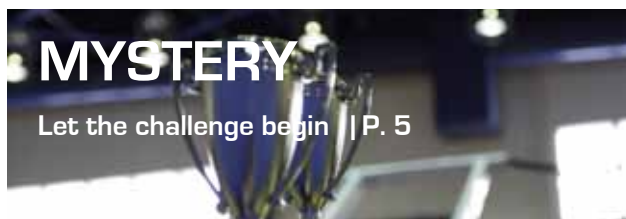




EXPANSION

Seabees help base expand | P. 4



MYSTERY

Let the challenge begin | P. 5



TEAR IT UP

Runners forge path to victory | P. 6 & 7

IWAKUNI APPROACH

Issue No. 9 Vol. 5 | Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan

MAG-12 celebrates its 70th anniversary



Seventy years later, MAG-12 still flying | P. 6 & 7

CPL. PAUL MESHAK

MARINE CORPS BASES, Japan — U.S. Marine Corps F/A-18D Hornets with Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242, Marine Aircraft Group 12, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III Marine Expeditionary Force, fly in support of Exercise Invincible Spirit July 24. The readiness exercise took place in and around the East Sea to demonstrate Republic of Korea-U.S. alliance resolve.

Marines receive visit by 1st MAW commanding general

Lance Cpl. Cayce Nevers
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

KORAT ROYAL THAI AIR FORCE BASE, Kingdom of Thailand — Military personnel of Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 115, Marine Air Control Squadron 4 Detachment B, Marine Wing Support Squadron 172, Marine Aircraft Group 36 and Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 received a visit by Maj. Gen. William D. Beydler, 1st Marine

Air Wing commanding general during Exercise Cobra Gold 2012 Jan 27.

Cobra Gold is a reoccurring multinational and multiservice exercise hosted by the Kingdom of Thailand. It is designed to advance regional security by exercising a multinational force from nations sharing common goals and security commitments in the Asia-Pacific region.

During Cobra Gold 2012 squadrons worked to improve mission readiness by training

SEE **COMMANDING** ON PAGE 3

Personnel return full force

Lance Cpl. Cayce Nevers
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Military personnel of Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadrons 242, Marine

Fighter Attack Squadron 115, Marine Air Control Squadron 4 Detachment B and Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 departed Korat Royal Thai Air

SEE **INDEX** ON PAGE 3


Assistance offered to servicemembers

Lance Cpl. J. Gage Karwick
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Tuition assistance is an opportunity for Marines and sailors to earn a college education with little to no cost.

In order to receive tuition assistance, servicemembers must first take a class called "College 101." The class is given every Friday from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on the first floor in building 411.

SEE **ASSISTANCE** ON PAGE 3



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The Iwakuni Approach welcomes Letter to the Editor submissions. Letters must include a full name and unit, if applicable. Anonymous letters and comments will not be published. Letters are the opinion of the writer only. Submissions may be edited for clarity and space. Letters can be dropped off at the Public Affairs Office or sent via e-mail to iwakuni.pao@usmc.mil. Please submit all content at least two weeks in advance of projected publication date for review.

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CHAPLAIN’S CORNER

‘Desire change for better’

Cmdr. Dean L. Hoelz
MAG-12 CHAPLAIN

With the Christian season of Lent upon us, I thought it might be helpful to provide some information about this important holy season that is observed by many in the Christian world. Lent begins with the observance of “Ash Wednesday.” It marks the 40-day period of fasting and repentance leading up to Easter. These 40 days parallel and recall the 40 days Jesus fasted in the wilderness as well as the 40-year wanderings of the Hebrew people from Egypt to the Promised Land. Ash Wednesday dates back to the 4th century.

The use of ashes draws on the ancient biblical traditions of covering one’s head with ashes, wearing a sackcloth, and fasting as a sign of repentance or change in one’s life. In Ash Wednesday services, church-goers are marked on the forehead with a cross of ashes as a sign of penitence and mortality. At some churches, the worshippers leave with the mark still on their forehead so they carry the sign of the cross out into the world while other churches’ services end with the ashes being washed off as a sign that participants have been cleansed of their sins.

The marking on their foreheads fashioned in the shape of a cross made of ashes reminds each church-goer of the finality of life and the reality that death is a part of life. It reminds participants that the Creator seeks for us to desire change in our lives for the better. That dark, cross-shaped smudge reminds us that the God who transformed a lump of dust in the Garden of Eden into a living breathing human being continues to have life changing and transforming power, in our lives. For me, I look at it as this: If God can transform mere dust, then what can he do with me and with you?

It is my prayer during this holy season that God’s life-creating power may transform you in ways that enrich your life, strengthen your relationships and add meaning and purpose in all you do.

ACTIVE SHIELD 2012



A cordon will be in effect March 6 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Affected roads will be blocked for vehicles and pedestrians. All personnel not directly participating in the portion of the exercise MUST STAY CLEAR OF THIS AREA.

The station public announcement system will sound March 7th beginning at 8:00 a.m. Announcements will be preceded and followed by “Exercise, Exercise, Exercise.”

Prepare for numerous emergency vehicles such as fire trucks and ambulances throughout the day from March 5 through 7 across the station.

Some active duty members participating in Exercise Active Shield will wear distinctive markings on their uniforms that could include glow belts, tape or other devices.

All exercise conditions are subject to change. Your patience is appreciated.



Interested in becoming a DJ?

You could rock the club and enjoy all the night time parties Club Iwakuni has to offer! If you are interested in becoming a DJ, call MCCS Productions at 253-3727 for details.

COMMANDING FROM PAGE 1

with allies in scenarios such as Royal Thai aircraft versus U.S. aircraft, U.S. and Royal Thai pilots working together to take out “enemies” on the ground by dropping ordnance and to complete semi-annual training for pilots.

Beydler’s visit included flying with VMFA(AW)-242 and visiting all the units, presenting challenge coins and patches to Marines.

These Marines were handpicked by their chain of command for their hard working and for exceeding the expectations set.

“The purpose is to see firsthand how Marines and sailors of 1st Marine Aircraft Wing are performing in the exercise and to see them perform the skills that we expected they would execute in a range of operation that we could be expected to support III Marine Expeditionary Force with,” said Beydler.

With the high intensity of performing on operations, Marines and sailors are still working to build the relationship with the host country.

“These exercises bring people together,” said Beydler. “Anytime you work with the host country, whether it’s briefing or debriefing, you get to know them and know that we are able to respond here to support them.”

While their job doesn’t change based on location, the intensity during exercises does.

“Here, we are restricted to what we brought with us,” said Cpl. Kayla Trolio VMFA (AW)-242 fixed-aircraft wing mechanic. “It is great



KORAT ROYAL THAI AIR FORCE BASE, Kingdom of Thailand – Maj. Gen. William D. Beydler, commanding general, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III Marine Expeditionary Force, watches a Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242 fixed-aircraft wing mechanic during Exercise Cobra Gold 2012. Cobra Gold is a reoccurring multinational and multiservice exercise hosted by the Kingdom of Thailand. It is designed to advance regional security by exercising a multinational force from nations sharing common goals and security commitments in the Asia-Pacific region.

training, the pilots get to train with host aircraft and pilots and we get to continue learning.”

Throughout the training evolution, squadrons worked to become proficient in surface-to-air exercises, daytime close-air support and air interdiction.

While deployed to strategic regions such as

the Kingdom of Thailand, the training is often difficult, both in the air and on the ground.

Exercise Cobra Gold is a Thai and U.S. co-sponsored multinational, multiservice exercise that includes forces from Singapore, Japan, Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and representatives from other countries in the region.

ENDEX FROM PAGE 1

Force Base, Thailand, Feb. 23 after supporting Exercise Cobra Gold 2012.

Exercise Cobra Gold is an annual multinational exercise which allows military personnel to conduct bilateral and unit level training with Thai Armed Forces, the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and 5th Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company.

During the first week of deployment, Marines and sailors set up and prepared for the beginning of the exercise.

Setup included prepping gear, maintaining aircraft and pilots performing familiarization flights.

Throughout the training evolution, squadrons worked to become proficient in air-to-surface exercises, daytime close air support and air interdiction.

“Cobra Gold is the U.S.’ largest multinational exercise and a major tool to build and maintain alliances,” said Maj. John M. Baseel, Cobra Gold 2012 action officer. “It represents one of our major training exercises to conduct air-to-ground training with the ground combat element of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and air-to-air training against dissimilar aircraft.”

Marines and sailors trained with units from all over the world to build strong ties with U.S. allies.

For 31 years, Cobra Gold has forged ties with U.S. allies.

“Cobra Gold is a way for us to build and strengthen the alliance between the U.S. and Thailand,” said Baseel.

Throughout the training, the tempo of the workload increased for those participating in the exercise.

“Cobra Gold is held annually to

exercise our ability to deploy to a key strategic region and to test our interoperability with a long-term allied nation,” said Baseel.

This exercise also allows pilots to complete semi-annual training and learn how to maneuver aircraft to “enemy” attacks.

“The training conducted included air-to-air training on small scales as well as Large Force Exercises involving 20 or more aircraft,” said Baseel.

While the U.S. works mainly with its Thai counterparts during the exercise, Cobra Gold requires many nations to run smoothly.

“Multiple units from the United States and other nations work together to make this exercise a success,” said Lt. Col. Richard E. Petersen, VMFA(AW)-242 commanding officer. “Nations include the United States, the Kingdom of Thailand, Japan, Singapore, the Republic of Korea, Indonesia and Malaysia.”

While deployed, Marines and sailors had the opportunity to leave base and experience cultures other than their own. Marines took trips to temples and other historic places.

“Humanitarian assistance and community relations activities enable our military forces to break cultural barriers, train together and improve interoperability while providing vital services to areas in need,” said Petersen.

The closing ceremony of Exercise Cobra Gold 2012 ended this year’s exercise. Exercise Cope Tiger is slated for April.

Exercise Cope Tiger is a multinational exercise where the U.S., Thailand and Singapore work together to strengthen ties between the countries and learn from other’s abilities.

TA schools Marines

ASSISTANCE FROM PAGE 1

The class touches on what servicemembers have to do in order to get the most from tuition assistance as well as teaching how to build a road map to their education.

Colleges aboard the station visit the class to give information about their respective schools.

The three resident colleges aboard the station located in building 411 are the University of Maryland University College, Central Texas College and the University of Phoenix.

Servicemembers gain information about the number of credits required to attain a degree, how long it takes to achieve a degree, depending on whether the service member is a full time or part-time student, and ways to choose a major.

“The Marine Corps provides a good opportunity in helping to take the burden of paying for school away,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Travis W. Storie, Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 121 coordinates officer. “When you have been in for a while you want to keep your options open for when you get out.”

Servicemembers who attended the class received a copy of their Sailor/Marine American Council on Education Registry Transcript.

Some military occupational specialties offer more college credits than one would expect. According to SMART, every Marine gets eight credits just for going to boot camp.

“Taking college classes will help me progress not only in my military career, but also in whatever civilian career I choose,” said Lance Cpl. Bradley Price, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 aviation calibration technician who recently took the “College 101” class.

So to all those who are looking to receive tuition assistance, the class “College 101” is requires to receive tuition assistance and is every Friday from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Seabees, MWSS-171 clear way to expand base

Seabees play part in station expansion

Cpl. Kenneth K. Trotter Jr.
IWAKUNI APPROACH
STAFF

Demolition, construction and maintenance are some of the things which may come to mind when one thinks of Navy Seabees, the backbone of U.S. Naval construction.

For Seabees stationed here, their role is complex and multilayered, but on a lesser scale.

"It's a small community of Seabees here," said Chief Petty Officer Gerald A. Rawlins, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron facilities maintenance chief. "There are two divisions of Seabees. There are those attached to H&HS facilities and those in the Resident Officer in Charge of Construction office."

Seabees have seven positions and rates they fill. They are construction mechanics, builders, electricians, equipment operators, construction electricians, steel workers and engineering aides.

Seabees attached to H&HS often an auxiliary role, providing assistance to barracks residents whenever they encounter problems. Some of those issues can be minute such as a broken light bulb to more costly, such as a broken washer or dryer.

"A lot of what we do with facilities is in emergencies in the barracks like when a washer or dryer breaks down," said Seaman Joshua A. Silva, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron utilities constructionman. "Seabees can get anything done, no matter what it is if someone needs it done."

One of the drawbacks to being part of a much smaller

unit is not taking part in larger projects associated with what Seabees are primarily known for.

"We're kind of out of our element," said Rawlins. "(Servicemembers) are so used to seeing us doing larger-scale construction. Here we're such a small force, that we don't get to do what we're trained to do as often. It's similar to a Marine who can't shoot."

Constantly constructing and putting together large-scale projects, such as runways and forward operating bases, is the Seabees true bread-and-butter.

"I helped start on the construction of Camp Leatherneck," said Rawlins. "It was Camp Bastion before, when it was just dust."

Though this station isn't Camp Leatherneck by any stretch, the Seabees find ways to put their skills to use by performing demolition duties in construction projects.

On Feb. 15, station Seabees and heavy equipment operators from Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 took part in demolishing a section of fence near the current construction site of the future commercial air terminal right off the station using two John Deere TRAM 624KR Tractor, Rubber Tired, Articulated Steering, Multi-purpose vehicles. The purpose of removing the fence was to make more room for the growing air terminal project.

"It was nice to work alongside (MWSS)-171," said Silva. "It was a good opportunity for them as well to get some training in with their equipment. They helped to speed up our project time by weeks and we're really appreciative of that."



CPL. KENNETH K. TROTTER JR.

Lance Cpl. Seth A. Cozean, a Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 heavy equipment operator, and Seaman Joshua A. Silva, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron utilities constructionman, look on as a John Deere TRAM 624KR Tractor, Rubber Tired, Articulated Steering, Multi-purpose vehicle prepares to clear away debris and sections of a demolished fence on the north side of the station near the future sight of the proposed civilian terminal. Along with demolition, Seabees help in auxiliary roles aboard the station, particularly the barracks.



CPL. KENNETH K. TROTTER JR.

Lance Cpl. Thomas R. Swortchek, Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 heavy equipment operator, sits in the cabin of a John Deere TRAM 624KR Tractor, Rubber Tired, Articulated Steering, Multi-purpose vehicle after clearing away debris and a broken down chain-link fence on the north side of the station here Feb. 15 with Seabees from Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron. Project which are small in scale, such as the demolition of this fence, are not done as often by Seabees, as more often than not, in larger battalions, they build runways and forward operating bases but are capable of doing any project regardless of the size. Only 12 Seabees are aboard the station.



CPL. KENNETH K. TROTTER JR.

A CAT420EIT Loader backhoe loads debris into the bed of a Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement vehicle on the north side of the station here Feb. 15 in preparation to reduce the space of a fence in preparation for the expansion of the proposed civilian air terminal. Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron Seabees and Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 heavy equipment operators worked together to achieve this goal.

COMMANDER'S CUP!!!



PFC. BENJAMIN PRYER

Pfc. Dylan Hale, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron postal clerk, does pull-ups while competing in the Commander's Cup Mystery Endurance Challenge in the IronWorks Gym sports court here Feb. 24. The mystery challenges consisted of surrenders, dips, ab-wheel rolls, bosu burpees with shoulder press, box jumps, pull-ups and suspended alternated lunges. Each participant had two minutes to do AS MANY repetitions as possible.

Mystery challenge: Four teams enter, one team wins

Lance Cpl. Benjamin Pryer
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Servicemembers competed in this year's second Commanders Cup event, the Mystery Endurance Challenge, at the IronWorks Gym sports court here Feb. 24 to build unit cohesion across the station and provide an intense workout for all who participated. The challenge forced competitors to push their bodies to the limit in a continual flow of exercises.

"It was good to see the Marines competing against each other," said Alma Dickinson, Marine Corps Community Services Iwakuni health promotions director. "It's events like this that help bring the units together and provide good fitness."

Of the teams that competed, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 came out on top with 1300 points collected. Following behind them was operations with 1174 points, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron with 1165 points and Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 with 1160 points.

"It was tough pushing through all the events, but it was definitely worth the reward," said Gunnery Sgt. Chris D. Walters, MWSS-171 air frame staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

"It was a great workout and even brought the units closer together," said Walters. "This was a great way to not only build camaraderie with my own unit, but every Marine who participated here today."

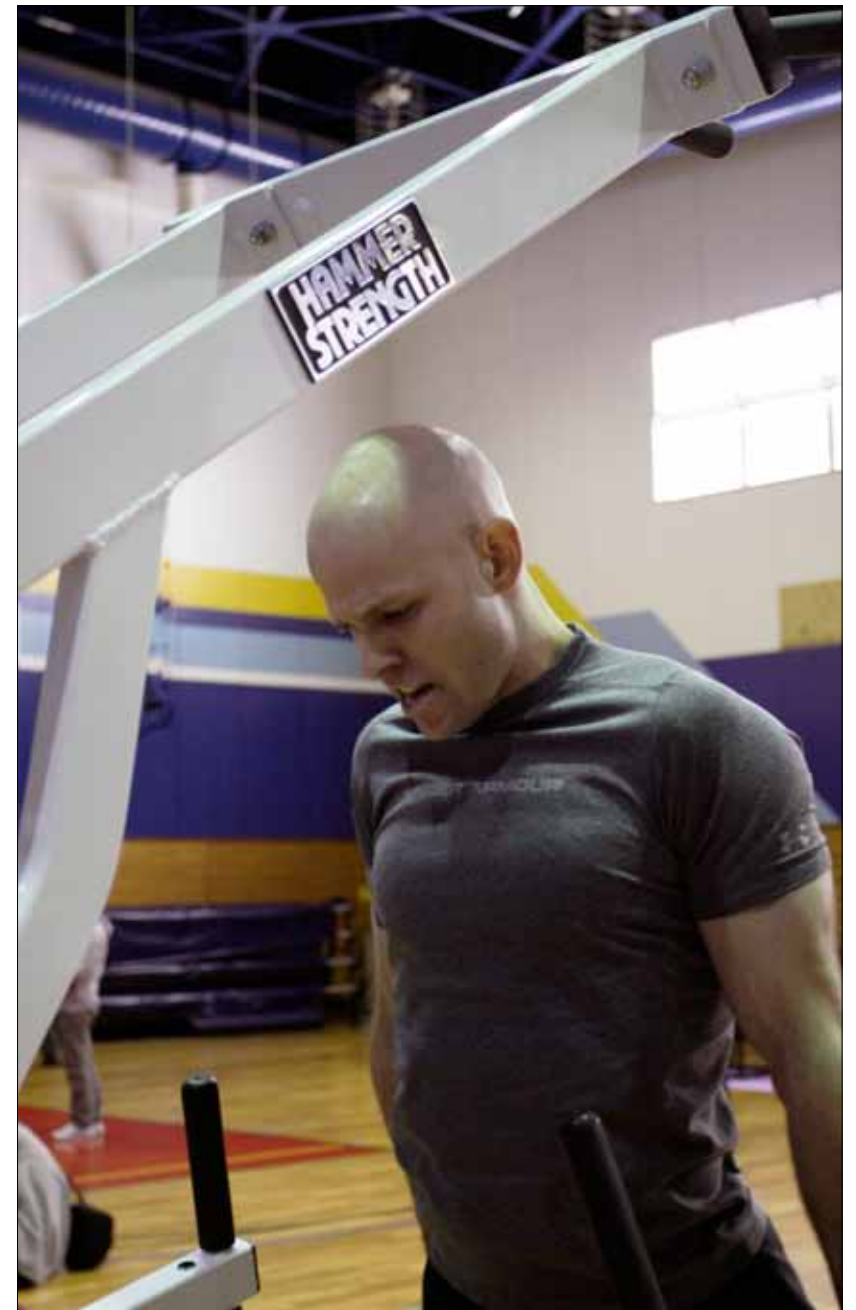
There were seven stations set up, each with its own workout and a proctor standing by to count the number of repetitions each athlete accomplished.

Competitors were given two minutes per station to complete as many reps as they could, only receiving a minute break in between each new exercise.

"By the time the Marines got to my station, they were covered in sweat and worn out," said Mai Tajima, MCCS Iwakuni SemperFit athletics recreation specialist. "The workouts we had set up for them today were designed to work out every part of their body."

The first and second place teams were awarded a source of money for shop functions and the top three teams received points towards their unit's overall score in the Commander's Cup.

Events for the Commander's Cup are scheduled every month until the final event, the Gladiator's Challenge, in September.



Gunnery Sgt. Chris D. Walters, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 air frame staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge, does dips as part of the Commander's Cup Mystery Endurance Challenge which was held in the IronWorks Gym sports court here Feb. 24. Of the teams that competed, MALS-12 came out on top with 1300 points collected throughout the challenge. Four team members were required for the challenge, with at least one female participant per team. Competitors were given two minutes per station to complete as many as they could, only receiving a minute break in between each new exercise.

PFC. BENJAMIN PRYER

MAG-12 celebrates 70 years of Marine aviation expeditionary excellence



CPL CLAUDIO A. MARTINEZ

Twenty-four Marine Aircraft Group 12 F/A-18s from Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242 and Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 safely landed to bring their portion of exercise Foe Eagle 2011 to a close. Col. Stephen G. Nitzschke, former MAG-12 commanding officer, referenced this moment as one of the most significant to him during his command of MAG-12 because it serves as testament to The Ready Group's abilities. Col. Christopher J. Mahoney succeeded Nitzschke as the MAG-12 commanding officer.

“The Ready Group” remains at the tip of the spear

Sgt. Charles McKelvey
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Marine Aircraft Group 12, commanded by Col. Christopher J. Mahoney, celebrates its 70th year of service this month. With this anniversary, the group can take time to reflect on its storied history.

From combat operations in the 1940s Pacific theater, to close-air support in Korea and involvement in Chu Lai, Vietnam, supporting Marine infantry and other allied forces in engagements against Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army units. MAG-12 has been a major player in air superiority since its inception.

“Seventy years is a huge milestone if you think about how far we have come,” said Mahoney. “Starting from flying the F4F Wildcats to our current F-18s, we have made a significant leap in technology.”

In addition to the 70th anniversary of MAG-12, 2012 also marks the 100th anniversary of military aviation.

“In conjunction with the 100th anniversary of aviation, we’re going to have a competition next week including basic fighter maneuvers (dog fighting),” said Mahoney. “This event, including our squadrons, will open the door to celebration.”

There is no big blowout celebration planned for this diamond of an anniversary. Instead, throughout the year MAG-12 will celebrate how far they have come since 1942 on days like Friendship Day and with events such as the dog-fighting competition.

Throughout the years, MAG-12 continues to validate its roots as an expeditionary force and an ever-extending “long arm” of United States military air power.

The official mission of MAG-12

is to conduct anti-air warfare and offensive air support operations in support of Fleet Marine Forces from advanced bases, expeditionary airfields or aircraft carriers and conduct such air operations as may be directed.

“To sharpen the readiness edge, we do monthly surge events with the squadrons to double and triple the amount of sorties they fly within a 24-hour period,” added Mahoney. “This shows everyone we can shift gears very quickly and put more combat power into the air.”

MAG-12 is unique, “The Ready Group” is the only constantly forward deployed fixed wing group in the Marine Corps.

“The most important part about being forward deployed is being ready,” said Mahoney. “There is no reason for us to be out here if we’re not ready.”

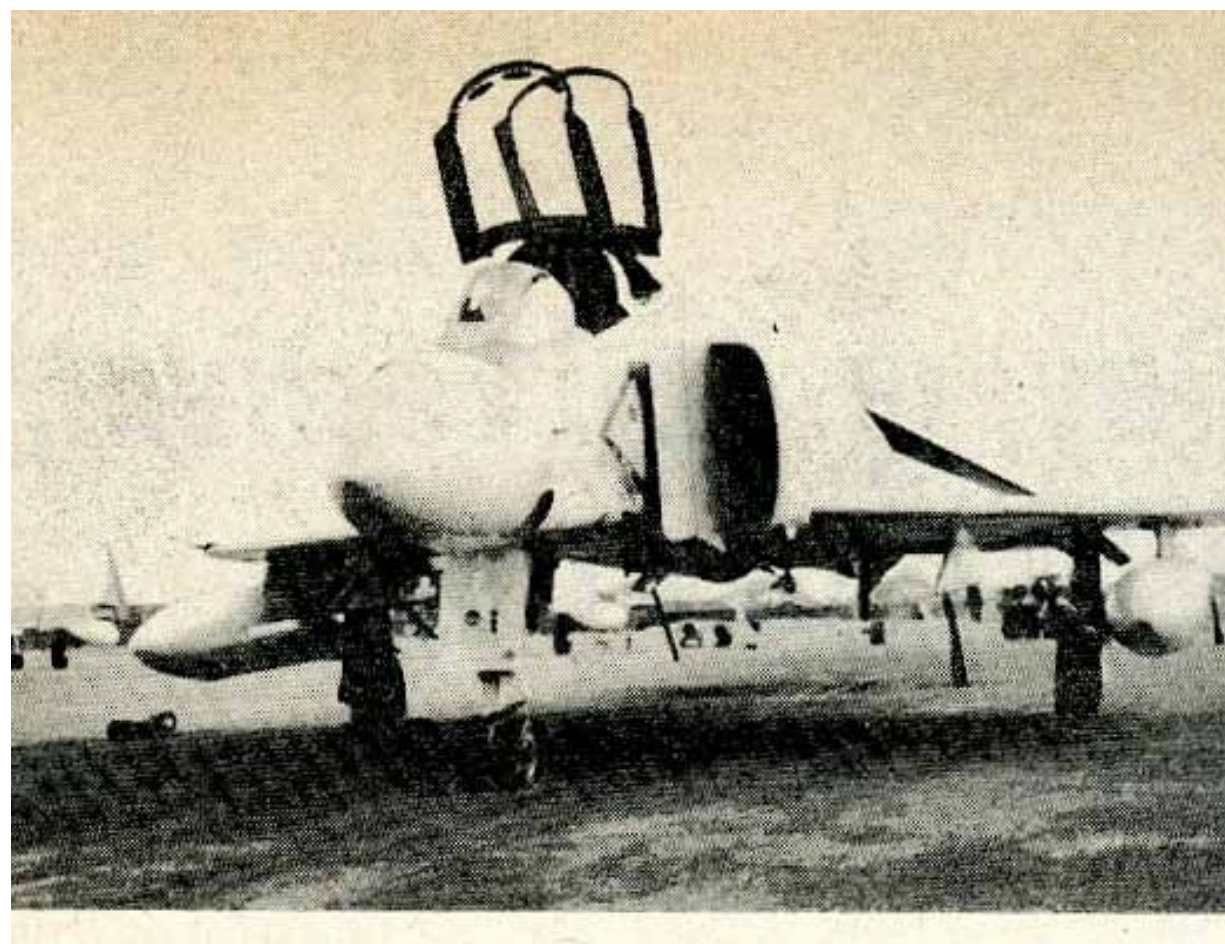
In 2011, MAG-12 took their combat readiness on the road and participated in multiple exercises spanning from Guam to Thailand. They even ventured “Down Under” to Australia to verify their aviation abilities.

However, in 2011 MAG-12 also conducted business of a different nature.

Elements of MAG-12 to include chemical biological radioactive nuclear Marines, planned to participate in Exercise Foe Eagle diverted to help with the relief effort of Operation Tomodachi.

“Our assistance in Operation Tomodachi showed we could also support operations in a non-traditional role for aviation squadrons,” said Mahoney.

Whether flying combat sorties in areas of the Pacific or helping people in need during humanitarian operations, MAG-12 is and will always be “The Ready Group.”



NOTE: THE FOUR PICTURES ABOVE WERE PUBLISHED IN A 1972 EDITION OF THE TORRI TELLER.

CORPS NEWS

HIGHLIGHTING MARINES AND
SAILORS AROUND THE GLOBE

Marines sweep uncharted areas of Khan-Neshin during Operation Highland Thunder

Cpl. Alfred V. Lopez
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 5

SRE KALA, Helmand Province, Afghanistan — A large plot of austere terrain in the southern portion of Khan-Neshin district is home to local farmers who make a living growing crops far from the more developed districts of southern Helmand province.

The villages of Sre Kala and Paygel can be found among this harsh terrain, along with evidence of an insurgency whose members have moved from northern districts to escape the growing reach of Afghan National Security Forces.

Until recently, the hundreds of kilometers of desert and marshland terrain in this area of Helmand's southernmost district was previously untouched by Afghan or coalition forces. Marines and sailors of 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion and India Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, swept through 324 square kilometers of southern Khan-Neshin during Operation Highland Thunder, Feb. 15-22.

The clear, part of the ongoing Regimental Combat Team 5 winter offensive, Operation Tageer Shamal (Shifting Winds), was conducted to prepare the area for follow-on counterinsurgency operations by Afghan forces.

The Helmand Afghan Border Police will soon join their Marine counterparts to begin partnered operations around Sre Kala and Paygel, further extending the southern reach of Afghan and coalition forces. The addition of the ABP will aid coalition efforts to curb insurgent drug and weapons trafficking activity in the area.

"This area is pretty large," said Sgt. Jared Carlson, a squad leader with Alpha Co., 1st LAR. "There's a lot of enemy activity... You

can tell by the atmosphere [in the villages]."

Due to logistical constraints, Afghan forces regard this segment of the Helmand River, which extends to Dishu Ferry, as their southernmost area of influence in the province. The establishment of two new patrol bases in Sre Kala and Paygel will further strengthen their ability to operate in this area of Khan-Neshin.

"The number one thing we're doing is disrupting the enemy to set the conditions for the arrival of the Afghan Border Police," said Capt. Sean Williams, the Alpha Co. commander, 1st LAR. "We're doing that by conducting a lot of dismounted patrols in the green zone, where everybody lives."

After establishing Patrol Bases Sre Kala and Paygel, Marines with 1st LAR led the operation on foot, using dismounted patrols to sweep for insurgent activity, weapons and drug caches.

Mobile units of the battalion set up blocking positions and vehicle check points to catch insurgents attempting to flee the area, while India Co., 3/3 conducted helicopter inserts to disrupt insurgent freedom of movement.

"We want to get [the ABP] established here, so they have the ability to be able to push west," said Williams. "Going into the villages, collecting biometrics data, getting to know the elders, getting to know the lay of the land is going to help set them up for success."

"We want to get them here and have something for them to fall in on," explained Williams. "It's always easier when there's a baseline already established."

The terrain presented uncomfortable obstacles during numerous daylong patrols. Marines treaded through waist-deep canals, and marched through knee-high patches of mud, averaging 10 kilometer treks on a daily basis.

"The terrain in our previous area of

operations was a lot more forgiving," said 1st Lt. Gil Barndollar, a platoon commander with Alpha Co., 1st LAR. "Here, the biggest challenge is the canals...They're a lot deeper and wider, we have very little choice but to cross them."

In order to avoid enemy ambushes and improvised explosive device attacks, Marines avoided crossing the makeshift bridges built by locals and other well-traveled routes.

"During an overnight outpost, one of our Marines was carrying his [overnight] pack along with an electronic countermeasure device while crossing a canal," recalled Barndollar. "He got off-balanced and fell back into the water...everything in his pack got wet. As soon as we got to our OP, we had to dry all his things and keep him warm to avoid hypothermia."

Regardless of the inherent difficulties presented by the terrain, Alpha Co. Marines found multiple caches during their foot patrols through the muddy marshland and seemingly endless desert.

These caches contained several AK-47s and RPK medium machine guns recently used against coalition forces, more than 3000 7.62mm rounds for the weapons, drugs and IED components.

"Being able to find the enemy's tools of the trade is a great victory," explained Carlson. "Hopefully it's keeping this area safe and helping it progress, especially with the ABP coming in."

Marines with 1st LAR will continue to strengthen their positions at Sre Kala and Paygel in anticipation of follow on operations with the Helmand ABP. The partnered forces look to mirror the steady progress made by their counterparts in northern districts, as Marine forces gradually shift into an advisory role and the ABP take the lead in counterinsurgency operations.



CPL. ALFRED V. LOPEZ

SRE KALA, Helmand province, AF-U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Marcos Castelan, a light armored vehicle crewman with Alpha Company, 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, and a 19-year-old native of Alvin, Texas, helps Sgt. Mario Mendoza, a team leader with Alpha Co., 1st LAR, 25-year-old native of Seguin, Texas, out of a canal during a patrol here, Feb. 16. Marines and sailors with 1st LAR and India Co., 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, conducted clearing and disrupting operations in and around the villages of Sre Kala and Paygel during Operation Highland Thunder. Marines with 1st LAR led the operation on foot, sweeping for enemy weapons and drug caches through 324 square kilometers of rough, previously unoccupied desert and marshland terrain. Mobile units with 1st LAR set up blocking positions and vehicle check points while India Co., 3/3 conducted helicopter inserts to disrupt insurgent freedom of movement.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS | CLASSIFIEDS

Briefs

Tsunami warning siren tests

The city of Iwakuni has decided to sound warning sirens when a tsunami is near. In order to provide widest dissemination the warning siren, the city has scheduled practice sirens beginning March 11 at 2:46 p.m. The sirens will sound 10 times for five seconds each with a six second break in between sirens.

Iwakuni is now on Facebook

The Iwakuni Approach now has a Facebook page. Updates will be made consistently along with content only available on Facebook. The page welcomes classified ads posted on the wall. Staff will choose ads weekly to be featured in the Iwakuni Approach paper. A larger selection of photos from covered stories will also be available and free for those pictured to tag themselves. Visit www.facebook.com/theiwakuniapproach

including both old and modern Japanese customs and traditions throughout the event. Enjoy free Japanese and American food and door prizes. For more information contact, the JAS office at 253-4744 or call 080-4554-4744.

Marine A-4 Skyhawk Reunion

Marine A-4 Skyhawk Reunion, in conjunction with the MCAA Symposium and Centennial Celebrations, is scheduled for May 16-19 at the Gaylord National Hotel, Oxon Hill, MD. All drivers, maintainers and aficionados are welcome. For more information, contact Mark Williams at rodger.wilco@comcast.net.

Free Child Development Screening

Educational and Developmental Intervention Services will hold a free child development screening event for children 4 - 60 months Feb. 29 and March 1 at Matthew C. Perry Elementary School. Child specialists will answer questions and screen 5 major areas of child development. For more information, please schedule an appointment with EDIS at 253-4562.

Iwakuni Roadrunners

All service members and civilians are welcome. Runs are Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. Meeting place is in front of Crossroads Mall. Time and length of runs vary. All abilities are welcome. For more information, visit "Iwakuni Roadrunners" Facebook page.

Education Fair

The Lifelong Learning Department is scheduled to host an Education Fair for station residents

March 7 from 12 - 2 p.m. in Building 411. This event will serve as a great informational forum for students interested in starting, continuing and advancing their education. Light refreshments will be served, and door prizes will be given away. For more information, contact the Education Office at 253-3855.

Off-limit Establishments

The following establishments are hereby off-limits:

- The multi-tenant building "NOW," Tenant occupant's names change frequently. Past names for this building include, Ran, Massage Parlor, Welcome American, Follow Me and F-18.
- Hiroshima's Tougan Goods Company.

Thrift Store Changes

The Marine Thrift Store has new management and new hours. Wednesday and Friday 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 4 - 6:30 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Open to active duty military in uniform Monday through Friday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday.

NMCRS Quick Assist Loans

The Iwakuni Navy Marine Corps Relief Society is providing Quick Assist Loans to prevent active duty service members from falling prey to predatory lenders. These loans are designed to assist with short-term living expenses up to \$300, interest free and must be repaid within 10 months. For more information, call the Iwakuni NMCRS at 253-5311 or stop by the Marine Memorial Chapel, Room 148.

Emergency Phone Numbers Reminder

- Anti-terrorism force protection hotline: 253-ATFP (2837).
- Life limb or loss of vision threatening emergencies while on the air station: 119 or 911. From a cell phone or for bilingual capability: 082-721-7700.
- For security issues, contact the Provost Marshal's Office: 253-3303. To report without talking to a person, Crime Stoppers: 253-3333.
- Sexual Assault: To make a confidential report of sexual assault or harassment, contact the victim advocate at 253-4526 during working hours. For after hours, weekends and holidays, call 090-9978-1033 or 080-3427-0835. You can also call the installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator at 253-6556 or 080-5865-3566.

OSC Scholarship

Applications are now being accepted for OSC scholarships. Graduating seniors or spouses can apply by sending an e-mail to iwakunischolarship@hotmail.com. Deadline for submissions is April 14.

Thrift Store Volunteers

Volunteer positions available. Applicants should be outgoing, willing to have fun and highly motivated. We are also looking for a board member treasurer with book keeping experience. Board members and store volunteers must attend all store meetings. All positions are volunteer, non-compensated positions. For more information call Patty or Sharon at 253-4711 or e-mail thrift_store@yahoo.com.

Lending Locker Program

The lending locker program is available to provide small home appliances and utensils for incoming and outgoing command sponsored members for up to 60 days inbound and 30 days outbound. A copy of PCS orders are required to check out items, and the program is by appointment only. The lending locker is located in Building 411, Room 101. Appointments are 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. For more information, call 253-6161.

Jobs

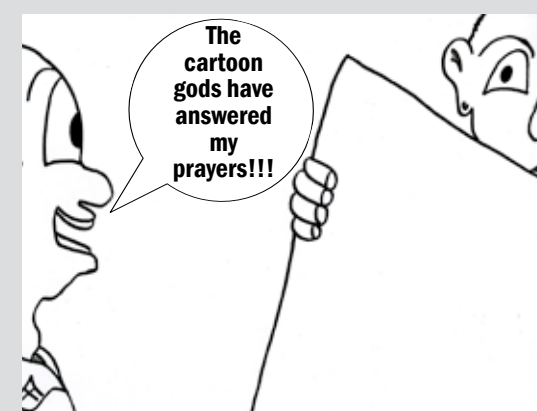
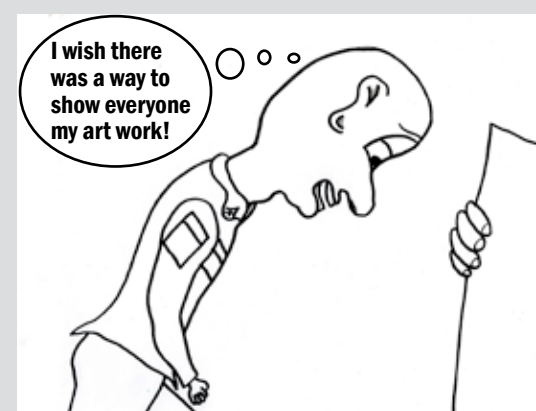
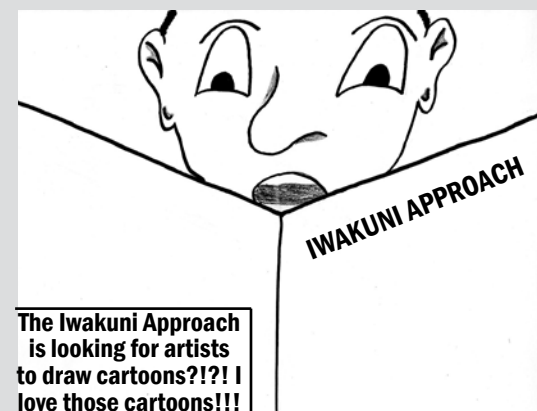
Dental Assistant

The 11th Dental Clinic is now accepting applications for a full-time dental assistant. Certification of qualification is required. For more information, call 253-5252.

Brief and Classified Submissions

To submit a community brief or classified advertisement, send an e-mail to iwakuni.pao@usmc.mil. Include a contact name, a phone number and the information you would like to be published. You may submit your brief or advertisement in person at the Public Affairs Office, Building 1, Room 216 or you may call 253-5551. Please ensure you provide all requested information to simplify the request process and ensure. The deadline for submissions is 3 p.m. every Friday. Submissions will run the following Friday on a space-available basis. The Iwakuni Approach staff reserves the right to edit submissions for space and style.

Chotto matte Joe Tomatte! Do you like to draw?



INFOTAINMENT

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

Protestant
2nd & 4th Saturday 10:00 a.m. Seventh-Day
Adventist Sabbath meeting
Sunday 9:30 a.m. Sunday School,
Adult Bible study
10:30 a.m. Protestant Service
4:30 p.m. Lutheran Holy
Communion Service
(Small Chapel)
Tuesday 9 a.m. Ladies Bible Study
Wednesday 5:45 p.m. Awana (Bldg. 1104)
1st & 3rd Thursday 9:30 a.m. MOPS

Church of Christ
Sunday 9:30 a.m. Bible Study (small
chapel)
10:30 a.m. Service Fellowship

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

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

THE IWAKUNI APPROACH CULTURAL LESSONS



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIS GLADIS

This week's Kanji Adventures will expand your Japanese traveling knowledge. A kôban is typically a two-storied building with one to ten police officers. The officers keep watch, respond to emergencies, give directions and assist local citizens. Remember to be courteous while traveling in Japan.

Helpful phrases

Call for a doctor, please.
Isha o yonde kudasai.

I need an interpreter.
Tsuyaku ga hitsuyo desu.

Help!
Tasukete!

I'm lost.
Michi ni Mayotte imasu.

Call the police, please.
Keisatsu o yonde kudasai.

Please call me a taxi.
Takushii o yonde kudasai.

Where is the police box?
Kôban wa doko desu ka?

Please help me.
Tasukete kudasai.

Where is the lost-and-found?
Ishtsubutsu toriatsukaiko wa doko desu ka?

How do I get there?
Dô yatte iku n'desu ka?

Vowel pronunciation

The letter “a” like the “a” in “father.”

The letter “e” like the “e” in “pet.”

The letter “i” like the American “ee” in “feet.”

The letter “o” like the initial portion of the American “o” in “so.”

The letter “u” like the “oo” in “fool.”

SAKURA THEATER

Friday, February 24, 2012

7 p.m. The Darkest Hour (PG-13)

10 p.m. The Devil Inside (R)

Saturday, February 25, 2012

4 p.m. Adventures of Tintin (PG)

7 p.m. Contraband (R)

Sunday, February 26, 2012

4 p.m. Journey 2: The

Mysterious Island (PG)

7 p.m. The Darkest Hour (PG-13)

Monday, February 27, 2012

7 p.m. The Devil Inside (R)

Tuesday, February 28, 2012

Theater closed

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Theater closed

Thursday, March 1, 2012

7 p.m. Contraband (R)

The movie schedule is subject to change. Please check www.mccsiwakuni.com/sakura often for updates, or call the Sakura Theater at 253-5291 for the latest schedule.

General Admission: Ages 12+ are \$3/ Ages 6-11 are \$1.50/ Children ages 5 and under admitted free. For more information, visit www.mccsiwakuni.com or call 253-5291.

Gokukan 5k fun run

Lance Cpl. Benjamin Pryer
IWAKUNI APPROACH
STAFF

A bitter wind howls in the air, chilling flesh and bone. Runners stand ready, determination showing in their faces.

The silence is broken by the pop of the starting gun, a flurry of motion erupts forth as the athletes begin their run.

This was the sight at the Marine Corps Community Services Iwakuni Gokukan five kilometer fun run, which took place on the seawall behind the IronWorks Gym here Feb. 17.

While some competitors raced to see who was the fastest, the fun run itself took place in order to give station residents an opportunity to meet someone new or just have an enjoyable run with others around.

“We want the servicemembers to be happy while they’re out here, to have a little taste of America,” said John Iwaniec, MCCS Iwakuni director. “We’re a community providing services to our fellow servicemembers and that’s what it’s all about.”

Gokukan, literally translated as “extreme cold” in Japanese, is given to this run, which takes place here annually and always during February, ensuring the coldest temperature.

Participants may run at their top speed, or take a leisurely pace.

“MCCS does its best to provide events for the station to help people stay in shape, and also to offer entertaining activities throughout the year,” said Iwaniec. “As a prior

servicemember, it makes me feel good knowing I can help keep the residents here happy and content with events like this.”

The race had five overall winners, three for males and two for both females who competed.

The first place male was Nobuhisa Tanigawa with a 5k run time of 16:49.

Behind him was Isaku Yamamori with 17:42.

With a time of 19:27, Nicholas Rhoades crossed the finish line for third place.

Female winners were Kyle Langan with 27:16 and Vera Savage with 28:02

“I practiced every day for this run,” said Tanigawa, “I’m proud of my results. The atmosphere was the best part though, getting to run with everyone else on the station.”

After the race, competitors were offered water and snacks.

Those who ran could be seen talking about the recent race, possibly with someone they had just met.

“This was a great opportunity for people from all over the station to meet each other,” said Mai Tajima, MCCS Iwakuni SemperFit athletics recreation specialist. “There was an American and a Japanese who were racing each other at the goal line and shook hands after. That’s what I want to see. We’re in a base were we have American and Japanese working together, military and civilian. I had to take a picture of them.”



PFC. BENJAMIN PRYER

J. Gage Karwick runs through the Gokukan five kilometer fun run finish line with a Pikachu mask behind the IronWorks Gym here Feb. 17. Gokukan, literally translated as “extreme cold” in Japanese, is given to this run, which takes place here annually and always during February.



PFC. BENJAMIN PRYER

Participants in the Gokukan five kilometer fun run begin their race on the seawall behind the IronWorks Gym here Feb. 17. Marines, Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force members and other station residents competed in the run. After the run, participants gathered around the Marine Corps Community Services Iwakuni tent next to the finish line to talk and receive trophies.

Mess Hall Menu

Monday

Cream of broccoli soup, turkey pot pie, chicken vega, Cajun baked fish, steamed rice, mashed sweet potatoes, cauliflower combo, collard greens, vegetable gravy, apple dressing, dinner rolls, macaroni salad, potato salad, coleslaw, standard salad bar, banana nut muffin, quick apple coffee cake, blueberry pie, devil's food cake with chocolate frosting, peanut butter cookies, macadamia cookie, chocolate pudding parfait, Jell-O parfait.

Tuesday

Chicken gumbo soup, shrimp scampi, barbecue pork ribs, sweet and sour chicken, peas with onions, wax beans, steamed rice, oven browned potatoes, mushroom gravy, dinner rolls, macaroni salad, potato salad, coleslaw, standard salad bar, banana nut muffin, quick apple coffee cake, blueberry pie, devil's food cake with chocolate frosting, peanut butter cookies, macadamia pudding, Jell-O parfait.

Wednesday

Tomato soup, lasagna, roast pork, fried breaded shrimp, au gratin potatoes, steamed rice, whole kernel corn, mixed vegetables, brown gravy, garlic bread, macaroni salad, potato salad, coleslaw, standard salad bar, snails, pecan rolls, cherry crunch with chocolate frosting, sugar cookies, chocolate pudding parfait, Jell-O parfait.

Thursday

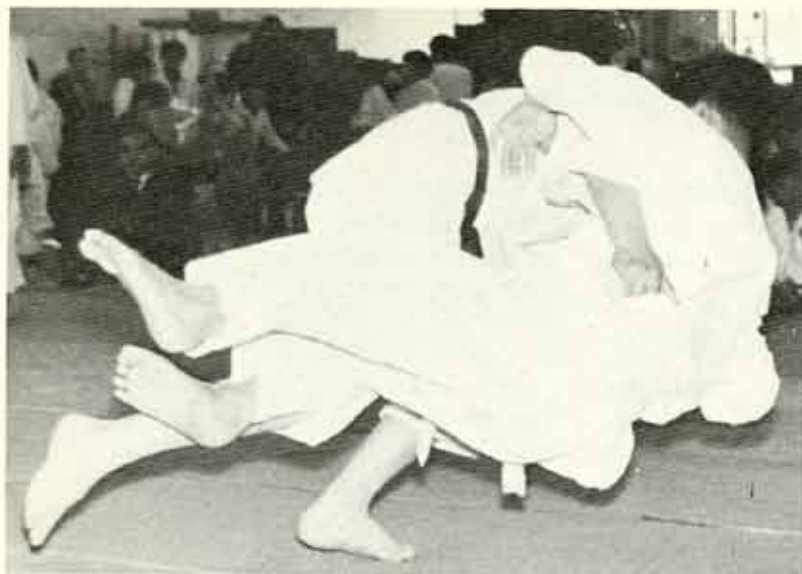
Minestrone soup, barbecued ribs, chicken on orange sauce, steak and vegetables, steamed rice, pork fried rice, vegetable stir fry cabbage, peas and carrots, brown gravy, dinner rolls, macaroni salad, potato salad, coleslaw, standard salad bar, kolaches, blueberry muffins, apple pie, spice cake with buttercream frosting, brownies, vanilla pudding parfait, Jell-O parfait.

Friday

Cream of mushroom soup, baked tuna and noodles, salisbury steak, fried catfish, mashed potatoes, steamed rice, brussels sprouts, cream styled corn, brown gravy, corn muffins, macaroni salad, potato salad, coleslaw, standard salad bar, kolaches, quick French coffee cake, Boston cream pie, carrot cake with cream cheese frosting, oatmeal raisin cookies, vanilla pudding parfait, Jell-O parfait.

The Iwakuni Time Machine

This week in 1972 the Torii Teller reported 450 youth judo players assembled for the second annual Japanese-American Friendship Judo Tournament. Other news included staff wives sponsoring a drive to furnish the new nursery, four Marines made the MESEP program. The Marine haircut regulation was also discussed and it was decided the Marine Corps would not join in other services in changing haircut regulations. The Marine Corps haircut is part of the Marine Corps image 'Lean and Mean'.



Photos
by
GySgt.
Ned
Broussard



Controlled excitement reigned as more than 450 youthful judo players assembled last Sunday at the Station Gym for the opening of the second annual Japanese-American Friendship Judo Tournament.

Colonel Hiel L. Van Campen, MCAS CO, welcomed the young judokas who had come from 14 different clubs in 12 cities throughout Hiroshima



and Yamaguchi prefectures. He noted the friendships established through the children's judo program and the value of character development through the study of judo.

Competition was keen as the best 6 - 12-year-old players in the area met to vie for the 63 individual and team trophies awarded.

Sunday's competition was "a complete success" in the words of officials of the tourney. It was the culmination of more than two years' work and devotion by the Station's children's judo instructor, Mr. Yoshiteru Yamamoto.

Yamamoto highlighted the success of the tournament and thanked those who had given unselfishly of their time to organize and judge the tourney events.

"It was a two-nation team effort and not merely the work of any individual that made this a valuable and meaningful event in the lives of the young judo players," he said.

Earnest Clemons captured second place in the 11-year-old heavyweight division while Andrew Plisko took first place in the 10-year-old

heavyweight division and John Plisko pulled down second place in the 9-year-old heavyweight division.

In the girls' competition, Kay Knowles took third place in the 10-year-old heavyweight category and Nina Mann captured third in the 10-year-old lightweight area.

American girls made a clean sweep of the 8-9-year-old section as Tamara Millis took first, Molly Tate snagged second and Denise Kerr wrapped up third.

In the 6-7-year-old group, Lorey Elkner took third place.

The girls' "A" team showed better than the boys' "A" team as the girls took first place in their competition, while the boys pulled a third place.

