

THE IWAKUNI APPROACH

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Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan

FRIENDSHIP DAY 2008



Visitors tour the Japanese and American aircraft on display at the Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni apron line during Friendship Day 2008 Monday. Despite the overcast morning, the annual open house and air show drew more than 93,000 attendees before noon. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

SEE STORY ON PAGE 6

Students get out of classrooms, into workplaces during Job Shadow Day

LANCE CPL. NOAH S. LEFFLER
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

"What do you want to be when you grow up?"

Doctor, policeman and chef are common answers to the question asked of all young adults, while responses such as rifleman, F/A-18 pilot and explosive ordnance technician may fall a little lower on the list.

All these careers and more were shown to a group of Matthew C. Perry 7th through 12th graders during Job Shadow Day April 24.

The event gave students a chance to get out of the classroom and shadow someone

in an occupational field they want to know more about, said Diane Landean, M.C. Perry Advancement Via Individual Determination teacher.

Although the majority of the 61 participants were members of Perry's AVID program, a college prep course geared to exploring future education and career

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Lance Cpl. Carlos Chen, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 aviation ordnance systems technician, helps John Gaddis, a 12-year-old Matthew C. Perry 7th-grade student, load an M9 pistol at the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer during M.C. Perry's Job Shadow Day April 24. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler



Lt. Col. Jonathan O. Gackle succeeds Lt. Col. Nicholas L. Knight in taking charge of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 during a change-of-command ceremony on the flight line here May 2. Photo by Tadahiro Ozako

Gackle takes reins as head of MALS-12

LANCE CPL. KYLE T. RAMIREZ
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

The former head of the Training Directorate at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training, Naval Air Station Pensacola, took charge of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 during a change-of-command ceremony on the flight line here May 2.

Lt. Col. Jonathan O. Gackle succeeded Lt. Col. Nicholas L. Knight, who said he plans to retire with his family near Marine Corps Air Station Yuma.

Gackle has served under several titles, including officer-in-charge of Naval Aviation Engineering Services at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro and officer-in-charge of the Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323 Sea Operations Detachment. He also served as the Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 assistant aircraft maintenance officer, the Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 39 operations officer as well as the Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101 aircraft maintenance officer.

He earned his Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of Minnesota and received his commission in July 1988. Gackle also attended U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

During his time here, Gackle said he plans to participate in the squadron's annual training exercises throughout the Pacific.

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CORPS SAFETY

Critical Days of Summer Safety Campaign 2008

SUBMITTED BY THE SAFETY OFFICE

You want to go across the country to see your loved ones, and you want to get there in one piece and spend some time with them. Out in your driveway you have a 1995 car; it has been acting up and you're not sure if it is the transmission or the engine. Will it make it home and back? Is there a big doubt in your mind? You just started the process of risk management.

You and your friend went to a bar, he forgot that he was the designated driver, he also had a few, now it is time to return to station. Your staggering friend is ready and eager to go. You may be too drunk to drive, but not too drunk to think, so what do you do? Hey, you get a cab and you both arrive alive. The next morning your head might hurt, but you are alive.

Is risk management hard to understand? No, it is common sense.

You see fast cars on a racetrack pile up, flip over three or four times. The yellow flag goes up. Everyone rushes to

the car, and lo and behold, the driver walks away. I will admit that some will say "bad luck" or "good luck". Bad luck because there was a crash, good luck because he was not killed. Nonsense! No driver will ever get into a racecar and place their hopes on luck. He knows that the car is as perfect as it can be humanly made. He also knows that his fire retardant clothing has been tested and his harness and seat can be trusted. Any number of things that he has no control over could have caused the accident. Nevertheless, by ensuring that his car, seat and clothing were as safe as possible he managed the risk that is inherent in racing.

Risk management is nothing more than looking at a project (it does not matter if the project is simple or complex) and estimating the risk.

In this article, you will learn about the Leave and Liberty Risk Assessment work sheet. This simple tool will help you evaluate your weekend and associated hazards. By mitigating the hazards, the life you save may be your own.

Safety Topic of the week

How to use and where to find the Leave Liberty Risk Assessment sheet

The leave/liberty ORM worksheet is a tool designed to aid leaders in briefing their subordinates. For this sheet to be successful it should be used by the subordinate to brief their immediate superior. For example a corporal should use this sheet to council his lance corporal. The following is a basic checklist for completing the worksheet.

- An individual goes to the Safety site on the station intranet (<http://intranet.iwakuni.usmc.mil/>)
- An individual navigates to the Library page and look under the Safety Forms column for the Leave And Liberty Risk Assessment Worksheet
- The individual then circles items that pertain to the individual
- The form is then returned to respective commands
- Command assesses the risk and counsels the individual on said risks
- The individual follows through with an agreed safety plan

Story of the torii

Station Commanding Officer Col. Michael A. O'Halloran holds a handmade wood torii presented to him by 101-year-old Ruechi Hino in the CO's office April 25. Hino, a former Marine Corps Community Services employee who worked on base for 70 years, also carved a wishing well and made several pencil and stationary holders for O'Halloran. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler



"The Sound Barrier" — A live 4-hour show with an open format. It features news, information, local guests and is often centered on a radio remote broadcast. It airs on Saturdays and holidays at 10 a.m.

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options, all involved got a taste of what goes on daily in many station shops, offices, simulators and kitchens.

"(Students) find out what these people really do," Landean said. "They see if, 'Hey, that's for me,' or 'No, that's not for me. I need to think of something else.'"

A wide array of civilian and military job fields were represented during the four-hour event as students spent time with Marine Corps Community Services employees at the Marine Corps Exchange, sailors at the Robert M. Casey Medical and Dental Clinic and Marines at the Provost Marshal's Office.

"(Jobs were) across the board," Landean

said. "We just happen to live on a military base, but a lot of the jobs in the military do have a civilian counterpart... We took advantage of everything that's available here to the students."

Matthew Swift, 14, said he got the best of both worlds during his trip to the Indoor Small Arms Range. Not only did the aspiring video game designer get to program real-life combat scenarios into the Deployable Training Environment, he also had the opportunity to test his skills with the M-16 A4 service rifle in the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer.

"We actually got to create simulations of combat in Iraq on the computer, so we

learned how to set things up and put them in place," Swift said.

"And I'd say for my age that it's actually pretty amazing I got to shoot that type of weapon," he added, referring to the realistic rifle simulator. "Most kids don't get to do that."

Many of those hosting the students seemed just as pleased to share their knowledge and experience. Cpl. Michael Blair, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron food service specialist, said he enjoyed the opportunity to show some future chefs what it takes to prepare food for an average 700 daily patrons at the R.G. Robinson Mess Hall.

"It was pretty cool. They seemed pretty

interested in everything," Blair said. "They picked to come here, and not too many people pick to come see what I do every day."

The students ended the morning with lunch at the Officer's Club, sharing what they'd learned. Even though some left with an entirely different view of their chosen field, Landean said such experiences aren't necessarily negative.

"There are a couple students that came back and enjoyed what they saw this morning, but realized that wasn't a career for them," Landean said. "I tell my students that finding out what you don't want to do is just as important as finding out what you do want to do."

Family Housing faces new opportunities, challenges

BOB ARBIOS
HOUSING OFFICER

It's one of those "good news/bad news" stories. First, the good news: MCAS Iwakuni's family housing stock will be getting some much needed "TLC" over the next several years. With many of our housing units well past the age of the average Marine here, major renovation work is now essential to keep these homes functioning and appealing for families to live in.

First up are the 96 east side units in the 25-year-old Monzen townhouse community, with work expected to start this summer. Besides upgrades to plumbing, cable and electrical systems, these homes will end up with all new kitchen facilities, new bathroom fixtures, and more usable space inside, according to Family Housing Director Bruce Gorst. Many units will also be reconfigured to add a separate utility area for washers and dryers. The work will be phased, meaning the contractor will complete a batch of six buildings, then move on to do six more. Families can move almost immediately into the completed batches of buildings after they pass inspection.

Then for each succeeding year,

Family Housing plans to tackle one project per fiscal year (FY), with Monzen's 72 westside units expected to start work in FY09, Midrise 1200 in FY10, Midrise 906 in FY11, and so on. All these projects are intended to not only keep buildings operational but to enhance residents' quality of life here, particularly important as more families relocate from CONUS locations where developments are setting high expectations for military housing.

The not so good news? With between 40 to 90 on-base units down for renovations at any given time, only about 90 percent of the on-base inventory may be available to house families. To meet the challenges of this ongoing shortfall, Family Housing is taking action on a couple of fronts. First of all, Family Housing is trying to use available stock as efficiently as possible. For example, families are now being housed in some of the eastside Monzen units not scheduled for renovation until the end of the project. While these families will likely need to be relocated at government expense before their tours end, they will be spared a long stay in the TLF waiting for a home.

Efforts are also being stepped up to identify more Private Rental

opportunities off-base. In fact, thanks to the work of Off-base Referral Specialists Hideki Fujioka (Fuji) and Kazuko Matsuda (Kaz), there has been a steady growth in off-base listings from just three years ago, from 240 units then to 310 units today, a nearly 30 percent increase.

These measures will enable Family Housing to continue housing families expected to PCS here in coming months.

Those of you who will be sponsors of incoming families can help greatly by asking your sponsored families to keep in frequent contact with Family Housing staff about their housing status. Also, encouraging potential new arrivals to consider leaving their pets with family or friends in the states can make a tremendous difference in the time needed to find them permanent housing. Bringing a dog takes away the opportunity to be housed in mid-rise buildings (which make up over half of the on-base stock) as well as many Private Rentals off base, which could potentially add many months to the time to get into permanent housing.

For further information about Family Housing, contact Bruce Gorst, Family Housing director, at 253-6817.

OHA survey could mean boost to Iwakuni allowances

Service members under OHA encouraged to participate

LANCE CPL. NOAH S. LEFFLER
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

The annual Overseas Housing Allowance Utility/Recurring Maintenance Survey for Japan will be conducted from April 15 through May 14.

Service members here currently in private leases under the OHA program are encouraged to participate, as results will be reflected in allowance changes later this year.

"Whatever they put on the OHA survey directly impacts the amount of OHA they receive," said David Naseer, assistant station inspector.

According to the Department of Defense Per Diem, Travel and Transportation Committee's Web site, the data collected is used to measure recurring expenses. To prepare for the survey, which takes about 30 to 40 minutes to complete, those receiving OHA should collect bills or records of utility and maintenance expenses for the last 12 months.

"They're asking that (survey participants) maintain receipts... that they reflect things like electrical patterns and that they accurately account for all utilities," Naseer said.

For move-in expenses, service members are told to include the initial costs to make the residence livable.

The survey refers to common upgrades and replacements made when moving into a Japanese home - things such as tatame mats, sliding screen doors, water filtration systems and traditional "squatter" toilet modifications, Naseer said.

The survey is only available online, however, unfinished surveys can be completed at a later time if accessed from the same computer on which they began. To access the survey, visit <https://www.perdiem.osd.mil/oha/survey/aproha.html>.

A sample of the survey has been posted for educational purposes and can be found at <https://www.perdiem.osd.mil/oha/survey/demo.html>.

News Briefs

L.I.N.K.S.

Do you want to know more about communicating, Tri-Care, allowances and entitlements, Leave and Earning Statements, deployments, rank structure and other Marine jargon? Then join us for Lifestyles, Insight, Networking Knowledge Skills! Free childcare and lunch provided. Please Call Marine Corps Family Team Building at 253-3754 for class schedules in June.

Asian Pacific American Heritage

May is recognized as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. The Special Emphasis Program is searching for individuals who would like to volunteer with the Asian Pacific American planning committee being formed. Volunteers will be asked to assist in planning events aboard the air station in honor of the month. If interested, call Master Sgt. Derrick Hart at 253-5530.

Filipino - American Association

The Fil-Am Association is presenting its 13th annual Pista Sa Nasyon "Town Fiesta" May 24 at the Club Iwakuni Ballroom. The event will include traditional Filipino song-and-dance routines, dinner and dancing following along with raffle prizes. Tickets are \$30. For more information, contact the Fil-Am Association president, HM1 Cadavos at 253-4825.

Earth Day Poster Contest reveals students' concern for environment

LANCE CPL. CHRIS DOBBS
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

To celebrate Earth Day, Matthew C. Perry Elementary School students participated in the annual Earth Day Poster Contest hosted by the Environmental Division of the station Facilities Department April 30.

Nearly all of the school's approximately 470 students participated in the contest, which was designed to get students to think about Earth's air, water, land, resources, wildlife and ecosystems, according to Ben Keasler, Facilities Environmental Division acting director.

Kindergarten through second-grade students colored pre-outlined drawings while third through sixth-grade students created entries from scratch. Many of the posters featured bright colored pencil marks, construction paper scraps and messages such as "Walk to work" or "Don't take an hour, just a five-minute shower!"

The contest's judges, who included school faculty members, Keasler and other volunteers, were impressed by the students' creative displays of sensitivity and concern for many of today's pressing environmental issues.

"Wow, these are really good," said Susan Strasner, contest judge and school counselor. "This is tough."

Awards were presented to the first and second place winners in each grade during a ceremony at the school May 2.

"I thought I did a good job, but I didn't know if I would win," said Marcell Milton, who earned first place in the second-grade contest. Milton said she colored on a separate sheet of paper before making marks on the entry to make sure the poster turned out the way she wanted it to.



The winners of the station's Facilities Department's annual Earth Day Poster Contest pose for a picture following an awards presentation ceremony at Matthew C. Perry Elementary School May 2. Photo by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

Another student produced award-winning results with a different method. Despite spending just 10 minutes coloring, first-grader Natalya O'Haver earned second place in the contest for her grade level.

"I tried my best," O'Haver said. "I'm happy that I got second place," she added with a smile.

The contest was a good way to encourage environmental education and awareness, Keasler said.

"The students always surprise us with how far along they are in their education," he added.

The school plans to hang the posters on campus walls, according to an official.

2008 Earth Day Poster Contest Winners

Kindergarten

1st - Mark Bertholet
2nd - Clayton Wike

First Grade

1st - Gaboa Wanrakchat
2nd - Natalya O'Haver

Second Grade

1st - Marcell Milton
2nd - Jareem Westcott

Third Grade

1st - Geraldine Baldelomar
2nd - Haley Kling

Fourth Grade

1st - Isabel Lucero-Boley
2nd - Mia Ortega

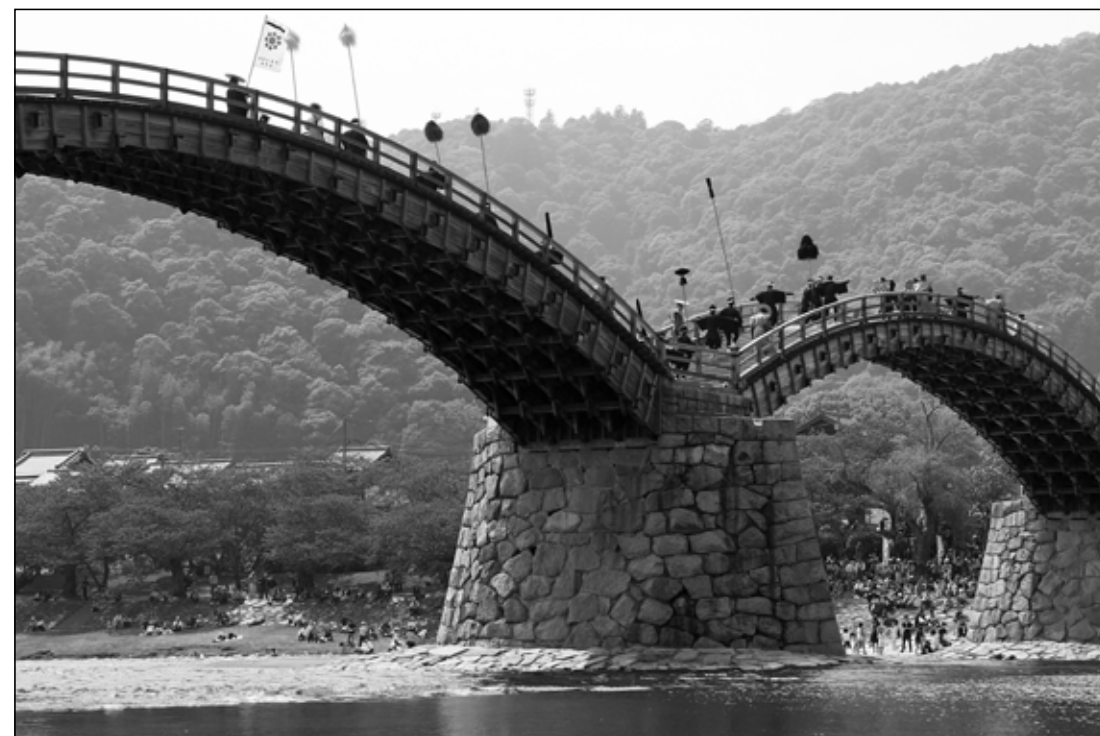
Fifth Grade

1st - Miranda Allen
2nd - Thomas O'Halloran

Sixth Grade

1st - Josie Mitchell
2nd - Daisy Ramirez

Japanese, Americans celebrate culture at Kintai-kyo festival



A colorful daimyo procession crosses the Kintai Bridge during Kintai-kyo Festival April 27. The procession, an annual staple of the festival, dates back to the 17th century when feudal lords would make a bi-annual journey to Tokyo on foot. Several station residents got in on the festivities by dressing in traditional Japanese garb and joining the procession. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

The Untouchables Part III

SGT. ETHAN ROCKE
MCB CAMP BUTLER

OKUMA, OKINAWA, Japan (April 25, 2008) — They were there; then they were gone again. It was a short reunion for Tim and his 2nd Platoon family. There was some healing, some relief, some happiness. Then it was over. The family parted ways again. His friends looked toward another tour in Iraq, and Tim looked back toward his new life in San Diego.

Tim spent another year in rehabilitation. He made the transition from active duty and used his medical retirement income to buy a place in San Diego where he could be close to Balboa and continue his prosthetics training, the portion of his rehabilitation he has found particularly cumbersome.

"It's very difficult for above-knee, bilateral amputees," Tim says. "It's agitating watching other amputees walk after three months. I mean, I'm happy for them, but I just wish I could do it as easily."

Tim works hard at walking on his prosthetics. He makes the trip from his condominium in the east San Diego suburb of La Mesa to Balboa three or four times a week. Balancing without help of a cane is difficult. Walking is quite a chore without legs.

Getting around in general is an involved process these days. Tim's Traumatic Brain Injury causes a seizure disorder that the California Department of Motor Vehicles deems a safety risk behind the wheel, and his driver's license was suspended as a result.

Traumatic Brain Injury has many debilitating effects, but Tim stubbornly refuses to let the injury deter his quest for independence.

"I don't like to admit I have as much TBI as I do," he says. "I don't feel I have a bad memory problem. I get brain farts here and there, but it's not that bad."

Tim lives alone in his two-bedroom condo and he is, for the most part, independent. He likes having a place to himself but he also appreciates having his new Marine family close by in San Diego.

He remains in contact with Marines at the Wounded Warrior Battalion, and, despite having no official obligation, Tim's gunny from Balboa provides him transportation whenever he needs it.

"I call him for rides, and he always comes, no questions asked," Tim says.

Marines take care of Marines, that unofficial mantra is inherent among them. From the closest bonds fortified by war, to strangers in a bar whose only commonality is the title — there is a tendency among Marines to go out of their way to help one another.

While Tim sought to become independent, he leaned comfortably on that tendency.

A New Friend

When he made the transition to the Veterans Affairs health system, Tim added another member to his Marine family, one that he was connected to in more ways than he could have imagined.

Retired Master Sgt. Joe Sturdivant left Okinawa May 23, 2005, two days before Tim officially transferred from the reserves to active duty. The position Sturdivant left was motor transportation chief at Motor T Company, 3rd Transportation Support Battalion, the unit Tim joined a few months later.

Sturdivant moved on to his final duty station at Camp Pendleton, Calif., and deployed to Iraq a few months later. In Iraq, he worked out of Camp Korean Village, a forward operating base in Anbar that protected the Syrian and Jordanian borders from insurgent activity. Jeffers protected convoys that supplied the base.

Sturdivant returned from Iraq March 29, 2006 and retired from the Corps Sept. 30 of that year. He started working as an addiction therapist a few months later at the Veterans Affairs Hospital in La Jolla, the opulent, coastal suburb in San Diego.

When the secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs mandated the establishment of Seamless Transition Teams to provide better continuity of care from the Department of Defense health care system to the VA, Sturdivant became a Transition Patient Advocate. TPAs serve as caseworkers for vets like Tim, tracking progress and providing a constant arm of support within the system for everything from explaining entitlements to helping TBI sufferers make it to appointments.

The TPA concept, Sturdivant says, was to hire combat vets who could provide patients the one thing medical staff couldn't: empathy through shared experience.

"A lot of clinic staff don't know how to connect and communicate with these vets," Sturdivant says. "That's where we come in." Their similar backgrounds helped Sturdivant and Tim connect easily, and their working relationship quickly blossomed into a friendship.

As his family in San Diego grew, Tim kept in touch with 2nd Platoon in Iraq. He watched the calendar, kept them in his prayers and looked forward to their safe return.

As the end of their deployment approached, Tim planned another reunion — one that wouldn't be abbreviated and rushed. He asked Sturdivant to go back to Okinawa with him.

"At first, I was like 'Are you serious?'" Sturdivant says. "I was flattered that he would ask me. I broached it with my program manager, and he absolutely supported it. This is a special case; this guy's coming back here for closure."

Tim dismisses the notion that the trip was about closure. He says it's simpler than that.

"I wanted to keep in contact with these guys," he said. "They're the ones who kept me from dying, and I wanted to see them together before they all change duty stations and get scattered all over."

He shrugged.

"It's family; ya' know?"

Different Iraq, Different Platoon

In the summer of 2007, 2nd Platoon returned to a much different Iraq than the one they left a year earlier. The tides had turned in Anbar Province. The area that was once one of the most volatile insurgent hotbeds in the country had become one of the most secure areas in Iraq.

Sunni tribal leaders in the region, tired of the brutality insurgents wielded against their people, turned against the insurgency and allied themselves with American forces, embracing the security the alliance provided.

And while the operational tempo on the ground had changed, so had the platoon dynamic. As platoon members were spread out to different areas and sections with different missions, the tightness the Marines had known before unraveled.

They enjoyed more security, but the Marines regarded the new calm with unease. Mostly, they missed the closeness they knew before.

As is often the case in war, the rigors they faced in 2006 had a galvanizing effect on the Scorpions.

"The situations we're put in, having to depend on each other — you get used to it," says Cpl. John Rockwell. "You don't ever have to think about whether your brothers will have your back; you know they're there. It's a way of life."

'That Moment'

Combat Logistics Battalion 4 returned to Okinawa March 20. They filed off busses to meet friends and family at the Community Center on Camp Foster.

To most of the returning Marines, the small, spectacled young man in the wheelchair was a stranger. To a handful of seasoned Marines from Motor T Company, he was the missing man who had finally come home.

"There's nothing I would ever trade in the world," says Sgt. Charles Trask, "for that moment — when I saw Jeffers sitting there waiting for us, just waiting for us to say hi. To see our brother just waiting for us to come back and welcome us home ..."

He tapered off.

'The hardest thing I ever did'

Trask and Tim were corporals together in Iraq. Tim slept in the bunk above

Trask at Al Asad. Tim's was usually the first face Trask saw every day when he woke up.

Trask was the turret gunner in a scout vehicle ahead of the convoy the day Tim was hit.

When the rear vehicle was hit with the first IED, Trask's vehicle got the call to provide security. The crew made their way to the rear of the convoy. Mortars started impacting nearby, and one hit an oil tanker. The tanker erupted into a mass of flames and black, billowing smoke.

"I thought ... this is a bad day," Trask said.

Then Trask heard the radio transmission that a man was down.

Again, the crew was redirected to provide security. Driving back toward the front of the convoy, Trask wondered who had been hit.

"I was thinking 'who could it be?'" he said. "I thought it couldn't be Jeffers because he's the only Marine who was in church every Sunday."

When Trask arrived, a Marine from Tim's vehicle and a corpsman were treating the wounded Marine, scrambling to tie tourniquets on his legs and control the bleeding from his head.

The violent scene pulled Trask's eyes from the direction of his gun toward his brother, now a bloody mess on the ground. He traced the trails. There was so much blood. His heart twisted in his chest. Adrenaline set his thoughts afire. His emotions shot through him like hot shrapnel from an artillery blast.

Trask felt the unrelenting force of instinct pulling him to Tim — the same unexplainable compulsion that causes Marines to lurch forward in battle when other men would shrink, the same compulsion that had already pulled Tim's gunner, Sgt. Joshua Vee, out of his turret to immediately tie the tourniquets that saved Tim's life.

"The hardest thing I ever did was have to sit in a gun turret and watch him laid out on the ground while other people fixed him," he says. "All I wanted to do was be there next to him, but I had to stay right there in that gun turret, not because I wanted to, but because my staff sergeant told me to — to do my job and pull security."

Trask scanned his sector, violent thoughts of retribution flooding his mind: "Let this be the day the enemy reveals himself — a trigger man, an ambush, anything." Trask looked for a target on which to unleash his agony in those tortured moments as he called out to let Tim know he was with him.

"I love you, Jeffers!" he screamed at the top of his lungs from the turret. "I love you! You're gonna be all right!" He kept screaming. The medevac helicopter swooped in and grabbed Tim, and the convoy drove on.

"We delivered the goods and got home," Trask says. "That's our sacrifice."

Getting Back

When 2nd Platoon returned from

Station opens gates to more than 200,000

LANCE CPL. NOAH S. LEFFLER
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

The morning began gloomily enough as overcast skies cast an ominous shadow over the flight line. It seemed Iwakuni's April showers had decided to stick around an extra week, threatening to put a damper on the open house annually welcoming hundreds of thousands of guests aboard the air station.

The ceremonial ribbon was cut and gates opened at 8 a.m., however, and to the surprise of many the large crowd came pouring in. Some were literally running, their shoes pounding the puddled pavement as they anxiously sought to claim a spot to witness the air show or to get in line at one of the numerous vendors or aircraft on display.

It was a day of food, fun and flights as more than 200,000 visitors swarmed the air station for the 35th annual Friendship Day Monday.

The highlight of the event was the air show, which featured sound-barrier-shattering fly-bys and demonstrations courtesy of Japan Air Self-Defense Force US-2s, F-2s and F-4s, a U.S. Pacific Air Force F-16 and one of the air station's own F-18s. Team Deepblues' EXTRA and Suhoi single-prop planes wowed onlookers with their aerial acrobatics, and the E-Team skydivers' high flying routine amazed young and old alike.

"Every year I come here by bus to see the show,"

said Kelly Keiko, an Okayama resident and longtime Friendship Day attendee. "The American people are very happy and the Japanese people are very happy. It's a good dynamic."

The apron line featured a diverse offering of American and Japanese military jets and helicopters. Oohs, ahs, and the click of camera shutters could be heard as spectators climbed aboard many of the aircraft and posed for pictures with the aircrews. Attractions off the flight line included a car show at Crossroads Mall, the Rolling Thunder motorcycle procession and several Ultraman performances at the Sakura Theater. And those seeking snacks and souvenirs didn't come away empty-handed; a sea of tents offered t-shirts, trinkets and everything from Japanese okinomiyaki to American-style steaks, hot dogs and hamburgers.

Seaman Leticia Sotelo, a hospital corpsman at the Robert M. Casey Medical and Dental Clinic, spent the day grilling and fundraising with co-workers from the 11th Dental Company, and said she felt Friendship Day couldn't have gone any better.

"It was definitely a success," Sotelo said. "We sold out of food and I personally got to interact with the locals."

Hopefully they got a good taste of American culture as well, she added.

FRIENDSHIP DAY 2008



(Above) Members of the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force's 13th Brigade Band play clarinets as part of the band's flight line performance during Friendship Day Monday. The band was one of many attractions during the annual open house and air show. (Bottom Left) Two trails of smoke are emitted from the wing tips of an F/A-18 Hornet as it makes tight turn in front of spectators during Friendship Day Monday. The F/A-18 was just one of several aircraft on display at the annual open house and air show. Photos by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs



A member of the E Team Sky Divers comes in for a landing at the flight line during Friendship Day 2008. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler (Bottom Right) Japanese look up at a Japanese Air Self Defense Force F-4 Phantom II aircraft during Friendship Day at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni Monday. Despite morning rain showers and overcast skies, the annual open house and air show attracted 93,000 visitors before noon. Photo by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs



AROUND THE CORPS

Hawaii-based Marines help provide medical care to Iraqis

CPL. CHADWICK DEBREE
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 1



Petty Officer 3rd Class Adam Shults, hospital corpsman, battalion aid station, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, hands a stuffed animal to an Iraqi girl during a cooperative medical engagement, April 12, in Karma, Iraq. The Hawaii-based unit helped conduct the event to help provide medical care to the Iraqi population in the area. Though there was a coalition presence, most of the event was performed by local Iraqis as a step to help transition authority from Coalition Forces to the Iraqis. Photo by Cpl. Chadwick DeBree

"The mission here, our mission, is transition," Lang said. "We want to show the Iraqis that we are not an occupying force, but that we are genuine in helping them and seeking the best for them. This event today isn't a photo op so a movie star can come out gain publicity or anything. This is our job here, this is what we do."

I expected we would have a sweaty afternoon today and we did. Everyone out here today is willing to work hard to help the Iraqi people get the attention that they need. One thing that I have noticed is that the units that are accepted out here and success-

ful, are the ones that work with the culture, and that's what we are doing. The transition is moving full steam ahead."

As the second day of the CME came to a close, Karagoli reflects on the two-day event as a success.

"This is the first time I have done a CME with this unit and everything went well and it was well organized," he said. "This event is very helpful for the Iraqi people because the medical is free for them (during the event). This is very important to the people because there aren't many clinics open or supplies in the area. I know that the people are grateful for events like this because it shows them the coalition does care about them."

The Hawaii-based unit is currently deployed to Iraq to help transition authority back to the Iraqi people.

KARMA, Iraq (April 30, 2008) — A convoy of humvees, 7-ton trucks, and mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles pull up to a sheik's home. As they arrive, local citizens, already lined up, wait outside the gate to receive aid through the teamwork of the local government, Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition forces.

On April 12 and 13, Marines of 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, alongside Iraqi doctors, conducted a cooperative medical engagement to provide medical care to Iraqi civilians in the Gnather and Lahib villages.

On the first day, Iraqis eagerly waited as Marines from Company F admitted them one at a time to maintain security and organization. Upon going through the gates, the Iraqis would receive a number to help keep track of how many people showed up. They stood in line outside a room where Iraqi doctors listened to their complaints and examined them to help identify their problem.

"Most of the people had upper respiratory tract infections, malnutrition, stomach problems from drinking dirty water and skin infections," said Dr. Ali Karagoli, an Iraqi medical doctor. "I'm Iraqi so I know what the main complaints are going to be. I look them over to see how severe their condition is and prescribe them medicine to help make them healthy again."

After being examined by one of the three doctors, the patients went into the next room where they received the medicine that they were prescribed. The battalion also passed out toys, clothes and school supplies to the children who had attended that day.

The whole event came together when the Marines attended a city council meeting where the subject of health care was brought up and the battalion commander wanted to give two days to help provide medical care for the civilians, said Capt. J.C. Lang, commanding officer, Company E, 2nd Bn., 3rd Marines.

"It turned out how we expected it to turn out," Lang said. "We had a little less than 500 people show up today. This is what the Iraqis expected of their government. They expected someone to help take care of them and provide medical care. All Echo Company did today was provide security."

"We want to show the Iraqis that we are not an occupying force, but that we are genuine in helping them and seeking the best for them."

Capt. J.C. Lang
Commanding officer, Co. E, 2nd Bn., 3rd Marines

JEFFERS FROM PAGE 5

Iraq last month, there was much to celebrate. Everyone had made it back alive and in one piece, and the only man who was missing from the return flight to Okinawa the first time was finally back with his family.

About a half dozen of the original Scorpions planned a celebratory weekend getaway at the Okuma Recreation Facility on Okinawa's northwestern coast March 28-30. It was the perfect setting to have the reunion they had wanted to have for so long.

They spent the weekend getting back — back to Okinawa, back to family, where they had been before. They went jet skiing, talked about girls, smoked and drank, talked about life, cracked jokes, razzed each other endlessly.

"This is probably the best weekend I've had on Okinawa," said Cpl. Jason O'Hearn. "This is about family, about relaxing after a deployment. It's a calming therapeutic feeling — being out here with the crew. I couldn't ask for anything more."

Trask says the Marines who gathered that weekend had bound themselves to one another long ago in the untouchable days before Iraq.

"Before or after what happened to Tim, any one of us would give our life for each other," he says. Sgt. Joseph Tocci says it's a feeling that can't be articulated to outsiders.

"These guys are the best people in the world," he said. "You think you have friends back home, but those friendships don't compare to this. There's no better feeling."

In the distance that Sunday afternoon at Okuma, the Marines packed their things and went back home. Tim flew back to California the next day. It was probably the last time they'll all get together that way.

Trask, O'Hearn, and Cpl. Daniel Lopez all reenlisted to stay in the Corps at least a few more years. Tocci, Rockwell and Drexler are all getting out.

Life will propel them all forward, further into the uncertain depths of tomorrow. And when it does, they'll look over their shoulders from time to time and glance back at the days of youth when the world was theirs, when the only thing they needed was each other — the days when they were untouchable.

And someday they'll meet again, and they'll say, "Remember when ..."



Medically retired corporal Tim Jeffers gets a laugh as Sgt. Joseph Tocci takes a fall getting off a jet ski March 29. Tocci and Jeffers, who served together in Iraq, reunited on Okinawa March 20. Photo by Sgt. Ethan Rocke

Community Briefs

Sponsor of the Quarter
Congratulations to Gena Friedhoff and Gunnery Sgt. Michael Friedhoff on being selected as Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni "Sponsor of the Quarter, 2nd Quarter, Fiscal Year 2008."

Special Meal for Asian Pacific Heritage Month

There will be a special meal for Asian Pacific Heritage Month from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at north side and the R. G. Robinson (south side) mess halls May 16. Everyone aboard MCAS Iwakuni is welcomed. Meal costs \$3.85.

The following is the menu that will be served: Egg rolls, Chicken Egg Drop Soup, Egg Foo Young, Sukiyaki, Yakisoba, Teriyaki Chicken, Pork Adobo, Pork Fried Rice, Steamed Rice,

Chinese Fried Cabbage, Mixed Vegetables, Tempura Fried Sweet Peppers, Fried Lumpia, Specialty Bar: Mongolian BBQ. For more information, contact Food Service Division at 253-6740.

The 13th Annual Pista Sa Nasyon 'Town Fiesta'

The 13th Annual Pista Sa Nasyon "Town Fiesta" will be held at the Club Iwakuni Ballroom at 5 p.m. May 24. There will be Filipino cultural performances, dinner, dancing, and raffle prizes. Social hour will begin at 5 p.m., dinner buffet and show will start at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$30. For more information, call 253-4825 or 253-6084.

Marriage Enrichment Retreat (MER)

The Marine Aircraft Group 12 Chaplains Office will be holding a Marriage Enrichment Retreat May 16 - 18 (from Friday morning to Sunday afternoon).

During the MER, couples will learn how to communicate even more effectively and work as a team to preserve and enhance love, commitment, and friendship.

Couples will gain new understanding and insight into themselves, one another, and their relationship.

All Marine Corps and Navy

active duty, reserve, retired personnel and their family members are eligible to attend (Army, Air Force personnel and civilian DoD/DoDDS employees and family members on a space-available basis). To sign-up and for more information regarding future MERs, please call the MAG-12 chaplain's office at 253-5212.

Volunteers needed - Thrift Store

The Marine Thrift Store is accepting applications to fill four volunteer positions: Manager, Assistant Manager, Secretary and Treasurer. Please call 253-3428 or 090-7506-6743 (cell) if you are interested.

Branch Health Clinic Closure

The Iwakuni Branch Health Clinic will be closed for routine business May 27. The urgent care clinic will remain open. This is in addition to the normal 1st and 3rd Wednesday afternoon closures every month. If you have any questions, please call 253-5571.

Registration for Term 5 - Central Texas College

Early registration for Term 5 is accepted from May 19 - May 30. The actual classes are from June 2 - July 27. Distance learning and traditional classes are available. For more information, contact the Central Texas College at 253-3631 or e-mail iwakuni.jpn.pfec@ctcd.edu.

New Family Service Center Opens



Yukio Yamada, the resident engineer for the Chugoku Shikoku Defense Bureau, Colonel Michael A. O'Halloran, station commanding officer, and Bruce L. Gorst, Family Housing Director, prepare to cut the ribbon to signify the official opening of the new Family Service Center. The old building was opened in 1948. The new building provides more space allowing patrons to view furnishings on-site. As well, the new building improves inter-office communication with more parking and lobby space. Photo by Lance Cpl. Joseph Marianelli

M.C. Perry Elementary School

The Author from the Black Lagoon

David Burke, 5th Grade

Wow! There was lots of excitement and amazement when Mike Thaler author of the "Black Lagoon Series," came. He taught us how to make really funny riddles and showed us a demonstration of how he makes a "self portrait."

He chose a student named Austin from the crowd and made him stand still. Then his drawing skills went into action. When he was done, a goofy character was shown on his easel. Everybody laughed at the funny picture.

After that he chose student named Yuji from the crowd to draw his portrait. Yuji did a great job! Thaler was impressed. When Mike Thaler

was done he had all of the teachers there make sound effects while he read along with a student burper. All in all it was a great experience for us all and we have Mrs. Elisha Brookover who put this together and the Parent Teacher Organization who sponsored it to thank.

Calendar of Events

May 14

Early Release

May 26

NS-Memorial Day



THE IWAKUNI APPROACH

Classifieds

Automobiles

1992 Mitsubishi Pajero 4x4

Seats up to seven. Asking for \$3,500 or best offer. JCI until April 2009. Well maintained, excellent condition, must see. Leather interior with heated front seats. Moonroof (sunroof), CD player, dual climate control. Road Tax paid.
Great for traveling, camping and skiing. For more information, call 253-4334 (work) or 253-2225 (home).

1995 Mitsubishi Delica 4x4 Space Gear

2.8 liter diesel, 4x4, green/gray, runs great, JCI due Oct. 2008. For more information, call 253-5123 (work) or 253-2147 (home).

1992 Suzuki Escudo

Asking for \$2,500 or best offer. JCI and Road Tax good until June 2009. Air conditioning, new tires, CD player, roof rack for bikes, 4WD. Runs great. Power locks, windows, auto trans. For more information, call 253-2779 (home).

1990 Nissan Prairie 2WD

Asking \$1,800 or best offer. JCI good until Feb. 2010. Road Tax paid. Automatic transmission, power windows and doors. A/C, heat, radio and CD player. All interested, please call 253-3227 (work) or 253-2538 (home).

1992 Toyota Corolla

JCI until March 2010. Automatic, air conditioned, power windows, power door locks, nice stereo. Runs and drives great. 173k km. Asking \$1,800. For more information, call 253-2015 (home), 256-2400 (work), or 090-9376-1841 (cell).

1989 Mitsubishi Pajero

JCI until Nov. 24, 2009 (18 months left), new tires, seats seven, seats fold up, 4WD, diesel, no A/C, power windows and locks, all taxes paid and automatic. Runs great! Asking \$2,500. For more information, call 253-2151 (home) or 080-3876-2327 (cell).

2001 Nissan March

Asking for \$3,650. JCI good until December 2009. For more information, call 253-3016 (work) or 253-2995 (home).

1995 Toyota Town Ace

Dependable vehicle, JCI good until March 2010, great A/C and heat, non-smoker, power windows and locks, CD/tape deck, runs and drives great, rear seats fold away for cargo space. Asking \$2,000 or best reasonable offer. Please contact 080-3469-4795 (cell), 253-2665 (home) or 253-4272 (work).

1994 Toyota Estima Van

Forest green, JCI good until Sept. 2009. Automatic, PW/PD/PS/A/C, heat, CD player, 3-door plus back hatch, 7-passenger, new battery,

clean, great vehicle for the family, Road Tax paid. Asking \$2,800 or best offer. For more information and a test drive, call 253-6904 (work) or 253-2063 (home).

1999 Mercedes-Benz A-160

Grey, excellent condition, well-maintained, navigation system, auto, power windows. \$7,000 or best offer. For more information, call 253-2152 (home).

1992 Toyota Soarer

Two-door, asking for \$1,995. JCI until September 2009. Known as the Lexus SC 400 in the U.S., this car is clean and reliable. Within the last year the battery, shocks, brakes, and tires have been replaced. A combo CD and cassette player is included. It has been driven by a non-smoker and is priced to sell. For more information, call 253-6220 (work) or 090-1773-6552 (cell).

1992 Nissan Skyline GTS

Two-door, asking for \$1,995. JCI until January 2009. Only 63,000 km. One of the most sought after cars in Iwakuni. This car has a sunroof, power everything, new tires, new battery, and an Alpine CD player. Snow chains will also be included. For more information, call 253-6220 (work) or 090-1773-6552 (cell).

1991 Mitsuishi Chariot

Asking for \$900 or best offer. JCI good to August '09. Great family car. Seats eight comfortably. Power windows, locks, and driver side power seat. Runs great with cold A/C. New A/C compressor, tires, timing belt, and drive belts. For more information, call 253-6984 (work) or 253-2689 (home).

1994 Toyota Estima

JCI good until Nov. 2009. Diesel, Road Tax just paid. Seats 8, AM/FM radio with cassette and CD player. 108,000 km. Power windows, locks. Power moonroof and sunroof. Working A/C. Asking for \$2,900. For more information, call 253-3955 (work) or 253-2257 (home).

SEE CLASSIFIEDS ON PAGE 11

Mess Hall Menu

MONDAY May 12, 2008

Cream of Mushroom Soup, Creole Soup, Sauerkraut, Hot and Spicy Chicken, Fried Rice, Oven Glo Potatoes, Fried Zucchini, Calico Corn, Hot Dinner Rolls, Congo Bars, Marble Cake Double Layer, Butter Cream Frosting, Blueberry Crunch, Specialty Bar: Pasta Bar

TUESDAY May 13, 2008

Cream of Potato Soup, Chicken Noodle Soup, Southern Fried Chicken, BBQ Beef Cube, Steamed Rice, Buttered Pasta, Black-Eyed Peas, Creole Squash, Corn Bread, Chocolate Chip Cookies, Double Layer Spice Cake with Butter Cream Frosting, Lemon Meringue Pie, Specialty Bar: Taco Bar

WEDNESDAY May 14, 2008

Cream of Broccoli Soup, Vegetable Soup, Tempura Fish, Pepper Steak, Steamed Rice, Oven Glo Potatoes, Glazed Carrots, Club Spinach, Brown Gravy, Dinner Rolls, Peanut Butter Cookies, Devil's Food Cake with Butter Cream Frosting, Specialty Bar: BBQ

THURSDAY May 15, 2008

Minestrone Soup, Cream of Chicken Soup, Creole Macaroni, Fried Shrimp, Fettuccini with Alfredo Sauce, Grilled Cheese Sandwich, Tempura Vegetables, Peas and Carrots, Dinner Rolls, Sugar Cookies, Strawberry Shortcake with Whipped Topping, Vanilla Cream Pie, Specialty Bar: Deli Bar

FRIDAY May 16, 2008

Clam Chowder, Minestrone Soup, Braised Beef and Noodles, Baked Fish, Mashed Potatoes, Fried Cabbage, Mix Vegetables, Chicken Gravy, Dinner Rolls, Banana Bread, Specialty Bar: Hotdogs/Polish Sausage

Sakura Theater

Friday, May 9, 2008

7 p.m. Dr. Seuss Horton Hears A Who! (G)
10 p.m. Iron Man (PG-13)

Saturday, May 10, 2008

1 p.m. Dr. Seuss Horton Hears A Who! (G)
4 p.m. Iron Man (PG-13)
8 p.m. Sakura Theater Spring Concert

Sunday, May 11, 2008

1 p.m. Dr. Seuss Horton Hears A Who! (G)
4 p.m. Iron Man (PG-13)

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

Monday, May 12, 2008

7 p.m. Iron Man (PG-13)

Wednesday, May 14, 2008

7 p.m. The King and I
(Civic Theater Performance)

Thursday, May 15, 2008

7 p.m. The King and I
(Civic Theater Performance)

National Prayer Day 'Prayer Breakfast'



Marine Aircraft Group 12 Marines and sailors bow their heads in prayer during a "Prayer Breakfast" at the north side mess hall here May 1. The breakfast was a way "to promote spiritual well being and to refocus on our nation's great spiritual heritage" during National Prayer Day, said Lt. Cmdr. Denis Cox, MAG-12 chaplain. Photo by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

M.C. Perry girls top Yokota in soccer season finale

LANCE CPL. CHRIS DOBBS
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Karla Stroud's second-half goal propelled the Matthew C. Perry High School Samurai over the Yokota High School Panthers 2-1 in girls varsity soccer action here Saturday.

Noelle Smith scored in the first half of the game, which was the second in a regular season-ending doubleheader against the Panthers. The first game May 2 ended in a scoreless tie.

The Samurai faced a difficult opponent in the Panthers, who posted a 13-2-2 regular season record and belong to the Department of Defense Dependents School High School Class 2A, a division of schools larger than those in the Samurai's Class A. The Samurai were able to match the Panthers' talent with teamwork and hustle, according to Stroud.

"We won more 50-50 balls than we have in past games against Yokota," Stroud said about situations where control of the ball was up for grabs. "That was the difference."

Though Yokota has come out on top of Iwakuni in a majority of the games they've played against them in recent years, the Samurais are especially strong this year, said Panthers' coach Matt Whipple.

"They're tough," Whipple said, who added that getting the ball past the Samurais' keeper Kate Cutshall was his team's biggest challenge. "She's really tough."

Despite giving up a goal early in the

first half, Cutshall was determined not to let it happen again. Planted firmly between the goal posts, she scooped up shot after shot of the Panthers' scoring attempts.

"I basically told the team where they needed to be to cut off the angles," Cutshall said, adding that Yokota's offense was "really good." "The way (my team) played made my job a lot easier."

Both Whipple and Samurai coach Chris Anderson said the games were an excellent opportunity to get in some final competitive play before the Far East Tournament.

Anderson is particularly happy with how the Samurais are playing heading into the event.

"You hope to start clicking, meshing at the right time," Anderson said. "They've been playing very well during the past few weeks."

Anderson added that he feels the Samurais' chances of taking the tournament are very good and that the girls "are ready to play." During a post-game huddle, he announced he was buying the team ice cream, to which the girls erupted in cheers.

"This was a great way to end the season," Cutshall said. "I don't think we've ever been tighter."

"We're family," added Lizzie Dover.

The boys and girls Far East Class A Tournament will take place May 18-21 at Penny Lake Field. The girls are looking to improve upon last year's second place finish.



Matthew C. Perry High School girls varsity soccer players Heather Hyson (left) and Noelle Smith celebrate following Smith's first half goal. The Samurai improved to 8-5-3 with a 2-1 win over Yokota. Photos by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

CLASSIFIEDS FROM PAGE 10

1996 Toyota Mark II

JCI good until Dec. 2009. Great gas mileage. Road taxes just paid. 4 doors. AM/FM radio with CD player. Navigational system in dash. 178,000 km. Power windows, locks, and mirrors. Working A/C. Runs absolutely smooth. Asking for \$2,500 (make offer). For more information, call 253-3955 (work) or 253-2257 (home).

Job Openings

Job available at 4th Marine Logistics Group

4th Marine Logistics Group is presently accepting applications for Marine Corps Reserve officer and enlisted leadership positions. 4th MLG has 70 sites across the United States. For more information, call 678-243-9646 or 504-678-6505, or e-mail to rayjohnson@usmc.mil or oretha.whiteside@usmc.mil.

Miscellaneous

USA made/Iomega Super DVD Writer

Dual format with 2.0 drive 16x burn speed, 8.5GB, DVD-R/RW System include CinePlayer, MusicMatch and Adobe Photo-Shop Editor with Photobook. Still in the box, tried to use but not compatible with computer made in Japan. Paid \$129.99, asking \$100 or best offer. For more information, call 090-1350-0640 (cell).

Townhouse wall-to-wall carpeting

Has padding under the top layer, makes hard floors very comfortable! Paid \$2,700 three years ago, no pets, no shoes worn on carpet. Light tan color, excellent condition. Fits a town-home where door opens in to the left from the outside. \$1,000 for the whole set. Willing to break the carpet up and sell by

room. For more information, call 253-3535 (work) or 253-2966 (home).

Four items for sale

One adult women's 16-speed bicycle with or without child bike seat, \$75 or best offer. Two children's bikes (ages 4-7), one with training wheels (make offer). Car bike rack (make offer). The pictures can be e-mailed. For more information, call 253-5183 (work), 080-3474-8856 (cell), or e-mail at potwick@gmail.com.

Boys clothes size 4 - 6

Boys clothes in very good to excellent condition. I have pants, shorts, short and long-sleeve shirts, sweaters and pajamas. Plan for the summer or next fall and winter! Come take a look and make me an offer! For more information, call 253-2257 (home).

Wall-to-wall carpeting

Purchased in the states. Fits Monzen housing floor plan. Living room, stairs, upstairs hallway, master bedroom - light green. Two kids' bedrooms - one forest green and one mauve. Asking \$650. Available after our pack-out on May 30. For more information, call 253-2063 (home) or 253-6904 (work).

12-foot inflatable excursion boat

Three cushion seats, oars, trolling motor bracket and hardwood flooring included. Great for local fishing or family fun on the river. Asking \$350. Call 253-2063 (home) or 253-6904 (work).

To submit an advertisement request, follow the classifieds link on the station Web site and open an advertisement request form. Submit the form via e-mail to iwakuni.pao@usmc.mil or in person at the Public Affairs Office, Building One, Room 216.

THE IWAKUNI APPROACH SPORTS
For sports coverage, call 253-5551

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

*Leadership,
diversity,
harmony*

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, 2008

A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America

Americans who trace their ancestry to Asia and the Pacific Islands have contributed much to our Nation. During Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, we highlight their importance to our great Nation.

Asian/Pacific Americans have made our country better with their talents and hard work. Their values and commitment to family and community have helped shape and strengthen America. These citizens speak many languages, honor countless traditions, and practice different faiths, but they are bound by a shared commitment to freedom and liberty. The diversity among Asian/Pacific Americans adds to the cultural fabric of our society.

Asian/Pacific Americans have enriched our culture, excelling in many fields, including education, business, science, technology, government, sports, and the arts. We especially honor those Asian/Pacific Americans who have answered the call to protect the cause of freedom by serving in our Armed Forces. These brave men and women set a powerful example for all Americans.

As we celebrate Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, we are reminded of the richness of the Asian and Pacific cultures. Asian/Pacific Americans enhance the American experience and contribute to our country's legacy of diversity.

To honor the achievements and contributions of Asian/Pacific Americans, the Congress, by Public Law 102-450, as amended, has designated the month of May each year as "Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month."

Now, therefore, I George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 2008 as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month. I call upon the people of the United States to learn more about the history of Asian/Pacific Americans and their many contributions to our Nation and to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

gateway to success