III MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE AND MARINE CORPS BASES JAPAN

OKINAWA MARINE

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A Philippine sailor and U.S. Navy Sea Bee, with Navy Mobile Construction Battallion 1, connect pvc-pipe for the plumbing of a two-room school building in support of Exercise Balikatan 2010 at Teppeng Elementary School in Sinait, Philippines Feb. 23, 2010. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Daniel Balmer*

Balikatan shoulders projects

Gunnery Sgt. Cindy Fisher
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP AGUINALDO, Republic of the Philippines — Exercise Balikatan 2010 kicked off with a ceremony at the Armed Forces of the Philippines headquarters here Tuesday. The exercise is a Government of the Republic of the Philippines-approved and U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff-directed annual combined joint bilateral exercise with AFP personnel, select experts from Philippine Civil Defense agencies and U.S. military personnel.

Balikatan, which means "shoulder to shoulder" in Tagalog, exemplifies the intent of the exercise – to strengthen the 59-year Mutual Forces Agreement relationship between Philippine and U.S. forces, said AFP and U.S. leaders at the ceremony.

This is the 26th year for the exercise and includes three simultaneous events in which more than 2,000 AFP service members and about 5,700 U.S. troops will take part.

Balikatan is a long-standing exercise, said AFP Gen. Victor S. Ibrado, the AFP chief of staff, during the opening ceremony.

SEE **BALIKATAN** PG 5

Relief to Marines, sailors is first priority

Lance Cpl. Kentavist P. Brackin
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP FOSTER — The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society annual active duty fund drive, an event giving each major subordinate command a chance to raise money to support the NMCRS, begins Monday and is scheduled to end the first week of May.

The NCMRS has been providing aid to Marines, sailors and their families around the world since its founding in 1904. The non-profit organization has assisted more than 4 million personnel with more than $l billion in loans and grants through a variety of financial programs and services, according to the organization's "2009 at a Glance" annual report.

The mission of the NMCRS is to provide financial, educational and other assistance to members of the Naval services of the United States, eligible family members and survivors when in need.

"A long time ago I once used the relief society for car repairs so it has definitely been beneficial to me," said Katrina Carrington, a former Marine and NMCRS volunteer case worker.

Carrington received aid from the society then in the form of an interest-free loan. The case was based

SEE **RELIEF** PG 5

Key Resolve takes warfare training to new heights

Lance Cpl. Abigail M. Wharton
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

REPUBLIC OF KOREA, MARINE CORPS MOUNTAIN WARFARE TRAINING CENTER — Marines and sailors with Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and Marine Air Support Squadron 2, Marine Air Control Group 18, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III MEF, participating in Exercise Key Resolve 2010, experienced training with Republic of Korea Marine Corps mountain warfare instructors, March 4 and 5.

The Marines rappelled from a tower wall and a simulated helicopter, from heights of more than 100 feet; climbed steep slopes using ropes and hiked over

SEE **MOUNTAIN** PG 5

Marines with Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and Marine Air Support Squadron 2, Marine Air Control Group 18, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III MEF, participating in Exercise Key Resolve 2010, practice the "safe rappel" while Republic of Korea Marine mountain warfare instructors coach. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Abigail M. Wharton*

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"Golf club in the sun" offers new features and beautiful greens to all golfers.
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GOOD BAD UGLY

Social networking via Internet explained

Gunnery Sgt. Jose R. Paloschavez

By nature, people are social creatures, and social networking is the medium we use to work together cohesively.

In its simplest terms, social networks require three or more entities communicating and sharing information. The Girl or Boy Scouts, a church community or a military unit are examples of social networking. But as times change, so do the ways we interact.

OPINION

The Internet has significantly impacted social networking. According to www.internetworldstats.com, roughly 25% of the world's population were Internet users as of 2009. This growth has been blazing at a rate of 380 percent from 2000 to 2009.

In the past, the Internet was no more than an information repository but now, this social networking medium is taking the world by storm. Social networking allows people to chat, text message, e-mail video, voice chat, file share, blog, participate in discussion groups and so on.

And the technology is vastly appealing to a younger audience.

According to About.com, half of those who visit social networking sites daily are ages 18-24. Forester Research indicated that more than 50 percent of U.S. teenagers, ages 12 to 17, visit MySpace daily.

Some social networking sites can be very beneficial.

For example, Wikipedia, a socially-motivated, not-for-profit, free, online encyclopedia, provides a vast store of human knowledge available to everyone via Internet. Wikipedia has more than 750,000 active contributors, 9 million articles and is written in more than 250 languages.

Another good use of the Internet's social network was evident during the mass murder at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Va., April 16, 2007. University officials and law enforcement communicated with conventional police radios and telephones. Students were better connected as they communicated via e-mail and even posted live information on social networks such as Facebook.

But, social networking on the Internet also poses some bad.

Because most users post pictures, music, videos, high-definition movies and other large files, they consume valuable bandwidth and storage space which has the potential to cripple the network.

Some organizations have banned social networking sites for reasons such as the potential to decrease employee productivity. Also, most social networks are designed to be open, unregulated. These open networks expose users to viruses, spyware, malware, worms and other malicious software.

Another concern is the disclosure of personal information encouraged by social networking sites. Companies regularly search MySpace, Classmates, YouTube and other sites for information about potential hires and competitors.

Social networking can get "ugly" fast. Social networks are routinely used by child predators, cyber-stalkers and cyber-bullies.

Many federal and state laws try to combat child predators, but, not enough has been done. Remember, more that 50 percent of current social networking users are teenagers. Many social networking sites fail to monitor user-age verification. Other sites are open and don't care about users' ages.

According to an article, Social Networking and Age Verification: Many Hard Questions; No Easy Solutions written by Adam Thierer, about 5 percent of adult offenders lied about their age and tried to pass themselves as minors on networking sites. Thierer indicated that 83 percent of minors who met with offenders, contacted online, voluntarily went somewhere with them afterward. As many as 41 percent of those spent at least one night with the offender.

Education and awareness are crucial to safeguard against the dangers of social networks.

Military members must be extremely cautious about posting information on any social networking site! This includes posting any information the enemy may use against us. Stop and think about operational security when posting to public social networking sites.

Leaders, talk to your Marines and sailors about their responsibilities in protecting information. Keep in mind the enemy is listening - he wants to know what you know.

It is important to educate ourselves and our children about online safety. This includes talking about social networking and any medium with the potential to harm our children. The key is parental involvement.

Use sound judgment and common sense. Best of all, use the "Three E's" described by Theirer: empowerment, education and enforcement. Empowerment means everyone making sound and timely decisions and providing the right tools to ward off bad people visiting social network sites. Educate individuals at all levels regardless of age about the risks of the Internet. Enforcement encompasses authorities weeding out the bad people.

Social networking is the tool of choice because it is designed to operate in a "live" environment, but protect children and yourself from the inherent risks.

Paloschavez is an information security technician with III Marine Expeditionary Force.

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES: A PARENT'S GUIDE

While social networking sites can increase a person's circle of friends, they also can increase exposure to people with less than friendly intentions. Here are tips for helping your children use social networking sites safely:

- Help your children understand what information should be private.
- Explain that children should post only information that you – and they – are comfortable with others seeing.
- Use privacy settings to restrict who can access and post on your child's Web site.
- Remind your children that once they post information online, they can't take it back.
- Talk to your children about avoiding sex talk online.
- Tell your children to trust their gut if they have suspicions. If they ever feel uncomfortable or threatened by anything online, encourage them to tell you.

Source: http://www.onguardonline.gov/socialnetworking.html

This Week in History

SOURCE: U.S. MARINE CORPS HISTORY DIVISION

March 13, 1943: The first group of women Marine officer candidates arrived at the U.S. Midshipmen School at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Mass.

March 14, 1942: The Rifleman's Creed was first published in the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Chevron on this day. Maj. Gen. William H. Rupertus founded this creed and it is still taught to Marines undergoing Basic Training at the recruit depots at San Diego and Parris Island, S.C.

March 16, 1945: Iwo Jima is declared secure. Adm. Chester W. Nimitz remarks of the Marines who fought there, "Among the men who fought on Iwo Jima, uncommon valor was a common virtue."

March 17, 1967: Master Sgt. Barbara J. Dulinsky began her 18-hour flight to Bien Hoa, Vietnam, becoming the first female Marine to serve in a combat zone. She served at Military Assistance Command Vietnam Headquarters.

March 17-18, 2004: The Marine Corps suffered its first casualties in its second Operation Iraqi Freedom rotation when three Marines were killed by enemy forces in the Al Anbar province in Iraq.

OKINAWA MARINE

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Camp Foster
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NORTHERN BUREAU
Camp Hansen
DSN 623-4054

Tax Center ready to crunch numbers

Lance Cpl Matthew A. Denny
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP FOSTER — It is tax season and the Camp Foster Tax Center is open to all Status of Forces Agreement personnel to help prepare their tax returns.

In order to successfully complete last year's tax files, service members will need the proper information before starting the process, said Sgt. Kyle B. Blumenstock, a combat engineer with Marine Wing Support Squadron 172, III Marine Expeditionary Force, who is currently assigned as the non-commissioned officer in charge of the Camp Foster Tax Center.

"The fastest way to get Marines in and out of here is if they do some of the leg work and have the proper paperwork when they come into the tax center," said Blumenstock.

To complete an average service member's taxes, they need to bring in their military identification card, social security card or last year's tax statement, wage and earnings statement, W-2, and their bank account number and bank's routing number to allow their return to be deposited directly in their account, according to Blumenstock.

"It would be a big help if people researched their state's tax laws," said Gunnery Sgt. Esteban Z. Castro, a supply Marine with Combat Logistics Regiment 35, 3rd Marine Logostics Group, III MEF, who is the staff non-commissioned officer in charge of the tax center here.

Every state has different tax laws and some do not require you pay taxes if you are in the military and don't live in the state for more than 30 days per year, added Castro.

"If everyone came in with all their ducks in a row, it would make this process easier and faster for everyone," he said.

There are two military tax centers on Okinawa. One is on Camp Foster and the other is on Kadena Air Base.

"Those who are married have to have their spouse physically here or they need a power of attorney in order to complete their taxes," said Castro.

The tax center volunteers offer their services for free. Thousands of dollars have been saved this year alone because of the service provided to service members and their families compared to if they went to another source and paid to receive the same tax counseling, stated Castro.

The Foster tax center cannot provide all tax services however. Those who have to file a schedule D will have to go to Kadena Air Base's tax center, said Blumenstock.

The Marines who work at the tax center are volunteers from different units across Okinawa. The Marines were temporarily assigned to the tax center in November and trained by an Internal Revenue Services official. The assignment lasts eight months and then the Marines go back to their original units.

For more information contact the Camp Foster tax center at 645-4255 or visit building 437. For more research about tax information go to www.irs.gov. The Camp Foster Tax Center hours are Monday through Friday 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. There are no appointments left for this tax season, but walk-ins are welcome daily with an average wait time of 30 to 60 minutes.

Contact the Kadena Air Base Tax Center at 634-7418 or visit building 1460. The Kadena Air Base Tax Center hours are Monday through Friday. 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Walk-ins are welcome with an average wait time of 30-45 minutes.

Staff Sgt. Latisha S. Franklin, the battalion mess chief for Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and Cpl. Allan Baer, a cook at the Courtney mess hall, decorate a cake for the Marine Corps birthday last November. *Photo courtesy of Staff Sgt. Morris Mayfield III*

Courtney Mess Hall named year's best in Marine Corps

Gunnery Sgt. Cindy Fisher
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP COURTNEY — When the Camp Courtney Mess Hall was named Marine Corps Bases Japan's Mess Hall of the Year in September, mess hall leaders were confident they would conquer the next challenge, the 2010 Maj. Gen. W.P.T. Hill Memorial Awards Program for Food Service Excellence.

They were right.

Courtney Mess Hall was named the W.P.T. Hill Award's best Military/Contractor Garrison Mess Hall in the Marine Corps, according to a Feb. 10 message.

The W.P.T. Hill Awards were established in 1985 to improve food service and acknowledge the best mess halls Marine Corps-wide.

It took a team effort for the Courtney mess hall to win, said Staff Sgt. Morris Mayfield III, with 3rd Marine Logistics Group and assistant manager of the Camp Courtney Mess Hall. Winning took the combined efforts of the 30 Marines and 30 local nationals on the mess hall staff, he added.

Last year was a good one for the mess hall, Mayfield, admitted.

The facility had also nabbed all four chef of the quarter as well as all four best mess hall of the quarter for Okinawa in 2009, he said.

Throughout the year, the mess hall was inspected and marked with flying colors "showing that we perform at a high level consistently" he said.

Just being nominated for the W.P.T. Hill Awards is an honor; one many food service Marines never experience, added Mayfield for whom this was his first competition in 13 years.

"It's a major award. It's kind of like the Marine Corps Super Bowl for food service," he said.

The top one or two mess halls in each region are nominated to compete for the award.

Then a team from Headquarters Marine Corps, including an officer, a senior enlisted member and a National Restaurant Association representative, tour all the nominated mess halls, evaluating their Marine Corps training, food service training, finances, day-to-day operations, food preparation and a host of other areas, Mayfield explained.

When the team visited Courtney in December, they even quizzed patrons about the daily quality of food and service, he said.

Lance Cpl. Adrian Platero, a cook, said that though he was surprised when he learned the mess hall had won, he was not nervous when the inspection team visited.

He was "confident in the training" his leaders had provided, he said.

At the end of the tour, the team recognized Lance Cpl. Joseph Robertson and Pfc. Javier Garcia for their performance during the inspection.

Getting immediate positive feedback for his work was exciting and rewarding, said Robertson.

"You don't get that very often," he said.

Of the mess hall's award, Robertson said, "I was really happy. We worked so hard. We did what we had to do, and we enjoyed getting what we deserved."

The Courtney Mess Hall will be recognized May 22 during the National Restaurant Association Awards Ceremony in Chicago.

BRIEFS

SEASONAL CHANGE; UNIFORM OF THE DAY

Effective Monday, the Marine Corps transitions to the desert Marine Corps combat utility uniform with sleeves up. All III Marine Expeditionary Force and Marine Corps Bases Japan personnel will wear the prescribed uniform, or when authorized for wear, tan flight suits.

Exercise Key Resolve participants will remain in woodland Marine Corps combat utility uniforms with sleeves down. Upon conclusion of the exercise, participant will immediately transition to the prescribed seasonal uniform.

NAVY MWR KIDS DEAL OR NO DEAL

Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation will be hosting "Kids Deal or No Deal" March 19 starting at 6 p.m. in the Crow's Nest Club, located on Camp Shields.

This event is for children ages 6 -16. There will be 15 envelopes given away. Everyone that plays is a winner! Tickets are required to enter the drawing for the contest. Tickets are now available at the Crow's Nest Club.

For more information please call the Crow's Nest Club at 959-2779.

MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT RETREAT

Chaplains' Religious Enrichment Development Operation will be conducting a Marriage Enrichment Retreat from April 9-11 at Pricia Resort, Yoron Island. Registration closes Wednesday. Call 645-3041, e-mail CREDO.mcbb.fct@usmc.mil; or drop by Camp Foster, building 442.

Couples must have been married at least 1 year and cannot have attended a CREDO Marriage Retreat within the past five years.

The drawing to determine couples to attend will be held Thursday and the couples will be notified by Friday. Eight of the 15 spaces are held for couples ranking E-1 to E-5.

CREDO retreats have a non-religious focus unless specified.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Celebrate Women's History Month at the Camp Foster Community Center March 26 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

CAMP FOSTER TAX RETURN PREPARATION

Until further notice, the Camp Foster Tax Center will not prepare tax returns dealing with rental properties in the United States. It will also not prepare returns requiring complex schedule D paperwork dealing with the sale and/or purchase of stocks and bonds. These issues are beyond the scope of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance volunteers. Call to discuss the complexity of your return.

If you have a rental property in the states or complex schedule D paperwork, call the Kadena Tax Center at 634-7418.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this notice, contact the Camp Foster Tax Center at 645-4255.

BE A DONOR, GIVE BLOOD

Donate blood and help save lives. All blood types are needed. Appointments are available Monday through Friday 9 a.m.- 2 p.m. at the Armed Service Blood Bank on Camp Lester at building 6017. For more information, or to make an appointment, call 643-7737/7710 or visit www.militaryblood.dod.mil.

TO SUBMIT A BRIEF, *send an e-mail to okinawamarine.mcbb.fct@usmc.mil, or fax your request to 645-3803. The deadline for submitting a brief is noon every Friday. The Okinawa Marine reserves the right to edit all submitted material.*

New Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain Vehicles developed by Oshkosh Corporation were recently fielded to the III Marine Expeditionary Force to be used as a training asset for Marines stationed here. *Photos by Lance Cpl. Thomas W. Provost*

M-ATV ready for rugged terrain

Lance Cpl. Thomas W. Provost
OKINAWA MARINE STAFFF

CAMP HANSEN — With the constant threat of improvised explosive devices since the start of the Overseas Contingency Operations, the military has gone through an evolution of finding the right vehicle to withstand an IED blast and traverse rugged terrain.

They found one in the form of the new Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain Vehicle that recently made its debut at the III Marine Expeditionary Force, Feb. 26.

Over time, the M-ATV will be fielded to units throughout the Marine Corps, said Byron L. Evans, a maintenance instructor with TJ Fig Inc., a military service support corporation.

To familiarize themselves with the new vehicles, operator and maintenance courses for motor transport Marines from units all over Okinawa are being conducted by TJ Fig Inc. instructors at Truck Company, Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, III MEF, motor pool on Camp Hansen. The courses will run through March 19.

"III MEF received the vehicles so the Marines here can get hands-on experience and training with them before entering a combat theater," said Gunnery Sgt. George F. Griffin, motor transportation chief, Truck Co., Headquarters Bn.

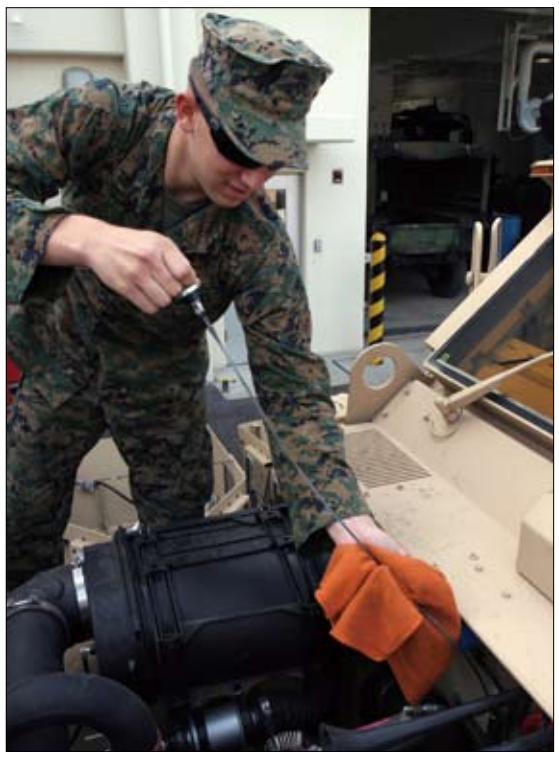
The courses include classroom portions, on-road driving and hands-on maintenance exercises.

According to Evans, the M-ATV sports many new capabilities, such as its agility due to its smaller size compared to the much heavier MRAP, and still incorporates the "V"-shaped hull to divert the deadly force of an IED blast like current models of the MRAP. The M-ATV only weighs 12 and half tons compared to the 16-ton Cougar variant in use in Afghanistan.

The vehicle has seating for four plus one turret gunner and a payload capacity of up to 6 1/2 tons.

In addition, it also sports a 370 horsepower caterpillar C7 engine and independent suspension.

The M-ATV was designed to maneuver over the harsh mountainous terrain of Afghanistan which causes problems for other vehicles in theater now, said Evans.



Pfc. Austyn J. Svehla, a motor transportation mechanic with Combat Logistics Regiment 3, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force, checks the oil from a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain Vehicle during a maintenance familiarization class Mar. 2.

The vehicle also has tight steering and more responsive brakes for a smooth ride, said Cpl. Andrew T. Roszkowski, tool room non-commissioned officer in charge, Engineer Sustainment Detachment, 9th Engineer Support Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III MEF.

"If you tell it to do something, it's going to do it," said Roszkowski.

Roszkowski also said he feels protected from IEDs and confident in the vehicle with the armor configuration on it. However this vehicle has more protection features than just armor.

It has fire detection and extinguishing capabilities for inside the cab and for the tires in an effort to keep the operator and passengers from being burned in the event of a fire, said Evans.

With the M-ATV now on Okinawa, Marines here will have the training and experience needed with the vehicle to maneuver over all kinds of terrain they may encounter with the protection they need to accomplish the mission.

BALIKATAN FROM PG 1

"It has taken a life of its own," Ibrado said. "It is a symbol of our strong and dynamic alliance" with the United Sates.

Balikatan 2010 helps promote regional peace, security and interoperability, AFP Rear Adm. Ramon P. Espera, Jr. told the opening ceremony audience. Espera is the Republic of the Philippines exercise director for Balikatan 10 and Sagip 10, a humanitarian aid planning exercise taking place alongside Balikatan.

"Balikatan is vital to maintaining readiness for both Philippine and U.S. forces," said Brig. Gen. William M. Faulkner, commanding general of 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and U.S. exercise director for Balikatan 10 and Sagip 10.

Balikatan 10 "will strengthen a close and sincere relationship" between the Philippine and U.S. militaries, Faulkner added.

The exercise is part of the long-term security assistance program between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States, Faulkner explained.

"The results of this training are that U.S. and Philippine forces will be better prepared and better trained to respond jointly to the needs of the people," he said.

The first event, humanitarian and civil assistance projects in Ilocos Sur, in northern and central Luzon, began Feb. 14. Projects include medical, dental, veterinarian and engineering capabilities designed to enhance the quality of life in the region and improve Philippine-U.S. military civic action cooperation, according to Erlinda Basilio, the Philippine Undersecretary for Policy, Department of Foreign Affairs.

The second event is a scenario-based staff exercise in Luzon. The event allows AFP and U.S. forces to practice joint force management at the headquarters level.

The third event includes cross-training and field exercises in central Luzon and the Cavite province. The cross-training and field exercises will include a boat raid to maintain the readiness and interoperability of Philippine and U.S. forces and a tactical casualty care training that focuses on lifesaving techniques.

All training will be conducted in accordance with Philippine and U.S. government agreements to include the Visiting Forces Agreement.

Referring to natural disasters such as the tropical storm and typhoon that struck the Philippines in late September and early October 2009 and natural disasters in the United States, Espera said the training between Philippine and U.S. forces increases their ability to work together to provide relief efforts in future disasters.

These humanitarian assistance and training activities allow troops from the two nations to build relationships, share knowledge and assist communities in need, said Basilio.

The exercise is scheduled to run until March 19. After the close of the exercise, U.S. service members will begin redeploying from the Philippines.

III Marine Expeditionary Force Marines and sailors participating in Exercise Key Resolve 2010, stand in formation for a mountain warfare training package instructed by Republic of Korea Marines. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Abigail M. Wharton*

MOUNTAIN FROM PG 1

mountains. The ROK Marine instructors from the school provide annual training to ROK Marines and initial training to ROK Marine recruits.

The goal of this training was to increase the U.S. Marines' confidence in their abilities to survive in a mountain environment, said Master Sgt. Kim Young Shik, ROK Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Unit.

This kind of training is important for Marines who may one day have to fight in a mountain environment, such as Afghanistan, said Master Gunnery Sgt. Eric King, S-3 chief, Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division.

Marines were warned to be careful as they became more confident in the training.

"We want the Marines, to get confident, not cocky," said Lt. Col. Roger D. Stanfield, Camp Mujak Camp Commandant. "A mountain will kill you in an instant."

For some, like Petty Officer 3rd Class Alvin Prasad, it was the first time being exposed to mountain warfare training.

"I really liked it," said the MASS-2 hospital corpsman. "It takes a little adjusting to, but I'm doing everything twice to get used to it."

For some of the Marines, the rappelling portion was also a time to conquer personal fears.

"It was scary to go off the tower, but once I did it I thought it was awesome," said Lance Cpl. Hayley S. DeFrate, air support operations operator, MASS-2.

Since there was a language barrier, the ROK Marines used the NCOs to help give orders and organize the Marines, King said.

Before Marines participated in any training, the ROK Marines made sure the U.S. Marines understood what was about to happen and how to properly execute the training.

"We got to learn how ROK Marines approach mountain warfare and how they do things," Prasad said.

Despite the language barrier, the training gave Marines the opportunity to experience how ROK Marines do things, King said.

"Obviously these Marines are not specialists in this yet, but generally they weren't bad at the training," Shik explained.

"The Marines had great attitudes toward the training and performed well," King said. "It was good training that gave Marines new experiences."

RELIEF FROM PG 1

on the recipient's emergency need. These needs include car repairs, food, utilities and rent, child care expenses, disaster relief assistance or unforeseen family emergencies.

"Volunteering for the organization is a great way for me to give back to the military community," said Carrington. "I love being able to assist service members and have that one-on-one interaction with them while teaching them ways they can avoid those financial pitfalls."

"I was an accountant for eight years working with companies, so this kind of gives me a different perspective," added Carrington.

"Service members should know 100 percent of the money donated goes back out to the Marines and sailors as interest free loans and grants. Every dollar you give is going to help someone," said Tatayon.

According to Maj. Brad Sherman, the area coordinator for the active duty fund drive, one in six Marines and sailors received some type of assistance from the NMCRS last year. He also added how fitting the overall campaign slogan is for the fund drive effort: It's not about Marines and sailors giving more; it's about more Marines and sailors giving.

The society offers several types of finance assistance classes for service members and their family including Budget 4 Baby and Financial Boot Camp.

The society also provides aid to eligible recipients for needs-based scholarships and interest-free loans for educational purposes. The society's newest addition is a quick assistance loan program.

"The QAL program was part of our solution to help protect service members against payday lenders," said Aundra R. Tatayon, the director for NMCRS Okinawa. "It gives service members access to an interest free loan in as little as 15 minutes."

The loan is limited to $300 and is available only to active duty Marines and sailors.

An individual sailor or Marine can receive no more than two QALs in a 12-month period. The first QAL must be paid in full before a second will be provided.

The society receives and manages the funding to administer these programs in partnership with the Navy and Marine Corps.

Funding for the organization comes in the form of contributions from active duty and retiree solicitation, donations from estates, individuals, organizations and corporations, investments and receipts from thrift shops.

Call 645-7808 to schedule an appointment for a budgeting class or to receive financial assistance from a NMCRS volunteer case worker. Visit the Web site www.nmcrs.org. for more information about the society and its programs.

65 years later

Dog tags from Marines and sailors who have visited Iwo Jima hang in front of the 5th Marine Division memorial at the site of the infamous flag raising atop Mount Suribachi. The memorial is there as a reminder of the bravery and heroics of the men who fought and died on the island.

The bugler with the Marine C
Taps as the colors march off i
Honor to commemorate thos

Commandant of the Marine Corps General James Conway, accompanied by retired Lt. Gen. Larry Snowden and U.S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos (not pictured), along with two students from the Young Marines program prepare to lay a wreath on the United States side of a joint memorial. The wreath laying was a significant part of the 65th Reunion of Honor commemoration of the Battle of Iwo Jima.

Veterans of the Battle of Iwo Jima take a moment of silence in front of th
raising atop Mount Suribachi to remember their brothers who fought bes

The USS Tortuga looms in the water off the coast of Iwo To, formally Iwo Jima, near Mount Suribachi. The taking of Mount Suribachi was a key turning point in the battle and was taken in less than a week. The ship carried supplies and personnel to and from the 65th Reunion of Honor commemoration.

orps' Drum and Bugle Corps stands at attention after playing n the background. Taps was played during the 65th Reunion of e lost at the Battle of Iwo Jima.

e 5th Marine Division memorial at the site of the infamous flag side them and those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Vets return, remember experiences of Iwo Jima

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Paul D. Zellner II
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

Complete silence fell upon Mount Suribachi as 11 veterans, travelling with The Greatest Generation Foundation, stood quietly in front of the 5th Marine Division Memorial overlooking Iwo Jima March 3.

The men were not alone after the 65th Reunion of Honor commemoration, as 25 other American Iwo Jima veterans, also made the trip to the iconic island and up the hill to the memorial.

The memorial marks the precise spot the American flag was raised by 2nd Battalion, 28th Marine Regiment, 5th Marine Division Feb. 23, 1945.

When coming here with veterans who fought with him 65 years ago, Cyril O'Brien, a combat correspondent who served on Iwo Jima, Bougainville and Guam, feels a strong sense of camaraderie and brotherhood. He says Iwo Jima is very significant to him because of the ferocity of the battle and because of the friends he lost there.

The Marines seemed to remember every bit of the island as they shared stories and thoughts about the opportunity to come together again and remember.

"They're all just such nice guys," said Hugh "Tony" Cumming, Iwo Jima survivor and mortarman with 1st Bn., 9th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, of the other veterans.

"We're all the same people on the inside, you know, once a Marine, always a Marine, except now we're old," he said laughing as he watched the waves roll in on the black sands.

Gathered as one in a display of their relationship, the U.S. and Japanese forces came together to commemorate one of the most significant battles for Marines in World War II.

Sixty-five years earlier their bravery and ferocity was recognized by leaders from both sides as they praised their men as the battle raged on.

"The battle is approaching its end. Since the enemy landing, even the gods would weep at the bravery of the officers and men under my command," Lt. Gen. Tadamichi Kuribayashi, commander of the Japanese garrison forces on Iwo Jima during the battle said.

"Among the men who fought on Iwo Jima, uncommon valor was a common virtue," said U.S. Navy Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, March 16, 1945, of the American warriors.

In the end the two countries became allies in defense of the Asia-Pacific Region and share many common goals for the future.

"We were once relentless enemies on this very island, fighting each other and the unforgiving terrain in defense of our separate countries. But now, we are working together to defend the world against ruthless adversaries," said Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James T. Conway in a message to those at the commemoration.

The veterans unanimously agreed the island now has a drastically different look, however their memories of that time and place have not faded. It was evident the chance to come back and pass on their legacy meant the most to the veterans as active duty Marines listened to their stories in awe.

As 11 veterans stood atop the mountain in a makeshift formation, a wheelchair-bound former Maj. Robert White, who served as an artillery liaison during the battle, began muttering words which turned into a booming voice, words that everyone around seemed to know. Before he got past the first sentence everyone atop the mountain seemed to be standing at attention, singing. "From the halls of Montezuma..."

For more photos, visit www.okinawa.usmc.mil.

Marines familiarize with automatic weapons

Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Abigail M. Wharton
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

Marines with Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, at Su Sung Ri Range, Republic of Korea, for Exercise Key Resolve, attended familiarization training for the MK-19 grenade launcher, 50-caliber machine gun, M249 squad automatic weapon and the M240B medium machine gun, March 3.

The purpose of the training was for Marines to be able to respond in a combat situation and be comfortable with whatever weapon assigned to them.

"The key to the training today is that a headquarters battalion has a lot of heavy machine guns the Marines in the battalion aren't necessarily trained on," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 David Bednarcik, 3rd Marine Division.

Some of the Marines participating in the training recognized it as out of the ordinary for their unit.

"It's good to be out here," said Lance Cpl. Luther Ransom, intelligence specialist. "A lot of us are doing stuff that Marines in a headquarters unit wouldn't normally do."

In combat the use of machine guns by a headquarters battalion is a rather common thing, said Bednarcik, the training planner and designer.

"Headquarters Marines provide security for assigned areas and also go on convoys," he commented. "Both of those employ machine guns."

Most of the Marines attending the training saw the value in it for themselves and others.

"I wanted to walk away from this training and be able to say as a Marine I can fire any weapon in any situation that I am thrust into," said Lance Cpl. Agnes Sagina, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear defense specialist. "I also wanted to feel confident that I could protect myself and others."

The Marines were instructed in a classroom setting at the beginning of the training and coached while firing.

Marines with Headquarters Battalion, at Su Sung Ri Range, Republic of Korea, for Key Resolve, open ammunition and prepare it to be fired during a familiarization course.

"I've gotten a lot of good training from the instructors here," Sagina commented. "They were helpful and precise with everything. They also made sure we could perform immediate and remedial action correctly by ourselves."

The day was a success in the eyes of the instructors for the goals they set.

"I wanted the Marines to get some good familiarization with the weapons they fired," Bednarcik said. "I think we've achieved that; learning has occurred today, and the Marines' performance was outstanding."

Most students were also satisfied at the end of the training evolution.

"I now have the knowledge that I could use any of these weapons in a combat situation," Ransom said.

Some Marines that attended the training got a whole new perspective on what it means to be combat ready.

"Being in Korea has made me realize that field and garrison lives are totally different," Sagina said. "I need to train more and not take knowledge that I have for granted. Some of this has been a blast from the past, because I learned it at Marine Combat Training, but I didn't remember it because I don't use it in garrison. Now I'm going to work on keeping my mind ready for any kind of situation."

The Marines conducted this training in preparation for Exercise Key Resolve 2010 which began Monday, along with other Marines from the III Marine Expeditionary Force slated to participate.

Marines with Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, at exercise Key resolve, fire an M240B medium machine gun to become more familiar with the weapon and other automatic weapons. The Marines participated in Exercise Key Resolve 2010 in the Republic of Korea to teach, coach and mentor service members while honoring the ROK-US Mutual Defense Treaty.

Marines with Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, at the Key Resolve exercise, receive a range safety brief from 2nd Lt. Adam Latham, range safety officer, S-3, Headquarters Bn.

Nobuko Igei, 92, a resident of the Hikaraga Nursing Home shows Marines with 7th Communication Bn., III Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group, III MEF, how to make traditional "mochi" or Japanese rice cake, during their visit, Feb. 26, at the Hikaraga Nursing Home.

Marines learn mochitsuki, one of Japan's oldest traditions

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Antwain J. Graham
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

For the last five years, it has become a tradition for the Marines of 7th Communications Battalion, III Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group, III MEF, to visit the residents of Hikaraga Nursing Home and exchange cultural views with each other.

Though they celebrate many different holidays and customs, the two cultures have introduced each other to their respective traditions throughout the years.

Most recently, the Marines joined the staff and residents of the nursing home, Feb.26, to celebrate one of Japan's oldest traditions, mochitsuki.

Mochitsuki is a ceremony to make mochi, a Japanese rice cake, or as it is called in Okinawa, "muchi," said Fumihiro Imakura, the coordinator of the visit.

Although this food is eaten year-round, mochi is a traditional food for the Japanese New Year and is commonly sold and eaten during that time, Imakura said.

He added that in Okinawa, "muchi" is made during the months of January and February.

The mochitsuki ceremony consists of one or two people pounding sticky rice with wooden mallets in a traditional mortar while yelling "Tsuki!" which literally means "to thrust," said Kaori Tanahara, the Camp Hansen community relations specialist.

The Marines and some of the staff and residents alternated the work, one pounding the rice and the other turning and wetting it to create the chewy treat.

"To make muchi they have to keep a steady rhythm to prevent from accidentally injuring one another with the heavy mallets," Tanahara said.

"It's somewhat of a workout, but it's a fun and spirited tradition that really brings the Marines and our residents together in harmony," said Imakura.

Despite the language barrier, the beating of the rice set the rhythm as the Marines and residents worked together to create the traditional snack.

It is important that the Marines living in Okinawa get the chance to experience some of the local culture first hand, according to Nobuko Igei, 92, a resident of the nursing home.

"It's nice that the Marines come to visit us, and that we can share our traditions with each other," Igei said.

Some Marines believe the event was a rare opportunity.

"It's an opportunity that not everyone can get so I'm glad I can be a part of this," said Pfc. Karellyn Sanchez, a maintenance management clerk with 7th Communications Bn.

Other Marines said their experience at the nursing home was enlightening.

"It's awesome how open they are to share their culture with us," said Lance Cpl. Eloy Rendon, a motor transport mechanic with 7th Communication Bn. "It really tells a lot about the Okinawan people's humility."

Visiting the Hikaraga Nursing Home is a tradition the Marines and residents built together through the interest of learning each others culture. Hopefully one that will keep the doors of the two worlds open for years to come.

Lance Cpl. David Fleming, a switchboard operator with 7th Communications Bn., III Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group, III MEF, helps the residents of Hikaraga Nursing Home make mochi, or Japanese rice cake. Volunteer Marines from the unit visited the nursing home, Feb. 26.

Training is priority for 9th ESB's 'most gung ho'

Story and photos by Cpl. Heather Golden
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

When Sgt. Maj. John Ploskonka, the former sergeant major of 9th Engineer Support Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force, passed around an eagle, globe and anchor emblem, asking his Marines to touch the metal – to leave their mark – Cpl. Christian Jensen said he never expected it to end up with him being voted the unit's "gung ho" Marine.

Throughout his career, Ploskonka, who is now at the Wounded Warrior Regiment in Quantico, Va., has made a tradition of presenting his unit's most motivated Marine with a particular emblem that has history with the command.

From the day he checks in at each new duty station, Ploskonka, gets as many of his Marines as he can to touch a dress blue cover emblem, to hold it even for just a second. He tells them this symbolically transfers a little bit of each Marine into that emblem.

Toward the end of his time at a unit, he asks the unit's Marines to vote for the top motivator, the one they feel deserves to keep this ultra-personal symbol of the unit with them forever. Everybody except for himself, from the commanding officer to the newest private, is eligible to win. Jensen was recognized as the battalion's choice during Ploskonka's relief and appointment ceremony in January

Jensen, an augment to the battalion's security platoon from Military Police Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 37, 3rd MLG, III MEF, has been with 9th ESB since August. In that short amount of time, he made an impression.

"He's one of those guys everyone can look up to," said 2nd Lt. Kimberly Julka, the commander for security platoon, Support Company, 9th ESB. "He has a great attitude, good work ethic and takes the initiative. He goes above and beyond."

Jensen does not see anything special about the way he conducts day-to-day business and said he prefers to spend even his free time training Marines.

The majority of the Marines he has been working with are currently participating in Mojave Viper in California in preparation for an upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

"I'm just doing my job, really," said Jensen. "I (had) no time for hobbies, just getting the Marines ready. I think that's how Marines should be."

His willingness to teach does not stop with the junior Marines for whom he is responsible. He extends a helping hand to anyone who needs it.

"He's out there, willing to teach me things," said Julka. "He's not afraid to step in. I'm very proud of him.

"I am by far the luckiest second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. All my (noncommissioned officers) are outstanding," she said.

When the voting began, Jensen never once suspected he'd head many people's motivator lists, topping even the commanding officer and other Marines who permanently belong to the battalion.

"I voted for one of my sergeants," Jensen explained. "I honestly thought it was going to be a popularity thing, so I was surprised."

Jensen knows it can be tough to work for him. Jensen says his job as a corporal is not to make friends, but to make sure his Marines have what they need to stay alive and get their jobs done.

"I am intense 100 percent of the time," he said. "I am the same way across the board. It goes back to being an NCO twenty-four, seven."

Nicknamed "firecracker" by a previous unit, Jensen attributed his own leadership education to one of his first NCOs, then-Cpl. Kevin Byrnes.

"He is probably the reason I am the way I am," Jensen said. "He knew how to get Marines ready for deployment the right way. He took extra time for training if we needed it."

Another experience that cemented his resolve to always give everything he has happened during a deployment to Iraq.

He lost three of his best friends – Cpl. Matthew Dillon and Lance Cpls. Budd Cote and C.J. Miller.

"All three, my best friends. We all lived together. It was hard," Jensen remembered. If he had "sulked off and even thought to quit" today, they would have died in vain, he said.

To this day, he still wears a bracelet engraved with their names to remind him to take each day for every opportunity it holds and take the steps to make sure he does everything he can to not lose anybody else.

"Bottom line – I want everybody to come home," Jensen said. "I could never live with it if one of my guys died because of something I didn't teach them."

Cpl. Christian Jensen, a military policeman augmented to Security Platoon, Support Company, 9th Engineer Support Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force, was voted 9th ESB's most "gung ho" Marine by everyone from the commanding officer to the unit's newest private.

In Theaters Now MARCH 12 - MARCH 18

FOSTER

TODAY Cop Out (R), 6 p.m.; Avatar (PG13), 9 p.m.
SATURDAY Alvin & the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel (PG), noon; Avatar (PG13), 3 p.m.; Valentine's Day (PG13), 7 p.m.; Daybreakers (R), 10 p.m.
SUNDAY Alice in Wonderland (PG), 1, 4 and 7 p.m.
MONDAY Valentine's Day (PG13), 7 p.m.
TUESDAY Avatar (PG13), 7 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Daybreakers (R), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY Alice in Wonderland (PG), 7 p.m.

SCHWAB

TODAY Shutter Island (R), 7 p.m.
SATURDAY Did You Hear About the Morgans? (PG13), 5 p.m.
SUNDAY Youth in Revolt (R), 5 p.m.
MONDAY-THURSDAY Closed

KADENA

TODAY Avatar (PG13), 6 p.m.; Daybreakers (R), 9:30 p.m.
SATURDAY Avatar (PG13), noon and 3:30 p.m.; Cop Out (R), 7 and 10 p.m.
SUNDAY Avatar (PG13), 1 p.m.; Cop Out (R) 4:30 and 7:30 p.m.
MONDAY Cop Out (R), 7 p.m.
TUESDAY Shutter Island (R), 7 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Avatar (PG13), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY Shutter Island (R), 7 p.m.

COURTNEY

TODAY Alice in Wonderland (PG), 5:30 and 8:30 p.m.
SATURDAY Leap Year (PG), 2 p.m.; Youth in Revolt (R), 6 p.m.
SUNDAY Leap Year (PG), 2 p.m.; Shutter Island (R), 6 p.m.
MONDAY Youth In Revolt (R), 7 p.m.
TUESDAY Closed
WEDNESDAY Cop Out (R), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY Closed

HANSEN

TODAY Avatar (PG13), 6 p.m.; Daybreakers (R), 9:30 p.m.
SATURDAY Shutter Island (R), 6 and 9 p.m.
SUNDAY Avatar (PG13), 2 p.m.; Daybreakers (R), 5:30 p.m.
MONDAY Alice in Wonderland (PG), 7 p.m.
TUESDAY Alice in Wonderland (PG), 7 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Avatar (PG13), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY Cop Out (R), 7 p.m.

KINSER

TODAY Daybreakers (R), 6:30 p.m.
SATURDAY Avatar (PG13), 2:30 p.m.; Daybreakers (R), 6:30 p.m.
SUNDAY Leap Year (PG), 3 p.m.; Dear John (PG13), 6:30 p.m.
MONDAY Closed
TUESDAY Nine (PG13), 6:30 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Alice in Wonderland (PG), 3 and 6:30 p.m.
THURSDAY Daybreakers (R), 6:30 p.m.

FUTENMA

TODAY Youth in Revolt (R), 6:30 p.m.
SATURDAY Alice in Wonderland (PG), 4 and 7 p.m.
SUNDAY Leap Year (PG), 4 p.m.; Youth in Revolt (R), 7 p.m.
MONDAY Shutter Island (R), 6:30 p.m.
TUESDAY Closed
WEDNESDAY Closed
THURSDAY Closed

THEATER DIRECTORY

CAMP FOSTER 645-3465
KADENA AIR BASE 634-1869
(USO NIGHT) 632-8781
MCAS FUTENMA 636-3890
(USO NIGHT) 636-2113
CAMP COURTNEY 622-9616
CAMP HANSEN 623-4564
(USO NIGHT) 623-5011
CAMP KINSER 637-2177
CAMP SCHWAB 625-2333
(USO NIGHT) 625-3834

Movie schedule is subject to change without notice. Call in advance to confirm show times. For a complete listing, visit http://www.aafes.com.

SINGLE MARINE PROGRAM EVENTS

For more information, or to sign up, contact the Single Marine Program at 645-3681

All bus pick-up points will be at Semper Fit gyms or the Foster Fieldhouse.

GIRL SCOUTS JANE WAYNE DAY: SATURDAY
• 50 volunteers are needed from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Camp Kinser to demonstrate self-defense and weapon handling techniques to girl scouts. A drill instructor is also wanted to show them how to properly march together.

EXPO PARK & PINEAPPLE PARK: MARCH 20
• The aquarium at Expo Park recreates the waters of Okinawa from the surface to the ocean floor. Come see 27.6-foot long whale sharks and huge manta rays, the largest of their kind! Visitors to Pineapple Park can get information on the history of pineapples, their origin, composition, potency and ways to be prepared! $10 for transportation must be paid at the SMP office to sign up.

GOLF TOURNAMENT: APRIL 2
• Best ball tournament hosted at Taiyo Golf Club will include longest drive and closest to the pin competitions. The 4-man teams must include one single Marine or sailor. Registration and payment is due by March 25. Cost, which includes 18 holes, a cart and a bar-b-que lunch after play, is $27 for E4 and below, $30 for E5 to E9 and $33 for officers and DoD equivalent. Rental clubs are available for an additional fee, $10 for standard or $20 for premium.

TAKE THE BUSHIDO CHALLENGE: APRIL 27, 29, MAY 7
• Bushido means way of the warrior, and this challenge will be a test of the warrior. The Bushido Challenge Southern will be held on Marine Corps Air Station Futenma April 27, and the Bushido Challenge Northern will be held on Camp Hansen April 29. The best 10 teams from each challenge will compete in the final challenge May 7. This is open to teams of four, of which at least one team member must be a single or unaccompanied Marine or sailor. Competitions include a physical fitness test, a combat fitness test, a tire flip, an up-armored humvee pull, a dead arm hang, a shot put and other events.

RANGE HIGH SCORES

March 1-5

Rifle Range
Lance Cpl. Peng Moua, 1st MAW, 340

Pistol Range
Staff Sgt. Raymond Griner, III MHG, 372

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

CAMP FOSTER | 645-7486
- *Catholic*: Mon.-Fri., 11:45 a.m.; Sat., 5 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.
- *Christian Science*: Sun., 11 a.m., Bldg. 442
- *Eastern Orthodox*: Sun., 9:30 a.m., Vespers, Sat., 5 p.m.
- *Gospel*: Sun., 11:30 a.m.
- *Hindu:* Sat., 3:30 p.m.
- *Jewish*: Fri., Traditional, 6 p.m.; Informal: 1st, 3rd Fri., 6:30 p.m.
- *Muslim*: Fri., Prayer, 12:45 p.m.
- *Protestant*: Sun., 8:30 a.m.
- *Seventh Day Adventist:* Sat., 10 a.m.

CAMP SCHWAB | 622-9350
- *Catholic*: Sun., 5:30 p.m.
- *Protestant*: Sun., 4 p.m.

CAMP COURTNEY | 622-9350
- *Catholic*: Sun., 8 and 11:15 a.m.; Mon.-Fri., 11:45 a.m..
- *Protestant*: Sun., 9:30 a.m.

CAMP KINSER | 637-1148
- *Catholic*: Sun., 11 a.m.
- *Protestant*: Sun., 9 a.m.

CAMP HANSEN | 622-9350
- *Catholic*: Sun., 10 a.m., E. Chapel
- *Protestant*: Sun., 11 a.m., W. Chapel

KADENA AIR BASE | 634-1288
- *Catholic*: Sun., 8:30 a.m., Mass, Chapel 3; Sun., 11:30 a.m., Reconciliation, Chapel 3; Sun., 12:30 p.m., Mass, Chapel 3; Sun., 5 p.m., Mass, Chapel 2; Daily Mass, Mon.-Fri., noon, Chapel 2
- *Contemporary*: Sun., 10:30 a.m., Kadena High School
- *Gospel*: Sunday School, 9 a.m., Bldg. 856; Service 10:30 a.m., Chapel 3
- *Inspirational*: Sun., 8:30 a.m., Chapel 2;
- *Protestant*: Sun., 10 a.m., Chapel 2;
- *Traditional*: Sun., 10:30 a.m., Chapel 2;
- *Wiccan/Pagan:* Sat., 2 p.m., Bldg. 856

CAMP LESTER | 643-7248
- *Catholic*: Sun., 8 a.m., Lester Chapel Tues., 7:15 a.m., Thurs., 9 a.m., Liturgy of Word
- *Non-Denominational*: Sun., 9 a.m., Hospital Chapel; Sun., 10 a.m., Lester Chapel

MCAS FUTENMA | 636-3058
- *Catholic*: Sun., noon
- *Contemporary*: Fri., 7 p.m.; Sun., 9 a.m.
- *High school senior service*: Sat. 6 p.m.

CAMP McTUREOUS | 622-9350
- *Gospel*: Sun., 12:30 p.m.
- *Lutheran*: Sun., 9:30 a.m.
- *Protestant Lethurgical:* Sun., 6:30 p.m.

CLASSIFIED ADS

AUTOMOBILES

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'94 MITSUBISHI PAJERO
JCI OCT 2010,
$2,200 OBO
(090)8487-2308

'02 HONDA ODYSSEY VAN
JCI JAN 2011,
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Golfers green get-away celebrates grand opening

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Matthew A. Denny
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

The time finally came to retire Awase Meadows Golf Course, when Taiyo Golf Club unveiled its fairways at the grand opening March 1.

Taiyo Golf Club is a brand new facility with the latest technology in irrigation systems and state-of-the-art computerized maintenance programs which allow for ground maintenance to be completed in the most time efficient manner possible, said Rich L. Erland, director of golf for Taiyo Golf Club, Marine Corps Community Services.

The facilities are a significant step up from the 61-year-old course it replaced, according to an MCCS release.

Taiyo carries forward a tradition of commitment to operational excellence and superior service to military service members and their families, Department of Defense civilians and local nationals, who enjoy golfing, according to the release.

Taiyo Golf Club translates to "The Golf Club in the Sun," and with its unveiling brings a new era for golf lovers throughout Okinawa.

Erland has been with the Taiyo Golf Club project since the design process began more than eight years ago, he said. It has been quite the project, being able to see it in the beginning stages and to see it completed is a satisfying feeling, he added.

"I will be excited when I see the Marines having the opportunity to enjoy the new facility and see their response," said Erland. "It is a top-notch club in every way."

The clubhouse was designed to make service members feel like they can get away, said Erland.

It's meant to be a more country club-style setting, and hopefully it will help service members relax, get away from rank and just "hang out" with fellow golfers, said Erland.

Ground broke on Taiyo June 20, 2005, and the course construction was completed in December. The project required 39 construction companies and 14 architecture and engineering companies to complete it. During construction, special care was taken to preserve the area's natural beauty and condition, including protected wetlands habitat, according to the release.

Taiyo Golf Club will have the same standards of play as Awase Meadows Golf Course allowing Japanese citizens the opportunity to play on a space-available basis. They are not required to have a SOFA member escort.

For more information, visit www.mccsokinawa.com or call the Taiyo Golf Club Pro Shop at 622-2004/2006 or the Lanai Restaurant at 622-2020.

Taiyo Golf Club consists of 6,645 yards of challenging fairways. During construction of the course wetlands and marshes were conserved and re-used to create an environmentally friendly project. The club staff invites golfers of every skill level and challenges all to come out and try the fairways.

Directions to Taiyo Golf Course:

To get to the Taiyo Golf Course from Camp Foster, travel straight out of the Legion Gate and follow the signs to enter the Okinawa Expressway northbound. Exit the expressway at exit 5 and turn left onto 329. Continue north about 1.8 miles until a sign at the traffic light reading Kurashiki Dam becomes visible. Turn left to follow the sign at that light. Stay on that road and it will dead end at the Taiyo Golf Course.