

Torii Teller

VOLUME 50 NUMBER 1

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, JAPAN

JANUARY 14, 2005

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Marines deploy to Sri Lanka as part of effort that includes more than 14,000 service members.

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Shunan Christmas Tree Festival brightens holiday spirits

Station residents visit Shunan Christmas Tree Festival of Lights Dec. 23, experience new food, entertainment and culture.

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Santa jogs off extra pounds

Santa, Chicago Honey Bears lead crowd of 1,200 in Station's second annual JingleBellJog.

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Senior enlisted leadership visits Corps' best kept secret

CH. DAVE BONI
Combat Correspondent

The Marine Corps' top enlisted Marine, Sgt. Maj. John L. Estrada, visited the Station Jan. 5-6 to speak with service members and spouses about the quality job they are doing, and answer any questions the Marines and their families had.

Estrada first visited the Station's noncommissioned officers at the Landing Zone to express his gratitude for the performance they give on a daily basis.

"I was in Iraq last month and the warriors out there asked me to let you guys know how impressed they are at what you Marines are doing over here," said Estrada. "The Commandant and myself are extremely proud of you, and we wish to say thank you for everything you are doing for your country."

Sgt. Arthur Ross, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron installation personnel administrative center noncommissioned officer in charge, enjoyed the words of encouragement from the senior enlisted Marine.

"It is nice to hear that the job we do here is being noticed.



Cpl. Amber Castro
The Marine Corps senior enlisted Marine, Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps John L. Estrada, speaks with Station Marines here during his visit.

I think that when Marines hear that, they want to work extra hard," said Ross.

The next step for the Marine Corps' 15th Sergeant Major was the Station Chapel, where a large group of spouses were primed and ready to fire off a variety of questions and concerns. After a brief introduction, Estrada fielded questions ranging from healthcare to the Montgomery GI Bill, from childcare to pricing at the Marine Corps Exchange to the deployment of relief aid to victims of the recent tsunami.

With the help of Station Sgt. Maj. David Allison, Estrada answered each question, and praised the spouses for the support they provide their military partner.

"I wanted to speak to the military spouses because I want to hear some of the concerns they have about what's going on."

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Veteran's assistance representative visits Station

LANCE Cpl. LYDIA DAVEY
Combat Correspondent

Overseas Military Coordinator for Veteran's Benefits, Ed Croft, will be stationed here Jan. 8 - May 20 in order to provide veteran's assistance benefits counseling to Station service members.

"This is the first time a VA representative has been selected to be stationed at Iwakuni," said Croft. "I look forward to the privilege of providing VA benefits

counseling and seminars to our Marine Corps personnel who will be making the transition back to civilian life."

Croft's visit is part of a widespread effort by the Department of Veteran's Affairs to increase support to service members throughout Japan, said Stewart Kaplan, Transition Assistance Management Program counselor.

During his time here, Croft will conduct veterans' benefits briefings, provide counseling to service mem-

bers about veterans' benefits issues and provide disability compensation benefits information to those with service-connected disabilities.

According to Kaplan, service members should take full advantage of Croft's knowledge.

"Mr. Croft is an expert on topics such as pensions, the Montgomery G.I. Bill, the vocational rehabilitation program, the VA work/study program, home loan guarantees, healthcare benefits, service connected sexual harassment, and more." Croft will be stationed at Iwakuni from Jan. 8 to May 20. see STATION Page 5

Scholarships for Military Children application deadline approaches

ADAM AUSTIN
Special to American Forces Press Service

The deadline to apply for \$1,500 scholarships from the "Scholarships for Military Children" program is Feb. 16, and all applications must be delivered to a Defense Commissary Agency store

by the close of business that day.

At least one scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location with qualified applicants, agency officials said.

The application can be downloaded through a link on the Defense Commissary Agency's Web site, or from the Scholarships for Military Children site,

and can be filled out by hand or on the computer. Copies of the application also are available at commissaries worldwide.

Edna Hoogewind, the agency's liaison to the program, stresses that students should put emphasis on writing the essay portion of the application. "In past years, the essay has been a key factor in deciding among the many out-

standing applicants," she said. This year's topic is "How has the heightened awareness of terrorism impacted your life?"

Students who are not hand-delivering applications are advised to use a delivery method that supplies a return receipt. Applicants may visit the Scholarships for Military Children Web site. see SCHOLARSHIPS Page 5



Torii Teller

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Going to take down my tree!

CMDR. DONALD P. FIX
Chaplain's Corner

I think I'm going to take my Christmas tree down - which is nothing unusual, for many people wait till mid January to put away the trimmings for another year. I even have two friends whose trees will remain up until the first robin is sighted, but I do hate to see the tree go.

One reason of course is that it looks so nice in the corner of my living room, but another is that I hate to think of how many needles will come falling off the minute I touch that dried up tree. It is never easy to say good-bye to the holidays and thus I have left all my Christmas presents unopened also - when I open them up Christmas will be officially over.

If it wasn't for taking down the

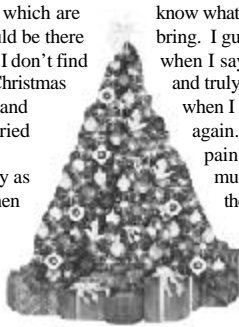
tree, perhaps the presents, which are lined up near the tree, would be there till next Christmas. I hope I don't find time-critical presents like Christmas tree ornaments or candies and cookies that may also be dried out.

Time passes too quickly as one grows in years, for when I was a young boy I just couldn't wait to see what Santa bought, but now I treasure the sight of wrapped presents and a decorated tree too much to disturb their beauty.

Perhaps that is one of the lessons that I need to take away from what has happened to the countless victims of the tsunami occurrence. The lesson is that I need to treasure things and especially people more because time goes by so quickly and we never

know what the next moment will bring. I guess I am like most of us when I say good-bye to someone and truly believe he will be there when I expect to see him again. I can't imagine the pain and loss that people must be feeling now when their family, who talked and joked and laughed together on Dec. 25 were not around to do the same 24 hours later.

I don't want to forget that lesson which is, time goes by quickly and others are too precious not to treasure now! I'm going to take down my tree - open the presents and say good-bye to another Christmas, and as I do so I will also say a prayer for those people who can't.



Ask the Inspector



MAJ. MATTHEW D. RAZVILLAS
Station Inspector

I have been the Station Inspector at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni for about three months. Being the Station Inspector has afforded me the opportunity to learn/understand how things operate on board the Air Station. Sometimes I scratch my head in amazement,

other times I say, "That makes sense."

Needless to say, sometimes useful information does not get to the people who would benefit most from the knowledge.

Wondering what to do with this dilemma, I have decided to start writing a column that would let residents aboard the Air Station ask me questions, to which I would find the answers and report back with my findings. The answers may not be what you want to hear necessarily, but at least you will have the scoop.

Also appreciated with all of your questions, would be possible solutions to your concern. This is an opportunity for your voice to be heard. The Station Inspector is the "eyes and ears of the Commanding Officer," and from what I am told he reads the paper as well.

All joking aside, this column is here as a benefit to the community as a whole. If you have a question, I am sure someone else has the same or a similar question. Your ideas may influence the future of the Air Station. If you have a question please send them to: razvillasmd@iwakuni.usmc.mil or naseerd@iwakuni.usmc.mil. If you do not wish for your name to be used please include in your e-mail.

You can also call the action line at 253-3100 and leave your questions. Ask me the question, and I will find the answer.

CHATTERBOX

Question: "What is your new year's resolution?"



"To get rid of some of my toys because I have a lot."

*Alex Danbery
Jacksonville, N.C.*



"To get in shape because advancement is getting more competitive and I need to be a better sailor."

*Petty Officer 2nd Class
Jaime Saenz
Los Angeles*



"To spend a little more time with my family if operationally possible."

*Gunnery Sgt. Victor E.
Velasquez
Albuquerque, N.M.*



"To get in better shape and karaoke more because it makes me feel good."

*Capt. Gregory W. Lewis
Adirondack, N.Y.*

Service members provide aid, relief to tsunami victims

CHL. RYAN WALKER
Combat Correspondent

Station Marines, such as embarkers and air traffic controllers, joined more than 13,000 other U.S. service members with Combined Support Force 536 who are working alongside international militaries and nongovernmental organizations in support of Operation Unified Assistance, a massive international response to help the victims of the tsunami disaster.

Many nations, including Thailand, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Australia and the United Kingdom, have joined the United States in support of the humanitarian effort, led by the III Marine Expeditionary Force based in Okinawa, Japan.

"The forward presence of Marines on Okinawa significantly contributes to U.S. ability to respond to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and to alleviate human suffering," said CSF-536

and III MEF Commanding General Lt. Gen. Robert R. Blackman.

Combined forces are working around the clock to deliver the necessary supplies to minimize the loss of life and mitigate human suffering.

About 90 U.S. aircraft and helicopters have transported more than 610,000 pounds of food, water and life-sustaining supplies to the affected people lacking basic survival needs, according to a Department of Defense report.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Patrick Sullivan, an aviation

warfare systems operator with the USS Abraham Lincoln, delivered aid supplies to people in Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

"The condition of the people has been improving over the past few days,"



Petty Officer 3rd Class Benjamin D. Glass

Navy Lt. Mark Banks and Petty Officer 2nd Class Patrick Faria from the USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) provide medical care for a victim of the tsunami at Sultan Iskandar Muda Air Force Base in Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

Sullivan said. "We're all focused on getting in there and helping out."

Fourteen U.S. Navy ships are in the region or on the way to support the humanitarian effort. The ships are capable

of producing 450,000 gallons of drinking water daily.

According to U.S. government sources, the estimated death toll from the tsunamis is more than 150,000 in Southeast Asia. In addition to the thousands of dead and missing, about three million people are lacking basic survival needs.

Last week President George W. Bush committed \$350 million toward earthquake and tsunami relief and recovery efforts.

"Many nations from the world are focused on doing everything in their power to aid the people tragically affected by this unfortunate natural disaster," said CSF-536 public affairs officer Maj. Brad S. Bartelt. "Not only are we bringing food and supplies, but we are also bringing hope to people who have lost so much."

Lance Cpl. Lydia Davey contributed to story.

Spring completion set for Crossroads renovations

PFC. MARK FAYLOGA
Combat Correspondent

The Tokimori Kensetsu Construction Company is currently renovating the dining area of the Crossroads Mall here in order to provide Station residents with a more comfortable dining experience.

The project, which began Oct. 2004, is slated for completion in the spring of 2005, said Don West, Marine Corps Community Service's architect and designer.

The Crossroads dining area has not been renovated since the mall opened in 1997, states an MCCS press release. The dining area's interior furnishings and finishes were worn out, and the space failed to reflect changes in the new style of service made available by restaurants added to the food court in recent years, said West.

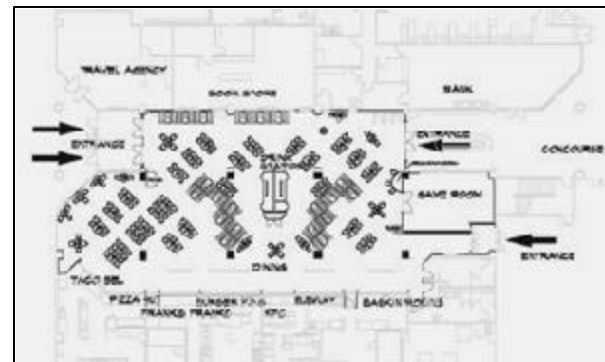
Renovations will expand the dining area to approximately 1,800 square feet, and will boost the seating capacity from 156 people to 215. In addition to accommodating additional patrons, the new arrangement will also provide more comfortable seating.

The new design of the dining area features a centralized drink station, said West.

New interior seating and privacy dividers have already been purchased and are awaiting installation. The furniture is made of medium tone wood and plastic laminate. The color scheme for the new dining area will incorporate warm earth tones.

The first phase began three months ago, and consisted of taking down two walls in order to turn the large corridor into part of the seating area, said West.

Phase two is being worked on now and includes the installation of syrup lines, water supply lines and a drain for the new beverage station. Phase two also



Graphic provided by Don West

The renovated Crossroads Mall will include a larger seating area, a centralized drinking station and new design elements. The darkened areas on the blueprint represent the mall once the renovations are complete.

consists of building and putting together one half of the dining area, said West.

The other half of the dining area will be completed during phase three.

Phase four includes reworking of the areas directly in front of the restaurant's counters. Phase four will take place during nighttime.

"The renovation project addresses quality of life, aesthetics and the flow and function of space for all Marines, Sailors and their families aboard this Air Station," said West.

The reworking and relocation of spaces, entrances and traffic flow provides the potential for adding another fast-food restaurant, said West.

Other renovations to Crossroads Mall includes the addition of a new dry goods storage building, (already underway in a rear portion of the complex). Construction begins on a new beauty shop this week, and a new coffee shop will be placed at the current location of the Travel Agency later this year.

The total cost of the project is \$370,000. The project is solely funded by local non-appropriated Marine Corps Community Services funds.

NEWS BRIEFS

STATION TO HONOR DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Join in commemorating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the Station Chapel today, 10-11 a.m. Call 253-4186 for further information.

YEARBOOK SALES

Yearbooks will be on sale Feb. 1 through mid March. Prices start at \$55, and will increase by \$5 a week. Books will be on sale during lunch and 2:30-3 p.m. in Mr. Williams room. See posters at school for additional details or Mr. Williams for any questions.

MAMMO VAN SECOND TRIP

Appointments are available for the Mammo Van which will be back in Iwakuni Feb. 8-12 to see patients. Women wanting mammograms need to make an appointment with their Primary Care Manager first. Call 253-3374 or 253-3379 to make an appointment.

CHILDREN'S STORY TIME

Story time is held at the Station library Thursday, 10-11 a.m. for children up to five years old who are accompanied by an adult. Call 253-3078 to confirm. Come and listen to stories and enjoy activities such as singing and crafts.

Marine family produces Krievs of the crop

PHOTO BY MARK FAYLOGA
Combat Correspondent

The living room is small to begin with, but throw in a big screen television, two couches, a coffee table, other assorted living room equipment and a family of six, and the small living room becomes a tiny living room. Upon closer observation, something interesting is noticeable right away: the children all manage to fit comfortably on a sofa made for two. The youngest girl huddles between her two oldest brothers, while a younger brother leans comfortably against them. The father relaxes on the open couch, and the mother sits on the floor next to the children's loveseat. For a space that has exceeded its maximum occupancy, the family in it couldn't fit any better.

This is the home of Master Sgt. Eric Krievs, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron S-6 communications chief. Krievs has lived in Iwakuni for the past two and a half years, and has been in the Marine Corps for 21. His wife, Germina, has been with him his entire military career and has shared the task of raising their four children.

For many people the difficulty of being in the military is the result of regular separation from home and family, the effort of maintaining relationships while deployed and the struggle of raising kids while constantly moving. The formula for success is an exacting one, but the Krievs family seems to have found it. According to Krievs, their particular formula includes strong religious faith, an interest in academics, clear communication links between each member of the family and a serious attitude about sports.

Their oldest son, Daniel A. Krievs, 20, graduated two years ago from Matthew C. Perry High School and is currently attending the University of California, Riverside. Despite attending three different schools during his last three years of high school, he managed to stay focused and was awarded the following: valedictorian, four scholarships from organizations aboard the Station and a full academic scholarship to UCR.

The Krievs' second-born son, Adam J. Krievs, 17, attended M.C. Perry where he played on the football team his first two years here. During Adam's freshman year he played alongside his older brother, Daniel. On defense, Adam played linebacker and Daniel played corner and safety. On offense, the two made an admirable running combo with Adam as the fullback and Daniel as the halfback.

"When Adam and Daniel first joined the team they were told that the team wasn't very good and they probably wouldn't win much, but my two boys came with a can-do attitude and brought the team



Erika L. Krievs show her older brother Adam J. Krievs how to bowl a strike, as the rest of the Krievs family looks on at the Station bowling alley. The Krievs enjoy doing activities as a family.

from losing standings to second place in the league," said Krievs.

"Getting to play with my older brother wasn't about competing for touchdowns - it was more about showing love for football; when I have my brother running behind me, it makes me want to block even harder to make sure he doesn't get hit," said Adam.

In fact, Adam had such a positive impact on the team during his time at M.C. Perry that coaches from other teams began to take notice.

This year, M.C. Perry didn't have enough players for a football team, and it looked like Adam wouldn't

get a chance to participate in his favorite sport during his senior year of high school. But near the beginning of the season, the Krievs family got a phone call from longtime friend Anthony Camacho, a retired gunnery sergeant who is currently living at Yokosuka Naval Base. Camacho told him that the Yokosuka football coach had requested that Adam play for the Red Devils (the Nile C. Kinnick High School football team in Yokosuka).

After discussing the matter, the family decided that Adam would live with Camacho (or Uncle Tony as the kids called him) until the first semester of school was over.

"Getting my parents to say 'yes' I could move in with Uncle Tony and Aunt Keiko (Tony's spouse) wasn't too difficult because they know how much I love football, and they trust the Comachos to take good care of me," said Adam.

The difficult part was getting Adam's move approved by the local school district, coaches and teachers, but that was easy compared to actually letting Adam go, said Krievs.

"The hardest part was saying 'yes, you can go,' knowing that he wouldn't be here to give him that hug good-bye in the morning before work," said Krievs.

The Red Devils football team did well this year and placed second in the league. After the football

season ended, Adam joined the wrestling team because he wanted to keep busy in sports and try something new. Adam will be home for the second semester of his senior year, and has aspirations of going to college at the University of Southern California, Miami or Hawaii.

The family's two youngest children, David J. Krievs, 13, and Erika L. Krievs, 9, both attend M.C. Perry and are just as involved in athletics as their two older brothers. David's favorite sport is baseball where he plays shortstop. Erika favors soccer and enjoys playing defense.

All of the Krievs children have maintained excellent grades along with schedules packed full of extracurricular activities and have managed to do so through many deployments and change of station orders.

"When dad is deployed we all really miss him, but we handle it well. I just take over as the 'Man of the House,' and when I'm not here Adam takes over; it's the in-household chain of command," said Daniel.

Moving has never been that difficult for Krievs because he got to have his family with him, he said. The only tough part about moving was that the children had to constantly make new friends, said Krievs.

"Making friends doesn't get any easier with age either," said Daniel. "It was tough because you would get to a new school and a new team where the players have been together forever and every time you moved you had to prove yourself to a brand new team."

However, there are upsides to moving around, said the family.

"We developed a special bond between each family member; moving brought us closer," said Daniel.

All the moving around and seeing new things and different cultures has given the children a sense of what life is really about. They've learned not to take things for granted and have become very close to one another, said Germina.

"The Marine Corps has allowed me more than ample opportunity to be a good parent to my children," said Krievs. "Throughout the years my leaders have helped me by allowing me to coach my children's teams, be involved with parent/teacher organizations and attend my children's school events. My wife has also found the Marine Corps to be very accommodating throughout the years. Once, when she was very ill, I was allowed to report to work and then go straight to the hospital to be with her.

"From that point on I knew the Marine Corps was good for my family," said Krievs. "In my case, being a Marine has given me the values and the opportunities to be successful in life - not only professionally, but personally as well. Family is not just a term I use at home; I will always be thankful for my wife and children in addition to my Marine Corps family."

Station choir brings joy through gospel music

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
PHOTO BY MARK FAYLOGA
Combat Correspondent

The chapel is suddenly filled with music. The sounds of the piano echo off the walls as the swelling voice of the choir joins in. The people in the chapel sit and listen, but not for long. Once the song grabs hold of them, the crowd is on their feet singing, dancing and clapping along. These are the effects of the 11:45 Gospel Choir, who's name is derived from the time it performs every Sunday at the Station chapel.

"Gospel music is all about hope. It's all about the way it makes you feel. It comes from the heart; that's what makes it so special," said Navy Lt. Carla M. Barry, Station chaplain and choir member.

The choir is made up of Marines, Sailors and family members. The choir currently has 10 members, but anyone from the congregation, community or gospel service can volunteer, said Barry.

"I joined the choir to praise the Lord, sing music and please Him," said Sgt. Sarah J. Raby, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron assistant career planner. Raby has only been in the choir for about two weeks.

The choir enjoys putting on

performances and being part of events on and off Station, said Barry.

The choir has performed throughout Japan at the Hofu City Chamber of Commerce, Sogo Department Store in Hiroshima, Iwakuni Symphonia Hall and at the Toyokuma Praise Chapel. They've also performed at several command-sponsored events here.

"The audiences out in town enjoy the shows," said Barry. "They always come up to us after our performance and say 'your music made me very happy.' They love it. That's what gospel music does - it makes you happy; it makes you want to clap."

"When the audience starts singing along with you, when they get into the song and can't help singing, dancing and clapping. That's the best thing about performing," said Raby.

People who have never seen the choir perform or those who want to see them again will get a chance during two upcoming events, said Barry.

The Jan. 17th Martin Luther King

Jr. Day Celebration will feature singing, scripture reading and prayer focused around King's life, said Barry.

During the Feb. 27th Unity Gospel Concert, the Station choir will perform with a local Japanese choir, said Barry.

"More than 250 people showed up for last year's Unity Gospel Concert and had a great time," said Barry. "This year's concert will include gospel hula, which is a religious variation of hula dancing, and this year one song will be sung in Japanese."

The choir is always looking for new members and volunteers, even if

the potential new member doesn't sing or think he can sing, said Barry. The choir is willing to train them.

"The great thing about our choir is that it's all about having fun and getting to be part of a family," said Sherry N. Benitez-Joseph, choir member for the past four months.

Anyone who wants to participate in the Unity Gospel Concert, learn about gospel music or be a part of the choir can attend rehearsals or contact the chapel at 253-3371. Rehearsals are held every Tuesday in the station chapel at 7 p.m.

The choir performs every Sunday at 11:45 a.m. during the station chapel gospel service.



Willis E. Barry, minister of music, tickles the ivories and sings during the 11:45 Gospel Choir rehearsal Jan. 4 in the Station chapel.



Practice makes perfect for the 11:45 Gospel Choir. The choir derives its name from the time it sings at the Chapel each Sunday.

IWAKUNI from Page 1

on in the Marine Corps. Family members of Marines make incredible sacrifices, and we are greatly appreciative of that. I wish we could offer them more for all that they do," said Estrada.

After the visit with the spouses, Estrada made his way over to the Staff NCO

Club for a social with senior leaders of the Station.

Estrada spend his second day here touring the Station, and visiting various units.

"I was stationed in Iwakuni in 1975, and this place has improved dramatically," he said. "I like to call Iwakuni the best kept secret overseas."

SCHOLARSHIPS from Page 1

ships for Military Children site and click on the "Verification of Receipt" section. Scholarship managers will respond to "Verification of Receipt" e-mails until June 15, officials said.

Applicants should check all materials carefully for simple things, like making sure the application is signed and that it's the 2005 application, not one from previous years.

The scholarship program is open to unmarried children under 21 (23 if enrolled in school) of active duty personnel, including Coast Guard, Guard and Reserve, and retired military. Eligibility will be determined using the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System database. Applicants should ensure that they, as well as their sponsor, are enrolled in the DEERS database and have a current ID card, officials said.

Applicants must be planning to attend, or be already attending, an accredited college or university full-time in the fall term of 2005, or be enrolled in a

program of study designed to transfer directly into a four-year program. Additional instructions can be found on the application or at the Scholarships for Military Children Web site.

Fisher House Foundation, a nonprofit organization best known for building comfort homes near military medical facilities, administers the Scholarships for Military Children program. Scholarship Managers, a professional firm that has handled more than 400 programs, screens applicants and awards scholarships. Neither Fisher House nor the Defense Commissary Agency is involved in the decision process, officials emphasized.

The Scholarships for Military Children program is in its fifth year and has awarded nearly 3,000 scholarships and more \$3 million since the first scholarship was awarded. Scholarships are primarily funded through the voluntary donations of the various manufacturers, brokers and suppliers that sell products in commissaries. The general public also can contribute through a link at the Scholarships for Military Children Web site.

STATION from Page 1

trauma and many other issues," said Kaplan.

Marines and Sailors who are trying to decide whether they should file for disability compensation should schedule an appointment with Croft, added Kaplan.

"Many service members are not aware they can file for disability," he explained. "Disability compensation is not just for combat related injuries; other disabilities such as hearing loss, mental issues or post traumatic stress disorder may also result in awarded compensation."

If a service member wishes to inquire about a specific disability issue, he or she should bring relevant medical records and all supporting documents to an appointment, said Kaplan.

Any active duty or retired Marine or Sailor may contact the Transition Assistance Program at 253-6439 or 253-4149 to schedule an appointment with Croft.



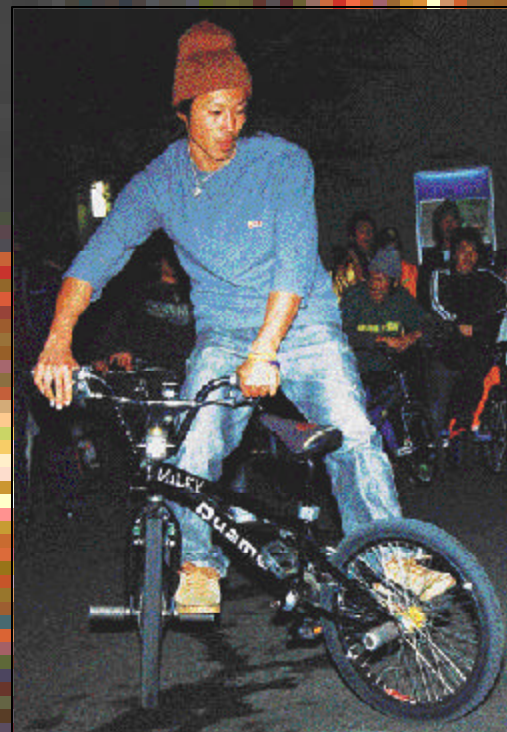
Hiroko Asada beats a rhythm that crowds can naturally move to at the Shunan Christmas Tree Festival.



Tanaka Hideki (right) and Todahiro Shogi prepare Mochi by beating rice in a stone pot with a sledgehammer, then taking out the slab of rice and molding it into small rice cakes for everyone to purchase and enjoy.



Japanese drum players beat out a steady rhythm on their traditional Taiko drums.



Norihiko Kono performs difficult bike tricks for an appreciative crowd at the festival, Dec. 23.

Shunan Festival lights up holiday spirits

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
LANCE CPT. CRISTIN K. BARTER
Combat Correspondent

The street is lit by the constant flickering of Christmas lights. Carols sung in the night are the only tunes heard for miles, and the wind carries scents of rice cakes and cotton candy to dancing children. The scene is not one risen to life from Charles Dickinson's work, "A Christmas Story." Rather, it is the picture that greeted 37 Station residents who recently traveled to the small Japanese town of Shunan.

The Information, Tourism and Travel office hosted a trip to the Christmas Tree Festival of Lights, Dec. 23, in Shunan. The Christmas celebration allowed visitors to experience a wide variety of new foods, entertainment and an abundant amount of Japanese culture.

Highlights of the event included Christmas carols sung by a choir

dressed extravagantly in velvet reds and whites, bicycle tricks performed by a troupe from Shunan, vendors luring visitors with the enticing smell of chicken on a stick, a drum show, the pleasant glow of brightly lit streets and a night that ended with a brilliant display of fireworks.

"I liked the fireworks the best," said Station resident Aaron Davis, 7, of Dothan, Ala. "There was also a drum show, and I thought that was great."

For Lance Cpl. Jacob R. Reinert, administration clerk, Headquarters and Headquarter Squadron, the light festival broadened his understanding of the unique Japanese culture.

One of the more traditional events that occurred during the festival was the making of Mochi (a Japanese rice cake.) Two men used wooden sledgehammers to beat the liquid out of freshly cooked, steamed rice. Next, they picked up a slab of the putty-like rice that remained, and divide it into

small circles of cake that they covered in flour. Mochi is considered best eaten when heated on a grill for a few minutes.

As the food was being prepared for all to enjoy, locals couldn't help but rise to their feet and 'shake it' to some familiar childhood music.

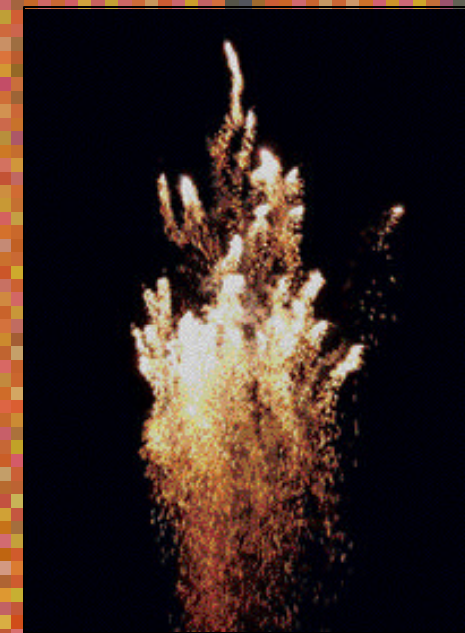
"At one point there was a group of people doing the Japanese version of the Hokey-Pokey," said Reinert. "I mean, old ladies were doing it and were having so much fun."

Visiting events such as the Christmas Tree Festival of Lights allows Station residents to get away from the everyday rigors of work and explore the culture-filled nation that surrounds them.

"Anytime we can get exposure to our host country's culture, the event is bound to be enriching one way or another," said Staff Sgt. Brian S. Sullivan, administration chief, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron.



Mochi makers roll the rice cakes in flour during the last phase of their preparation at the festival. After receiving a light dusting of flour, the cakes are grilled, then served warm and ready to eat.



A lively display of fireworks ended the evening's festivities at the Shunan festival.

Master potter molds students

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
PFC LUKAS J. BLOM
Combat Correspondent

Tucked away in the hills of Iwakuni, Shoto Yamada's Kikkogama Studio is an active center for the creation of beautiful pottery. For their unique artwork, Yamada and his family are well known, both locally and nationally.

The Kikkogama Studio recently celebrated its 30th anniversary. In 1974, Yamada quit his job (traditionally, Japanese stay with one company for life) and became a professional potter. He has been teaching Japanese students for seven years and, about two years ago, he began teaching Americans.

Shoto initially taught his son, Tetsuo Yamada, pottery. A graduate of the Osaka Art Institute, Tetsuo is a celebrated and successful potter in his own right, earning many local and national awards for his work. He currently works out



Master pottery artist Shoto Yamada demonstrates how to smooth out clay surfaces to his class. Yamada opened the Kikkogama Studio 30 years ago to fulfill his dream of being a professional potter.



A student in Shoto Yamada's pottery class shaves off excess clay from the mug she created. Classes are offered twice a month at Yamada's Studio.

of the Kikkogama Studio alongside his father.

Yamada is responsible for reviving and recreating a distinctive style of pottery, commonly referred to as the traditional Iwakuni style of pottery, which was

a lost art form for more than 100 years.

Upon arriving at the two-story studio, students are greeted by dozens of beautifully crafted pieces of artwork, staring down from every ledge in the showroom. Walking in between the glistening displays the father and son duo have created, artistic possibilities race through the student's minds.

Filled with creative inspiration, students continue down the narrow staircase in to the sparsely filled classroom and work area. They find themselves surrounded by the family's unfinished artwork that will some day make its way up to the display room. With guidance and careful instruction of Yamada, the students are inspired to create their own pieces.

"I enjoy teaching the Americans because they bring different concepts and a different perspective to my studio," said Yamada. "They have a unique approach; there is no right or wrong when it comes to pottery making."

Students new to the class learn the basics of working clay by creating plates. After mastering plates, they gradually progress to vases, bowls and individual creations. Students also learn how to glaze their pieces.

"I love working with clay, and Mr. Yamada gives me the chance to learn how to create many different styles of pottery," said Marcia Hashman, a pottery student for nearly two years. "You start with a piece of clay and over the course of the evening it changes into something different. Sometimes you have a plan and sometimes you don't, but it's always exciting to see how it looks when you're finished."

Classes at Kikkogama Studio, located off of Route 59, are held the first and third Tuesday of every month, from 6:30 - 9 p.m. Class fees are 2,000 yen per class, plus a onetime fee of 4,000 yen for pottery tools.

For more information contact Therese Tinker (253-2224) or Sallie Donahue (253-2492).

Ceramics part of fragile national tradition

- The extensive reliance on lacquered wood and bamboo in Japan has meant that the development of ceramics in Japan really began in the late 16th century during the Momoyama Period (1568-1615). So the "tradition" of Japanese ceramics can be said to be relatively recent, although ceramics have been made in Japan since about 5,000 B.C.
- The development of ceramics in Japan was stimulated by the import of Korean potters (as prisoners) to Japan between 1592 and 1597. This was also the time when the tea ceremony became very popular among the aristocracy and the military class.
- The tea ceremony is a highly stylized and

- elegant ritual related to Zen Buddhism.
- Sen-no Rikyu (1521-1591), a great tea master, was highly influential, and renewed appreciation for the rusticity of the medieval kilns in Japan, leading to development and greater refinement of Japanese pottery.
- In 1926, the philosopher Yanagi Soetsu (1889-1961) launched the Folk Art Movement (*mingei*). Sympathetic to its spirit were the potters Shoji Hamada (1894-1978), Kawai Kanjiro (1890-1966) and Yomimoto Kankichi (1866-1963) who were tremendously influential.

Information compiled from www.galleries.com

OUT THE GATE

Note: Japanese who do not speak English may answer the phone numbers provided.

Japanese Calligraphy Exhibition
There is a display of Japanese calligraphy at Chuo Library now through Tuesday. The library is closed Monday. Call 31-0046 for more details.

Momotesai Festival
This Shinto ceremony will take place at Ohmoto Shrine on Miyajima

Island Thursday, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. During the ceremony they shoot arrows in order to drive out evil spirits. There will be some offering called "Houhan", a food that was typically field rations for Japanese soldiers in the Middle Ages, will be offered to visitors. The admission is free. Call 0829-44-2011 for further information.

Bonsai Display
There will be a display of nearly 30 Bonsai plants of black pine trees in the Exhibition room at the Iwakuni City Auditorium Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Monday,

9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The admission is free. For more details, call 21-6535.

Obuku Chakai Tea Ceremony
There will be a tea ceremony, praying for good health in the upcoming year. Sunday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Shukkeien Park in Hiroshima City. An admission is required. For further details, call 082-221-3620.

Yanai Flea Market
A flea market is scheduled to be held at Yanai City Hall 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. In case of heavy rain, it will be cancelled. Call 0820-26-6666 for more information.

TORII TELLER CLASSIFIED ADS

To submit your ads or announcements: *Torii Teller* accepts ads/announcements from nonprofit organizations and groups only. Briefs run on space-available and time-priority basis. Deadline for briefs is noon Thursday. *Torii Teller* reserves the right to edit to fit space. Stop by Building 1, Room 216 to fill out a form.

AUTOMOBILES

Nissan Serena, 1991, cold A/C, seats seven, very well maintained, JCI until May 2006, \$2,400. Call GySgt. D'Trinidad at 253-5392 dwh or 253-2860 awh.

Nissan Serena, 1992, JCI until May 2006, \$2,100 obo. Call GySgt. D'Trinidad at 253-5392

Mazda Carol, 1992, mini car, automatic, P/W, CD player with 12 disc changer, great little car, available Feb. 11, JCI until Oct. 2005, \$475 obo. Call SKCS Dizon at 253-6529 dwh or 253-2263 awh.

Toyota Hilux Surf, 1991, 4WD, P/M, P/L, P/W,

power moonroof, CD & subs, racing air filter, racing rims, altimeter, in-cab adjustable suspension, good suv, JCI until Dec. 2005, \$1,800. Call Sgt. Nickell at 253-3211 dwh or 253-2116 awh.

Kawasaki ZX9R, 1994, 900cc, experienced bike, JCI until Oct. 2005, \$1,500. Call Major Braund at 253-

4584 dwh or 253-5705 awh.

OTHER ITEMS

Misc., camera, AT-1 Canon, old 35mm with lots of extras, \$150; martial arts equipment, sparring gear, wave master standing punching bag, leg stretcher, \$200 or will sell separately; guitar, nylon string, sunburst, godin with GR33 and cables, \$1,000; guitar, Gretsch 'Tennessee Rose', \$1,000. Call Major Braund at 253-4584 dwh or 253-5705 awh.

Misc., 2 short sleeve creighton shirts, SSgt. chevrons, size M 15-15/2, \$10 each, 1 alpha blouse, size 40R, \$15. Call GySgt. D'Trinidad at 253-5392 dwh or 253-2860 awh.

WANTED

Child Care Provider
Mondays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for son 2 and daughter 3. Call Samantha at 253-2081.

JOB OPENINGS

WIC (243-9426)
A part time position as a nurse/nutritionist is open at the WIC Overseas Program in Iwakuni. Position requires a BS in Nursing, Nutrition, Dietetics or Home Economics, and experience in prenatal, maternal or infant nutrition.

E-mail your resume, cover letter and copy of your driver's license to williamsd@nhyoko.med.navy.mil or fax it at 243-2614 attn: Denise Williams.

CHRO (253-6828)

MCCS:
-Supervisory Education Services Specialist, world wide
-Substance Abuse Counselor, world wide

Facilities:
-Interdisciplinary Engineer, world wide
-Architect, world wide

Clinic:
-Occupational Health Nurse, world wide
-Speech Pathologist, world wide
-Secretary (OA), Iwakuni wide

Commissary:
-Secretary (OA), Iwakuni wide

MCCS (253-3030)

(The following jobs are open at MCCS Personnel)

MCCS Job Listing:

-Secretary, Executive Admin Office
-Retail Area Supervisor, Sound Shop
-Senior Sales Associate, Main Complex
-Material Handler, Warehouse, civilian only
-Material Handler Supervisor, Warehouse, civilian only

-Assistant Club Manager, Club Iwakuni, civilian only
-Club Operations Assistant, Club Iwakuni
-Food Court Operations Assistant, Food Court, all sources
-Recreation Assistant, Fitness Instructor/

Trainer, Health Promotions, civilian only
-Recreation Assistant, Youth Sports, civilian/military
-Sports Specialist, Athletics

CHRO (253-6828)

-Head Cashier, Cash Cage
-Duty Manager, Bachelor Housing

MCCS:
-Supervisory Education Services Specialist, world wide
-Substance Abuse Counselor, world wide

Facilities:
-Interdisciplinary Engineer, world wide
-Architect, world wide

Clinic:
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-Speech Pathologist, world wide
-Secretary (OA), Iwakuni wide

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-Club Operations Assistant, Club Iwakuni
-Food Court Operations Assistant, Food Court, all sources
-Recreation Assistant, Fitness Instructor/

Never fear - award time is here!



Cpl. Amber Castro

Station Commanding Officer Col. Michael Dyer presents civilian employees with awards for their job performance during the 2004 rating period. From left to right: Mr. Raymond Knox (BPO Officer), Mr. Gary Gilmour (Director, CHRO), Ms. Sue Kear (Housing Officer), Mr. Andrew Samuels (AT/FP Officer), Ms. Helen Marquez (Comptroller), Mr. Dave Garber (Protocol Officer), Col Dyer, Mr. DJ Duarte (Innovation & Improvement Officer) and Mr. Rick Perry (Safety Officer).

MOVIE SCHEDULE

SAKURA

FRIDAY
7 p.m. Christmas With The Kranks (PG)
10 p.m. Seed Of Chucky (R)

SATURDAY
1 p.m. Lemony Snickets: A Series Of Unfortunate Events (PG)
4 p.m. Ocean's Twelve (PG-13)
7 p.m. Christmas With The Kranks (PG)
10 p.m. After The Sunset (PG-13)

SUNDAY
4 p.m. Fat Albert (PG)
7 p.m. Bridget Jones: The Edge Of Reason (R)

MONDAY
7 p.m. Phantom Of The Opera (PG-13)

TUESDAY
7 p.m. Meet The Fockers (PG-13)

WEDNESDAY
7 p.m. Seed Of Chucky (R)

THURSDAY
7 p.m. Christmas With The Kranks (PG)

This schedule is submitted by the Sakura Theater and is subject to change. For show times call the Sakura Theater at 253-5291.



FRIDAY
11 a.m./5 p.m. Two Brothers (PG)
2 p.m./8 p.m. Unbreakable (PG-13)

11 p.m./5 a.m. Black Heart (R)
2 a.m. Under Siege 2 (R)

SATURDAY
11 a.m./5 p.m. Love Don't Cost A Thing (PG-13)
2 p.m./8 p.m. Daredevil (PG-13)
11 p.m./5 a.m. Terminator 3 (R)
2 a.m. Sniper (R)

SUNDAY
11 a.m./5 p.m. Starsky And Hutch (PG)
2 p.m./8 p.m. Laws Of Attraction (PG)
11 p.m./5 a.m. Gothika (R)
2 a.m. The Punisher (R)

MONDAY
11 a.m./5 p.m. Top Secret (PG)
2 p.m./8 p.m. Shrek 2 (PG)
11 p.m./5 a.m. Murder By Numbers (R)

2 a.m. Town And Country (R)

TUESDAY
11 a.m./5 p.m. Star Wars 2 (PG)

2 p.m./8 p.m. Showtime (PG-13)
11 p.m./5 a.m. Twisted (R)
2 a.m. Hamburger Hill (R)

WEDNESDAY
11 a.m./5 p.m. Stealing Harvard (PG-13)
2 p.m./8 p.m. Soul Plane (PG)
11 p.m./5 a.m. Lost In Translation (R)
2 a.m. Instinct To Kill (R)

THURSDAY
11 a.m./5 p.m. Two Weeks Notice (PG-13)
2 p.m./8 p.m. Spider Man 2 (PG)
11 p.m./5 a.m. Taxi Driver (R)
2 a.m. Walking Tall (R)





More than 1,200 participants ran in the second annual Jingle Bell Jog, Dec. 22. Runners were encouraged to dress up in Christmas costumes to spread holiday spirit to Station residents.



Chief Warrant Officer Scott E. Hunt, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 assistant aviation ordnance officer, drives his Harley Davidson "sleigh" to lead the second annual Jingle Bell Jog.

Santa jogs off extra pounds

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
PFC LUKAS J. BLOM
Combat Correspondent

The third annual Jingle Bell Jog kicked off in front of the IronWorks Gym here, Dec. 22. Participants of the health-conscious Christmas event ran the 1.2-kilometer course dressed in various festive costumes to convey their holiday spirit to Station residents.

"This is a great event for the whole community to come out and have fun together," said Bruce L. Quintin, a runner who was dressed in a green and red holiday costume. "It's such a small base and a big event that pretty much everyone can come out here, dress up and share a piece of Christmas together."

Eventgoers embarked on the festive jog at 11 a.m. behind Santa Claus and the Chicago Honey Bears, who set the pace for the event. Throughout the jog, Santa and the Honey Bears motivated the joyful joggers by tossing out candy and other treats.

"That was the first time I've ever been given candy while running in formation," said Quinton.

"It was an incredible sight," said Billie Scott, Semper Fit health promotions director. "There were so many people, both lanes of the road were full as far back as you could see. We had a goal of 1,000 people, but we beat that by 203; it was just awesome."

After the run, participants were invited to the IronWorks Gym to cool down with a performance by the Chicago Honey Bears and a free lunch.

While the Honey Bears were busy entertaining the crowd, the judges were deciding who would take home the treasured best costume awards. There were a total of 12 awards (divided into categories: group, individual, age and gender).

"My Mom and Dad look really funny," said Danom Wilson, 7, of her cheerful parents. Her mother, Zorina Wilson, dressed up as a wrapped present and took home the prize for the adult woman category.

The recovery team, or "Charlie Brown's Christmas gang," won a \$200 prize for being the best-dressed team.

"We needed to have something unique," said Jake J. Witt, recovery team captain. "We wanted to have fun and come off cartoony, so someone suggested the Charlie Brown Christmas and we went with it."

The crew was complete with Charlie Brown, Linus and Lucy while a mobile version of Snoopy's doghouse joined the excursion.

The success of this year's Jingle Bell Jog has spurred the Marine Corps Community Services to start the planning for next year's event, and plan for 1,500 participants.

"This was the most joyful and fun event we've had all year," said Scott. "Everybody seems so happy."



ABOVE: Captain of the Chicago Honey Bears, Lisa Michelle, takes a minute to greet some of her young fans. The Honey Bears completed their weeklong stay here by leading the Jingle Bell Jog. RIGHT: The grinch's reindeer prepare to pull his sleigh through the second annual Jingle Bell Jog here, Dec. 22. Awards were handed out after the run for best costumes.

