

OKINAWA MARINE

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Cobra Gold 2012 concludes

Army Pfc. Ryan Scott

122ND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OPERATIONS CENTER

CAMP SURANAREE, Korat, Kingdom of Thailand — The U.S. ambassador to Thailand and the Royal Thai Air Force's Deputy Chief of the Defense Forces praised the efforts of those who took part in Exercise Cobra Gold 2012 during a ceremony at the Royal Thai Air Force Wing 1 headquarters here Feb. 17.

U.S. Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney and Air Chief Marshal Boonyarit Kerdasuk, along with representatives from seven participating nations, celebrated the relationships built and interoperability developed during CG 12.



Republic of Korea, Royal Thai, and U.S. Marines rush toward the objective during the multilateral amphibious assault at Hat Yao, Kingdom of Thailand, Feb. 10, during Exercise Cobra Gold 2012. The U.S. Marines are with Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit. Photo by Cpl. Justin R. Wheeler

CG 12, which began Feb. 7, was the 31st iteration of the annual exercise hosted by the Kingdom of Thailand. CG 12 is designed to advance regional security and stability by strengthening relationships and developing

greater interoperability between all participating nations.

"Cobra Gold is a very important exercise and is regularly conducted," said Kerdasuk. "It is a testament to planners at all levels, and the cooperation of every

man and woman. We built a valuable foundation for future cooperation."

"Our work will have a direct benefit for local people," he added. "It will stand as a symbol of cooperation and friendship see CG 12 pg 5

Japan Defense Minister visits Leaders observe Corps' facilities



Japan Minister of Defense Naoki Tanaka walks with Col. Stephen M. Neary at Camp Schwab Feb. 18. The purpose of the visit was to observe the current situation of the facilities through briefings and tours of the camps and to meet with Lt. Gen. Kenneth J. Glueck Jr., Okinawa Area Coordinator and commanding general of III Marine Expeditionary Force, and Maj. Gen. Peter J. Talleri, commanding general of Marine Corps Installations Pacific. Tanaka toured and made courtesy calls to Marine Corps Camps Schwab, Lester, Foster and Kinser, and to Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. Neary is the Camp Schwab commander and 4th Marine Regiment commanding officer. Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Freeman

Casualty evacuation order for Okinawa updated

Sgt. Rebekka S. Heite
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP BUTLER — III Marine Expeditionary Force's and Marine Corps Base Camp Butler's commanding generals prepared for worst-case scenarios by signing III MEF/MCB Camp Butler Order 3700.1C Jan. 18.

The adoption of the revised casualty evacuation order is in direct response to a casualty evacuation in Hawaii in which III MEF personnel and civilians worked together to get patients to a medical treatment facility, said Mike Lacey, emergency manager with G-3 operations, see CASEVAC pg 5

Heart Health Month

Healthy choices mean healthy heart

Brian J. Davis

In the time it takes to read this column, five Americans will die of heart disease. U. S. Department of Health and Human Services statistics show that heart disease kills approximately 630,000 Americans each year.

According to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, heart disease, including stroke, is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States.

Every year nearly 785,000 Americans have their first heart attack. Another 470,000 people who have already had one or more heart attacks have another attack.

The good news is that heart disease can be prevented.

February is Heart Health Month, an opportunity to raise awareness about cardiovascular disease and to educate Americans on how to live heart-healthy lives. Minimizing the risk of heart disease can be as simple as managing diet, keeping fit and watching blood pressure.

The most common heart disease for Americans is coronary artery disease, or CAD. CAD is a narrowing of the blood vessels that supply the heart with blood and nutrients. A heart attack occurs when the blood flow is completely blocked, depriving the heart of oxygen. More than 400,000 Americans died of CAD in 2008, according to the U. S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

The U. S. Department of Health & Human Services says the risk of heart disease is greater if you are a woman aged 55 or older; a man age 45 or older;

or a person with a family history of early heart disease. For the large portion of the U. S. military population under 40 and in good health, the risk of heart disease might seem a long way off. Lifestyle choices can have a big impact on how healthy one's heart is several years down the road.

True, heart disease can be a matter of heredity or just the luck of the draw, but if you can have some control over the odds of contracting heart disease just by

"If you can have some control over the odds of contracting heart disease just by making a few small changes now, why not do so?"

making a few small changes now, why not do so? After all, when you're about ready to roll into surgery for that quadruple bypass, it's way too late to take back all those years of

cigarettes, couch surfing and triple gut-busters with cheese and chili fries.

To keep your heart healthy:

- Watch your weight
- Quit smoking and avoid second-hand smoke
- Drink alcohol only in moderation
- Get active and eat healthy
- Men over 45 or women over 55, should talk to their doctor about getting screened for heart disease
- Manage stress

U. S. Naval Hospital Okinawa, located on Camp Lester, offers tobacco cessation, monthly heart health seminars, nutrition and stress management classes, and one-on-one nutrition counseling by appointment. Let us help you be a healthier you.

For more information, call our Health Promotions Department at 643-7906.

Davis is the public affairs officer at the U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa.

AROUND THE CORPS



Brig. Gen. Michael G. Dana and Sgt. Harry Pickett uncover and attach the Afghanistan Campaign Streamer to the 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward) colors during a ceremony aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Feb. 15. During a transfer of authority ceremony, 2nd MLG (Fwd.) transferred all logistical support responsibilities to 1st MLG (Fwd.). Dana is the commanding general of 2nd MLG (Fwd.). Pickett was wounded-in-action during a deployment to Iraq in 2008. Photo by Sgt. Justin J. Shemanski

A Marine with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit's maritime raid force torch-cuts steel aboard USS Makin Island Feb. 9. The unit is deployed as part of the Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group, a U.S. Central Command theater reserve force. The group is providing support for maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet area of responsibility.

Photo by Cpl. Chad J. Pulliam



Gunnery Sgt. Tony Russo catches a rebound during a wheelchair basketball game Feb. 17 at the 2012 Marine Corps Trials, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. More than 300 injured Marines, veterans and allies, are competing in the second annual competition, which includes swimming, wheelchair basketball, sitting volleyball, track and field, archery, cycling and shooting. The top 50 Marines will earn the opportunity to compete in the Wounded Warrior Games in Colorado Springs, Colo. in May. Photo by Lance Cpl. Daniel Wetzel

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OKINAWA MARINE

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CENTRAL BUREAU

Camp Foster

DSN 645-7422

NORTHERN BUREAU

Camp Hansen

DSN 623-4224

SOUTHERN BUREAU

Camp Kinser

DSN 637-1092



Winner, 2010 DoD Thomas Jefferson Award
Best Tabloid Format Newspaper

JGSDF, 3/12 refine casualty evacuation skills

Pfc. Nicholas S. Ranum

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

HIJUDAIMANEUVER AREA, OITA PREFECTURE, Japan — Members of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force and Marines and sailors with 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, conducted a bilateral casualty evacuation exercise at the Hijudai Maneuver Area here Feb. 9.

The exercise was part of Artillery Relocation Training 11-4.

Marines with 3rd Bn., 12th Marines, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, participated in the training to provide support for the U.S. Navy corpsmen who organized the mock evacuation and allow the newest corpsmen and Marines to gain experience in executing and conducting casualty evacuation procedures.

It was a good experience for both the Marines and corpsmen, said Petty Officer 1st Class David Long, a corpsman with 3rd Bn., 12th Marines.

Members of the JGSDF Western



Marines and sailors with 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment transport a casualty to an awaiting Japan Ground Self-Defense Force UH-1 Iroquois helicopter during a bilateral evacuation exercise at the Hijudai Maneuver Area, Japan, Feb. 9. Casualty evacuation training is a requirement prior to any artillery relocation training live fire. The JGSDF provided air evacuation assets for both the mock casualty evacuation and Artillery Relocation Training 11-4. 3rd Bn., 12th Marines, is part of 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force. Photo by Pfc. Nicholas S. Ranum

Aviation Unit also participated in the exercise by providing the air-lift capability for the simulated casualty evacuation from the maneuver area to the Shin-Beppu University Hospital in Beppu City, Oita Prefecture, Japan.

The JGSDF also assisted with

the ground evacuation procedure. The air transportation featured a UH-1 Iroquois helicopter while the ground evacuation was conducted using a JGSDF field ambulance.

The Marines used two of their vehicles, one ambulance and one

transportation vehicle, said Petty Officer 2nd Class Antonio Jumanig, a corpsman with Hotel Battery, 3rd Bn., 12th Marines.

Two Marines acted as the patients for the exercise with simulated shrapnel wounds, loss of hearing and a loss of limb. This provided the corpsmen with an opportunity to hone their skills in treating injuries encountered on the battlefield.

The corpsmen also rehearsed giving a nine-line brief, which contains pertinent information about the patient and severity of the medical situation. The nine-line brief is communicated back to higher headquarters to provide a situational update on the current evacuation.

The exercise was just one of the many opportunities during Artillery Relocation Training 11-4, which allowed U.S. military members the opportunity to work alongside their Japanese counterparts toward a common goal.

3rd Recon Marines honor fallen during ceremony

Sgt. Rebekka S. Heite

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP SCHWAB — 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion Marines said final farewells to two comrades during a memorial service here Feb. 3.

Sgt. Daniel D. Gurr and Cpl. Adam J. Buyes were both killed in action during a recent deployment to Afghanistan with 3rd Recon. Bn., 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force.

“When the battalion lost Sgt. Gurr on 5 August and Cpl. Buyes on 26 November, we all felt a tremendous sense of loss that to one degree or another affect every single member across the battalion,” said Lt. Col. Travis Homiak, the battalion’s commanding officer. “A memorial service was held and a flag was flown aboard Patrol Base Alcatraz for each man. However, the real grieving and assimilation, the making sense of the loss, that was put on hold until we completed our mission and returned to Okinawa. Both men were dedicated professionals being United States Marines and on top of that they accepted the added challenge of becoming a reconnaissance Marine. They truly represented the best our nation and the Marine Corps has to offer.”

The battalion returned from Afghanistan in December 2011. During the deployment, Buyes was a reconnaissance radio operator and Gurr was a tactical debriefer.

“By their selfless service and sacrifice, every citizen of our nation owes them a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid,” said Brig. Gen. Frederick M. Padilla, commanding general, 3rd Mar. Div.

The service began a day of remembrance for the fallen Marines’ families, who attended the service, along with their brothers-in-arms.

“Sgt. Daniel Gurr and Cpl. Adam Buyes will never be forgotten by those who served with them and by their loving families,” Padilla said. “Their loss will leave a space that cannot be filled. We



3rd Reconnaissance Battalion Marines salute their fallen brothers after a memorial service at Camp Schwab Feb. 3. The Marines died in combat in Afghanistan last year. Sgt. Daniel D. Gurr passed on Aug. 5, 2011. Cpl. Adam J. Buyes passed on Nov. 26. 3rd Recon Bn., 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, returned from a seven-month deployment in December 2011. Photo by Sgt. Rebekka S. Heite

may however take some small measure of comfort in knowing that they lived their lives as men of action and as President Ronald Reagan said, ‘they made a difference.’”

The hole left by the fallen Marines was also noted by Sgt. Michael Barczak, one of Gurr’s friends in the battalion, said this during the service:

“What I’ve come to understand since (Gurr’s) passing is that when you spend that much time with someone you learn basically everything there is to know about each other,” said Barczak. “When the smoke settles what you have is a forged bond that cannot be broken by anything or anyone. When you let someone so deeply into your life, that person never leaves you. What I’ve also come to understand is when that very same person is so abruptly taken away from you, you are left with a large, gaping hole in your heart that nobody could ever fill. In the end all you are left with are the memories you’ve made with them and, most importantly, a brother’s love.”

Buyes was also remembered fondly during the service.

“A warrior thinks of death when things become unclear,” said Staff Sgt. Saint-Matthew Scott, Buyes’ staff noncommissioned officer. “The idea of death is the only thing that tempers our soul. It truly pains me to see a son, not of my blood, but a son in the truest form, taken. Adam was a big guy. But his size was only dwarfed by the size of his heart.”

During the service, Gurr’s family accepted the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with Combat Distinguishing device in honor of their son.

Buyes’ family also accepted the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal in honor of their fallen son.

“Sgt. Gurr and Cpl. Buyes are now on advanced party,” said Padilla. “They’re providing watch from a new observation post. May God bless them and keep them until we meet again.”

BRIEFS

Off Limits Establishments

The following off-limits establishments are identified for all status of forces agreement personnel attached to or accompanying III Marine Expeditionary Force/Marine Corps Installations Pacific personnel on Okinawa. This includes all military members, civilian personnel (including contractors), and all family members in accordance with III MEF/MCIPACO 1620.

- Stoner's Den
- Tokyo Syoten Bookstores
- Samurai King
- Hotel Takahara
- Ground Tobacco Shop
- Yoshihara Red Light District
- Bernard's Garage
- Events hosted by Parties International
- Shuffle Resort
- Hamby Bistro
- Liza's Bar

VISITORS TO OKINAWA NEED ADEQUATE OVERSEAS HEALTH INSURANCE

Before welcoming visitors to Okinawa, service members and their dependents should determine whether the visitors are covered by an existing insurance policy and take appropriate action to obtain insurance if needed.

Many Americans who visit Okinawa are unaware that their health insurance – whether private or public – often does not cover injury or illness while traveling abroad.

In some cases, private health insurers will cover illness or injury abroad. If this is the case, visitors to Okinawa should be sure to carry their insurance policy identity card and claim form with them. Be aware that although hospital costs may be covered, medical evacuation back to the United States is rarely covered.

If a visiting family member or friend has a health insurance policy, they should be prepared to ask their provider a number of questions before departing the U.S.

For more details, contact 645-7462.

BUDGET FOR BABIES

Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Okinawa offers budget for babies classes for expecting parents.

The classes will help attendees understand future baby expenses and what to do to prepare for them.

Space is limited and registration is required. Register by calling 645-7808 or 645-2357. For additional information, visit www.facebook.com/nmcrs.okinawa.

MARINE CORPS EMBASSY SECURITY GROUP AND HEADQUARTERS U.S. MARINE CORPS MSG SCREENING TEAM

The Marine Corps Embassy Security Group and Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps MSG Screening Team will visit Okinawa Feb. 29 - March 2 from 7:45 a.m. to noon at the respective theaters during the following dates:

- Camp Foster, Feb. 29
- Camp Kinser, March 1
- Camp Hansen, March 2.

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.

Tax time has arrived

Foster Tax Center makes filing simple

Lance Cpl. Alyssa N. Hoffacker

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP FOSTER — The Camp Foster Tax Center opened its doors Jan. 30.

The center provides tax preparation services to all status of forces agreement personnel, retired military, family members of personnel who died on active duty and family members of deceased retired military.

April 17, this year's deadline for filing taxes, is thought by some to be a dreadful day. Many are afraid of what they may owe and procrastinate until the last possible moment to file their federal and state taxes. For many on Okinawa, the tax center provides a way to circumvent this stress and anxiety.

The clerks working at the center have received intensive and thorough training through the Internal Revenue Service to properly file clients' taxes and get the taxpayers the refunds they deserve, said Sgt. Matthew S. Whetsell, a tax center clerk.

Patrons should bring military identification, social security cards for the service member and family, proof of date of birth for those being claimed as dependents, wage and earnings statement form from all employers, interest and dividend statements from banks, proof of any income, child care expenses, bank routing and account information, and a copy of last year's returns if available, said Whetsell.

"We will have to turn (customers) away if they do not have the documents needed for us to complete their taxes," said Lance Cpl. Cy S. Sicat, a tax center clerk.

The tax center's services are free-of-charge and open until April 13. The center accepts walk-ins from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday-Friday and will book appointments from 3 - 5 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays, which are reserved for those who have time-consuming returns.

The center will re-open from April 15 to June 15, for those who qualify for the automatic extension.

For more information, call 645-4829.

Leaders assess quality of life on Camp Kinser



Above: Col. John E. Kasperski shows Maj. Gen. Peter J. Talleri the location of the future single Marine program building at Camp Kinser during the general's visit to the camp Feb. 14. Talleri and other senior leaders discussed quality of life and the future of the camp. Kasperski is the commanding officer of Combat Logistics Regiment 37, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force. Talleri is the commanding general of Marine Corps Installations Pacific and Marine Corps Base Camp Butler.

Left: Joel Kursman, shows Talleri the water bath cook tank at the Cook Chill Facility at Camp Kinser Feb. 14. Food served in the mess halls around Okinawa is prepared and distributed in the cook chill facility. Kursman is the chef and food production officer for the facility. Photos by Lance Cpl. Michael Iams

Hijiki harvested on Camp Courtney



Okinawa community members harvest hijiki seaweed from the waters off Camp Courtney Feb. 20. Annually during prime harvesting season, Camp Courtney opens the beach for local sub-villagers and the Uruma City Fisherman's Association to harvest hijiki. Hijiki is prepared as a side or main dish on Okinawa and is also served at religious ceremonies. Photo by Sgt. Rebekka S. Heite

CG 12 from pg 1

long remembered. I would like to declare Exercise Cobra Gold 2012 closed."

Since the exercise began Feb. 7, approximately 10,000 service members from participating nations have been engaging in training events spanning the spectrum of military operations, including field training exercises, a command post exercise, humanitarian and civic assistance projects, and several senior leader seminars.

The exercise required extensive coordination from each participating nation during the preceding year.

"Our Thai hosts have been really superior, and the support that they have provided has been truly outstanding throughout this entire exercise," said Lt. Gen. Kenneth J. Glueck Jr., deputy commander of the exercise and commanding general of III Marine Expeditionary Force.

"Since this is the largest multinational exercise that we have in Asia today, it is a real credit to the Thai government," he added.

Field training exercises took place throughout the country during CG 12. FTXs included a combined-arms live-fire exercise, involving close air support provided by Thai and U.S. militaries, artillery fire and infantry maneuvers. Other field training events included an amphibious assault demonstration, a noncombatant evacuation operation and jungle-warfare training.

Over the course of CG 12, thousands of rounds were expended, including approximately 600 mortar rounds, 500 artillery shells and 200 bombs or rockets fired from aircraft.

"This (was) another opportunity to come together and work on our tactics, techniques and procedures and to work as a coalition," said Brig. Gen. Craig C. Crenshaw, commander of the Coalition Marine Force during the exercise. "We have been doing Cobra Gold now for over 31 years, and it really brings together all the nations that contributed."

Additionally, 10 humanitarian and civic assistance projects were conducted, including projects to directly help areas affected by flooding from monsoon rains during 2011. During HCA projects, service members from

the Kingdom of Thailand, United States, Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore built facilities for six schools, provided medical or dental treatment to approximately 1,200 Thai community members and provided veterinary care to more than 300 animals.

"Today is a special and important day in this beautiful and historic province. We are witnessing what happens when we work together," said Kenney. "Cobra Gold is not only a partnership between U.S. and Thailand, but a partnership with many Asian nations.

"I am deeply honored to be here to see what our militaries have accomplished together," she added.

In Korat, a multinational headquarters, comprised participants from 17 nations, was established to combat a simulated aggressive military force from "Arcadia" during a command post exercise. During the CPX, the multinational force shared knowledge and experience and developed an effective strategy which reinstated peace and stability in the simulated region of "Pacifica."

Several senior leader engagements took place throughout Thailand. Leaders from every participating nation shared expertise and lessons learned from real-world contingencies, such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts during Operation Tomadachi and flood relief conducted in Thailand last year. Elsewhere, a group of senior enlisted leadership toured the addition to a school constructed by a multinational team of military engineers from the Kingdom of Thailand and the United States.

"(We had) a good opportunity to not only intermingle amongst the different countries, but also to see some of the positive things that can happen during an exercise like this," said Sgt. Maj. Steven Morefield, III MEF sergeant major, during a tour of a building project.

CG 12, designed to enhance regional peace and security and prepare participating nations for the next crisis, has officially ended.

"Our mission is accomplished; we exceeded all expectations. A job well done to all," said Glueck. "The legacy of Cobra Gold 12 will be long remembered. We have proven that we are ready for today's crisis today."

CASEVAC from pg 1

Marine Corps Installations Pacific.

"If they can do it, why can't we?" he added.

There are six major changes in the casualty evacuation order, which covers more than just single casualties, said Lacey. It goes beyond mass casualties all the way to natural disasters such as tsunamis, typhoons and earthquakes.

One change is the ability to send injured status of forces agreement personnel to 17 different Japanese hospitals on or around Okinawa.

In the previous edition, all injured SOFA personnel were transported to U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa on Camp Lester.

With injuries, the greatest chance of survival is if the patient is moved from the injury site to a treatment site within one hour, the golden hour, said Lacey. With the old order, that was not possible if they were injured while at the Jungle Warfare Center, Ie Shima or other training areas on or near Okinawa, he added.

A second change is the ability for Japanese emergency personnel to respond to casualty evacuation scenarios involving SOFA personnel on and off base.

With Japanese emergency responders agreements, we now have access to Japanese firefighters, ambulances, the Japan Coast Guard and Dr. Heli, a Japan life-flight helicopter, when there is the need, Lacey said.

A third change is new procedures concerning high-risk training at remote locations.

New operational risk management steps will be required for high-risk training on or around Okinawa, said Lacey.

High-risk training includes nighttime convoy operations, close air support, small boat operations and dismounted jungle patrolling, according to the order.

Units requesting to conduct high-risk training shall schedule aviation support 45 days prior to the commencement of the training, according to the order.

It is prohibited to conduct such training during sea condition danger or when air casualty evacuation cannot recover a patient due to a lack of available air assets or visibility.

The fourth major change is the scope. The new order covers all of Okinawa, on base and off Marine Corps installations.

Another change in the order requires leaders to activate emergency responders by calling 911 instead of contacting range control, which speeds up the process by taking out the middle man, said Lacey.

Range control will still be notified through the sixth major change, a new MCIPAC communications system linking range control, the provost marshal's office and the officer-in-charge/range safety officer.

The order is all-inclusive, said Lacey. It includes a map of all casualty collection points, a map with directions to Japanese hospitals, a list of all Japanese hospitals authorized for treatment of SOFA personnel, a communications plan and a PMO 911 central dispatch smart pack.

Forms included in the enclosures are assault support request forms, training area accident report forms, training area incident report forms, the MCB Camp Butler operational risk management format and nine-line casualty evacuation request form.

To access the complete 46-page order, III MEF personnel can visit <https://portal.mce.iiimef.usmc.mil/Pages/Default.aspx>. Then click on the CASEVAC button. MCIPAC personnel can visit https://intranet.mcbbutler.nmci.usmc.mil/G3_Operations/Range_Control/References.aspx.

The updated casualty evacuation information will also be reviewed in the weekly range safety officer course on Camp Hansen, said Lacey.

For more information, contact Mike Lacey at 645-7607 or Maurice.lacey@usmc.mil.

Exercise Cobra Gold 2012 showcases

U.S. Marine Cpl. Garrett Storhoff, plane captain with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 115, sits outside of the cockpit of an F/A-18 Hornet as two Hornets from VMFA-115 take off from the flight line of Wing 1 Air Force Base, Korat, Thailand, Feb. 14. The squadron is part of 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III MEF.

Photo by Army Pfc. Ryan Scott



Royal Thai and U.S. Marines secure a beach landing zone while the last few days of the exercise during Exercise Cobra Gold 2012, the 31st iteration of an annual multilateral exercise in the region. The U.S. Marines are with Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, and the 1st Marine Battalion of the Royal Thai Marine Corps.

Photo by Cpl. Justin R. Wheeler



A nurse with the U.S. Navy's 3rd Medical Battalion checks an infant's vital signs during a medical civic action project in Banmi District, Lop Buri province, Kingdom of Thailand, Jan. 30. U.S. and Thai medical personnel treated approximately 200 members of the local community as part of CG 12. 3rd Medical Bn. is part of 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force.

Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Karen Persons

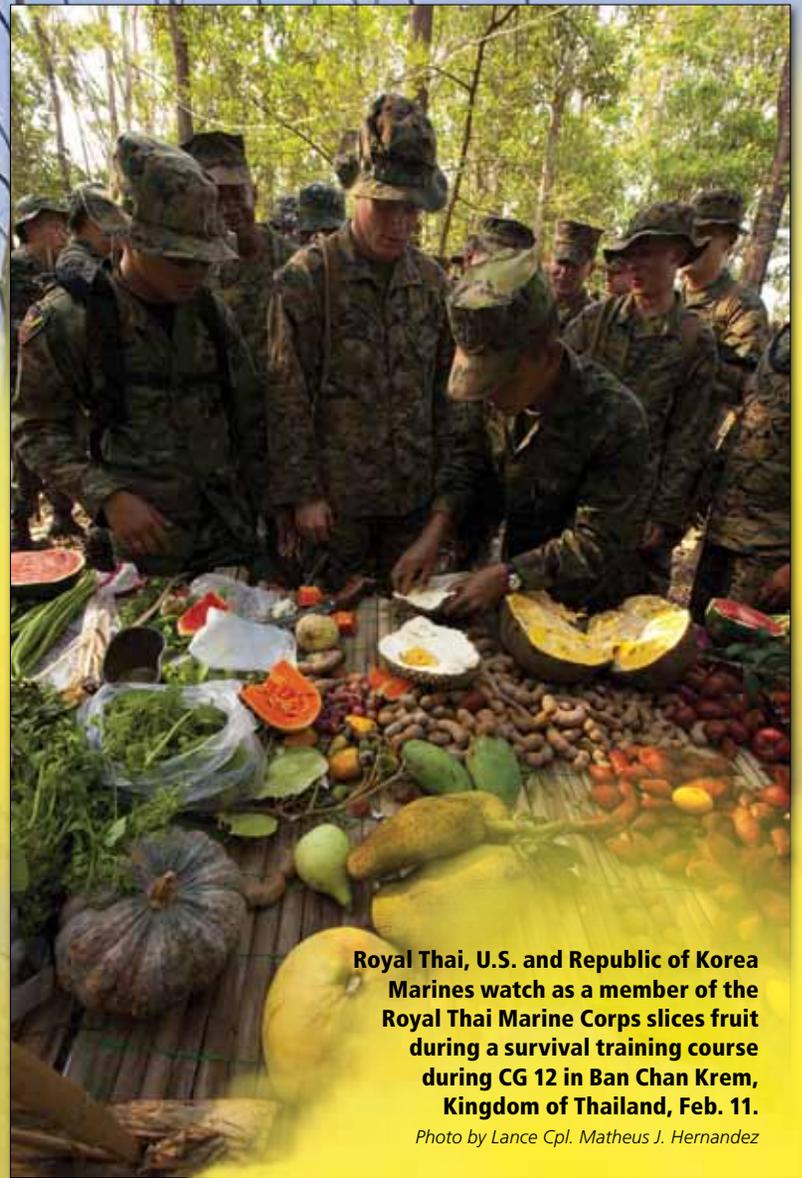
A Marine provides security as smoke is used to signal to supporting forces during the bilateral, combined arms, live-fire exercise in Muang Kom, Kingdom of Thailand, Feb. 15 during Exercise Cobra Gold 2012. The training provided the opportunity for the Royal Thai and U.S. Marines to implement techniques and procedures learned throughout the week including maneuvering under fire and conducting small-arms, artillery and machine gun fire. Cobra Gold is an annual Royal Thai and U.S. co-hosted multinational exercise designed to advance security throughout the Asia-Pacific region and increase interoperability with participating nations. The Marine is with Company A, 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Matheus J. Hernandez



es interoperability

boats arrive at Hat Yao, Kingdom of Thailand, Feb. 7. The Marines conducted the training exercise designed to increase interoperability with participating nations in the Asia-Pacific Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, and the Royal Thai Marines are with the 1st



Royal Thai, U.S. and Republic of Korea Marines watch as a member of the Royal Thai Marine Corps slices fruit during a survival training course during CG 12 in Ban Chan Krem, Kingdom of Thailand, Feb. 11.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Matheus J. Hernandez

A Marine launches an AT-4 rocket as other Marines lay down fire support during the bilateral, combined arms, live-fire exercise in Muang Kom, Kingdom of Thailand, Feb. 15 during CG 12.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Matheus J. Hernandez



Evacuees board a CH-46E Sea Knight helicopter during the simulated noncombatant evacuation operations at Rayong, Kingdom of Thailand, Feb. 12. The Royal Thai Marine Corps, U.S. Marines, Japan Self-Defense Forces, Malaysia and Singapore armed forces all participated in the NEO training during CG 12. The aircraft belongs to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit. *Photo by Cpl. Justin R. Wheeler*



CH-46E Sea Knight helicopters with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265 land on the flight line on Marine Corps Air Station Futenma Feb. 15. The helicopters returned from the central training area where they provided airlift capability to Marines with Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment. HMM-265 is currently assigned to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit.



HMM-265 provides support to boots on ground

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Alyssa N. Hoffacker

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

More than ten aircraft with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265 filled the skies simultaneously as they took off from Marine Corps Air Station Futenma Feb. 15.

The purpose of the flights was to provide airlift capability to ground units in the northern training areas of Okinawa.

The aircraft, which included UH-1 Huey, CH-46E Sea Knight, CH-53E Super Stallion and AH-1W Cobra helicopters, departed

MCAS Futenma en route to Camp Hansen where they picked up Marines with Company B, Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Once onboard, the Marines were transported to the central training area.

The mass airlift's training value was beneficial to the air crews as well as the infantry Marines being transported, said Cpl. Kevin A. Bruscas, a crew chief with HMM-265.

"This (training) is about supporting the lone rifleman, standing down there in the mud," said Lt. Col. Damien M. Marsh, the

squadron's commanding officer.

Marsh continued to explain how Marine riflemen make up the ground combat element of the Marine air-ground task force.

The training also allowed the aviation combat element Marines to continue to prepare for future flying engagements.

"This is a good opportunity for us to train for deployments," said Bruscas. "We do similar exercises often but never on this large of a scale."

"This required a lot from the maintenance crews, scheduling operations and planning on a lot of facets, which today's training would not have been possible without," said Capt. Terry A. Carter Jr., a pilot with the squadron.

With nearly a dozen helicopters in the air simultaneously, HMM-265 was also able to provide pilots with the opportunity to lead a formation of aircraft. This skill set ultimately allows pilots to serve in more demanding roles within the squadron, said Marsh.

"This is the most important training that can prepare (HMM-265) for austere environments found throughout the (Asia-)Pacific area of operations," said Carter.

CH-46Es, which have been in the Marine Corps inventory since the Vietnam War, are beginning to be drawn out of the Marine Corps and will be replaced with the MV-22 Osprey tilt rotor aircraft, said Marsh.



CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265, prepare to takeoff on the MCAS Futenma flight line Feb. 15. The helicopters returned from the Central Training Area where they provided airlift capability to Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment. HMM-265 is currently attached to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Corpsman proves valuable to team in Afghanistan

Story and photos by Cpl. Bryan Nygaard

2ND MLG (FORWARD)

During the late afternoon hours of Jan. 30, Marines with 9th Engineer Support Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), were working hard to take apart a medium girder bridge in the rural district of Garmsir, in Afghanistan's Helmand province. During the disassembly, part of the bridge inadvertently gave way and landed on a Marine's leg, sending him to the ground, writhing in pain.

"Doc! Doc! Doc! Doc, get up here now!"

Sprinting on to the scene with his medical bag on his back was Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael Soto, a corpsman for the battalion. Though he did not know exactly what was going on, he ran to where Marines were gathered. Soto knelt next to the injured Marine and began to determine the extent to which his leg was damaged. Soto's hands trembled slightly as he used his scissors to cut the Marine's trousers to expose the injury.

Once he determined the Marine had suffered a closed fracture, Soto grabbed some splints out of his medical bag. After setting the Marine's leg, giving him some medicine to dull the pain and taking his vitals, Soto began joking with his patient.

"Oh man, now you're going to be on light duty for the rest of the deployment," chuckled Soto. "You're going to be our new clerk."

During this time, other Marines had coordinated a medical evacuation. Less than 30 minutes later, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter landed in a field next to the bridge site. The injured Marine was placed on a litter and carried toward the aircraft with Soto leading the way.

"The way Doc Soto took care of everything and really controlled the site was almost a textbook medevac," said Staff

Sgt. Brian Glory, a combat engineer with the battalion, which is part of 3rd MLG, III Marine Expeditionary Force when it is not forward deployed. "He did his job extremely well."

The 21-year-old Soto has come a long way in his three years since joining the Navy. Growing up in Lake Villa, Ill., the self-proclaimed party animal never took anything too seriously. Now he is entrusted with rendering emergency medical treatment to Marines on the frontlines of Afghanistan.

Soto decided to join the military, like much of his family. His father, Antonio, spent 22 years in the Navy as a sonar technician. For much of Soto's childhood, his father was aboard a ship at

some remote location around the world.

"I saw what the Navy did for my dad," said Soto. "The stories he'd tell me and the pictures he'd show me ... I definitely wanted to do something like that too."

At first, Soto wanted to join the Marine Corps, but his father, a career sailor, had other ideas. Antonio suggested to his son that he become a Navy Corpsman, functioning as the primary medical caregiver to Marines on the battlefield.

"You're kind of like a Marine in a way," Soto was told by his father. "You'll be treated differently because you're a sailor, but you're going to learn a bunch of medical stuff."

Soto was sold on the idea. After graduating from boot camp and going through hospital corpsman school, he got his first taste of what life is like in a Marine unit when he went through field medical training at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

"A lot of guys are like, 'Oh, it wasn't that bad,' but it was pretty hard for me," said Soto. "I learned a lot though. It definitely opened up another side of the corpsman rating. I was thinking it was all in the hospital and then I was exposed to actual tactical care in the field on the ground."

Once that pillar of training was completed, Soto received orders to Camp Hansen on Okinawa, Japan. After working in a clinic for a while, he was transferred to 9th ESB.

In the months leading up to their current deployment to Afghanistan, Soto trained alongside the Marines and worked hard to get them medically ready. During this time, he learned Marines like to poke fun at each other and even more so at any sailors who are within their ranks.

"He's too soft so I try to harden him up," jokes Lance Cpl. Jesus B. Penagraves, a combat engineer with the battalion. "I try to make him feel

like a Marine. Thick skin – he needs it."

In order to fit in, Soto, who is naturally cheerful and outgoing, had to embrace the unique culture in which he was placed.

"Everyone talks trash to each other," said Soto. "You just kind of take it. I just got used to it. I started talking trash back, then I became one of them."

Three months into the deployment, "Doc" Soto is just one of the guys. He has made many friends in the platoon, who he says help him get through every day.

In addition to prescribing aspirin, patching up small cuts and pulling splinters from the fingers of Marines, Soto frequently tries to help out with



Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael Soto, right, gives medical supplies to Lance Cpl. Nathan A. Morningstar during the construction of a bridge in Garmsir, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Jan. 30.

the labor-intensive work his friends are engaged in when they are building bridges.

Glory often chases Soto off the building sites out of fear of him possibly getting injured.

"There are a lot of times he tries to get involved and help the Marines out because he's created that camaraderie," said Glory. "That's just Doc Soto, but I hold him back because if he gets hurt we're kind of done."

At the time of the accident, Soto had taken a break from walking around checking on his Marines and decided to sit down to read a few pages of "Starship Troopers." Not long after sitting down, he heard the call for help. Without hesitation, the 5-foot-7-inch, 140-pound sailor sprinted to the bridge site in only a few seconds.

1st Lt. Matthew E. Paluta, a platoon commander with the battalion, believes that Soto's actions have given the Marines peace of mind for the rest of the deployment.

"It wasn't a major injury, but (Soto) definitely proved his worth," said Paluta. "It's one of those things when Marines see their doc performing that well under pressure, it breeds confidence. Their minds won't be distracted as much now."

Not only do the Marines now have confidence in Soto, but he also has more confidence in himself and his fellow Marines.

"I'm happy it happened while we weren't being shot at," said Soto. "It helped me out a lot today because I actually got to see the bigger picture. I got to see how everything worked. Now I know all I really have to do is just focus on my job."

"When Marines see their doc performing that well under pressure, it breeds confidence."

1st Lt. Matthew E. Paluta

Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael Soto accompanies litter-bearers as they load an injured Marine into a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during a medical evacuation in Garmsir, in Afghanistan's Helmand province, Jan. 30. Soto, a native of Lake Villa, Ill., has been with 9th Engineer Support Battalion for the past year and is the primary caregiver to the Marines of Bridge Platoon as they serve on the front lines of Afghanistan. Soto is a hospital corpsman with 9th ESB, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force.



Members of the Ryukyu Kings prepare for the start of a paintball round on Kadena Air Base. Each member plays his zone of the field and readies himself to get to his position as fast as possible.



Ryukyu Kings give speedball velocity

Story and photos by Pfc. Ian M. McMahon

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

A *drenaline pumped through their veins, heart rates rose, and instincts replaced fear as they moved from one bunker to the next taking cover from enemy fire.*

Though it sounds like a combat scenario, the battle was just another competition for the Ryukyu Kings Okinawa International Paintball Team.

The Ryukyu Kings paintball team was officially formed May 1, 2006 and is the oldest paintball team in Okinawa according to the Ryukyu Kings website.

The long-standing team has consisted of U.S. service members and locals from the Okinawa community who train regularly on Kadena Air Base.

The Kings have participated in many tournaments over the years from local events to the international level.

The team dominated in the Paintball-Asia League Series Tournament Thailand last year, a competition between some of the best teams from across Asia.

“Even though it is hard for (the team) to play together all the time due to a currently small community, we have successfully been winning local tournaments,” said Conrad Bidal, the Kings team captain and coach.

The team does not limit itself to just winning, it enjoys creating awareness of the sport.



Hector Lizama lays down suppressive fire as team mate Joe Freeman reloads. Each member plays his zone of the field, keeping his “lane” covered, so teammates can move around the field.

“The team’s goal is to maintain and grow the sport of paintball on Okinawa,” said Bidal.

“In paintball there is a large gap between the players who can afford the more expensive gear and the ones (who) can’t,” Bidal explained.

The Kings more than welcome new players on to the field with them regardless of their equipment.

“It is disappointing to see these kids come out to a field and see just the speedball players with all the top-of-the-line gear and think

‘I can’t play with them,’” said Bidal.

Although the team has the upper-hand in experience, it wishes to see more teams to play against. It has succeeded by advertising the sport through flyers, social media sites and word of mouth.

“Today there are more than double the amount of players on the field than usual,” said Chris Gruber, a member of the team. “We want to open the community up for more players.”

To see how to get involved with paintball, visit www.ryukyukings.com.

In Theaters Now

FEBRUARY 24 - MARCH 1

FOSTER

TODAY Journey 2: The Mysterious Island (PG), 6 p.m.; One for the Money (PG13), 9 p.m.
SATURDAY Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G), noon; We Bought a Zoo (PG), 3 p.m.; Big Miracle (PG), 6 p.m.; One for the Money (PG13), 9 p.m.
SUNDAY Big Miracle (PG), 1 p.m.; This Means War (R), 4 and 7 p.m.
MONDAY One for the Money (PG13), 7 p.m.
TUESDAY We Bought a Zoo (PG), 7 p.m.
WEDNESDAY We Bought a Zoo (PG), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY This Means War (R), 7 p.m.

KADENA

TODAY Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G), 6 p.m.; We Bought a Zoo (PG), 9 p.m.
SATURDAY Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G), noon; We Bought a Zoo (PG), 3 p.m.; Journey 2: The Mysterious Island (PG), 6 and 9 p.m.
SUNDAY We Bought a Zoo (PG), 1 p.m.; Journey 2: The Mysterious Island (PG), 4 and 7 p.m.
MONDAY Journey 2: The Mysterious Island (PG), 7 p.m.
TUESDAY We Bought a Zoo (PG), 7 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Big Miracle (PG), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY Big Miracle (PG), 7 p.m.

COURTNEY

TODAY This Means War (R), 6 and 9 p.m.
SATURDAY The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (R), 2 and 6 p.m.
SUNDAY Big Miracle (PG), 2 and 6 p.m.
MONDAY Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (PG13), 7 p.m.
TUESDAY Closed
WEDNESDAY Journey 2: The Mysterious Island (PG), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY Closed

FUTENMA

TODAY Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (PG13), 6:30 p.m.
SATURDAY This Means War (R), 4 and 7 p.m.
SUNDAY Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (PG13), 4 p.m. The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (R), 7 p.m.
MONDAY Big Miracle (PG), 6:30 p.m.
TUESDAY-THURSDAY Closed

KINSER

TODAY Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G), 3 and 6:30 p.m.
SATURDAY Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G), 3 p.m.; We Bought a Zoo (PG), 6:30 p.m.
SUNDAY We Bought a Zoo (PG), 3 p.m.; Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked (G), 6:30 p.m.
MONDAY Closed
TUESDAY Closed
WEDNESDAY This Means War (R), 3 and 6:30 p.m.
THURSDAY We Bought a Zoo (PG), 6:30 p.m.

HANSEN

TODAY The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 (PG13), 7 p.m.
SATURDAY Big Miracle (PG), 6 and 9 p.m.
SUNDAY Big Miracle (PG), 2 and 5:30 p.m.
MONDAY This Means War (R), 6 and 9 p.m.
TUESDAY This Means War (R), 7 p.m.
WEDNESDAY We Bought a Zoo (PG), 7 p.m.
THURSDAY Journey 2: The Mysterious Island (PG), 7 p.m.

SCHWAB

TODAY Big Miracle (PG), 7 p.m.
SATURDAY Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close (PG13), 5 p.m.
SUNDAY Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows (PG13), 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.

ALL CAMPS MONTHLY MEETING - MARCH 2

• An All Camps monthly meeting will take place at the Camp Hansen SMP office in building 2377 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. March 2.

DRAGON BOAT TEAM

• It's that time of year, dragon boat time! The Single Marine Program is looking for motivated single Marines and sailors to join the 2012 dragon boat team and participate in the Annual Naha Dragon Boat Race May 5. The teams consist of 37 members each. The SMP team will be trained again by the Japanese Marine Self-Defense Force Team. Practices will be held at White Beach every Wednesday in March, with two practice days per week in April. Transportation will be provided to all team members. Do not miss out on this opportunity to participate in the Okinawan culture and be part of the best dragon boat team on island. Contact 645-3681 for more information.

BUSHIDO CHALLENGE - MAY 18

• The Bushido Challenge tests physical and combat fitness with competitions including a tire flip, dead hang, shot put and other events. This challenge is open to teams of four, of which at least one team member must be a single or unaccompanied Marine or sailor.

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

Japanese phrase of the week:

“Doitashi mashite”
 (pronounced:
 DOH-ee-tah-shi-mah-shteh)

It means,
 “You are welcome”



Feb. 13-17

RIFLE RANGE

Staff Sgt. Anthony Gorecki, MCB, 333
 Lance Cpl. Brian Moser, MLG, 333

PISTOL RANGE

No detail this week.



CHAPLAINS' CORNER

So much of our quality of life is determined by our capacity to receive creative inspiration.

Creative insight solves challenges

Lt. Cmdr. Alfred V. Pena

DEPUTY COMMAND CHAPLAIN, MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP BUTLER

Challenges are a fact of life we all face. Some challenges appear to be without solution or the answer is highly elusive.

In 1865 a chemist, Friedrich August Kekule, faced the difficult problem of figuring out the structure of the benzene molecule, (C6H6). He knew which atoms composed benzene but not how they were arranged. In theory, such a combination of atoms was not supposed to exist. So how could they possibly fit together and remain stable?

One night, Kekule had a dream of a snake biting its own tail. When Kekule awoke he realized he had the solution to his problem. The structure of the benzene molecule was in the shape of a ring!

Kekule, a principle founder of modern organic chemistry was highly intelligent, but he still required a sudden burst of creative insight to solve this problem.

Sometimes our life's challenges may resemble the benzene puzzle. They may seem to have no immediate or obvious solution.

We may not even know all the necessary facts or principles at stake. However, a receptiveness to creative inspiration may be required.

So much of our quality of life is determined by our capacity to receive creative inspiration. It is very easy, however, to lose this ability within the distractive sites and sounds of everyday life. Such distractions can dull our senses and anesthetize our minds away from creative influences.

In a moment of silence, Kekule received the answer to his puzzle. A possible lesson here is that when we learn to periodically isolate ourselves from distractive sights, sounds and people, we allow our minds the occasion to be expanded and stretched. Some people achieve this through meditation or prayer. Others gaze at natural scenery or utilize the fine arts such as paintings, sculpture or music for this insight.

Finally, the image of a snake biting its tail has no direct connection to organic chemistry. However it proved key in solving the benzene puzzle. When you also learn to look to areas outside your usual realm of experience, new worlds and solutions to life's challenges will often be within reach.