

OKINAWA MARINE

JANUARY 27, 2012

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School construction builds strong foundation for Exercise Cobra Gold

Staff Sgt. Ken Melton

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP FOSTER — The Royal Thai military along with U.S. forces from various units began construction projects in the Kingdom of Thailand,

preceding the official opening of Exercise Cobra Gold 2012.

Exercise Cobra Gold is an annual multinational, multiservice exercise, hosted by the Kingdom of Thailand and developed in coordination with the United States. This year's exercise

marks the 31st iteration of the event designed to advance security throughout the Asia-Pacific region and enhance interoperability with participating nations.

“Cobra Gold 2012 demonstrates the see **HCA** pg 5

Japanese dignitaries visit MCAS Miramar



Shozo Azuma, a member of the Japanese House of Representatives, Democratic Party of Japan, walks with Marines and other dignitaries to an MV-22B Osprey at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., for Azuma's first flight Jan. 19. Japanese dignitaries visited the air station to learn more about the aircraft before 1st Marine Aircraft Wing in Okinawa receives its first Osprey. Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica Disalvo

Malaysian military, 3rd MEB plan in joint environment

2nd Lt. Taylor A. Clarke

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — Members of the Malaysian Armed Forces, U.S. Pacific Command and Marines and sailors of 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade participated in the Malaysia Staff Exercise 2012 here Jan. 10-17 to prepare for upcoming exercises.

The purpose of the exercise is to improve interoperability between the U.S. and Malaysian militaries and prepare the two services to better operate in a joint-bilateral environment.

see **STAFFEX** pg 5

Marines, Singapore counterparts propel relationship

Lance Cpl. Mike Granahan

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

SINGAPORE — Members of the Singapore Armed Forces Naval Diving Unit conducted diver-propulsion device training alongside Marines assigned to Company A, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, during Exercise Sandfisher, a bilateral exercise Jan. 12-17, conducted to foster relationships and increase readiness.

The DPD is an underwater craft used to bring warfighters into enemy territory undetected during clandestine missions.

“It's like a two-man submarine,” said Petty Officer 3rd Class Ryan McGovern, a see **PROPEL** pg 5



Members of the Singapore Armed Forces Naval Diving Unit operate a diver-propulsion device in a training pool on Sembawang Camp in the Republic of Singapore Jan. 12. Marines with Company A, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, brought the devices to the Republic of Singapore to support Exercise Sandfisher a bilateral training exercise conducted to increase interoperability. 3rd Recon Bn. is part of 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force. Photo by Lance Cpl. Mike Granahan

Planning, key to financial fitness

Anthony Green

There are many aspects of sound financial planning, ranging from covering life's necessities to estate planning. Some individuals are fortunate to have parents who were taught and passed on good financial planning habits to them.

For those still putting it together, here are some powerful tools you can use beginning today.

Initially, take an assessment of where you are financially and realistically plan for long-term results (ten years and beyond), only after considering the short term (from present to one year out). The benefit of this type of insightful planning can be broken into simple, achievable, daily goals that will help you decide whether or not you should leave the military, go on vacation, postpone marriage or take a second job.

Most things we do cost somebody something. When you have a spending plan, you know who is paying for it and how much. Much like physical fitness, financial fitness requires three basic elements: strength, endurance and flexibility.

Strength, or savings, gives us the ability to meet financial demands. Whether taking a leisurely walk, or paying for a flight home, both require either physical or financial strength respectively. If we lack the level of fitness needed for the task, our options result in a shorter walk or only a phone call home.

The next element is endurance, which is the ability to maintain performance over the long term. A car is usually financed for a period of 36 to 72 months and, much like running a marathon, it places consistent demands on our financial and physical houses respectively. If we are fit, we ultimately own the car or complete the marathon.

If we are not fit, the car is repossessed, our credit suffers and in both situations, we go back to walking. Establishing a living standard well within our financial means will aid in building greater levels of financial endurance.

The third component is flexibility. This one can be difficult because it requires advance preparation and knowing your limits before you reach them. If there are too many immediate demands, which are often caused by living beyond our perceived financial means, the results can be disastrous. Many hard-working people are struggling to make ends meet, now more than ever, because they lack this crucial element of financial fitness.



"Much like physical fitness, financial fitness requires three basic elements: strength, endurance and flexibility!"

Anthony Green

If you are reading this article and know that you lack one or all the components of financial fitness, make your financial fitness a high priority this year by contacting the Marine Corps Community Services' Personal Service Center at 645-2104. There, you can get pointers on money-management skills, how to build, repair and restore credit, first-time home buying, the thrift savings plan, individual retirement accounts and investing. Let us help you get financially fit in 2012.

Anthony Green is a personal financial management specialist with Marine Corps Community Services Personal Services Center.



AROUND THE CORPS



The graduating class of the first Wounded Warrior Detachment Corporals Course at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Bethesda, Md., Jan. 16. The detachment's goal is to continue professional development classes for wounded warriors throughout the Marine Corps. Photo by Lance Cpl. Daniel A. Wetzel



British army craftsmen Adam Evans, in the foreground, and Lance Cpl. Craig Heaton, right, troubleshoot a Detroit Diesel V6 logistics vehicle system truck engine at the Intermediate Maintenance Activity lot aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Jan. 20. The pair is part of an ongoing exchange program between Marine Air-Ground Task Force Support Battalion 11.2's Maintenance Company and their coalition counterparts at Camp Bastion. Photo by Sgt. Justin J. Shemanski



Reconnaissance Marines jump from a CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter into the Arabian Sea during training Jan. 19. The Marines are part of Battalion Landing Team 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit. Photo by Gunnery Sgt. Scott Dunn

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OKINAWA MARINE

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Winner, 2010 DoD Thomas Jefferson Award
Best Tabloid Format Newspaper

New, state-of-the-art child development center opens

Pfc. Ian M. McMahon
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP FOSTER — Staff members of the new Ashibina Child Development Center held a ribbon cutting ceremony and tour on Camp Foster Jan. 20.

The Ashibina Center is one of two CDCs on Camp Foster. CDCs offer full-day, part-day, and hourly care programs for children 6 weeks to 5-years old.

The existing CDC on Camp Foster was renamed the Chumugukuru Center, meaning “pure heart,” the new center’s namesake, Ashibina, means “gathering place to play.”

“The goal of the Ashibina Center is to provide quality early childhood programs centered around safe and nurturing environments that promote the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of young children,” said Jeff El-Bdour, Child Development Services program coordinator for Marine Corps Community Services Children, Youth & Teen Programs.

These programs are staffed by trained care-giving professionals, said El-Bdour. The CDCs meet accreditation standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Additionally, the Ashibina Center created a total of 60 jobs for staff members, he added.

“The Ashibina Center was needed to meet the childcare demands of the MCB Camp Butler community,” said El-Bdour.

“In many ways, the existing CDC was an inspiration for the Ashibina Center,” said El-Bdour.

The ceremony started with remarks given by Steve Pauli, assistant chief of staff for Marine Corps Community Services; Cullen A. Ohashi, MCCS Youth & Teen Program chief; and Maj. Gen. Peter J. Talleri, commanding general of Marine Corps Installations Pacific and Marine Corps Base Camp Butler.

During the ceremony, Talleri was given the honor of cutting the ribbon with Molly Conley, the Ashibina CDC director, marking the completion of the building and starting the tour of the center. Talleri and company made their way through each room of the center.

The Ashibina Center is designed for the care of up to 104 children and consists of an 8,000 square-foot playground, eight classrooms, a kitchen and a state-of-the-art safety security system.



Maj. Gen. Peter J. Talleri, commanding general of Marine Corps Installations Pacific and Marine Corps Base Camp Butler, and Molly Conley, the Ashibina Center director, cut a ribbon symbolizing the completion of the center on Camp Foster Jan. 20.

Photo by Pfc. Ian McMahon

Justin Presti, staff architect and MCCS project manager, explained his excitement with the project.

“Since I am project manager and staff architect for the Ashibina center, I’ve had a large influence on the project,” said Presti. “It has been amazing to see this come together.”

The \$4.7 million facility took approximately two years to build, according to El-Bdour.

Inside the center, the area has a warm and bright atmosphere. Skylights illuminate most of the building. Each of the eight classrooms are individually designed.

“Some of the greatest strengths of the Ashibina Center facility involve its color scheme, the presence of artwork from a local Okinawa artist, and the large, spacious rooms that accommodate care for various ages of children,” said El-Bdour.

Paintings by acclaimed Okinawan artist Kyoko Nakamoto line the hallways of the center. The paintings are Nakamoto’s “Paradise Series,” which symbolizes equality and the discovery of paradise within.

Talleri thanked Nakamoto for her contribution to the CDC during the cake cutting.

The older Chumugukuru CDC will remain open.

“Children will not be moved between centers. Placement of children into the programs will be based on space availability,” said El-Bdour.

The Ashibina CDC is scheduled to begin services Jan. 30.



Kadena Panthers boys basketball team member Preston Harris shoots over Kazuta Hiyane of Kohan High School during the championship game that concluded the 6th annual Okinawan American Shootout at the Camp Foster Field House Jan. 22. The Kadena Panthers claimed victory over Kohan High School in a nail-biting finish that brought fans out of their seats to cheer. Photo by Lance Cpl. Ronald K. Peacock

American, Okinawan students play ball in name of friendship

Lance Cpl. Ronald K. Peacock
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP FOSTER — It was a day of sportsmanship, struggle and triumph as the 6th annual Okinawan-American Shootout concluded on Camp Foster Jan. 22. Friendship through sport was the tournament theme, as boys and girls high school basketball teams across Okinawa battled against each other until a winner was crowned.

“International games like these are good learning experiences for our players,” said Kimio Inoue, the coach of the Konan High School boys basketball team. “American players have height and spring, which gives our players good competition.”

Day-one of the shootout began with round-robin play, as 12 teams engaged their peers to determine what the championship bracket would look like the following day. Before the first whistle blew and the games began, an opening ceremony was conducted in which Raymond F. Greene, the U.S. Consul General in Naha, and Matsuteru Waniya, the chairman of the Okinawa Basketball Association, spoke to the players about the importance of sportsmanship during the competition.

“Sports and athletics provide an understanding and a mutual respect for the kids,” said Fred Bales, the tournament director and a teacher at Kubasaki High School. “As they play and spend the weekend together, they develop an understanding for how one another operates, not just in basketball, but in life.”

The boys and girls divisions consisted of two Department of Defense Education Activity high schools, the Kadena Panthers and Kubasaki Dragons, and four Okinawa high schools. The Okinawa schools in the boys division were Konan, Kitanakagusuku, Oruku and Chatan. The Okinawa schools in the girls division were Kitanakagusuku, Naha Shogyo, Chatan and Haebaru.

“I was impressed by the loud cheers from the audience and think the interaction between the U.S. and Okinawa is good,” said Mayumi Vema, mother of Reo Vema, 16, a player for Kitanakagusuku High School. “I want this event to be bigger.”

While each team fought gallantly to claim ultimate glory during the tournament, it was Kadena High School that ended up on top with both of its teams in each division winning their championship games.

“We beat the Kadena Panthers in the round-robin play, so I liked our chances in the championship game,” said Taishi China, team captain for Konan High School, whose team placed as the boys division runner-up. “The American players did better than us at rebounding and taking the ball to the hoop that game.”

The tournament concluded with a closing ceremony where each team was presented with a plaque, and key players received personal achievement trophies for their play in the tournament.

First, second and third-place teams from each division were also presented with trophies as they celebrated their conquests and new friendships.

BRIEFS

PROGRAM YOUR CELLULAR PHONE



LEGION GATE OUTGOING LANE CLOSED

The outbound lane of Camp Foster's Gate 6, the Legion Gate, will be closed until further notice due to road damage.

VIRUS TARGETING DOD CACS

A new phishing scam is circulating through the internet targeting DOD users that installs a Trojan virus which can steal CAC information, user PINs as well as data stored in the systems.

The scam contains a malicious Adobe Reader or Acrobat (.pdf) file, which is the transport mechanism to install the virus.

Users should be aware of potential e-mail scams, phishing attacks and social networking scams. Users are reminded not to open files, click on suspicious links, or forward e-mails with suspicious links to other users. Delete the e-mail and then empty your recycle bin.

For more details, contact 645-5015.

FAMILIES DURING DEPLOYMENT

The Marine Corps Family Team Building is hosting the Families During Deployment Workshop Feb. 9 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at MCFTB, building 5677, on Camp Foster.

Parents participate in a workshop where they will learn to assess their children's behavior, promote healthy coping habits, and improve communication with their children. The children, ages 5 and older, enjoy interactive games and activities that help them express their feelings and emotions to better cope with their parents' deployment. The workshop is free and open to all SOFA personnel.

Registration is required and class size is limited. To register, call MCFTB at 645-3689.

LINKS FOR COUPLES

A Marine Corps Family Team Building LINKS for Couples workshop will be held Feb. 9-10 from 5-8 p.m. at the Ocean Breeze on Camp Foster. Attendees will receive important resources and services to ensure their families' future readiness and receive mentorship from experienced couples. The workshop is free and open to SOFA married couples.

Registration is required, and childcare is offered on a space-available basis. To register, call Marine Corps Family Team Building at 645-3698.

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 Friday. Okinawa Marine reserves the right to edit all submitted material.

POV license required to drive

Lance Cpl. Ronald K. Peacock

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP FOSTER — The Japanese Traffic Regulations handbook for Status of Forces Agreement drivers states that driving on Okinawa is a privilege. Those who wish to obtain a personally-owned vehicle SOFA license, officially known as a U.S. Forces Japan operator's permit, or USFJ 4EJ drivers permit, must understand the rules of the road and license requirements for driving on Okinawa.

In 2011, the Provost Marshal's Office saw a rise in SOFA drivers operating vehicles without licenses or with expired licenses. In order to eliminate these incidents in 2012, it is imperative that SOFA drivers understand how to acquire a license, renew expired licenses, and who to contact if there are any questions or issues.

"To obtain a SOFA license, the first thing a person needs to do is read the Japanese drivers handbook," said Sgt. Vasili J. Tsovilis, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of traffic court, Provost Marshal's Office. "Many things are different about driving on Okinawa compared to back in the U.S., including different signs and signals, and driving on the opposite side of the road."

The requirements to obtain a USFJ operator's permit for a civilian vehicle, serviced by Marine Corps Base Camp Butler's Installation Safety Office, varies by individual.

All active-duty personnel E-5 and below are required to have their commanding officer's signature on the application for a drivers permit.

Family members of active-duty service members and DOD civilians must have their sponsor's signature on their permit to receive approval.

Other basic requirements for all personal attempting to obtain a SOFA license include a valid U.S. driver's license issued by a state or territory, a foreign country driver's license recognized in the U.S. Forces Japan Instruction 31-205, or completion of an accredited driving school aboard a U.S. military installation in Japan. Additionally, service members

must have government orders for residing in Japan and DOD civilians, who are not also military dependents, must have a certificate of employment. Contractors employed in support of the DOD are required to obtain a SOFA letter from the Staff Judge Advocate's office or branch equivalent legal office.

Once those documents are acquired, personnel must pass a written-license exam with a score of 80 percent or higher, according to Shawn M. Curtis, deputy safety director, MCB Camp Butler Installation Safety Office.

When a SOFA license is obtained, Japan considers you a professional driver. To maintain this professionalism, it is important to have licenses up-to-date and in the driver's possession at all times when operating a vehicle.

The consequence for driving without a valid SOFA license is a mandatory six-month suspension on all military installations, including the entire area and roadways for Okinawa, as well as a citation from military police, according to Staff Sgt. Collinger Daughtry, operations supervisor for the Marine Corps Installations Pacific Base Safety Office. A second violation for driving without a SOFA license subjects a person's license to being revoked for one year.

If someone is driving with an expired SOFA license, the same rules apply as if they were driving without ever obtaining a SOFA license, according to Tsovilis.

If you possess a SOFA license and are caught driving without it, your driving privileges could be impacted. On first offense, drivers will be issued a warning. On the second offense, drivers' privileges could be suspended from 15 to 90 days. Licenses' expiration dates are located on the front of the license near the middle area, according to Curtis.

For any questions concerning license renewal, expiration, consequences or requirements, contact Base Safety at 645-7219/3183. If there are any questions regarding citations, points assessed from citations, traffic court appointments, suspensions or revocations, contact the Traffic Court Division at 645-2879.

Leaders discuss sexual assault prevention

Col. Kevin King discusses the resources available to sexual assault victims during a commander's summit on sexual assault prevention at the Butler Officers' Club on Camp Foster Jan. 19. Sexual assault victims can contact their family service center, chaplains, health care providers and Military One Source. King is the III Marine Expeditionary Force sexual assault response coordinator. Photo by Lance Cpl. Courtney G. White



HCA from pg 1

U.S. commitment to our long-standing ally Thailand," said Lt. Gen. Kenneth J. Glueck Jr., deputy commander of CG 12 and commanding general of III Marine Expeditionary Force. "Through the exercise, III MEF is continuing to develop regional partnerships, increase prosperity and improve security in the Asia-Pacific region."

More than 13,000 service members from a variety of nations, including the Kingdom of Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan, Singapore, Republic of Korea and the United States, will participate in the exercise.

Other nations that have been invited to participate in the exercise as part of the Multinational Planning Augmentation Team include Australia, France, Canada, the United Kingdom, Bangladesh, Italy, India, Nepal, Republic of the Philippines and Vietnam.

The exercise will feature a variety of events throughout the country, including a senior leader seminar, allowing information sharing and relationship building between key leaders from partner nations; a computer-simulated command post

exercise, focusing on peace-enforcement operations; field training exercises, featuring combined arms training; and humanitarian and civic assistance projects, including medical and engineering civic action projects like building schools.

Marines and Thai personnel began building a school in Ban Lang Kao Jan. 17.

"We are here to help (our Thai counterparts) build the school, to learn from them, to teach them what we have to offer them also," said Lance Cpl. Alex Wisecup, a combat engineer with Marine Wing Support Squadron 172, Marine Wing Support Group 17, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III Marine Expeditionary Force.

After a small dedication ceremony, work began on the school that is one of six structures under construction over the next month.

"The opening ceremonies at each of the six HCA sites were performed in accordance with the traditional Thai ground-breaking ceremony called Yok Sao Eak, which means, 'Stand up the first pillar,'" said Capt. Amelia J. Griffith, a civil affairs team leader for the exercise. "To mark the occasion, a ceremonial ribbon was tied



Marines and sailors with the Royal Thai Navy and Indonesian service members spread concrete over a foundation at the Ban Khlong Bangbor school in Rayong, Thailand, Jan. 20 as part of humanitarian and civic assistance projects that precede the official kickoff of Cobra Gold 2012. "Through humanitarian and civic assistance programs, we have an opportunity to support the needs of our friends and regional partners," said Lt. Gen. Kenneth J. Glueck Jr., deputy commander of CG 12 and commanding general of III Marine Expeditionary Force. The Marines are part of Marine Wing Support Squadron 172, Marine Wing Support Group 17, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III MEF. Photo by Cpl. Jessica Olivas

around the first column to be raised in construction."

HCA projects play an important part in Cobra Gold.

"HCA activities are very important because they improve the quality of life and local infrastructure for the Thai people while at the same time increasing the interoperability skills of U.S., Thai and multinational

forces," said Griffith.

The multinational exercise will also provide medical, dental, optometry and veterinary services to the local Thai people. Some of these activities will also contribute toward the current flood recovery efforts.

"The local (population has) been very receptive to the presence of U.S., Thai and

multinational forces working on HCA projects in their respective communities," said Griffith.

CG 12 is scheduled to officially commence with an opening ceremony Feb. 7 and run through Feb. 17. For continued coverage of activities before and during the exercise, visit www.facebook.com/ExerciseCobraGold.

STAFFEX from pg 1

"Working together like this will help to improve our interoperability and efficiency in a joint, (bilateral) environment," said Col. John A. Ostrowski, the chief of staff for the brigade. "For two nations to come together and achieve a common goal is not an easy task. However, exercises such as this allow both nations to operate under one set of (standard operating procedures) and really learn from one another how to best work together."

To begin the exercise, the groups were given background information outlining a scenario with an issue or obstacle to overcome. From there, they broke out into three operational planning teams with a mix of U.S. and Malaysian service members. For the following five days, the two nations systematically and analytically determined several possible courses of action that could solve the issues presented in the scenario.

Once the teams developed a plan, a Malaysian officer from each team briefed this plan to the group and the combined command element.

"The Malaysians aren't the only ones that benefitted from this (exercise). We learn a lot from them as well," said Ostrowski.

Navy Lt. Raymond Posey, a medical planner for the exercise, said it is a great opportunity to exchange information and ideas.

"With our focus shifting towards the Pacific, these exercises will continue to increase our effectiveness in a multinational environment," he said.

Working relationships were not the only thing established during this exercise.

"We come here and we tend to focus on the professional relationships more than the personal ones," said Brig. Gen. Craig Q. Timberlake, commanding general, 3rd MEB, III Marine Expeditionary Force.

"The personal relationships are going to last for years to come," he said.

PROPEL from pg 1

naval diver with the battalion.

The company, part of 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, combined their knowledge about the device with members of the SAF NDU, using a 40-foot-deep pool in the NDU's training area.

We discussed the specifications, emergency procedures, operations, assembly and disassembly, said Cpl. Ryan G. Harris, a reconnaissance man with the battalion.

Members of the SAF NDU and the Marines learned from each other in the classroom and then operated the craft in the training pool.

"(Members of the SAF NDU) put the DPDs together successfully the first time and operated them successfully," said Harris.

The SAF has an experience level unlike most other countries. It cross-trains with

militaries from around the world and brings that knowledge to Exercise Sandfisher, according to Petty Officer 1st Class Donald R. Miner, a naval diver and supervisor for the exercise.

"The NDU combines (that experience) to create a special forces team of divers, deep-sea divers and (explosive ordinance disposal) technicians," said Miner. "I think that gives them a real edge when it comes to their broadened spectrum of military capability."

After mastering the pool maneuvers, the DPDs were brought to the open water where the training concluded and certification was achieved.

"Training overall was fantastic," said McGovern. "(The NDU) knows their stuff, they adapt very well, and on the other end, our guys did a great job teaching."



Members of the Singapore Armed Forces Naval Diving Unit launch a diver-propulsion device into the ocean at the start of their final exercise. The SAF NDU conducted bilateral training with Marines of Company A, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, throughout Exercise Sandfisher Jan. 17. Photo by Lance Cpl. Mike Granahan

Comb

Cpl. Ryan D. Vogel fires a .50-caliber Browning machine gun during the live-fire portion of the Fuji Combined Arms Operation at the Combined Arms Training Center, Camp Fuji, Jan. 18. The Marines worked as a team to help improve their confidence and proficiency with various weapons systems. Vogel is a motor transport operator attached to Golf Battery.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Michael Iams



Cpl. Devin T. Kelly pulls the lanyard to fire the M777A2 howitzer during the live-fire portion of the Fuji Combined Arms Operation at the Combined Arms Training Center during the three-day operation. Kelly is an artilleryman with Golf Battery, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Michael Iams*

Combined arms training commences for 3/12

Lance Cpl. Michael Iams

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

COMBINED ARMS TRAINING CENTER, Camp Fuji, Japan — Marines with Golf Battery began the live-fire portion of the Fuji Combined Arms Operation here Jan. 17.

The overall purpose of the operation is to give Marine artillery units the opportunity to conduct live-fire training with their weapons systems, according to Capt. Marc H. Ginez, battery commander.

“Our goal is to increase the proficiency and confidence of our Marines when utilizing these weapons systems,” said 1st Sgt. Shane E. Henson, the battery first sergeant.

The battery, originally from the 10th Marine Regiment out of Camp Lejeune, N.C., is assigned to 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, through the Marine Corps’ unit deployment program.

The weapons systems used by the battery include the M777A2 howitzer, the M240B machine gun and the .50-caliber Browning machine gun.

During the training, the battery fired hundreds of 155 mm high-explosive artillery rounds and thousands of .50-caliber and 7.62 mm machine gun rounds, according to Henson. For many of the Marines, the greatest challenge for them was the extremely cold weather conditions and mountainous terrain.

“This training helps us stay proficient as a unit,” said Sgt. Robert E. Sheppard III, a section chief for the battery. “It’s especially good for the Marines to learn to adapt and overcome the difficulties of the weather and terrain.”

“This training marks the final live-fire training the battery will perform as a unit,” said Henson. “The unit is scheduled to rotate back to its parent command in the United States next month.”

“Many of the Marines will receive orders to different units upon our return to Camp Lejeune,” Sheppard said. “They may either stay or leave 10th Marines.”

“It’s a sad feeling to be leaving your fellow Marines, brothers and friends,” said Lance Cpl. Justin C. Linton, an armorer with the battery.

This is a historic event in the Marines’ lives and careers, said Henson.

Marines kept their heads held high and



Marines with Golf Battery work together to aim, load and fire an M777A2 howitzer during the live-fire portion of the Fuji Combined Arms Operation at the Combined Arms Training Center, Camp Fuji, Jan. 18. Photo by Lance Cpl. Michael Iams

remained optimistic about seeing each other again throughout their careers.

“For all of Golf Battery, it’s been a pleasure working and training alongside them,” said Linton. “I hope to see them again in the near future.”



Marines with Golf Battery slide a 155 mm round into the breech of an M777A2 howitzer during the live-fire portion of the Fuji Combined Arms Operation at the Combined Arms Training Center, Camp Fuji, Jan. 18. For many of the Marines, the greatest challenge for them was the difficult terrain and inclement weather conditions. Photo by Lance Cpl. Michael Iams

er, Camp Fuji, Japan, Jan. 18. The Marines fired hundreds of rounds

to by Lance Cpl. Michael Iams

9th ESB completes road construction in Helmand

Sgt. Justin Shemanski

2ND MARINE LOGISTICS GROUP (FWD.)

Marine combat engineers are known for being the first called when something needs to be repaired, improvised, built or even destroyed. These capabilities often earn them accolades from their fellow Marines.

Combat engineers assigned to 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), lived up to this reputation recently by completing two major route construction and improvement projects in Afghanistan's Helmand province.

Elements of the Okinawa-based 9th Engineer Support Battalion completed the road surfacing phases of Routes Red and 611 early this month. Each route provides north and south passage on their respective sides of the Helmand River. Additional measures are now being put into place over the course of the next month to ensure their permanence, while also marking total project completion.

"We'll continue minor improvements along both routes, including culvert emplacements," said Capt. Christopher Kaprielian, operations officer for the battalion.

The installation of culverts, Kaprielian explained, will allow for proper drainage of rain water, preventing the roadways from simply washing away.

Work on the routes began last year with 9th ESB's predecessors, 7th ESB based out of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., who completed nearly half of the work before going home in late November.

"A lot of cross-coordination was involved," said Kaprielian. "The combined effort was truly unique."

In terms of Route Red alone, he noted expert integration across the Marine air-ground task force to secure the volatile region through which Route Red intersects. Support from Regimental Combat Teams 6 and 8 was especially critical in allowing the engineers to continue construction efforts, he added.

The enhanced roads are essential to NATO International Security Assistance Force operations and, perhaps most importantly, the livelihood of Afghan locals in the region due to the proximity of the routes to several major population centers. Safe roadways will present a viable means of transportation and facilitate economic expansion well into the future.

Route Red connects Gereshk and Shir Ghazay, while Route 611 serves as the main thoroughfare between the Sangin and



Chief Warrant Officer Brandon Smith speaks with residents while his unit conducts road repairs in Helmand province, Afghanistan, Nov. 3. Marines with 7th ESB repaired multiple areas along Route 611 in support of Operation Eastern Storm and after redeploying, 9th ESB continued to make progress on the major thoroughfare. Smith is the officer-in-charge of Heavy Equipment Platoon, Support Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward). Photo by Cpl. Katherine M. Solano

Kajaki districts.

Like Route Red, the region around 611 was also a hotbed for insurgent activity. Operation Eastern Storm, a major offensive spearheaded by the Marines of 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, launched last October to secure the Upper Sangin Valley from the Taliban-led insurgency. The secured and improved route will now allow ground convoys to deliver equipment and parts required to install a third turbine at the Kajaki Dam, located northeast of the village of Kajaki.

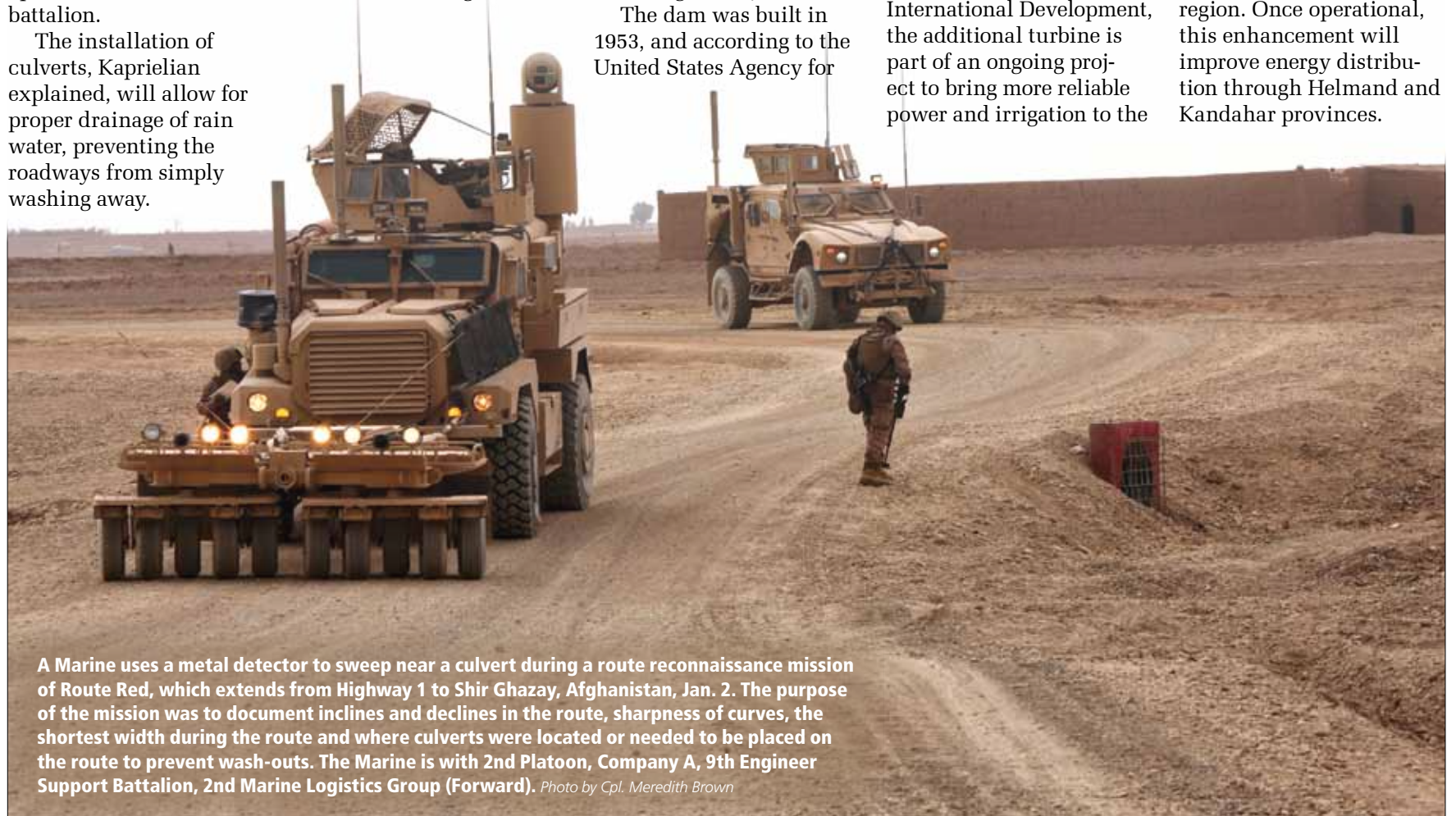
The dam was built in 1953, and according to the United States Agency for



A Marine with 7th ESB, supervises a portion of the Route Red improvement project in October 2011. The surfacing portion of Route Red was completed early this month. The improved road will benefit locals by connecting several major population centers west of the Helmand River, which in turn will promote economic growth in the region. Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeff Kaus

International Development, the additional turbine is part of an ongoing project to bring more reliable power and irrigation to the

region. Once operational, this enhancement will improve energy distribution through Helmand and Kandahar provinces.



A Marine uses a metal detector to sweep near a culvert during a route reconnaissance mission of Route Red, which extends from Highway 1 to Shir Ghazay, Afghanistan, Jan. 2. The purpose of the mission was to document inclines and declines in the route, sharpness of curves, the shortest width during the route and where culverts were located or needed to be placed on the route to prevent wash-outs. The Marine is with 2nd Platoon, Company A, 9th Engineer Support Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward). Photo by Cpl. Meredith Brown



Marines with Company A, Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, run toward an objective at the Kin Blue training area, Okinawa, Japan, during a mock boat raid Jan. 13.

31st MEU secures beach with amphibious assault

Story and photos by Cpl. Jonathan G. Wright
31ST MEU PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Sporadic bursts of rifle fire cut through the still air, drawing an immediate response from the Marines staged on the opposite end of the clearing. Calls for maneuvers were made as groups of Marines took up defensive positions, returning fire in the direction of the enemy contact. Minutes later, three hostiles were either killed or captured, and a security perimeter was established around the cleared area.

“We’ve encountered rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire,” said Lance Cpl. Derek Gregory, an assaultman with Company A, Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit. “After clearing the immediate area and checking for any (improvised explosive devices), we’ll return the town to the (local) government.”

Capturing an area from control of enemy forces is one of the objectives during a training exercise that took place Jan. 13. The unit, known as Boat Company, conducted a mock raid using combat rubber raiding craft on the Kin Blue training area as part of the MEU’s pre-deployment exercise.

“The focus of this training was to properly conduct a boat raid from the beach, locate and eliminate any offensive forces, and patrol the surrounding area,” said Sgt. Henry Pulcine, acting range safety officer for the Kin Blue training area.

A total of 15 boats hit the beach with the Marines moving quickly ashore and setting up defenses around the beach. After the boats were camouflaged with sand, the Marines made their way into the simulated enemy-held areas with cover provided by snipers and mortar teams.

“It may be fake, but it’s one of the best



An explosive ordnance disposal Marine with Company A, Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, inspects a possible improvised explosive device for wires and other components during a mock boat raid at the Kin Blue training area Jan. 13. During the training, Company A assaulted the beach, recaptured a hostile-controlled town, cleared IEDs, secured a landing zone, and eliminated any remaining enemy threats from the area.

ways to keep our skills fresh and ensure we don’t forget any beneficial training,” said Gregory. “We’re going to keep doing it, so we’re ready when we deploy.”

After securing the area, the Marines continued patrolling, discovering and properly clearing mock IEDs along the way.

Another patch of resistance was met when hostiles, concealed in the foliage, attempted to repel the Marines from securing a landing zone.

Those Marines who suffered simulated injuries during the firefights were evacuated

by way of helicopter from the secured landing zone.

When the rest of the area was deemed free of enemy forces, the Marines made their way back to the beach to leave in the craft they arrived in.

“This training combined different elements of the (Marine air-ground task force) and further taught them how to work as a cohesive whole,” said Pulcine. “It was a good learning exercise, and I think it helped the Marines work on any areas that might have needed attention.”

Cirque Dreams dazzles audience

Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Alyssa N. Hoffacker
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

Most days and nights audiences at the Camp Foster Theater quietly watch movies or learn from lectures, but on Jan. 21 the crowded theater roared with applause and laughter from involved spectators.

Marine Corps Community Services and the Armed Forces Entertainment collaborated in hosting the Cirque Dreams Jungle Fantasy World Tour performance here on Okinawa.

The show included intense jump-roping, a violinist, a performer using multiple hula-hoops, a contortionist, theatrical gymnastics, high-elevation balancing and extreme feats of flexibility.

"The event was funded by Armed Forces Entertainment, which worked with MCCS to schedule the Okinawa performances at the Camp Foster Theater," said Dureil Farnell, the MCCS Entertainment program manager and AFE area coordinator.

The fact that the show was offered free-of-charge was nice and it brings to light that we're appreciated for what we do, said Maurice I. Nwagbara, an audience member.

"What we have to offer the troops is our art," said Heather Hoffman, the tour manager with Cirque Dreams. "It's an honor and a privilege to perform for them."

Cirque Dreams tour will continue with a total of 34 performances at 17 U.S. military installations in 10 countries.

"A lot of families



A performer balances on the feet of a fellow performer at the Camp Foster Theater Jan. 21. The balancing performer continued the performance with flipping in the air and landing back on his partner's feet.

have deployed family members, this is a great opportunity for them to get out of the house and have fun," said Nwagbara. "The show was fantastic and impressive."

Thousands of people eagerly waited in line for hours to attend the free performances.

"For the approximately 3,000 individuals who were able to attend the four Camp Foster Theater performances, we've heard almost unanimous feedback that it was a spectacular show," said Farnell.

The performances featured incredible color, music and movement, amazing the audience members.

"I can not chose a favorite act," said Nwagbara. "They were all equally impressive."

Cirque Dreams members entertain a crowded audience at the Camp Foster Theater Jan. 21.



Cirque Dreams performers conduct a balancing act at the Camp Foster Theater Jan. 21. Cirque Dreams performed four shows on Okinawa and will continue on to 17 military installations around the world in seven weeks.



A performer allows an audience member to take part in the act during the Jungle Fantasy show at the Camp Foster Theater Jan. 21. The performer randomly chose members of the audience to balance the spinning ball on their hands.

A member from the Cirque Dreams Jungle Fantasy World Tour performs a balancing act at the Camp Foster Theater Jan. 21. Marine Corps Community Services collaborated with Cirque Dreams and Armed Forces Entertainment to host free shows on Okinawa.



In Theaters Now

JANUARY 27- FEBRUARY 2

FOSTER

TODAY War Horse (PG13), 6 p.m.; Contraband (R), 9:30 p.m.
SATURDAY Happy Feet Two (PG), noon; The Muppets (PG), 3 and 6 p.m.; War Horse (PG13), 9 p.m.
SUNDAY Happy Feet Two (PG), 1 p.m.; Red Tails (PG13), 4 and 7:30 p.m.
MONDAY War Horse (PG13), 7 p.m.
TUESDAY The Muppets (PG), 7 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Immortals (R), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY Red Tails (PG13), 7 p.m.

KADENA

TODAY The Muppets (PG), 6 p.m.; Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close (PG13), 9 p.m.
SATURDAY The Muppets (PG), noon and 3 p.m.; Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close (PG13), 6 and 9 p.m.
SUNDAY The Muppets (PG), 1 and 4 p.m.; Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close (PG13), 7 p.m.
MONDAY Contraband (R), 7 p.m.
TUESDAY The Muppets (PG), 7 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Joyful Noise (PG13), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG13), 7 p.m.

COURTNEY

TODAY Red Tails (PG13), 6 and 9 p.m.
SATURDAY Happy Feet Two (PG), 2 p.m.; J. Edgar (R), 6 p.m.
SUNDAY Joyful Noise (PG13), 2 and 6 p.m.
MONDAY J. Edgar (R), 7 p.m.
TUESDAY Closed
WEDNESDAY Contraband (R), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY Closed

FUTENMA

TODAY J. Edgar (R), 6:30 p.m.
SATURDAY Red Tails (PG13), 4 and 7 p.m.
SUNDAY Immortals (R), 4 p.m.; J. Edgar (R), 7 p.m.
MONDAY Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol (PG13), 6:30 p.m.
TUESDAY-THURSDAY Closed

KINSER

TODAY Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol (PG13), 6:30 p.m.
SATURDAY The Muppets (PG), 3 p.m.; Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol (PG13), 6:30 p.m.
SUNDAY The Muppets (PG), 3 p.m.; The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG13), 6:30 p.m.
MONDAY Closed
TUESDAY Closed
WEDNESDAY Red Tails (PG13), 3 and 6:30 p.m.
THURSDAY The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG13), 6:30 p.m.

HANSEN

TODAY The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG13), 7 p.m.
SATURDAY Joyful Noise (PG13), 6 and 9 p.m.
SUNDAY The Muppets (PG), 2 p.m.; The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG13), 5:30 p.m.
MONDAY Red Tails (PG13), 6 and 9 p.m.
TUESDAY Red Tails (PG13), 7 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close (PG13), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close (PG13), 7 p.m.

SCHWAB

TODAY Joyful Noise (PG13), 7 p.m.
SATURDAY J. Edgar (R), 5 p.m.
SUNDAY Happy Feet Two (PG), 5 p.m.
MONDAY-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 www.shopmyexchange.com.



SINGLE MARINE PROGRAM EVENTS

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

WHALE WATCHING TRIP - FEB. 4

- Join the SMP for a whale watching trip Feb. 4. Deadline to sign up is today. Bus will leave the Camp Foster Field House at 6:50 a.m. and MCAS Futenma Semper Fit Gym at 7:10 a.m.

BATTLE SITES TOUR - FEB. 10

- Learn about the Battle of Okinawa during a tour of the island. Visit significant battle sites to include the Kakazu Ridge, Japanese Naval Underground Headquarters, Peace Prayer Park and the Camp Kinser Museum. Bus will leave Camp Foster Fieldhouse at 7:10 a.m., MCAS Futenma USO at 7:45 a.m. Sign up deadline is Feb. 7.

SOUTHERN HILLS ICE SKATING TRIP - FEB. 20

- Sign-up deadline is Feb. 15. The bus will leave Camp Foster Field House at 11 a.m. and MCAS Futenma Semper Fit Gym at 11:20 a.m.

Mention of any company in this notice does not constitute endorsement by the Marine Corps.

Japanese phrase of the week:

“Daijobu desu”
 (pronounced: dye-jo-bu des)
 It means, “It is ok”

“Dame desu”
 (pronounced: da-meh des)
 It means, “It is no good”



CHAPLAINS' CORNER

Oftentimes we do not take notice of problems in our marriage until it begins to fall apart.

CREDO Marriage Enrichment Retreat brings couples together, reunites love

CDR Myung B. Kim
 CHC, DIRECTOR OF CREDO OKINAWA

Following our marriage enrichment retreat, many participants expressed their appreciation for having taken part. Some of the comments include:

“I understand my wife and realize more why she’s the love of my life,” “I learned so much about my wife,” “I’ve learned more in three days about my wife than I learned in 20 years! Thank you for helping us to save our marriage!”

How about your marriage relationship? Is it at risk or is it in good shape?

Oftentimes we do not take notice of problems in our marriage until it begins to fall apart. Chaplains Religious Enrichment Development Operations is great opportunity for you to build a better, more rich marriage relationship. CREDO provides many programs on Okinawa, including the marriage enrichment retreat for those married couples stationed here.

The retreat features a multiday trip to a beach resort with all lodging, meals and transportation paid in full.

The marriage enrichment retreat allows

married couples to learn better ways to communicate and work as a team to preserve and enhance love, commitment and friendship with each other. Participants will also gain new understanding and insight into themselves, one another and their relationship.

CREDO programs like this have been in existence for 41 years and has been led by the Navy Chaplain Corps since its inception.

Over time, CREDO has evolved in its approach to a new form of retreat ministry applicable to a broad spectrum of personal and spiritual development.

In 1997, the Commandant of the Marine Corps assumed sponsorship of the CREDO program providing CREDO sites at select Marine Corps facilities.

CREDO Okinawa has been serving military members and their families in the Western Pacific since 1986.

The next marriage enrichment retreat is scheduled for Feb. 23-25 at YYY Resort. Those interested must sign up before Feb. 1.

To sign-up and for further details, please contact CREDO at 645-3041 or e-mail: CREDO.MCBB.FCT@usmc.mil.