greeted him with smiles and laughter. This scenario is not unusual, however, said Perez.

“This is actually pretty common while the father is gone,” said Perez, a Whittier, Calif., native. “He was considered the man of the house since his dad was gone, which trips me out because back in the States, a seven year old wouldn’t even be allowed to answer the door, and here he is, the one in charge.”

The days of kicking in doors and forcibly searching buildings and homes are long over for the Marines in the city of Fallujah as it

transitions back to a peaceful community. Instead, Marines knock at the doors and greet the people with a professional and sociable demeanor with cultural courtesies in mind. It is a job many of these Marines never imagined they would be tasked with in a city known for its history as a violent epicenter of Anbar Province.

Perez and his Marines with 4th platoon, Co. K, patrolled their neighborhood and gathered census information to develop a clearer insight into the area, its people and their concerns.

Along the way, during the patrol, Perez chose the upscale home to stop and visit. He wanted to speak with the residents to check on how things were going, as a friendly neighbor would do.

The boy said his father was away at prayer and the mother was out tending to daily errands. For Perez this was a sign the family felt secure enough to attend local mosques and shop in a now-bustling market place.

Perez asked the boy for permission for his Marines to go to the rooftop to overlook the

area from above. The boy took a look around at the Marines and their weapons, and with a smile, decided to allow them in.

As the Marines slowly walked through, they subtly scanned the rooms as an informal search while they made their way to the rooftop. Perez ensured his Marines were careful not to encroach on the family’s privacy.

“My Marines know what rooms not to go into and stay out of, like the prayer rooms with mats and the rooms the females are in,” Perez said.

Perez, having children of his own, wondered what the Iraqi children hope for in the future.

“Personally, I like to try to see what their outlook is toward us and what their dreams are compared to the children in America, who dream of being crazy things like rock stars and all,” Perez said. “From what I have got so far, they aim pretty high. A lot of them want to be doctors, physicians and engineers. Some of them may get the chance.”

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**CORPS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22**

When Perez asked the child how big the family was, and all the children's ages, he came to the realization the family had been growing at a rate of roughly one child every year.

As the Marines started to descend the three-story house to leave, the father returned home from prayer.

When asked if he minded the Marines being there, he responded by saying they were more than welcome to be in his house. He thanked the Marines for being there and commented on how well the Iraqi Police are coming along.

To the Marines' cultural interest, the father kept up two families. At the household the Marines were currently visiting, he had a wife and seven children. In his other household in a neighborhood not far away, he had his second wife, four children, mother and mother-in-law. He supported the family by selling fish in the market.

"He seemed like a real upkept guy," Perez said. "He was a very family-oriented man. He didn't care about what was going on in the outside world. All he worried about was his own family."

What was unique about this man to Perez was the man was wealthy by Fallujah standards, yet remained more focused on the smaller issues within his family than trying to have any influence on the developing world around him.

"Fallujah is very good. I don't worry about the poverty. I don't care about the war and insurgents. I care about providing food and shelter for my family," the man told Perez.

During the fighting for the city, the man said he had left the city, but had not traveled far to live in a small town outside of Fallujah. He returned home and found his property had been damaged. Two of his bedrooms had been completely burned.

He didn't know who was responsible, and did not seem interested in finding out. Since his return, the highways had become safe enough for commercial trucks to travel from Baghdad to deliver his fish to the market. The man made enough money from his business to go on with his life and make the necessary repairs to his homes with his own money.

For the man it was a normal visit. He said he speaks with the Marines frequently and continually understands more about what is going on. His only complaint was about the



Pfc. Brian Jones

Marines Company K, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 6, stand outside of a Fallujah resident's home after stopping by to see how the family was doing, Nov. 15. Stopping at Fallujah homes while on patrol through their neighborhood to speak with residents help the Marines collect census information from the area.

unreliable power sources in the city. He said he rather see money be spent on correcting the power failure problems than anything else. The Marines reassured him the problem was being worked on.

It was a brief visit for the Marines with a family they will now know a little better. The Marines will continue communicating with the locals, getting to know them better and, ultimately, ensuring the people's safety and their own through everyday interactions.





**Lance Cpl. James W. Phelps**  
Richmond, Va.

“It would be better for recruits at boot camp. They wouldn’t have to worry about keeping one pair really nice and the other really broken in. That could also be a problem. Most Marines keep one pair of boots squared away at all times and another pair of boots as ‘work boots.’ In the end we’ll all just end up saving money.”

**Cpl. David M. Hammell**  
Cape May, N.J.

“The change will most definitely benefit us. There will be even less issued items for us to worry about keeping track of. Marines won’t have to worry about losing their gear. It will alleviate a lot of stress that comes from having too much gear.”



The commandant has recently been spotted wearing a new type of boot with his combat utility uniform, according to Pendleton-based Marines, whom he recently visited. The boots are said to have a green rubber toe and a removable insulation system that makes them adaptable to all weather environments, eliminating the need for two different types of boot. There is no definite word on the big switch, but many Marines are already weighing the pros and cons of the Corps’ newest kicks. This week we want to know ...

## What’s your reaction to the new style of boot?



**Gunnery Sgt. John E. Ramos**  
San Diego, Texas

“I always say that Marines should be uniform. This new boot will make that possible. Most Marines, especially ones on this air station, don’t seem to care too much about being uniform anymore. There are still those of us, myself included, that lace their boots left over right and stick with old traditions. Uniformity is key.”

**Warrant Officer Wes M. Nelson**  
Rifle, Colo.

“A gear list would no longer have to say ‘Bring two pairs of boots.’ That would be a really good thing. But with this new insulation insert, that’s just something else Marines are going to lose. If you give them something as small as something to stick in their boot, they’re going to lose it or someone is going to destroy it. Other than that, I think it’s a great idea.”





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All queries concerning news and editorial content should be directed to the Public Affairs Office, Building One, Room 216, MCAS Iwakuni, Japan. Call 253-5551.