Commanders’ forum targets avian flu awareness

Okinawa Marine Staff

CAMP FOSTER — A commanders’ educational forum at Camp Foster’s Butler Theater Aug. 8 took aim at educating U.S. and Japanese leaders and raising awareness about avian influenza, also known as bird flu.

Leaders from III Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Bases Japan and U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa and Kadena Air Base arranged the event to focus senior leaders here on avian flu concerns and prompt them to educate their personnel as well.

Significant outbreaks of avian flu began in Southeast Asia in mid-2003, according to the World Health Organization’s Web site. The H5N1 strain of the virus has proved to be especially tenacious.

Despite the death or destruction of an estimated 150 million birds, the virus is prevalent in many countries in the Pacific region. Control of the disease in poultry is expected to take several years.

While avian flu is a contagious disease of animals caused by viruses that normally infect only birds, there have been 238 confirmed human cases of H5N1 in 10 countries from Southeast Asia to the Middle East, with the largest numbers of infection in Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand, according to Globalhealthfacts.org.

Of the 238 human cases, 139 have been fatal. With 44 deaths, Indonesia recently topped the list of confirmed Bird Flu fatalities, passing Vietnam with 42.

There have been no avian flu cases in humans in Japan, but medical professionals at the recent forum emphasized preparedness in the American and local communities in case of a pandemic. “There is no need for hysteria or panic, but the threat of pandemic is real,” said Lt. Cmrd. David Asseff, a preventive medicine and tropical disease physician with III MEF. “We might never have a pandemic, but people should be aware and educated. A little prevention goes a long way.”

Medical professionals from USNH Okinawa and Kadena Air Base’s 18th Medical Group and several III MEF officials covered a variety of topics See FLU pg. 6
Around the Corps

For more Marine Corps stories and photos, visit http://www.usmc.mil

ENGLAND | An MV-22 Osprey, belonging to Marine Tiltrotor Test and Evaluation Squadron 22, flies over England after making history by completing the first-ever Tiltrotor Vertical Assault Aircraft trans-Atlantic flight July 29. Two Ospreys successfully flew from North Carolina to England and back, covering more than 4,000 miles, in challenging weather conditions. Photo courtesy of Bell-Boeing

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq | Maj. Alex J. Durr puts the finishing touches on a mural of the late Iraqi Brig. Gen. Khodeiri Obeid Abbas Al Janadi, deputy chief of police in Fallujah. Durr painted the concrete barrier in August as a memorial to Khodeiri, who was killed by insurgents June 19. Photo by Gunnery Sgt. Mark Oliva

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. | Petty Officer 1st Class Jason Conley, corpsman with Search and Rescue, signals to the crew chief to lift off during practice rescue training near Lake Martinez July 27. The constant training prepares the corpsman and Marines for real-life emergencies. Photo by Lance Cpl. Megan Angel
‘The Girl with the White Flag’

Navy Lt. Cmdr. Joe D. Haines

E
evry American living in Okinawa should read ‘The Girl with the White Flag’ by Tomiko Higa. It is the survival story of the author as a 7-year-old Okinawan girl during the U.S. invasion of Okinawa during World War II. The memoir describes the traumatic experience of young Tomiko as she and her family become caught in the crossfire of the Battle of Okinawa.

The book might have been written had the author not recognized a photograph of herself in a book about the war in 1977. The striking image showed young Tomiko, bare-foot and wearing work pants while carrying a three-cornered white flag attached to a stick.

However, it was not until 1984, when film footage of the war was shown on television in Okinawa, that Tomiko publicly identified herself as the girl with the white flag. She wrote a story entitled, “I Was the Little Girl With the White Flag,” which led to a TV program and finally her book.

Tomiko’s story is a vivid portrayal of the unceiled civilian casualties inevitable in every war. With stark innocence, she rebells the invasion of one of Japan’s last outposts from a child’s perspective.

As the battle begins, Tomiko’s father is forced to leave his children to supply food to Japanese soldiers. With their mother dead, Tomiko, her 9-year-old brother along with her 13 and 17-year-old sisters leave their home in Shuri and make their way south. They travel on foot at night to avoid detection by the soldiers. Her brother is killed in his sleep by a stray bullet, and the girls bury him in the sand at Komesu Beach. As they continue on, Tomiko becomes separated from her sisters.

The book relates Tomiko’s search for her lost sisters while narrowly avoiding death at the hands of Japanese soldiers and surviving on scraps of food from dead soldiers’ knapsacks. Her description of the human carnage she wit- nesses is horrific.

An elderly Okinawan couple finally take Tomiko into their underground shelter. But as the battle ends, the old couple force Tomiko to leave, making a white flag of surrender for her to carry. It took great courage for her to leave safety and surrender to the Americans. As she relates in her story, “(The Japanese) told me Americans true story of women and children into little pieces. These false rumors were spread by the Japanese Army to make the populace hate the Americans and think of them as ogres, so as to make the people afraid to surrender. But I did not know at the time, and innocently believed them.”

Despite her fear, Tomiko courageously left the safety of her underground shelter and surrendered to the Americans who reunited her with her sisters. The story concludes with Tomiko’s emotional reunion with the American photographer who took her picture 43 years before.

“The Girl with the White Flag” is an unforgettably true story of survival that is an inspiration to children and adult readers alike. It reminds us that children are the most unfortunate victims of war.

Haines is a family practice physician at Lester Family Medicine Clinic.

Are you tough enough to say, ‘I’m sorry’ and mean it?

Navy Lt. Steven Stougard

“Tell your brother you’re sorry.” You owe your sister an apology.” These words are often spoken in my house. In the world of human relationships, “I’m sorry” is the beginning of real healing because we all stumble and fall at times. But saying it is easy; saying it with sincerity is not. We live in the age of the cheap apology, or worse yet, the non-apology. Non-apology? What’s that? Wikipedia defines it as “a statement in the apparent form of an apology that is actually nothing of the sort. Non-apologies are a common gambit in politics and public relations. An example of a non-apology is to say ‘I’m sorry’ if you were offended by my remarks, to someone who has been offended. This not only fails to admit that there was anything wrong with the remarks made, it also subtly insinuates that the person offended was excessively thin-skinned or irrational by taking offense in the first place.”

But people don’t do that, do they? Maybe you’ve heard of a professional athlete who, after being caught using performance enhancing drugs, says, “I’m sorry that this disrupted my teammates and embarrassed my team.” Or the politician who, when faced by dozens of reporters and TV cameras after an off-the-record racial outburst, solemnly speaks the mother of all non-apologies, “I’m sorry if my words offended anyone.” If?

These are non-apologies because one essential element is missing from all of them: admitting that what they did was wrong. If you’ve done something you shouldn’t, and maybe it has hurt a relationship or tarnished your character, are you tough enough to say, “I’m sorry” – and mean it?

Stougard is assigned to Marine Aircraft Control Group 18 and occasionally leads worship at Futenma Chapel during the 9 a.m. worship service.

The Okinawa Marine is published by Marine Corps Community Services under exclusive written contract with Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler, Okinawa, Japan. The editorial content of this newspaper is edited and approved by the Commander Public Affairs Office of Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler. This newspaper is an authorized publication for members of military services stationed overseas, on land, sea and air forces. It contains information, news and public relations. Our primary purpose is to report news and changes that affect all Marine Corps personnel overseas.

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Identification tags serve an administrative function, so they are not addressed in the Marine Corps Uniform Regulations. Marines are required to have one tag suspended from the neck, and the other tag as the commander prescribes, according to Marine Corps Systems Command. Many commands dictate that the second tag be worn on the left boot, but check with your chain of command to be sure. Medical tags must be worn at all times. More information may be found in Chapter 7 of Marine Corps Order P1070.12, Individual Records Administration Manual.

Q: I can’t find anything in the uniform regulations that talks about dog tags. What is the correct way to wear them?

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BAGGAGE RESTRICTIONS
Due to recent security threats, the Department of Homeland Security and the Transportation Security Administration have placed restrictions on all flights destined to the United States. No liquids, gels or aerosols including beverages, shampoo, lotions, creams, toothpastes or other items of similar consistency may be carried onto an aircraft, although they may be transported in checked baggage. Items that are permitted include baby formula, breast milk or juice, if traveling with a small child, prescription medicine with a name that matches the passenger’s ticket, insulin and other essential non-prescription medicine not to exceed four ounces per container.

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WITNESS COURSE
Christian Life and Witness Course training will be held Thursdays from 7-8:30 p.m. Aug. 31, Sept. 7, 14, 21, and 28 at the Camp Hansen Chapel, Zion Christian Ministries and Koza Baptist Church. For more information, contact Chaplain Don Buadog at 623-4694 or Rev. Greg Hall at (098) 897-8954.

COMMAND RECRUITING PROGRAM
Marine Corps Recruiting Station Twin Cities, Recruiting Substation Coon Rapids, is seeking Marines, sergeant and below, to participate in the Command Recruiting Program as recruiter assistants for the following areas: Anoka, Chicago, Isanti, Sherburne, and Wright County. Permissive TAD orders will be issued by your chain of command if authorized. Promotion points, meritious mast, certificate of commendation and other incentives are available. For more information, contact Master Gunnery Sgt. Bautista (763) 576-9049, or e-mail bautistage@marines.usmc.mil.

DTS SELF-REGISTRATION
The Defense Travel System (DTS) – a new system for completing TAD travel – is now in operation. Before registering, personnel should contact their unit’s Organizational Defense Travel Administrator (ODTA) to confirm the correct organization label. When registering, person should have the following information available: unit information, personal EFT account number and routing number, government charge card account number and expiration, unit and personal contact information. Upon completing the self-registration process, the individual’s ODTA will need to accept personnel within the organization before DTS can be used. For additional information concerning self-registration procedures, please visit http://www.dts.travelcenter.dod.mil/Training/Docs/Deployment_Tools_Users_Manual.pdf. You may also contact your unit ODTA or the DTS Help Desk at 645-3300.

TO SUBMIT A BRIEF, send an e-mail to okinawama- rine.mcbb.fc@usmc.mil or fax your request to DSN 645-3803. The Okinawa Marine accepts briefs from nonprofit organizations only. The deadline for submitting a brief is noon every Friday. The Okinawa Marine reserves the right to edit all submitted material.

CORRECTION
In last week’s edition, on page 14, a Marine pictured in a dunk tank at the 3rd Marine Logistics Group Headquarters and Service Battalion, barbecue on Camp Kinser was misidentified. He is Master Sgt. George Henderson, the battalion’s logistics chief.

AVIAN FLU
including emergency evacuation procedures, medical responses and priority personnel.

The forum covered such specifics as contingency procedures during a pandemic. In case of an overflow at USNH Okinawa, for example, Camp Lester middle school’s gym would function as a medical facility.

Asseff said avian flu can be transmitted in two ways: through direct contact with infected birds or poultry, or through close, sustained contact with an infected human.

Poultry should be well-cooked to kill any possible avian flu virus, he added.

“If you are going to travel to places such as Thailand, Vietnam or Indonesia, make sure the poultry is well cooked and go to higher end places where the food will be prepared better,” Asseff said.

Asseff stressed general illness prevention measures such as hand washing, covering one’s mouth when coughing or sneezing and staying at home when ill.

Okinawa personnel can expect more information in the coming months and can log onto http://www.pandemicflu.gov.

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*As of Aug. 14, 2006

Source: http://www.globalhealthfacts.org

FLU FROM P1.1

Maj. Chris Nodurft asks a question at the commanders’ educational forum. Photo by Cpl

Guillermo E. Vargas

FOR THE DINING FACILITY SCHEDULE, VISIT HTTP://WWW.OKINAWA.USMC.MIL

CAMP ESTER | Seaman Babs Loheide administers a Meningococcal vaccine to 12-year-old Joyceann Suba at U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa during a walk-in immunization clinic Aug. 12. Hospital staff administered vaccines to approximately 200 children in accordance with a Department of Defense Education Activity requirement for 11 and 12 year olds and students entering the ninth grade. The students must receive two required vaccines before the start of the school year. The hospital staff will hold a final clinic Aug. 19 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Students must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Photo by Lance Cpl. David Rogers
DoDDS officials stress safety for new school year

Pfc. Richard Blumenstein
Okinawa Marine Staff

CAMP FOSTER — In 2005, school bus accidents killed 26 children and injured 9,000 in the United States, according to Charles Vukich, the public affairs officer with Department of Defense Dependant Schools-Pacific.

To prevent similar incidents, Steitz and other local officials are encouraging parents to emphasize safety precautions to their children as they travel to and from school.

When biking, rollerblading and skateboarding children are required to wear helmets at all times, and 1st Lt. Christopher Kupka, a military police officer with the Marine Corps Base Camp Butler Provost Marshal’s Office, recommended they wear kneepads and gloves also.

The use of headphones is prohibited while walking or participating in any of the same activities because the obstruction of sound could result in an accident.

Children taking the bus to school should be careful not to walk behind the bus and make sure the driver can see them when they walk in front of the bus, Steitz said. Parents should inform their children of possible dangers when crossing the road. Children should look “right, left and right” since traffic here travels in the opposite direction of traffic in the United States.

“Drivers should always be mindful of children darting out into traffic,” Kupka said.

With a new school season approaching safety is paramount, he added.

School safety is not limited to these procedures, however. Local military police offer free courses to all Status of Forces Agreement personnel to help them avoid dangerous situations, according to Kupka.

Drug Abuse Resistance Education officers from PMO run a program that teaches children safety techniques and how to identify potential dangers.

The “Stranger Danger” course emphasizes the importance of not talking to strangers, according to Lance Cpl. Michael Vukich, a military policeman with PMO. During the course children learn to stay in groups while walking without parental guidance and how to inform someone if they come in contact with a suspicious stranger.

Steitz said parents should work out a route to and from school with their children. The route should have the least amount of street crossings and utilize intersections with crossing guards.

The crime prevention unit also hosts the Bike Rodeo, which teaches parents and children the importance of bike safety and demonstrates proper hand signaling and safety gear while riding, Vukich said.

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Service members aid airman at accident scene

Okinawa Marine Staff

CAMP HANSEN — Service members who provided immediate aid to an airman involved in a single-vehicle accident on the Okinawa Expressway probably saved the woman from serious permanent injury, according to doctors at U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa.

Marine Staff Sgt. David Jarvis, Petty Officer 2nd Class Maurice Cornish, Petty Officer 3rd Class Vincent Bell and Cmdr. Manuel A. Biadog Jr., rushed to the aid of two service members in a car that struck a guard rail July 25.

Airman 1st Class Jennifer Walters was immediately called 911 as Jarvis and Cornish alternated applying pressure to the open wound while carefully keeping her neck in place. As they waited for an ambulance to arrive, Brown comforted Walters, keeping her engaged with conversation.

“Everything seemed to fall into place that day,” Bell said. “We were doing everything to the best of our abilities while help was on the way.”

Approximately 20 minutes after the accident, emergency personnel arrived. The fire department carefully extracted Walters from her vehicle, and an ambulance took her and Brown to USNH Okinawa for treatment.

Walters suffered injuries to her neck, arms and legs. Brown was released with no reported injuries.

“I appreciate everyone who was on the scene that day who helped me out,” Walters said. “If it weren’t for them, I wouldn’t be able to move at all.”

Walters is currently in Pittsburgh, Pa., undergoing physical rehabilitation.

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SCHOOL BUS safety tips

* Arrive at the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
* Always stand four giant steps back from the curb. When forming lines, line up away from the street.
* Never walk behind the bus.
* If you have to cross the street, take at least six giant steps forward on the sidewalk before turning to cross the street. This allows you and the bus driver to see each other.
* If you drop something near the bus, tell the driver before you pick it up. Make sure the bus driver knows where you are at all times.

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CAMP FOSTER | Col. Sheila Q. Scanlon accepts a check for $36,357 from Renee Acosta on behalf of Marine Corps Community Service’s Family Support and Youth Program Aug. 10 at Marine Corps Bases Japan Headquarters on Camp Foster. The check represented money donated by Marine Forces Japan contributors during the 2006 Combined Federal Campaign. Scanlon is the chief of staff of Marine Corps Bases Japan. Acosta is the president and chief executive officer of Global Impact. Photo by Lance Cpl. Juan D. Alfonso
Medical Service Corps celebrates 59th birthday

Lance Cpl. Juan D. Alfonso
Okinawa Marine Staff

CAMP LESTER — The Navy’s Medical Service Corps celebrated its 59th birthday Aug. 4 with a cake-cutting ceremony at U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa.

The organization is comprised of naval medical specialists from 32 areas of expertise, including fields such as optometry, environmental health and clinical psychology, who are not doctors or dentists.

Cmdr. Thomas Petrlik, the director of administration at USNH, opened the ceremony by reading a birthday letter from Rear Adm. Brian G. Brannman, director of the Medical Service Corps.

“Each anniversary gives us the chance to reflect on what we have contributed to the success and well-being of our fighting forces,” Brannman said in the letter. “Be proud of what you do each and every day and continue to be the leaders and innovators that make Navy medicine great.”

Junior and senior officers on staff at the hospital cut the cake with the commanding officer’s Naval Officer Sword.

Lt. Chris DeAngelis was the junior officer present, and with more than 28 years of active duty service, Cmdr. John Laurent was senior. Both are optometrists at the hospital. The Navy’s Medical Service Corps was founded by the Army-Navy Medical Service Corps act of 1947. The act marked a significant change in how the Navy practiced medicine by providing the means to create a permanent corps of specialists to complement the existing medical departments, according to Lt. Cmdr. Gail Strong, a dietician with the hospital’s Nutrition Department.

The Medical Service Corps began as four areas of expertise: supply and administration, medical allied services, optometry and pharmacy.

The spread oak leaf and twig embroidered in gold that Medical Service Corps officers wear today was created in 1948 as a means to distinguish them from doctors, according to Laurent.

With less than a year left on active duty, Laurent felt nostalgic as the ceremony came to an end.

“I didn’t feel sad,” he said. “It just felt like time had passed by. This is probably my last cake cutting ceremony and being the oldest, it was an honor.”

Marines continue tradition of visiting Korean orphanage

Lance Cpl. Travis V. Easter
Okinawa Marine Staff

POHANG, South Korea — Marines and sailors with 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and 3rd Marine Logistics Group visited the House of Love orphanage Aug. 9 to spend time with the children and reach out to the local community during Exercise Ulchi Focus Lens 2006.

The visit to the orphanage is a 1st MAW tradition that dates back to 1951.

In 1951, Marines and Navy chaplains noticed an estimated 10,000 children in the Pohang area who were orphaned during the Korean War. They took the children to local orphanages, which quickly became overloaded. To assure the childrens’ survival, the 1st MAW Marine Memorial Orphanage was created.

Other orphanages such as the Pohang Marine and Little Flower were created to ease the overcrowding. The orphanages were funded through donations by 1st MAW Marines until the late 1970s and early 1980s when the government of the Republic of Korea took over the funding.

The Republic of Korea then merged all of the orphanages established by Marines into the Marine Memorial Orphanage. It was then renamed the House of Love, or Sunrin Aeyukwon in Korean, to reflect its roots as an act of mercy and unconditional love from the Marines for the children.

Since then 1st MAW Marines have regularly returned to continue the tradition of supporting the orphanage.

Marines arrived at the orphanage and greeted the children with gifts including cookies, candy and T-shirts. Navy Chaplain Andrew Colvin, with Marine Aircraft Control Group 18, kicked things off by telling the children how excited the Marines were to be there.

After the chaplain’s greeting, the Marines and children played games such as soccer, basketball, and hockey sack. Some Marines played catch, listened to music and pushed kids on swings.

The children were very excited by the Marines’ visit, said House of Love Director Leemn Won Ju.

“After the chaplain’s greeting, the Marines and children played games like that.”

Chief Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Willis pinky arm wrestles with Son A Ron, 6, in the lunchroom of the House of Love orphanage. Marines with 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and 3rd Marine Logistics Group visited the orphanage Aug. 9. The Marines have been in South Korea preparing for the combined/joint training exercise Ulchi Focus Lens 2006. Willis is a religious programs specialist with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 1. Photo by Lance Cpl. Travis V. Easter

“I want them to keep coming with us, especially soccer,” Min Ju said. “I want them to keep coming back.”

Lance Cpl. Steven B. Wright, with Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron 18, said he was left speechless after spending the afternoon with the children.

“It was a blessing to go there and spend time with those children,” said Wright, a supply administration and operations warehouse clerk with MTACS-18. “I loved it and I would go back anytime for them.”

Lance Cpl. Callahan Welsh, a logistics vehicle system operator with Marine Wing Support Squadron 172, visited the orphanage during Exercise Foal Eagle earlier this year. He said he was especially moved by his second visit.

“To see their happiness and enjoyment is what made the trip for me,” Welsh said. “If I were in their position, I would like somebody to come and spend time with me like that.”

Several senior leaders in the group said they were amazed by the Marines’ interaction with the children.

“It was inspiring,” Colvin said, “You could easily tell it meant a lot to the children. They don’t have families, but for that short period of time, the Marines made them a part of their family.”

“What those Marines did meant more than money,” said Master Sgt. Franklin Benjamin, a military policeman with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 1. “Those children were uplifted from the moment they saw the Marines. It impacted everyone.”

Leemn Won Ju said the orphanage is extremely grateful for 1st MAW’s support over the years.

“The Marines are welcomed everywhere they come to the orphanage,” he added. “They helped build this orphanage from the bottom up and gave us everything we have, including this very building. We didn’t have much money then, and it’s still appreciated today.”

Lance Cpl. Callahan Welsh, a logistics vehicle system operator with Marine Wing Support Squadron 172, visited the orphanage during Exercise Ulchi Focus Lens 2006. Willis is a religious programs specialist with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 1. Photo by Lance Cpl. Travis V. Easter
Lance Cpl. Juan D. Alfonso
Okinawa Marine Staff

Lance Cpl. Laura Hurtado enjoys knocking people out; it’s become a hobby of hers. Hurtado is not a boxer or fighter. She’s not a violent person at all; she’s a dodgeballer. Hurtado and the other members of her dodgeball team, the Okinawa Blue Ballers, are among the many service members on Okinawa who have embraced the dodgeball craze that grew from 2004’s “Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story,” a movie about a band of underachiever athletes and misfits who live their own “Hoosiers” dream through the obscure sport. “Everyone got into dodgeball when the movie came out,” Hurtado said. “That’s when it became a cool adult sport.”

For service members on Okinawa, dodgeball is more than a recreational sport, according to Sgt. Joseph L. Ford, a member of the Headquarters and Service Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, dodgeball team, the Law Dogs. Ford says the sport coincides with the Marine Corps’ warrior mentality. “Dodgeball keeps you on your toes,” Ford said. “It teaches you to react quickly, not just to save yourself but to prevent your teammates from getting hit. Sometimes, you just have to take one for the team.”

Dodgeball began in 1922 when it emerged as a game played during physical education classes in public schools, according to a 2002 New York Times article. The game was originally designed to promote competitiveness without the humiliation that accompanies losing a team sport.

Today, dodgeball is nearly non-existent in physical education curriculums as most PE teachers agree that the game is not appropriate for school-based PE programs, according to the Web site for PE4life, an organization advocating quality daily PE programs in U.S. schools. Dodgeball on Okinawa is about teamwork and strengthening connections between junior and senior Marines, Ford said. “We work together on a daily basis, and junior Marines only get to see us as their superiors,” he said. “It definitely boosts camaraderie and helps morale when they see that their leaders care about them outside of work.”

For more than a year, Okinawa’s Single Marine Program has hosted dodgeball tournaments open to Marines and sailors. As a result of the sport’s increased popularity, several units have established their own teams, such as the Balls of Fire and the Average Joes, both teams from 3rd MLG units.

SMP’s first tournament in June 2005 drew a small number of teams, barely enough for the double-elimination format. For SMP’s upcoming dodgeball tournament, scheduled for Sept. 15 on the Foster Parade Deck, 13 teams have already signed up. “Tournaments are on popular demand,” said Kim Newberry, the SMP director. “Anyone who wants to start up a tournament can call us, and we’ll send up the smack talk to all the existing teams and put out fliers to attract new ones.”
Lance Cpl. Eric D. Arndt
Okinawa Marine Staff

Back on the ground, preparation and anticipation was replaced with memory and awe. No one could stop talking about what it felt like to fly.

For Marines in the Helicopter Rope Suspension Training Master Course, Special Patrol Insertion/Extraction rigging marked the end of an evolution designed to give Marines the skills necessary to insert into landing zones quickly and teach other Marines to do the same.

“It’s like you’re bungee jumping, except you’re not bobbing up and down,” said Cpl. Roberto C. Escobar, a student in the course. “A lot of guys in the platoon and I have a fear of heights. This takes it away.”

SPIE, along with fast roping and rappelling, is one of three landing zone insertion methods Marines learn during HRST, according to Gunnery Sgt. Robert E. Davis, the chief HRST instructor for III Marine Expeditionary Force’s Special Operations Training Group.

It was designed primarily for inserting and extracting a team from a landing zone that a helicopter could not normally fly into, such as a heavily wooded area, Davis explained.

During SPIE operations, a helicopter carries personnel as an external load. Service members wear harnesses designed to attach with carabiners to metal rings situated in a 1-inch-thick, 120-foot rope. Participants are also fitted with a safety line wrapped around their body and tied with a secure knot. Should their SPIE harness system fail, the safety line would turn an otherwise fatal plummet into a small drop.

Escobar said his feelings of apprehension ceased once he was lifted off the ground.

“Once you’re up there, you know you’re secured because you have the two lines of safety,” he said.

A HRST master observes the SPIE line through a hole in the helicopter’s floor and relays information to the flight crew during takeoff, in flight and landing.

Although SPIE involves Marines being suspended from a flying object, when performed correctly, it is safer than fast roping or rappelling because of the safety measures employed, according to Sgt. Steven D. Hess, an HRST instructor with SOTG.

“There’s planned safety measures in place with hand and arm signals,” he said. “If there’s an emergency, we’ll bring the bird down and solve the issue.”
Service members give a “thumbs up” as the CH-46E Sea Knight helicopter prepares to ascend over the Central Training Area. Everyone on the landing zone must give the signal before the helicopter will take off. Photo by Lance Cpl. Eric D. Arndt

Personnel participating in a Special Patrol Insertion/Extraction exercise dangle from a 120-foot SPIE line over Okinawa Aug. 11 while attached to a CH-46E Sea Knight helicopter from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265. Each service member is attached to two metal rings on the line. Each ring can support a maximum of 3,000 pounds. Photo by Lance Cpl. Eric D. Arndt

Sgt. Jared A. Mason prepares to go airborne. Each participant must hold the rope and run toward the helicopter as it takes off so that they are not dragged along the ground. Photo by Lance Cpl. Eric D. Arndt

Pfc. Justice T. Knight observes Sgt. Brian Baker create an around-the-body bowline knot, which serves as a secondary safety harness. Photo by Sgt. C. Nuntavong
Henoko residents prepare wooden torches for the Wild Procession of Torch Lights Aug. 13 at the Henoko Triennial Giant Tug-O-War Festival. Torches were originally used to deter insects and provide light during festivals, according to Shigemori Shimabukuro, a Henoko historian. Photo by Sgt. C. Nuntavong
Tsunahiki, or tug-of-war, festivals have been a part of Japanese culture for more than 100 years.

At the Henoko Triennial Giant Tug-O-War Festival Aug. 12-13, both sides of the town squared off in one of the many traditional Tsunahikis that occur in Okinawa and mainland Japan throughout the year.

Though the rope used in the Henoko Tsunahiki is significantly smaller than the former Guinness World Record Naha Great Tug-of-War rope, it has a unique aspect to its construction: each household in Henoko made 50 meters of the rope for the festival. The smaller ropes were combined to create the official rope, which weighed in this year at more than 8 tons and was about 100 meters.

The festival originated as a way for rice farmers to celebrate an abundant harvest, according to Sam Epperson, a resident of Henoko and retired Marine sergeant major. The local festival has commenced every three years since the late 1940s.

Tsunahiki festivals are a unique way for Okinawans to demonstrate their hospitality to foreigners, said Lt. Col. Michael L. Carter, the commanding officer of Combat Assault Battalion, 3rd Marine Division.

“My favorite part was meeting the townspeople,” Carter said. “They are genuinely sincere and nice. They have really made us feel like a part of their family.”

On the eve of the Triennial Giant Tug-O-War, the festival featured a comedy show, traditional Okinawan folk music performers and a karaoke contest.

The second day of the festival featured a procession of portable shrines by Henoko children; a performance by the III Marine Expeditionary Force Band and local Eisa dance group; a flag bearers’ competition; the Wild Procession of Torch Lights; a martial arts demonstration with bo staffs and bladed staffs; and the giant tug-of-war.

All festival attendees were invited to participate in the tug-of-war. The special event began as Henoko residents, dressed as ancient warlords, stood on one side of the rope – either east or west – and cheered for their side to pull toward victory.

The contest ended in a tie, but it allowed viewers to experience a culture different than their own.

“Once the Marines come out here, they’ll realize how unique Okinawa is,” said Pfc. Gene P. Casterlin, after witnessing his first Tsunahiki festival. “You see some things you’ll never really see in the States.”

Tsunahiki festivals take place in Okinawa throughout the year, with one of the world’s largest, the O-Tsunahiki, taking place in Naha City in September.
When growing the minds of preschool-age children, there’s one key ingredient — magic story dust. Every week, dozens of children on Camps Foster, Kinser and Courtney eagerly perform a story-time ritual, gathering around on the floor of the base library, some of them shyly clinging to mom or dad, others clamoring for a front row seat for preschool story time. But the final touch is a liberal sprinkling of the invisible, magic dust.

The ritual is part of Preschool Story Time, one of the libraries’ youth and family reading programs, which encourage positive trends in the growth of young minds during the important stages of development, according to Riley Flynn, the library director for Camp Foster’s Life-long Learning Center.

The three family libraries have three reading programs for different age groups, preparing them in stages for preschool.

Eight months out of the year, the Camp Foster library offers the Lapsit Program for children 8-36 months, Preschool Story Time for 3 to 5-year-olds and Family Story Time for all ages leading up to preschool.

The programs are designed to make reading a habit for children from a young age, but parental support and participation is a key element for it to be a success, according to HollyMay Pickel, programs and acquisitions librarian for the Library Processing Center.

“Obviously parents have a huge influence over their children and their worldview,” Pickel said. “If parents model reading behavior, reading is a normal, learned activity for the children.”

The programs use stories, poems and songs to help children get ready for school and develop a love for books and the library, Flynn said.

“We love the mix of stories, poems and songs,” said Pegeen Stougard whose daughter Kathryn enjoys the interaction with other children during Preschool Story Time.

Each portion of Preschool Story Time is geared toward a different aspect of a child’s development, according to Pickel. Socialization is one of the more obvious yet underestimated benefits.

“It’s important to start socializing children before they start school,” Pickel said. “What is seen as play by adults is actually the work or the job of children. All that playing is actually teaching them things about the world around them.”

Preschool story time is a short period of time out of the week, and it is important for parents to continue focusing on intellectual development at home, Pickel added.

“Parents can start reading to their children before they’re even born,” said Pickel. “Mothers report increased activity, usually kicking, when they read to their unborn children. Twenty minutes a day is a good start for reading to children, and it doesn’t have to be in a full 20-minute stretch.”

For more information on upcoming programs offered by the Marine Corps Community Services Libraries and schedules visit the library’s section on www.mccsokinawa.com.

Preschool story time takes place at Camp Kinser, Mondays at 10 a.m., Camp Foster, Tuesdays at 11 a.m. and Camp Courtney, Thursdays at 11 a.m. every week.

Preschool story time will not be held the last two weeks of August.

Tracie Zimmerman reads “The Stray Dog” to children during Preschool Story Time Aug. 1 at the Camp Foster Library. The libraries also offer Family Story Time, the Lapsit program for children 8-30 months as well as teen and adult reading programs. For more information on the library’s reading programs visit http://www.mccsokinawa.com and check the library’s section. Zimmerman is a storyteller with the Camp Foster library. Photo by Lance Cpl. Terence L. Yancey
Soccer teams gear up for CG’s Cup

Urasoe Soccer Club takes out MCB, earns berth in CG Cup tournament

Lance Cpl. Terence L. Yancy
Okinawa Marine Staff

The Urasoe Soccer Club routed the Marine Corps Base team 4-1 in the final game of the Southern Camp Commander’s Cup soccer tournament Aug. 13 at Camp Foster.

Six teams, three from southern Marine units and three local Okinawan teams from south of Camp Foster, took part in the two-day double elimination tournament, which was a stepping stone to the Commanding General’s Cup tournament, scheduled for later in the summer.

Marine Corps Base fought its way through the winner’s bracket only to be knocked out in the final round by the Urasoe Club. However, MCB claved its way back through the loser’s bracket to force a rematch between the two clubs.

Base took an early lead with a goal in the first few minutes of the game, but it was short-lived as Urasoe tied it up, leaving the game at 1-1 going into the half.

Base fell apart in the second half as Urasoe scored three more goals while thwarting all of Base’s offensive attempts.

“The game was a lot of fun,” said Urasoe coach Kakihana Shusako. “There was a little difference in (style of play) on base, but after the first game we were used to it.”

Urasoe made it through the tournament bracket undefeated and is now eligible to play in the CG Cup.

“The tournament went really well despite the injuries we had,” said Wilson Rodriguez, the team captain for MCB. “The tournament has prepared us for the CG Cup.”

Both Urasoe and MCB took home team trophies presented by Col. Russell Jones, the Camps Foster and Lester Commander.

“This tournament will prepare many of the teams for the CG Cup,” said Theodore Shadley, a sports specialist with Marine Corps Community Services. “They will play many of the same teams again. The CG Cup gave them a chance to see their competition.”

The primary teams from all five Marine major subordinate commands on Okinawa and any secondary teams that placed in the top three at the CC’s Cup tournaments are eligible to play in the CG Cup.

Aside from Urasoe and Base, two Marine unit teams and two local teams participated in the tournament: Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 36, Marine Wing Support Squadron 172, Preu Nikki and Waribashi.

Ginoza breezes by MEF in northern tourney final

Lance Cpl. Kevin M. Knallay
Okinawa Marine Staff

After a strong come-from-behind run in the Northern Camp Commander’s Cup soccer tournament, the III Marine Expeditionary Force soccer team was blown out 6-1 by Ginoza in the championship game at the Camp Courtney Bowl Aug. 12.

III MEF dropped into the loser’s bracket in the double-elimination tournament after losing its first game to FC Real, 6-1.

III MEF fought back in the second game, edging Nago, 2-1, and advanced to face FC Real again in the semifinal.

Early in the semifinal game, III MEF forward Eric Newton scored, but FC Real answered with back-to-back goals within minutes of each other.

The mood worsened as FC Real scored quickly on a penalty kick in the opening minutes of the second half. Newton turned on the heroics for III MEF, however, pulling out a hat trick to force a tie and a decisive penalty kick shootout.

FC Real, shooting first, made every shot but its last, which was blocked by III MEF goalkeeper Juan Arvizu.

III MEF striker Scott Caudill fired in the final shot, sending them to the championship.

“One word described our performance today – hustle,” said III MEF team captain Mitsuo Sato. “We hustled all day, through every game.”

The championship game was the third consecutive game for III MEF.

The fatigued III MEF players headed out to face Ginoza, still fresh after three hours of rest.

III MEF took an early 1-0 lead with a goal from Caudill, but Ginoza’s offense scored twice before the half was over.

III MEF’s exhaustion from consecutive games showed, and Ginoza took advantage by adding four goals during a relentless attack.

“This was a great learning experience to prepare for upcoming tournaments,” Caudill said.

III MEF plans on competing in the Commanding General’s Cup soccer tournament, scheduled for Aug. 28 to Sept. 2 on Camp Foster.

“Practico, practice, practice is the only way we can improve,” Sato said. “After today we get all of the kinks out as far as teamwork. Now we just need to focus on the fundamentals.”

Ginoza’s goalkeeper clears the ball after an attempted shot by III Marine Expeditionary Force during the Northern Camp Commander’s Cup Soccer Tournament Aug. 12 at Camp Courtney. Ginoza held III MEF to a single goal in its 6-1 championship game victory. Photo by Lance Cpl. Kevin M. Knallay
**KADENA** 634-4422  
**FRIDAY** The Ant Bully (PG), 6 p.m.  
**SATURDAY** Missoula Children’s Theatre, 3 p.m., 7 p.m.  
**SUNDAY** The Amy Bully (G), noon; Garfield (PG), 3 p.m.; Nacho Libre (PG), 7 p.m.  
**MONDAY** The Ant Bully (PG), 3 p.m.; The Lake House (PG), 7 p.m.  
**TUESDAY** Garfield (PG), 3 p.m.; Nacho Libre (PG), 7 p.m.  
**WEDNESDAY** Garfield (PG), 3 p.m.; The Lake House (PG), 7 p.m.  
**THURSDAY** Talladega Nights (PG-13), 7 p.m.  

**FOSTER** 645-3465  
**FRIDAY** Garfield (PG), 3 p.m.; The Lake House (PG), 7 p.m.; Talladega Nights (PG-13), 10 p.m.  
**SATURDAY** Garfield (PG), 1 p.m.; Nacho Libre (PG), 4 p.m.; Talladega Nights (PG-13), 7 p.m.; The Lake House (PG), 10 p.m.  
**SUNDAY** Garfield (PG), 1 p.m.; Nacho Libre (PG), 4 p.m.; Talladega Nights (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**MONDAY** Barnyard (PG), 3 p.m.; Talladega Nights (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**TUESDAY** Nacho Libre (PG), 7 p.m.  
**WEDNESDAY** The Lake House (PG), 7 p.m.  
**THURSDAY** Barnyard (PG), 3 p.m.; World Trade Center (PG-13), 7 p.m.  

**FUTENMA** 636-3890  
**FRIDAY** The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**SATURDAY** Cars (G), 1:30 p.m.; The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift (PG-13), 6 p.m.  
**SUNDAY** World Trade Center (PG-13), 1:30 p.m., 6 p.m.  
**MONDAY** Cars (G), 7 p.m.  
**TUESDAY** Closed  
**WEDNESDAY** Talladega Nights (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**THURSDAY** Closed  

**SCHWAB** 625-2333  
**FRIDAY** The Break-Up (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**SATURDAY** The Da Vinci Code (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**SUNDAY** The Oregon Trail (PG), 7 p.m.  
**MONDAY** Talladega Nights (PG-13), 6 p.m.; 9 p.m.  
**TUESDAY** X-Men: The Last Stand (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**WEDNESDAY** Closed  
**THURSDAY** Closed  

**KINSEF** 637-2117  
**FRIDAY** Nacho Libre (PG), 7 p.m.  
**SATURDAY** Garfield (PG), 3 p.m.; The Lake House (PG), 7 p.m.  
**SUNDAY** Garfield (PG), 6 p.m.  
**MONDAY** Closed  
**TUESDAY** Nacho Libre (PG), 7 p.m.  
**WEDNESDAY** World Trade Center (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**THURSDAY** The Ant Bully (PG), 7 p.m.  

**SCHWAB** 625-2333  
**FRIDAY** World Trade Center (PG-13), 6:30 p.m., 9:30 p.m.  
**SATURDAY** Cars (G), 2 p.m.; World Trade Center (PG-13), 6:30 p.m., 9 p.m.  
**SUNDAY** The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**MONDAY** Stick It (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**TUESDAY** Closed  
**WEDNESDAY** Barnyard (PG), 1 p.m.; The Fast and the Furious (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**THURSDAY** Closed  

**HANSEN** 623-4564  
**FRIDAY** You, Me and Dupree (PG-13), 6 p.m., 9 p.m.  
**SATURDAY** You, Me and Dupree (PG-13), 6 p.m., 9 p.m.  
**MONDAY** The Da Vinci Code (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**TUESDAY** World Trade Center (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**WEDNESDAY** X-Men: The Last Stand (PG-13), 7 p.m.  
**THURSDAY** X-Men: The Last Stand (PG-13), 7 p.m.  

**SINGLE MARINE PROGRAM SCHEDULE**  
**Kariyushi Park Cleanup/Barbecue**  
Aug. 18  
Departure times:  
Camp Courtney, 6:30 a.m.; Camp Hansen, 7 a.m.; Camp Schwab, 7:45 a.m.  
**Kariyushi Park Clean-Up/BBQ**  
Aug. 18  
Departure times:  
Camp Courtney, 6:30 a.m.; Camp Hansen, 7 a.m.; Camp Schwab, 7:45 a.m.  
**Okuma Camping Trip**  
Aug. 18  
Departure times:  
Camp Schwab, 6:15 a.m.; Camp Hansen, 6:45 a.m.; Camp Courtney, 7:30 a.m.; Camp Foster, 8 a.m.  
**MSCAUS Futenma**  
Aug. 25  
Departure times:  
Camp Schwab, 6:30 a.m.  
**Al No Mura**  
Aug. 25  
Departure times:  
Camp Courtney, TBD  
**Toshikishi island Overnight Trip**  
Aug. 26  
Departure times:  
Camp Schwab, 6:15 a.m.; Camp Hansen, 6:45 a.m.; Camp Schwab, 6:45 a.m.; Camp Foster, 6:45 a.m.; Camp Schwab, 7 a.m.  

Contact the Single Marine Program Office at 645-3681 for more information  
All pick-up points will be at Semper Fit gyms or the Foster Field House.