

# THE IWAKUNI APPROACH

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Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan

## America's Squadron, Aussie firefighters keep Tindal cool



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE BASE TINDAL, Australia — A TFA Trident fire truck douses a car with water while Royal Australian Air Force Sgt. Peter Noyce, 322 Expeditionary Combat Support Squadron fire controller, shouts instructions to Cpl. Thomas Millsaps, Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 aircraft rescue firefighter, during training at the RAAF Tindal Rescue and Fire Services fire station June 12. The Australian firefighters are receiving the assistance of four Marines from MWSS-171 during Pitch Black 2008, a three-week multi-national air-to-air training exercise. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

SEE BOND ON PAGE 3

## MCCS: Fuel prices to increase at pumps

### Motorists to pay \$4.53 for single gallon of unleaded gasoline

SUBMITTED BY MCCS IWAKUNI  
MARINE CORPS  
COMMUNITY SERVICES

Effective July 1, an increase in fuel pricing from the Department of Defense, Defense Energy Support Center will bring the price for a gallon of unleaded mid-grade gasoline for consumers on the station to \$4.53. A similar increase for one gallon of diesel fuel will bring the price at the pump for diesel to \$4.34.

Fuel pricing is established, projected, and contracted for a fixed term based on a pre-determined annual cost from the supplier and DESC.

Funds generated from the sale of fuel and all other Marine Corps Community Services businesses go back into the Iwakuni community in the form of new or improved businesses, entertainment and free events, goods or services.

MCCS is structured to make a profit as mandated by Congress. Each MCCS has the same guidelines: to be self-sustaining and provide for the needs of the community.

As always, MCCS will pass on savings to our customers through improved quality-of-life programs, activities, events and new or improved goods and services. An important distinction for residents in Iwakuni to note is the price point or gross margin on the sale of fuel has in fact not changed in more than three years. What that means to the customer is MCCS will not make one penny more July 1st than it made today for selling a gallon of gas aboard the station.

SEE DIGITAL ON PAGE 3

## VR training is effective for Marines



Virtual Battle Space II software resembles something like Grand Theft Auto — The Fallujah Edition. Screen grab courtesy of Virtual Battle Space II team

LANCE CPL. KYLE T. RAMIREZ  
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

When the new laptop-based Deployable Virtual Training Environment (DVTE) suite made its debut at the Indoor Small Arms Range (ISAR) here in late February, it left a lot of RPG-gamers and avatar ringleaders licking their chops while seasoned leathernecks scratched their heads in disorient and disgust. Pencil pushers

and aircraft refuelers alike found themselves thrust into a digital battlefield armed with a joystick and directional keypad. As many formally trained Marines shook their heads at the said "bogus battlefield," many new-joins enjoyed what training they could take away from it, learning combat overseas on flat screen TVs.

The equipment was unveiled by combined arms staff trainers as a newly

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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.*

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# CORPS SAFETY

## Critical Days of Summer Safety Campaign 2008

### THIS WEEK'S SAFETY TOPIC: Camp Fires

**SUBMITTED BY**  
**THE STATION SAFETY OFFICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
Did someone say we need a campfire?

Nothing beats the back to nature experience of going camping. When planning the next ultimate camping getaway, do it with safety in mind. You'll be more relaxed, and comfortable, with the piece of mind that you're doing it right.

Of course camping wouldn't be complete without a campfire. But whether you're building one for cooking, warmth or just for that campfire atmosphere, there are a few things you should do first. Choose a spot that's upwind, and at least 15 feet (3.5 meters) from your tent (made of flame retardant material). A spark from a fire could land on your tent or camping gear and catch fire.

#### Building a fire

If your site has a designated fire pit, then check to see that it's in good repair, and free of hazards. If it isn't, look for an area of bare ground for your campfire site. Clear a 10 foot (3 meters) diameter area around the site. Get any grass, twigs, needles, firewood, or anything else that can catch fire, out of the circle. Also make sure there aren't any trees or combustibles overhead.

Build a circle of rocks around your fire to keep it from

spreading. Have a bucket of water, or sand, or even a shovel close by, just in case the fire gets away on you. Never use gasoline, or any other flammable liquid to get your fire started. Instead, use crumpled up newspaper and kindling.

#### Stay with your fire

Sure there are lots of distractions, and other things to do while camping, but once you've started that fire, it's your responsibility to stay with it at all times. Keep your campfire safe from children and pets. Whether they're snuggling by the warmth of the fire, roasting marshmallows, or just playing and having fun, make sure that they're always being supervised to prevent any accident.

#### Things to watch out for with campfires

Never build a campfire on a windy day. Sparks and other burning material could travel large distances. It may be tempting to get a roaring fire going, but try to keep your fire to a reasonable and manageable size. Now that you've enjoyed the fire, let's make sure that it's totally extinguished. Pour lots of water on the fire. Thoroughly drown it out. If you simply cover it with sand or dirt the fire may be out, but heat will remain and could cause someone harm. Be sure you never walk away from any smoldering embers. An unwanted fire or tragic burn could result. Don't leave a fire until it's "out cold."

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

### EXCELLENT FRIENDS

**Lt. Gregg Peters**  
MWSS-171 CHAPLAIN

I've had the same close friend since I was 5 years old.

We met the first day of school and we've been friends ever since. I thought what made us such good friends was the fact that we never fought.

But now I recognize what makes excellent friends and excellent friendships.

Good friendship is not the absence of conflict but the ability to resolve it.

Friendship is not the absence of adversity but the ability to come through it. That's the kind of relationship I've had with my good

friend.

I've been fortunate enough to learn that a "friend loves at all times and a brother or a sister is born for adversity."

How do these kinds of friendships

**Friendship is not the absence of adversity but the ability to come through it.**

take place?

Do they just happen?

Are some people lucky and others

aren't?

There are things we can do to make us the kind of people who can be excellent friends.

First, we must be loyal. During adversity, it's the people who stick close to us, often closer to us than our own family, who gain our appreciation.

Second, we must be selfless or sacrificial. I've been amazed at how generous my friend has been to my family and me over the years during those times we've needed help.

There are so many more qualities we could list here, but the bottom line really is about being the right kind of friend.

If we're excellent friends, we'll be surrounded by excellent friends.



## Water Safety

kick-off of Iwakuni's water safety campaign. During the 1-hour plus show, we will highlight the five Most Dangerous Water locations near the air station.

In addition, we will discuss generic water safety tips, boating safety, and diving safety. The show will feature water safety experts from across the air station including the safety office.

Feel free to call in during the show and join in on the conversation at 253-1575.

Join AFN's Power 1575 radio, Monday morning at 10:05 for Commander's Corner and the

## Growing bond keeps Marines coming back

**LANCE CPL. NOAH S. LEFFLER**  
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

**BOND FROM PAGE 1**

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE BASE TINDAL, Australia – There is a unique relationship shared by those forced to eat, sleep and work in close proximity to one another. Many service members' lives have become dependent on the very men to their left and right. This is a bond that transcends color, creed and - as a group of aircraft rescue firefighters working in Tindal, Australia, are proving - nationality.

Four leathernecks from Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 are currently augmenting Royal Australian Air Force Base Tindal's Rescue and Fire Services during Pitch Black 2008, a three-week multi-national air-to-air training exercise.

Tindal's Rescue and Fire Services manning requirements depend on the number of aircraft present and are represented by an airfield category number. With Pitch Black comes increased aircraft and personnel, and the normally CAT 5 airfield is upgraded to CAT 6.

"I'm running fairly tight," he added. "I'm not supposed to go on the floor of the trucks, but recently I've had to fill in because we've been short on numbers. ... Basically, with you guys here it just takes a bit of pressure off the long hours we've been doing."

Pocklington, who has worked in a joint Rescue and Fire Services environment during other exercises, said he has been lobbying for the Americans' return following their absence in a previous Pitch Black.

There was some miscommunication about how the Australian and U.S. training standards didn't match up, Pocklington explained.

"I said, 'No, that's rubbish,' and I've been fighting for two years to get you back again," he added.

Now that they're here, some Marines are discovering while they have the same job, their Aussie counterpart covers a broader range of operations including on-base and local domestic emergencies.

"We just do more stuff here," added Lance Cpl. Shawn Will, MWSS-171 firefighter who recently responded to a base structural alarm while on shift. "They do everything. They even support the town (of Katherine) if something happens. ... We don't do any of that."

While the drills, training, and sometimes confusing Australian slang have all been a learning experience, it didn't take long for the firefighters from America's Squadron to catch on.

"When you work with each other enough, you notice - as a firefighter - it's just like any other unit," Millsaps said. "You kind of grow, and everybody gets accustomed to everything really fast."



**Gunfire, steel rain, smoke, screams, accomplishments and failures are recreated in a digital realm by Virtual Battle Space II software. Real minds controlling the digital warriors could benefit from this training that is hardly "like the real thing."** Screen grab courtesy of Virtual Battle Space II team

## Digital mass destruction

**DIGITAL FROM PAGE 1**

developed interface that simulates combat scenarios in a first-person view. Its capabilities range from simulating convoy operations with Virtual Battle Space II software to teaching language and cultural essentials with Tactical Language and Culture Training Systems (TLCTS) software, preparing Marines on essentially every aspect of their upcoming deployment. The equipment isn't something entirely new to the Marine Corps. Virtual Battle Space I software made its debut in the mid 1990s, training Marines in technical areas including light armored vehicle (LAV) operations and flight simulations. However, the equipment was quickly outdated.

Virtual Battle Space II software goes further in depth, replicating certain aspects of combat such as hostage situations, escalation-of-force procedures and battalion-sized movements.

The constantly updated TLCTS software simulates social interaction with other nations' inhabitants including Iraqi, Pashto, French and Dari people. Trainees are able to receive detailed reactions and real-time responses with the software's voice-recognition feature and can monitor the sensitivity of the simulated conversation via their computer monitor.

The only downside is none of it is real.

Marines can train on the system's curriculum for months or years and still lack the decisiveness and operability of those who have been trained on real equipment in a bona fide field environment. The ISAR has detailed simulation chambers where trainees can hold life-sized weapons with a simulated kick back after firing each round, enhancing the train-

ing experience. This breakthrough technology puts the student on a basic video-gaming console that is hardly "like the real thing."

But the DVTE was never meant to replace real training, simulation analysts warned as the platform was delivered to Iwakuni. The system is only meant as a fall back for those Marines stationed in areas without ground forces and thus lacking the correct supplies combat training requires.

Each Marine deserves the same quality of training as the next. But while others are fortunate enough to participate in convoy training using real convoys, the rest of us will have to settle for the know-how at least. Also, DVTE is not meant to replace traditional pre-deployment training as a whole. It's just another resource that is available to Marines at any given time, whether they're gearing up for their next deployment or not.

This doesn't mean unit commanders shouldn't get creative with their individual year-round training suites. Of course, physical training shouldn't take the backseat for the sake of mental readiness. Many Marines are just as capable of becoming combat-ready in a garrison environment without being hard-wired to a personal computer.

DVTE can offer a wealth of knowledge with by-the-book standards. Dismissing it blindly could result in Marines missing out on new need-to-know information. The Marine Corps is always victim to changing times, values and beliefs — this isn't one of those times. The more we embrace what new tools and techniques are available to us, the more lives we save when it matters the most.

## News Briefs

### Toner cartridges

The Recycling Center will now begin to receive toner cartridges due to M.C. Perry no longer recycling them. If you only have a few, they may be placed separately along with your non-combustible trash. If you have several, bring them to the Recycling Center during operating hours, Mondays - Fridays 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. All boxes that the cartridges come in are recyclable and must be separated.

### Women, Infant and Children

WIC Overseas is a nutrition education program that also provides supplemental foods to encourage good health. Pregnant and postpartum mothers and children up to age 5 may participate. Eligibility is based on family size and household income. Please call 253-4928 to set up an appointment.

### AA sponsorship needs volunteers

Senior friends of Bill W. needed for sponsorship assistance.  
Place: Alcoholics Anonymous floor of Yujo Hall, next to the base chapel.  
Time: Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.  
For more information, call 253-4526.



# Marines, sailors keep things cooking in Tindal

LANCE CPL. NOAH S. LEFFLER  
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

**R**OYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE BASE TINDAL, Australia (June 20, 2008) — For many in the armed forces, debating deployment conditions comes almost as naturally as standing at attention during the national anthem or saluting an officer.

However, thanks to a group of service members participating in Pitch Black, "I'd give anything for a hot meal" is one gripe that's been virtually nonexistent since the beginning of the three-week multi-national air-to-air training exercise.

Ten Marines and two sailors are helping keep Tindal's Airmens, Sergeants and Officers Messes open and running smoothly for the hungry masses.

According to RAAF Sgt. Matt James, 322 Expeditionary Combat Support Squadron Airmens Mess manager, the influx of service members for Pitch Black puts a strain on the Australian airmen and civilians running the dining facilities.

"While we're not doing exercises, we normally feed about 70 to 80 people (per meal)," James said. "Now we're feeding anywhere from 350 to 400 people per meal."

To remedy the situation, Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 and Naval Fighter Attack Squadron 97 are providing the 12 cooks and messmen to help prepare, serve and clean after the four daily meals.

Not all working in the messes have food service military occupational specialties, however. Marines with military police, motor transportation and water purification backgrounds have all assumed jobs in the messes.

"They're definitely (from) different fields," said Sgt. Edward Ruffin, MWSS-171 food service specialist and acting staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge for the American mess hall workers.

Although long shifts in a fast-paced environment are par for the course, Ruffin said he hopes the experience for those working outside their normal jobs will prove to be a positive one.

"I think it will help them to appreciate the MOS," he said. "I know that some people who have never worked with cooks don't know how we operate. Cooks are pretty much looked at as being lazy sometimes or that we have it easy."

"But with them, seeing what we go through and the hours that we work ... they realize, 'Hey, they are Marines. They put out just as much as any other MOS.'"

Messman Lance Cpl. Chris Kane is getting plenty of time in the kitchen during Pitch Black, and the MWSS-171 basic water support technician said he will leave with a newfound appreciation of the job.

"There's a lot of work that goes into prepping meals for Marines," Kane said.

"But the mess hall is a great asset," he added. "If you've got well-balanced meals, you've got everything you need to stay full and on the run."

Staying full is something Pitch Black participants are having no problem doing. With daily choices including lamb chops, T-bone steaks and chicken curry, picking out a main course is often a tough decision.

According to Ruffin, the variety of foods prepared is giving his cooks a chance to spread their culinary wings.

"The big difference as far as cooking here is they allow you to pretty much experiment with the product — there's no set recipe card or anything like that," Ruffin said. "They afford you the opportunity to create. If cooking is your calling, you'll find it here."

Others are enjoying the Aussies' "no worries" attitude.

"They're pretty laid-back, like how they're on a first name basis with everyone," said Lance Cpl. Justin Rutledge, MWSS-171 food service specialist. "But they do a lot of work here. They're all really hard workers."

Overall, the combining of two kitchens and cultures is proving to be a learning experience for all involved.

"There's different ways that we do things," James said. "We ask (the Americans) to do it how we would normally do it, and they sort of reciprocate — 'Hey, can we do it like this and see how it goes?' We are generally learning off each other as we go along."

"It's like one big force, I suppose," he added. "We all have to chip in and do our work so that everyone has full bellies and plates."



Lance Cpl. Chris Kane, Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 basic water support technician, places thongs in the buffet line at the Royal Australian Air Force Base Tindal Airmens Mess June 10. Kane, along with nine other Marines and two sailors, is augmenting the facility's RAAF and civilian employees during Pitch Black 2008, a three-week multi-national air-to-air training exercise. Photos by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler



(From right) Sgt. Edward Ruffin, Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 food service specialist, and Royal Australian Air Force Airman Kyle Geisler, 302 Expeditionary Combat Support Squadron cook, serve food to American and Australian service members at the RAAF Base Tindal Airmens Mess June 10. Ruffin, along with nine other Marines and two sailors, is augmenting the facility's RAAF and civilian employees during Pitch Black 2008, a three-week multi-national air-to-air training exercise.

(From left) Petty Officer 3rd Class Stephen Robinson, Naval Fighter Attack Squadron 97 culinary specialist, and cook Matt Chamaret prepare stir fry served for lunch at the Royal Australian Air Force Base Tindal Airmens Mess June 10.



Marine Refueler Transport Squadron 152 loadmasters watch from the rear of their KC130-J as an F/A-18 taxis down the runway at Royal Australian Air Force Base Tindal June 16. Service members are flying a variety of night missions during Pitch Black 2008, a three-week multi-national air-to-air training exercise. Photo by Lance Cpl. Noah S. Leffler

## Night flights

LANCE CPL. NOAH S. LEFFLER  
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

**ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE BASE TINDAL, Australia** — For the past several weeks, shooting stars haven't been the only thing streaking across the Northern Territory's seemingly endless evening sky.

Pitch Black 2008, a multi-national air-to-air training exercise, is living up to its name as aircraft from more than six different countries are taking part in night flights in the expansive Outback airspace.

According to Lt. Rob Marrs, Naval Fighter Attack Squadron 97 F/A-18 pilot, participating Marines and sailors from Iwakuni and Okinawa are making the most of an opportunity to train sans sun.

"A lot of the fighting in real wars goes on at night, so the more comfortable we get flying around at night the better prepared we'll be," Marrs said.

While the "Red Air/Blue Air" scenarios are the same after dark as those in the daytime, the visibility drastically impacts how they are flown.

The missions don't change, but it's more difficult at night, Marrs said.

"We put more restrictions on ourselves and each other as far as how much maneuverability you can do and how

low you can go."

The requirement of flying with night vision goggles is another challenge; however, the area's lack of distracting ambient light makes for an ideal training location.

"If you fly in Southern California ... no matter how far you get you can still see the glow of the city," Marrs said. "Out here you don't really have that issue."

"There's nothing, just one city," he added. "You're flying around and you'll see a few fires burning in this area, but that's it. It really is ... pitch black."

Those aboard the KC130-Js are just as reliant on night vision. With the assistance of NVGs, the pilots can pick out aircraft coming in to tank while the rear-seated observers can monitor an aircraft's approach and connection.

"Observers are the pilot's eyes in the back," said Cpl. Ian Sumner, Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 152 loadmaster.

"(The NVGs) enhance your situational awareness."

Though the Okinawa-based squadron regularly conducts night training both at home and on deployment, Capt. Kacey Cottrell, VMGR-152 KC130-J pilot, said she feels the Sumo's time in Australia will only enhance their readiness.

"The environment helps us to train better," Cottrell said. "I definitely think it will give (the younger Marines) a step up on their peers."

**"A lot of the fighting in real wars goes on at night, so the more comfortable we get flying around at night the better prepared we'll be."**

**Lt. Rob Marrs**  
VFA-97 Pilot





The audience claps and sings along to "You Are My Sunshine," during the second annual Japanese American Friendship Concert here June 20. The American audience members sang the song as a dedication to the Japanese audience members. Photo by Lance Cpl. Joseph Marianelli

## Friendship Concert fills chapel with Sound of Music

LANCE CPL. JOSEPH MARIANELLI  
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

Violin, piano, guitar, bass and vocals filled the chapel with music. Japanese and Americans joined together for a scintillating auditory experience devoid of language barriers because all who attended spoke the language of music.

Music lovers had the opportunity to enjoy the second annual Japanese American Friendship Concert here June 20.

The concert was a myriad of musical performances, with popular Japanese and American titles including "Furusato," and "You Are My Sunshine," followed by a reception targeted toward Japanese-American mingling.

Missie Hamano, concert coordinator and secretary for the Branch Health Clinic's officer in charge, began the concerts as a UNICEF charity event in her home.

The concert gained popularity and took an additional venue on base.

Besides performing for charities, the artists volunteered to perform at the concert here.

"They love music and they think it's a great privilege and honor to play on base," she said.

One audience member was particularly impressed with singer, songwriter Jiro Mouri's style, "Seriously, that dude looks like the Japanese version of Johnny Cash."

Mouri, on guitar, led the crowd in a duet with Chaplain Bob Mills, vocals, during "You Are My Sunshine."

The crowd enjoyed all the performances, but the concert wasn't just about the music.

While there was participation from the audience all around, there could have been more American participation during the actual event. Hamano encourages more American participation in the future both in the audience and musically.

After the concert, there was a reception allowing all audience members the opportunity to mingle with one another and meet with the performers.

"I just want to say how thankful I am the church invites us," said Hamano.

For those that were unable to attend this concert, coordination is in the works to turn the concert into a series, having on in autumn and during Christmas, she added.



The Hinotsume Sisters, Chie on violin and Yumiko on piano, play "Nocturne" by Fredrick Chopin during the second annual Japanese American Friendship Concert here June 20. The sisters both graduated from the Toho Music School in Japan as well as music schools in France. Photo by Lance Cpl. Joseph Marianelli



Jiro Mouri, sing song-writer, plays "Deep Love" while Missie Hamano, concert coordinator, translates to English during the second annual Japanese American Friendship Concert here June 20. Mouri quit his job at age 51 to pursue music. Photo by Lance Cpl. Joseph Marianelli



Chie Hinotsume, part of the Hinotsume Sisters Duo, plays "Csa'rda's" by Vittorio Monti during the second annual Japanese American Friendship Concert here June 20. While attending music school in France, the sisters established the Hinotsume Sisters Duo. Photo by Lance Cpl. Joseph Marianelli



# AROUND THE CORPS

## Task Force 2/7 strikes back



**HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan (June 15, 2008)** — Marines assigned to Company F, Task Force 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division clear a Taliban stronghold during fierce fighting that resulted in one wounded Marine and numerous killed enemy forces. Together with Coalition Forces, Fox Company dealt a tremendous blow against the Taliban with a well-coordinated mounted and dismounted assault. The Marines have defended themselves against enemy forces on several occasions in recent weeks, eliminating Taliban strongholds within their area of operation. A robust, light infantry battalion, TF 2/7 deployed to Afghanistan in early April to support Operation Enduring Freedom. Although their efforts to bring peace and prosperity to the Afghan people have been punctuated with enemy attacks, the Marines remain committed to carrying out their mission to train, mentor and advise the Afghan National Police in order to extend Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan authority and influence during security, stability and regional development. *Photo by Sgt. Freddy G. Cantu*

## Medal of Honor recipient visits Okinawa

LANCE CPL. COREY A. BLODGETT  
III MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

**CAMP FOSTER, OKINAWA, Japan** — People are defined not by the situations they find themselves in but by how they handle those situations. This is what Medal of Honor recipient Donald Ballard stressed during his visit to Okinawa June 12-14.

Ballard, one of only three living corpsman awarded the Medal of Honor, toured military bases on Okinawa delivering words of encouragement and enjoying a sense of camaraderie among sailors and Marines alike.

Ballard was awarded the Medal of Honor on May 14, 1970 by then President Richard Nixon in recognition of his actions in Vietnam.

The main purpose of his visit to Okinawa was an invitation to be the guest of honor during the 110th Corpsman Ball June 13 at the Butler Officers' Club.

"When I was asked to come out here, I jumped at the chance without hesitation," Ballard said. "Coming back here is like coming back to a family reunion, because you're all my family."

The Missouri native enlisted in the Navy as a dental assistant in 1965 with hopes of becoming a dentist. But because of an abundance of dental assistants, "they told me I was going to be a 'corpsman,'" Ballard said. "I had no idea what that was supposed to mean. But they sent me to surgical school and told me I'd be sent to a medical battalion — in the rear with the gear, so I figured I'd give it my best shot."

Ballard was studying orthopedic and general operations at Surgical Assistant School when he received news that would drastically change his military career and his life.

"They spent a lot of money sending me to surgical school so I thought that's what they'd do with me at a hospital in the rear," Ballard said. "But they didn't need me there; they needed me out on the front lines. So all of a sudden I was a line corpsman with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines. I had no desire to go into the Marines, I mean, I joined the Navy for a reason — and that was to stay out of the Army," he said.

However Ballard's attitude changed as he became attached to the Marines of M Company, 3rd Bn.

"After serving with Marines for a while, there became a bonding that was a closeness that I'd never experienced, and I fell in love with the Marine Corps," he said.

In 1967 3rd Bn., 4th Marines, was sent to Vietnam where Ballard was wounded during a firefight and subsequently awarded the first of three Purple Hearts. But despite the hardships, his toughest lay ahead.

On May 16, 1968, just after medically evacuating two Marines for heat exhaustion, Ballard's battalion was ambushed by North Vietnamese troops brandishing automatic weapons and grenades. The unit incurred heavy casualties immediately. Earlier in the day the ambush occurred, the area had been heavily bombed by U.S. forces leaving several large craters in the ground. In a desperate effort to find cover, Ballard moved a group of wounded Marines into one of the craters and began medical treatment. While treating a Marine for a leg wound, a grenade rolled into the crater under the Marine's other leg and exploded. After recovering from the blast, Ballard continued treating the Marine, and while applying a tourniquet, saw another grenade tossed into the crater.

"They knew where we were at, we couldn't see them, but they could sure see us," Ballard said. "It hit me in the helmet, landed on my shoulder and fell down to the ground. So I picked it up and threw it back. Looking back it was pretty stupid on my part, but I didn't have many choices. I was able to throw it away just before it went off," he said.

Immediately, Ballard returned to treat the wounded Marine when he heard another Marine yell "Doc, grenade!"

"I turned around and there was another grenade between us, it would have killed all six of us, I had to spin around to grab it and when I did I thought the thing was going to kill us, I really did," Ballard explained. "So I grabbed the grenade and pulled it under my flack jacket thinking that it would absorb the shock and maybe I'd live through it, but at least maybe it would save the other Marines."

With the grenade tucked under his flak, Ballard said he had a moment of clarity about what he was doing.

"If you have time to think, you've got time to react," he said. "So I rolled up onto my patient and I flung the thing away, and as soon as I released it, and got some air to it — it detonated."

Ballard said that his Medal of Honor citation does an



**Medal of Honor recipient Donald Ballard speaks to sailors and Marines June 13 during the 110th Corpsman Ball at the on Camp Foster. Ballard, who earned the award for military valor for actions in Vietnam, visited Okinawa as the Corpsman Ball guest of honor. Photo by Lance Cpl. Corey A. Blodgett**

OK job of summing up the event, but does not paint a completely accurate picture of what happened.

"If you read my citation, it says that I jumped on the grenade and then calmly arose to treat my patients," he explained. "I didn't calmly do anything; I moved as fast as I could. That was the scariest thing in my life. Sometimes you're just faced with situations that you have to deal with to the best of your ability — you just have to do what you think is right at that time — that's all I did."

Ballard later returned to the United States after being wounded again near the end of 1968 and was assigned to the "blue side" — a unit away from Marines. Ballard said he was not able to make the transition.

"That's the reason I got out of the Navy," he said. "Because they would not leave me on the 'green side.'" It was at this time Army recruiters approached

Ballard with an enlisted to officer program enlistment incentive.

Ballard knew he wanted to make the military a career so he decided he would "join the Army after all," he said.

Ballard retired as an Army colonel from the Kansas National Guard in 2000 after 35 years of service.

The scope of Ballard's experiences and career provided a very memorable experience for those present at the ball.

"We simply couldn't have asked for a better guest of honor to speak at our ball than a corpsman who won the Medal of Honor," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Jorge Talavera, a hospital corpsman with 3rd Medical Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group. "It was amazing to have the once in a lifetime chance to meet a true hero."

## Community Briefs

### Water Safety Campaign

Join AFN's Power 1575 radio, Monday morning at 10:05 for Commander's Corner and the kick-off of Iwakuni's water safety campaign. During the 1-hour plus show, we will highlight the five Most Dangerous Water locations near the air station. In addition, we will discuss generic water safety tips, boating safety, and diving safety. The show will feature water safety experts from across the air station including the safety office. Feel free to call in during the show and join in on the conversation at 253-1575.

### Mess Hall Independence Day meal

There will be a special lunch meal served on Wednesday July

2 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at both north and south side mess halls in observance of Independence Day. Everyone aboard MCAS Iwakuni is invited. Comrats, family members and civilian employees pay \$3.85. Family members of E4 and below pay \$3.30. The following menu will be served:

Vegetable Soup  
Grilled Tenderloin Steaks  
Cheeseburgers/Hamburgers  
Frankfurters  
Baked potatoes  
Potato Salad  
Macaroni Salad  
Baked Beans  
Asparagus  
Corn on the Cob  
Devil's Food Cake  
Butter Cream Frosting  
Peanut Butter Cookies

### Apple Pie

Please also note that the northside mess hall will be closed on Friday, July 4. Southside will be open July 4 from 9 a.m. to noon and 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Both messhalls will be open the remainder of the holiday weekend of July 3-6 at the same hours mentioned above.

### Suicide Risk Workshop

Marine & Family Counseling is offering an Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk workshop. This training is very timely as overall military suicide numbers are up and receiving a significant amount of attention from Congress and USMC leadership. This training has been mentioned during testimony and while Marine suicides are not showing an upward trend over the last few years, it is very timely training for our counselors, leaders and other professionals to assist in their professional development and support their continued outstanding service to our Marines. Dr. Werbel is a Behavioral Health Affairs Officer at MR, very well-versed in this subject matter, and an engaging presenter. The Assessing & Managing Suicide Risk Training will be held July 21 at Club Iwakuni Talbot's dining room from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please register before July 2, by calling Counseling Services at 253-4526. Workshop participants must

register prior to the event. Onsite registration is not allowed.

### Goodwill golf tourney

A Japan-U.S. goodwill golf tournament with the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry is scheduled for July 19 at the Tori Pines Golf Course. Anyone interested in signing up should contact Dave Garber, station protocol officer, by e-mail (dave.garber@usmc.mil) by June 30. After June 30, people may sign up at the golf course. The cost, including green fees, is \$25 per person. Participants may pay at the golf course after June 30. Showtime for the event is 8 a.m., and tee-off is at 8:30 a.m. MCCA will provide food following the tournament. Call 253-4213 or send an email to dave.garber@usmc.mil for additional information.

### Boy Scouts Troop 77

After 50 years of air station service, Boy Scouts Troop 77 is still accepting new members. Meetings are Mondays 6 to 7:30 p.m. at Building 1111 (Two buildings down from the Marine Memorial Chapel). For more information, call 353-3505.

### 2008 Summer Reading Program

Join "Catch the Reading Bug!" this summer at the Station Library and discover the amazing world of insects. The 2008 Summer Reading Program is open to young people, preschool through age 12 with programs, prize drawings, story hours and more. Families are invited to join the Read-to-Me portion of the program. Registration for the Summer Reading Program begins June 30. For more information, call the library at 253-3078. All programs

are free of charge.

### Girl Scout Summer Clubs 2008

**Twilight Camp:** June 30 - July 3, 5:30 p.m. - 8 p.m. at Girl Scout Hut.

**Going Green Crafts:** July 14 - July 18, 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Girl Scout Hut.

**Base Camp:** July 28 - August 1, 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the Girl Scout Hut. For more information or to sign up, please call 253-2159.

### PTO needs volunteers

M.C. Perry Elementary School, Parents and Teachers Organization (PTO) needs volunteers to help through the summer to plan events and fundraisers for the fall. Please call 253-3327, for more information.

### Busch Gardens is giving back to the troops

For those looking to go on leave in the U.S. during the summer season, Busch Gardens and all of its affiliated parks are offering free admission to all active duty military members plus three direct dependent family members (with ID cards) to one of their parks. SeaWorld in Orlando, San Diego and San Antonio, Busch Gardens in Tampa Bay, Adventure Island and Water Country USA are all affiliates and will be taking part in the free admissions.

### From Provost Marshall's Office

Flight line gate 11 is down until further notice. Please use flight line gate 12. For information, contact PMO at 253-3303.

### New after hours phone number American Red Cross

The American Red Cross has a new after hours phone number, DSN: 253-6802.

## Chapel Services

### Roman Catholic

Saturday 4:30 p.m. Confession  
5:30 p.m. Mass  
Sunday 8:30 a.m. Mass  
9:45 a.m. Religious Education  
Tuesday - Friday 11:30 a.m. Weekday Mass  
Wednesday 6:00 p.m. Inquiry Class for adults

### Protestant

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

### Church of Christ

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

### Latter Day Saints

Weekdays 6:30 a.m. Youth Activities

### Jewish

Friday 6:00 p.m. Shabbat (small chapel)

### Teen Programs

For times, call 253-5183: high school meetings, junior high meetings, HS and JR Bible studies, retreats, service projects, mission trips, Special Events Volunteer Training and Mentoring, Parent Support Groups

For information regarding divine services, religious education or any other command religious program or chapel activity, call the Marine Memorial Chapel at 253-5218.

## Sakura Theater

### Friday, June 27, 2008

7 p.m. The Incredible Hulk (PG-13) Premier  
10 p.m. Street Kings (R) Premier

### Monday, June 30, 2008

7 p.m. Baby Mama (PG-13)

### Tuesday, July 1, 2008

7 p.m. 88 Minutes (R)  
Last Showing

### Saturday, June 28, 2008

1 p.m. The Forbidden Kingdom (PG-13)  
4 p.m. Steet Kings (R)  
7 p.m. Baby Mama (PG-13)  
10 p.m. The Incredible Hulk (PG-13)

### Wednesday, July 2, 2008

7 p.m. Prom Night Last showing  
7 p.m. You Don't Mess With The Zohan (PG-13)

### Sunday, June 29, 2008

1 p.m. Kung Fu Panda (PG)  
4 p.m. The Incredible Hulk (PG-13)  
7 p.m. Street Kings (R)

### Thursday, July 3, 2008

2 p.m. The Forbidden Kingdom (PG-13)  
7 p.m. Forgetting Sarah Marshall (R)  
Last Showing

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](http://www.mccsiwakuni.com) or call 253-5291.



# THE IWAKUNI APPROACH Classifieds

## Automobiles

**1993 Toyota Lucida**  
8 PAX Family Van. Asking \$1,500 OBO, will negotiate, must sell by June 25. JCI is good through Sept 09. Dependable, clean, automatic, air conditioning and non-smoking owners. Diesel engine gets great gas mileage. Call with questions at 253-7019 (home) or 090-9376-1841 (cell).

**2000 Mazda Premacy**  
\$1,500. Good tires, brand new brakes and battery. A/C, AM/FM/CD/Cassette, JCI is good through March 2009. Runs great. For more information, call 253-5308 (work) or 38-2323 (home).

**2000 Honda Capa**  
A steal at \$2,300. I bought it for \$3,900 nine months ago but have to leave. 40 mpg white hatchback and seats 5. Rear seats fold down to make bed. 1-year JCI.

The envy of all my friends. Available June 26. For more information, call 080-3453-4094 (cell) or 63-3119 (home).

## Job openings

**Full-time Home Visitor**  
J & E Associates, Inc., a government contractor, has an opening for a full-time home visitor with the Iwakuni New Parent Support Program. Position requires a Bachelor's degree in nursing, a Master's degree in social work or a Master's degree in marriage and family therapy. Applicants must hold a clinical license as an RN, LCSW or LMFT.  
Two years work experience in maternal and clinical health, community services, or abuse and neglect is desirable. Note: degree and license requirements cannot be waived. To apply, drop off your cover letter and resume to NPSP, Bldg. 411, e-mail to resumes@jeassociates.com or fax to 253-6626.

## Miscellaneous

**Items for sale**  
52" HD DLP TV for \$1,800. Large Kerosene Heater for \$200. For more information, call 253-3331 (work) or 080-3388-4175 (cell).

53" Television  
53" Sony projection TV, picture-in-picture, excellent condition. Asking \$300. Call 253-2416 (home).

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.



## Mess Hall Schedule

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Everyone aboard MCAS Iwakuni is invited. Comrats, family members and civilian employees pay \$3.85. Family members of E4 and below pay \$3.30.

- The following menu will be served:
- Vegetable Soup
  - Grilled Tenderloin Steaks
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  - Frankfurters
  - Baked potatoes
  - Potato Salad
  - Macaroni Salad
  - Baked Beans
  - Asparagus
  - Corn on the Cob
  - Devil's Food Cake
  - Butter Cream Frosting
  - Peanut Butter Cookies
  - Apple Pie

Please also note that the northside mess hall will be closed on Independence Day. Southside will be open July 4 from 9 a.m. to noon and 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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## Beloved elementary school teacher retires



Burma Abbott, a Matthew C. Perry fourth-grade teacher, and her students pose for a picture in Abbott's classroom at the school here June 12. Abbott, who is retiring to Lynchburg, Va., following 19 years of service at the school, said she will miss interacting with the children and watching them learn and grow. Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs

## THE IWAKUNI APPROACH ONLINE

WWW.IWAKUNI.USMC.MIL

THE IWAKUNI APPROACH NEWS  
For coverage, call 253-5551

# H&HS grabs Tigers by tail

## Sherwood's goal caps off five-score comeback

Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs  
IWAKUNI APPROACH STAFF

With an unlikely second-half comeback, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron edged the Orient Tigers 7-6 during intramural soccer action at the north side field here Monday.

H&HS remained undefeated with their fifth win of the season while the Tigers dropped just their first game, falling to 3-1-1.

While H&HS midfielder Baldemar Pardo set the tone for an H&HS comeback with a goal in the first minute of the second half, H&HS' rally didn't materialize until the game's closing minutes.

From the 29th to 35th minutes, H&HS scored five times in a run that included a pair of back-to-back goals by forwards Fernan Hernandez and Juan Bravo.

Forward Alex GarciaSilva's capped off the comeback, tying the game at six.

"He's played against me probably 18 times and that's the first time he's ever scored on me," said Tigers' goalie and coach Mark Lange after the game, adding laughingly "every now and then a dog finds a bone."

While GarciaSilva's goal against Lange may have been a rarity, it put H&HS one score away from pulling off a sizeable comeback and keeping their undefeated season alive.

Three minutes later H&HS put the nail in the coffin when H&HS forward Mason Sherwood chipped one in after Lange was unable to handle forward Juan Bravo's hard shot from midfield.

"It was a great comeback," said H&HS forward Baldemar Pardo. "We never gave up."

During the first half, the Tigers dominated the game's tempo, controlling the ball and delivering well-executed plays in a high-energy manner.

Forward Takanori Manago scored twice to help them get off to a 3-0 lead.

"We came in a little overconfident," H&HS's Pardo said.

Tigers forward Masayasu Odakura contributed two goals in the final eight minutes of the half as the Tigers took a 6-1 lead heading into the break.

But H&HS turned the tide in the second. Goalie Forist Brockway's strong play shutdown the Tiger's dangerous offense and a repositioning of H&HS players opened up the field for the team's scorers.

"We were getting out of position in the first half," Pardo said. "In the second, we went back to a standard two (defenders), one (midfielder), two (forwards) setup."

Staying patient and in position, H&HS was able to give the Tigers a taste of their own medicine.

"We ran out of steam," Lange said. "They got hot in the second half and they kept coming at us. Hats off to them."

The two teams will get another shot at each other when they face off once again at 7:30 tonight at the north side field. For more information, contact intramural sports at 253-3067.



Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron forward Fernan Hernandez looks to score against the Orient Tigers during an intramural soccer game at the north side field here Monday. H&HS' rallied from a 6-1 deficit at halftime to edge the Tigers 7-6. Photo by Lance Cpl. Chris Dobbs



Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron forward Fernan Hernandez attempts to control the ball during an intramural soccer game against the Orient Tigers at the north side field here Monday. Photo by Lance Cpl. Joseph Marianelli

## Scoring summary

	1st	2nd	Total
Orient Tigers	6	0	6
H&HS	1	6	7



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