CLR-35 named DoD’s top maintenance unit

Lance Cpl. W. Zach Griffith
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP KINSEY — Combat Logistics Regiment 35 was named the best maintenance unit in the Department of Defense Oct. 26 and presented the Phoenix Trophy during an awards ceremony at the 2006 DoD Maintenance Symposium and Exhibition in Reno, Nev. The regiment recently won the Secretary of Defense field-level Maintenance Award, large category, qualifying them to compete for the DoD’s top honor. A total of six maintenance organizations, representing the very best units across the U.S. military services, were in the running for the award. But only one was selected as the “best of the best.” This is only the sixth time in the 26-year history of the program that a Marine Corps unit has won the Phoenix Trophy, adding to the significance of the award, said the commanding officer of CLR-35, Col. Robert Ruark. Ruark credits most all of the success of CLR-35 to the Marines in the shops doing the work that supports III Marine Expeditionary Force.

DoD announces it will resume Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program

U.S. Department of Defense

The Department of Defense announced today a resumption of the mandatory Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program for military personnel, emergency-essential DoD civilians and contractors, based on defined geographic areas or roles. For the most part, mandatory vaccinations are limited to military units designated for homeland bioterrorism defense and to U.S. forces assigned to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility and Korea.

The undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness will issue implementing instructions to the military services for resuming the mandatory vaccination program within 30 to 60 days. “The anthrax vaccine will protect our troops from another threat—a disease that will kill, caused by a bacteria that already has been used as a weapon in America, and that terrorists openly discuss,” said Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr., assistant secretary of defense for health affairs. The policy also allows personnel previously immunized against anthrax, who are no longer deployed to higher threat areas, to receive follow-up vaccine doses and booster shots on a voluntary basis.
MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif. | Two Patriot L-39 jets fly in formation Oct. 14 at the annual Miramar Air Show. Photo by Seaman Daniel A. Barker

MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT SAN DIEGO | Marines with E Company perform bicycle crunches during the last exercise of a strength and endurance course Oct. 16. Photo by Lance Cpl. James Green

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif. | Marines from Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting test their hose nozzles Oct. 17. The Marines conducted a routine training evolution to ensure their firefighting and rescue skills were sharp. Photo by Lance Cpl. George J. Papastrat

MARINE CORPS MOUNTAIN WARFARE TRAINING CENTER BRIDGEPORT, Calif. Cpl. Thomas J. McGirt, a team leader from India Co., 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, works his way across a one-rope bridge spanning a small gorge Oct. 23. The bridge navigation was one of many assault climbing techniques taught and practiced during the Mountain Warfare Training package. Photo by Sgt. Andy Hurt

For more Marine Corps stories and photos, visit http://www.usmc.mil
Rebel yelling over Shuri Castle
How the Confederate Stars and Bars made its way to Okinawa

Only the Normandy D-Day invasion surpassed Okinawa in its scope, preparation and forces employed. More than 500,000 Americans participated in the Okinawa invasion. American service members were surprised to find virtually no resistance as they stormed the beaches on Easter 1945. They soon discovered that the Japanese Imperial Army and Navy had literally gone underground having spent a year forcing Okinawan slaves to dig their underground defenses. It required 83 days of combat to defeat the Japanese.

The invasion of Okinawa was by the newly organized American 10th Army. The 10th, commanded by Lt. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner, was composed of the XXIV Corps, made up of veteran Army units including the 7th, 27th, 77th, and 96th Infantry divisions, and the III Amphibious Corps, with three battle-hardened Marine divisions, the 1st, 2nd, and 6th.

One of the most significant milestones in the Okinawan campaign was the taking of Shuri Castle, the underground headquarters of the Japanese Imperial Army. After two months of fighting the Japanese, the 6th Marines and the Army’s 7th Division were moving south, nearing Shuri Castle. The 6th Marines were commanded by Maj. Gen. Pedro del Valle. Following a hard fight at Dakeshi Town, del Valle’s Marines engaged in a bloody battle at Wana Draw.

Wana Draw stretched 800 yards and was covered by Japanese guns from its 400-yard entrance to its narrow exit. The exit provided the key to Shuri Castle. The Japanese were holed up in caves the entire length of the gully, and had to be eradicated in man-to-man combat.

While the Marines battled through the mud and blood up the draw, the Army’s 77th Division was approaching Shuri from the east. To the west, the 6th Marines were pushing into the capital city of Naha. Faced with this overwhelming force, Japanese Gen. Ushijima’s army retreated to the south.

On May 29, 1945, A Company, Red Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, commanded by Capt. Julius Dusenberg, approached to within 800 yards of Shuri Castle. The castle lay within the zone of the 77th Infantry Division, known as the Statue of Liberty Boys. However, Gen. Ushijima’s rear guard had stalled the 77th’s advance.

Impatient, Maj. Gen. del Valle ordered Capt. Dusenberg to “take that damned place if you can. I’ll make the explanations.” Dusenberg radioed back, “Will do!” Dusenberg’s Marines stormed the stone fortress, quickly dispatching a detachment of Japanese soldiers who had remained behind. Once the castle had been taken, Dusenberg took off his helmet and removed a flag he had been carrying for just such a special occasion. He raised the flag at the highest point of the castle and let loose with a rebel yell.

The flag waving overhead was not the Stars and Stripes, but the Confederate Stars and Bars. Most of the Marines joined in the yell, but a disapproving New Engander supposedly remarked, “What does he want now? Should we sing ‘Dixie’?” Maj. Gen. Andrew Bruce, the commanding general of the 77th Division, protested to the 10th Army that the Marines had stolen his pennant. But Lt. Gen. Buckner only mildly chided Gen. del Valle, saying, “How can I be sure at home? My father fought under that flag!” Gen. Buckner’s father was the Confederate Gen. Buckner who had surrendered Fort Donelson to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in 1862. The flag flew only two days over Shuri Castle when it was formally raised on May 31, 1945. Dusenberg’s flag was first lowered and presented to Gen. Buckner as a souvenir. Gen. Buckner remarked, “OK! Now, let’s get on with the war!”

Tragically, just days before Okinawa fell, Gen. Buckner was killed by an enemy shell on June 18, 1945, on Mezido Ridge while observing a Marine attack.

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

The Okinawa Expressway will be closed Nov. 6 and 7 from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. between entry point No. 5 (Okinawa North) and No. 6 (Futemna) due to bridge construction. A detour route will be provided along with a connection service ticket. For further information, call Camp Foster Camp Services at 645-7317.

NATIONAL NAVAL OFFICERS’ MEETING

The Okinawa Chapter of the National Naval Officers’ Association will hold its monthly meeting Nov. 8 at 11:30 a.m. at the Habu Pit on Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. For more information, visit http://www.nnnoa.org or call 645-3712.

ANIMAL ADOPTION EVENT

The Okinawa-American Animal Rescue Society will host an adoption awareness event Nov. 5 outside of the Camp Foster PX from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. A variety of dogs and cats will be available for adoption. Adoption coordinators and volunteers will be available to assist with the selection and the application process. For more information, visit http://www.oaars.com.

CLASS FOR EXPECTANT PARENTS

The U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa is now offering a new class for expectant and new parents called “The Happiest Baby on the Block.” The class was developed by pediatrician Harvey Karp and provides a methodical approach to calming crying babies. To sign up, please call the OB/GYN clinic at 643-7267. For more information about the class, visit http://www.thehappiestbaby.com.

KUBASAKI HIGH PROJECT GRADUATION

Kubasaki Project Graduation will host an in-store sale at Oriental Place Nov. 3-5 to support the Kubasaki High School class of 2007. For more information or directions, call Johanna Gilbert at 646-6210.

HOLIDAY MAILING DATES

The following are the projected deadline dates for sending letters and packages from military post offices on Okinawa to Stateside addresses for the 2006 holiday season:

- Space Available Mail (SAM): Nov. 20
- Parcel Airlift Mail (PAL): Nov. 25
- Priority Mail (APP): Dec. 1

For more information, contact your camp’s post office.

TO SUBMIT A BRIEF, send an e-mail to okinawanmarine.mcbb.fct@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.

BRIEFS

EOD Marines introduce bomb disposal robot to Philippine Air Force squadron

Lance Cpl. Terence L. Yancey
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES — U.S. Marine Corps explosive ordnance disposal technicians met with Philippine Air Force EOD staff and students Oct. 23 at the Philippine Air Force’s 772nd EOD Squadron, 710th Special Operations Wing, at Clark Air Base to demonstrate the Talon bomb disposal robot and to exchange information about EOD techniques.

The Marine EOD technicians are from the Iwakuni-based Marine Wing Support Squadron 171, and are currently attached to the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade for exercises Talon Vision and Amphibious Landing Exercise 2007. The introduction to the Talon system began in the classroom where the students learned about the capabilities of the robot and how Marines are using it to battle the threat of improvised explosive devices during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Following the classroom instruction, some students were allowed to operate the robot and try their hand at removing inert unexploded ordnance. Students had to learn how to steer the robot using only the robot’s built-in cameras to guide them.

“It was difficult to control, but it was also fun,” said Philippine Sgt. Dino De Los Reyes, a student in the EOD course who was the first to volunteer to operate the robot. “The best part is that this training will help us recover ordnance with less risk to our lives.”

It took a little while for De Los Reyes to become comfortable with steering the robot, but he soon had the robot picking up an inert mortar round and carrying it to a safe area.

“This is important because they get to see our equipment and how we use it, and we also get to see some of their techniques,” said U.S. Marine Staff Sgt. Kevin D. Brown, an EOD technician.

As the Marines passed on their knowledge and skills acquired from combating IEDs in Iraq, the Filipinos showed us stuff from their experiences that will be very helpful to us.

Throughout the exercise there were subject matter expert exchanges on many aspects of the bomb disposal trade. This was just one of many bilateral training opportunities for Philippine and U.S. EOD technicians.

COURSE FROM ‘T’ void if necessary, he said.

Communications Co. Marines are often assigned to Iraq-bound units, and the training is intended to prepare them for any situations they may face.

“As Marines we’re constantly taught first aid,” said Cpl. Sharif A. Fulcher, a multi-channel equipment operator. “But when our CO tells us we really need to grasp this stuff because it will save someone’s life someday, we listen and we learn as much as we can.”

During the course, Marines learned how to assess the condition of wounded service members as well as how to determine heart rate and blood pressure. Training also covered identifying and treating bleeding wounds, bone fractures, burns, and severe complications caused by wounds typically incurred on the battlefield.

“This is one of the next logical steps in every Marine’s training,” said Cpl. Nicholas R. Becker, a digital multi-channel wide-band transmission equipment operator. “Learning to do what corpsmen do is difficult, but it’s something we all need to know in combat.”

One of these potentially difficult yet necessary skills is learning how to give fluids intravenously to casualties.

Hammock said knowing how to properly give an IV makes these Marines much more valuable after a conflict has ended and casualties require more medical care than the corpsmen can handle.

“I’ve been through a lot of medical training since I joined the Marine Corps, but giving someone an IV is definitely something I’ve never done,” said Master Sgt. Lonny N. Meno, the company operations chief. “Any time Marines are given the opportunity to receive new training, they should jump on it. You can never be too prepared for combat.”

To become certified combat lifesavers, the Marines had to successfully navigate an obstacle course to reach a simulated casualty, who the students had to assess. They had to treat life-threatening injuries, determine whether the casualty required immediate evacuation and carry the simulated victim to a designated location.

“It was hard enough (assessing the victim) after running through the course, I can only imagine what it must be like in Iraq,” said Lance Cpl. Shelly Perry, an automotive organizational mechanic.

Sgt. William D. Tokiwa, an electronic maintenance technician, said the best lesson many of his Marines learned was that a corpsman’s job is harder than what they believed it to be.

“For what this course is and the limited time they were given, the Marines did a great job,” said Seaman Marie Fagan, a hospital corpsman and course instructor with Headquarters Battalion.

She is confident in all of the attendees’ ability to contribute life-saving skills on the battlefield, she said.
3rd Medical Bn. prepares for front line readiness

Lance Cpl. Bryan A. Peterson OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CENTRAL TRAINING AREA — Nearly 200 Marines and sailors with 3rd Medical Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, conducted a mass-casualty exercise Oct. 25 in the Central Training Area as part of Exercise Autumn Endeavor 2006.

The annual exercise, which was cancelled last year when the battalion deployed to Pakistan, started in 2001 to ensure the battalion’s Marines and sailors are prepared for any combat situation, said Cmdr. Marty McCue, the commanding officer of 3rd Medical Bn.

“The main purpose of the exercise is to get the surgical companies and their equipment out in the field,” McCue said. “We need to make sure the battalion is capable of properly setting up expedient medical facilities in a timely manner to test their abilities in order to support a real-world mission.”

Nearly 15 Navy doctors and nurses from U.S. Naval hospitals here and in the United States joined in the training.

“Through the (Health Service Augmentation Program), Navy doctors and nurses deployed to Okinawa so they could get experience, and in some cases, more experience using medical tools in the field,” said Navy Lt. Ryan Meskimen, the battalion operations officer.

Cmrd. Joe Taddeo, a general surgeon for U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka, who also deployed to Pakistan last year, said the field training is helpful when preparing for deployments. Especialy critical is the time immediately following an injury, he said.

“This is what we call the golden hour,” Taddeo said. “This is where we make sure the casualties are breathing and not bleeding. When casualties come in, it’s a matter of life or death. That’s why we need to be near the Marines in any situation.”

The battalion relied on its Headquarters and Service Company Marines to supply tools and manpower the sailors need to conduct the exercise, Meskimen said.

“Without the Marines, none of this would have happened,” he said. “They provide us with the manpower to help set up the facilities, generators and communication (assets). Without them, we couldn’t go to the fight.”

The Marines began the exercise conducting military operations in urbanized terrain in Combat Town. When they sustained simulated casualties, Marines were medically evacuated to waiting hospital corpsmen who began life-saving steps.

Casualties arrived with mock wounds simulated with moulage – a type of crude makeup designed to enhance the realism of the training.

After the wounded were checked in and initially treated, they were sent to either the Forward Resuscitative Surgery System tent or the Shock Trauma Platoon’s tent.

“Basically, a FRSS is a surgical room where casualties are brought in. They are in immediate danger of losing their life,” Meskimen explained.

“The STP is where casualties with flesh wounds are sent so they can heal before being sent back out to fight or to the rear to heal longer. Both are mobile (and) designed to go where the fight is.”

If injuries are serious enough, casualties are transported to the surgical company in the Combat Service Support Area for more in-depth care, he added. Depending on the outcome, the injured will stay there or be sent to a fleet hospital.

Twelve Japan Ground Self Defense Force soldiers also attended the training as observers. They came to the training as part of the Japan Observer Exchange Program.

“We need to study what could happen in war,” said 1stLt. Makiko Takahashi, a medical planner with Ambulance Platoon, JGSDF. “We need to know how to rescue patients from the front lines. The training was well organized and I learned a lot.”

PHOENIX FROM PG 1

“Day in and day out, these young Marines do an outstanding job because they know they’re not just supporting their battalion, they are supporting the MEF,” Ruark said.

The Phoenix Award is named after the mythological phoenix, a bird of fire that lived 500 years and, after dying, was reborn from its own ashes. The Phoenix and DoD maintenance awards both recognize the long life given to equipment by sustained quality maintenance and rejuvenation of equipment through superior maintenance programs.

The regiment is made up of about 1300 Marines and sailors. At any given time nearly 400 personnel are deployed in support of combat operations, annual training exercises or humanitarian missions, Ruark said. For this reason, the junior Marines are stepping up and taking on more responsibility.

With the Marines filling multiple billets while keeping the often understaffed regiment up and running, it is no surprise that they received the Phoenix Award, according to Maj. Timothy Cooley, the materiel operations center assistant officer in charge for CLR-35.

“Everyone has stepped up to the plate here,” Cooley said. “Some people might be filling four billets, but they’re putting in 100 percent and that’s the kind of thing that gets us recognized like the (Phoenix Award).”

The symbolism behind the Phoenix award is a perfect fit for CLR-35, Cooley said.

“The things our regiment does are unbelievable,” he said. “Some of these Marines perform miracles everyday.”

The Marine Corps has the oldest equipment, the lowest amount of funding and the fewest people, but our guys go out there and make it happen every day.”

The Phoenix Award is the latest in a string of awards 3rd Marine Logistics Group, and units within, have received in the past 18 months, according to Ruark.

“I have worked with every maintenance battalion in the Marine Corps, and I have never seen a unit win this many awards,” Cooley said.

The trophy which, according to Ruark, stands nearly five feet tall and weighs more than 300 pounds is scheduled to arrive at CLR-35 within the next two to three weeks.

ANTHRAX FROM PG 1

Under the voluntary vaccination policy, implemented during the period of a court injunction throughout 2005, the voluntary acceptance rate was about 50 percent.

“This rate of vaccination not only put the service members at risk, but also jeopardized unit effectiveness and degraded medical readiness. The threat environment and the unpredictable nature of terrorism make it necessary to include biological warfare defense as part of our force protection measures,” Winkenwerder said.

Anthrax is a deadly infection, and the anthrax vaccine is an important force protection measure to combat it. In the fall of 2001, 22 cases of anthrax resulted from attacks with anthrax spores through the U.S. postal system. Five people died in these attacks.

The Food and Drug Administration has repeatedly found, and independent medical experts have confirmed, that anthrax vaccine is safe and effective.

For more information, visit http://www.vaccines.mil/ or http://www.vaccines.mil/anthrax.
Camp Butler facilities rake in 11 food, hospitality excellence awards

Pfc. Richard Blumenstein
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP FOSTER — Eleven Marine Corps Community Services facilities on Okinawa took home Marine Corps Food and Hospitality Excellence Awards for fiscal 2005 in a ceremony at Chesty’s Staff Noncommissioned Officers’ Club Oct. 24.

Forty-three facilities were recognized throughout the Marine Corps and Marine Corps Base Camp Butler led all installations in number of awards. MCB Pendleton was second with seven awards.

“Our goal is to take care of our patrons,” said James Garringer, MCCS director of food, beverages, entertainment and special events on Okinawa. “Because we strive to exceed the standard — that’s why so many facilities were awarded this year.”

Maj. Gen. Mary Ann Krusa-Dossin presented the awards to representatives from the seven clubs and four lodging facilities that earned the awards.

The facilities received the awards for achieving excellence in customer service, financial performance and hosting various events throughout fiscal 2005, according to Garringer.

“It’s not about earning the award, it is about providing quality products and service to our patrons,” said Garringer. “The awards merely reflect the efforts of our outstanding staff and their daily efforts.”

MCCS submitted packages containing advertisements, financial statements, photos of their facilities on Okinawa and an assortment of activities held throughout fiscal 2005 to a panel of judges from Headquarters Marine Corps Personal and Family Readiness Division.

Judges reviewed activities held in the facilities and graded them against a criterion of excellence. They also reviewed the facilities’ monthly and annual financial records, customer comments and general appearance.

“It’s about attention to detail, everyone doing the job to make sure everything is where it should be,” said Tim McCullough, the Butler Officers’ Club manager. “The staff’s internal desire to ‘wow’ the guest everyday is how you win this award.”

4,000 Americans, Okinawans attend first Trunk-or-Treat

Camp Foster shares Halloween tradition with community

Lance Cpl. Corey Blodgett
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP FOSTER — Camp Foster hosted a Halloween celebration with a twist Oct. 30 as more than 60 volunteers gathered their decorated vehicles in front of Gunnery Fitness Center to pass out candy in the first “Trunk-or-Treat.”

Headquarters and Service Battalion, Marine Corps Base Camp Butler, sponsored the event, which brought together more than 4,000 Americans and Okinawans, according to Catrina Grugin, the secretary for Camp Foster’s Camp Services.

“We wanted to include the Okinawans in a Halloween event because they’re our neighbors and friends. But we had to keep safety in mind, and that’s where the idea came from,” Grugin said.

Trunk-or-Treat was intended to provide an environment to celebrate Halloween in one central location and give Okinawans “the trick or treat experience” in a controlled area where military police could keep everyone safe, according to Lt. Col. Michael J. Murphy, deputy camp commander for Camps Foster and Lester.

“It went awesome,” Murphy said. “You could tell the kids really had a lot of fun.”

Volunteers passed out candy from decorated vehicles that ranged from a jailhouse holding a candy thief to a jungle with a crazed, treat-toting gorilla.

The Army Air Force Exchange Service donated prizes to owners of the four best decorated vehicles. Col. Russell Jones, the Headquarters and Service Battalion commanding officer, handed out the prizes. The first place winner received an Xbox 360.

Headquarters and Service Bn. also put together a haunted house, located inside building 5965, beside the Trunk-or-Treat area.

“The haunted house was extremely busy,” Grugin said. “We had to keep it open longer than we expected. It was supposed to close at 9 p.m., but the line for it was so huge that the last group ended up going through after 11.”

Murphy said that given the success of the event, he hopes to make it an annual event.

“The kids loved getting the candy, and the haunted house was a definite favorite of the older group,” Murphy said. “The whole event was an absolute hit, and if we have it next year, I think we’re going to need more candy.”

Food and Hospitality Excellence Award winners on Okinawa

• Globe & Anchor Enlisted Club
• Asawa Meadows Restaurant
• The Palms Consolidated Club
• Butler Officers’ Club
• BeachHead Consolidated Club
• Futenma Habu Pit

Maj. Gen. Mary Ann Krusa-Dossin, commanding general of Marine Corps Base Camp Butler, presents one of 11 Marine Corps Food and Hospitality Excellence Awards to Tim McCullough, manager of the Butler Officers’ Club, Oct. 24 at Chesty’s Staff Noncommissioned Officers’ Club.

Photo by Pfc. Richard Blumenstein
When Cpl. Cesar Arriaga walked into the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing Marksmanship Training Unit in preparation for the range, he was counting on shooting marksman — again, just like his last two times qualifying. But instead of shooting a score that barely let him qualify, he walked off the range less than two weeks later with an expert score of 235.

Although it was Arriaga who actually pulled the trigger on qualification day, he credits his high score to the dedicated instruction and professionalism of the coaches in 1st MAW’s newly formed Marksmanship Training Unit.

“They put me in a very relaxed, very calm environment so I could concentrate entirely on shooting,” said Arriaga, an administration clerk with Marine Air Group 36. “Instead of having to worry about all the regular stuff, it was like, for those two weeks, we were paid to shoot.”

Since the training unit formed in July, Cpl. Duane White, a 1st MAW MTU instructor, says he has seen a dramatic improvement in how Marines are scoring on the range.

“We used to have a fair amount of (unqualified Marines) and Marksmen, with a medium amount of sharpshooters, and a few experts,” White said. “Now we’re getting no (failures), a small number of marksmen, a medium number of sharpshooters and a lot of expert shooters. The experts are shooting high expert; not just barely making it.”

The staff noncommissioned officer in charge of 1st MAW’s MTU, Gunnery Sgt. Jamie Gibson, credits the high success rates of the shooters to the engaging personalities and teaching techniques of his nine coaches.

“None of my Marines give a class in a monotone; nobody really listens really well when someone teaches a class like that,” Gibson said. “I tell them to be more personal with each shooter so they can develop a relationship. If the shooter has a good relationship with his instructor, he’s a lot more apt to listen to instructions.”

According to Arriaga, he developed that relationship during grass week the week prior to firing on the range and it carried all the way to qualification day. When the coaches gave him guidance on the firing line or when snapping in, he paid more attention to their advice, he said.

“No one teaches you how to shoot, they just have to be patient,” Arriaga said. “I’m a more patient learner, but I really needed to improve and they really helped me do that.”

“We had already built that friendly relationship the week before,” Arriaga said. “So once we were on the range, it wasn’t like it was some random guy telling me how to shoot.”

People are more likely to remember something they were taught if they remember their instructor, Gibson said.

He describes his coaches as a “fueled up, motivated bunch” who may just be a little “over the edge.” But that is just the way he likes them to be and the results speak for themselves. “If the instructor maybe freaks you out a little bit, you’re a lot more likely to remember him and what he taught you,” Gibson said.

Getting energetic in the classroom not only helps students stay awake, but also helps the instructors stay motivated. This motivation is paramount because the Marines who come to MTU are not just in class to just learn how to qualify on the range, White said.

“We are teaching Marines the number one priority, the number one job, of all Marines,” he said. “We are instilling in them the basic idea that every Marine is a rifleman.”

Arriaga believes the success of the new MTU will prompt more major commands to follow in the 1st MAW’s footsteps.

“Really knowing your instructors, and having your instructors really understand you as a shooter, where your strengths are, helped immensely,” Arriaga said.
Banding together

III MEF, JGSDF bands join forces for friendship concert

Lance Cpl. Corey A. Blodgett
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF


The III Marine Expeditionary Force Band and the Japanese 1st Combined Brigade Band have performed together for the concert since 1995.

The combined concert was initiated by Chief Warrant Officer Rob Farmer, then the III MEF band director, to enhance the American and Okinawan relationship, according to Staff Sgt. Michael A. July, the III MEF Band’s enlisted conductor.

“It brings everyone together,” July said. “It shows that we’re not that different because we all enjoy music.”

The Marines and the Japanese troops performed and practiced together building friendships along the way despite the language barrier, July added.

“Music definitely crosses cultural boundaries,” he said. “We had a translator to help us converse with the Japanese, but the Marines really got by with hand signals and facial expressions just fine.”

Other band members agreed that a mutual affection for making music was all that was needed to overcome cultural obstacles.

“Music is universal,” said Sgt. Robert C. Hungerford, a tuba instrumentalist with the III MEF Band. “It was easy to work with the Japanese and extremely easy to make friends with them just because of our mutual passions.”

Both bands practiced individually before coming together for two combined rehearsals before the concert.

“It was easy working with the 1st Combined Brigade Band because they’re talented and they really know what they’re doing,” Hungerford said.

The concert opened with a combined performance of the U.S. and Japanese national anthems.

The 1st Combined Brigade Band, conducted by Capt. Hirohide Ogawa, then performed the first musical selections: “Pomp and Circumstance No. 4,” “Love Thoughts” and “Japanese Folk Song Medley.”

Led by July, the III MEF Band followed the performance with renditions of “Hounds of Spring,” “Procession of Nobles,” “Mlada” and a performance of “Battle Hymn of the Republic” that included vocals from July’s wife Keely J. July, a former saxophonist and vocalist for the band.

The two bands joined for the final performances, playing “Valdres,” “Triumphal Return,” “Aida” and “West Side Story.”

In addition to the Friendship Through Music Concert, the III MEF Band performs two other free concerts on Okinawa annually. The next is a Christmas concert in December.
Staff Sgt. Michael A. July, the III MEF Band's enlisted conductor, gives direction. Both bands practiced on their own before coming together for two combined rehearsals.


Photos by Lance Cpl. Corey A. Blodgett

Cpl. Cody R. Bond, a saxophonist with the III MEF Band, performs alongside his Japanese counterpart.

July (left) and Capt. Hirohide Ogawa, the principal conductor and officer-in-charge of the 1st Combined Brigade Band, congratulate each after the performance.
Local residents join forces in a game of War Tran Trooper Oct. 28 at Sega Arcade. Sega features a variety of shooting games.

The Dragon Palace Arcade is located in Mihama American Village across the street from Sega Arcade, near the Ferris wheel.

Tuner cards can be purchased at almost any Okinawan arcade. The cards are used to save a gamer’s progress in a specific game to be resumed later.

Arcades can be found in almost every major Okinawan city and offer a variety of games for people of all ages, from first-person shooting games to the latest high tech role-playing fantasies.
For all the arcade junkies who grew up ignoring their parents’ advice to “quit wasting money on video games,” Okinawa offers a whole new world of unexplored arcade games and an affordable recreation option that even Mom might approve of.

Video-game arcades can be found in almost every major Okinawan city and offer a variety of games for people of all ages—from first-person shooting games to the latest high tech role-playing fantasies.

“One know Marines who waste $400 a weekend by going out and partying,” said Lance Cpl. Micah Strawn, a telephone systems computer repairman with III Marine Headquarters Group and an avid gamer. “I barely spend 20 bucks a weekend at the arcade.”

Sega Arcade, Tecmopia and the Dragon Palace arcades are some of the most visited arcade centers by American service members. They are located in or around American village in the Mihama area.

With hundreds of arcade machines in that area alone, there is a possibility that even some non gamers could find a new hobby.

The Japanese arcades offer games that aren’t commonly seen in the United States. Many Americans become “big-time” fans of these video games.

“Japanese games are much more (interactive) than most American games,” said Cpl. Jair F. Guevara, an automotive organizational mechanic with Combat Logistics Battalion 4. “There’s a lot more action involved and it takes time to build up and be good at them.”

Games such as “Dance Dance Revolution” and “Drum Mania V3” are Japanese games that require musical talent, good memory and patience.

“A lot of these games make you have to move to the beat of the music,” said Lance Cpl. Kevin Phillips, a telephone systems computer repairman with 7th Communication Battalion, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and a Sega Arcade customer. “I’ve been coming here for a while, and whenever I play one of these games for the first time, I’m (pretty bad at them). I get better the more I play, but I’m never perfect. It’s that challenge that makes these games so addictive.”

The Sega Arcade and Dragon Palace Arcade host a variety of sports video-games, such as Virtual NBA, and sports racing games simulating everything from a car to a fighter jet.

All three arcades feature a variety of shooting games, such as Silent Hill and War Tran Trooper. Japanese arcades also feature many claw machines – sometimes even a whole floor – that offer an array of stuffed animals, candy and plastic toys for children and adults. Tecmopia also features a play area for children to run around free of charge, offering the “more seasoned” gamers an excuse to drop by the arcade with the kids and a couple hundred yen to burn.

“I go to arcades almost every other weekend,” Strawn said. “They’re just fun and I can’t think of a safer thing to do on island, aside from being a barracks rat.”

These arcades have no entry fee and each game costs on average ¥100.
Kinser Elementary teachers organize poetry jam night

Lance Cpl. W. Zach Griffith
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

Camp Kinser Elementary School teachers promoted a deeper appreciation for poetry Oct. 26, hosting a poetry jam that featured student recitals and a guest appearance from a local author.

Parents watched as their children took the stage at the school, reading poems and, in one case, acting out a poem. Special guest David Allen, author of “The Story So Far,” a book of poems published in 2004, also read several of his own poems.

Following the readings, parents and students participated in small group poetry studies, in which volunteers taught several different types of poetry.

Allen said it is important that the children of this generation are exposed to poetry and writing in general because modern entertainment technology allows little opportunity for children to express themselves.

“It is impossible to express yourself in front of a movie or playing a video game,” Allen said.

Expressing oneself is something people once did well through all types of writing, but especially poetry, said Barbara Trendway, the literary support specialist for Kinser Elementary.

“Poems can make you laugh, cry, feel a whole range of emotions,” she said.

Getting an early start on exposing the children to all types of writing should help ensure they at least get a basic understanding of literature as a whole, Trendway said. She saw first hand how having no exposure to poetry influenced the children’s opinion of it.

“At the beginning of the month, I went through and talked to all the classes about poetry, asking them if they thought poetry was ‘cool,’” she said. “Most of the kids, maybe five out of 100, thought it was. After exposing them to some fun poems, nearly all the kids said they enjoy poetry.”

SMP’s Fear Factor contestants bite off more than they can chew

Cpl. Scott M. Biscuiti
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

Fourteen two-man teams gathered at Camp Foster’s Globe and Anchor enlisted club Oct. 28 to prove that eating revolting foods and playing obscure games are not a factor when it comes to their fears.

The Single Marine Program organized the Fear Factor competition and provided the food and equipment used to test the participants’ peculiar skills. Contestants competed in three tests to decide the Fear Factor champion.

“Last year we had a Halloween party, but this year we wanted to do something with a twist,” said Amanda Daniels, one of the event’s coordinators.

The competition started off with one member of each team sitting in the “dunk tank of horror,” blindfolded with their arms behind their backs. They had to use their mouths to find rubber ducks with numbers on them. Once they got one, the other team member had to eat whatever gross concoction was beneath the box with the corresponding number.

“IT was pretty gross,” said Petty Officer 3rd Class Vincent Bell, who came to the event to watch his friends compete. “I was wondering what they were eating that made some of them sick.”

Among the many “specialties” were shakes comprised of cooked liver, tapioca pudding, cooked pigs blood, cottage cheese, vinegar, minnows and wasabi powder.

Lance Cpl. Michael Spencer Jr. of Team Shake and Bake finished a specialty shake in one minute and 27 seconds, earning his team first place in the most disgusting event of the evening.

“I got the shake with squid and octopus in it and it was nasty. I ate worse things at boot camp, so I just kept going,” he said with a chuckle. The six teams with the fastest eating times moved on to the second event, blind boxing.

One member of each team donned oversized boxing gloves and blindfolds to duke it out in the ring.

The final event of the competition was a tricycle race where competitors had to wear goggles designed to disorient them while holding an egg on a spoon while racing across the Globe and Anchor’s dance floor.

Seaman Shane Lucas and Seaman Apprentice William Bladow’s Team Rambo took overall top honors and won a hefty prize. Their prize included two $50 gift certificates from AAFES, two tickets to the next SMP trip to Iwo Jima, a one-night stay at the Grand Mer Hotel and, of course, bragging rights as the first SMP Fear Factor champions.
Island grapplers take to the mat

Twenty-five competitors showed off their grappling skills at the Marine Corps Community Services open freestyle wrestling tournament at the Camp Schwab Power Dome Gym Oct. 28.

The tournament was the first of four that MCCS hosts during the first two quarters of each fiscal year, according to Felipe Perez, the commissioner of referees with Okinawa Athletic Officials Association.

Wrestlers weighed in before the tournament and were divided into five weight classes from 145 to 210-pound-plus.

In the middle of the mat, the competitors shook hands before the referee blew the whistle. Wrestlers grappled for two minutes, attempting to pin opponents or earn points for throwing them to the mat.

Referees said the tournament is also a way to help prepare Marines for All-Marine wrestling tryouts.

“Many of the wrestlers seemed to freeze or act a little lost because they were new to freestyle wrestling,” said Ariel Morano, a referee with OAOA.

Justin Fown never wrestled freestyle before and found the tournament to be a great learning experience.

“I really wasn’t sure what to expect because I didn’t know how different freestyle wrestling was, but it was a lot of fun being able to get out and wrestle again,” Fown said.

Though a lot of the Marines were unfamiliar with the style, they still knew how to wrestle, and there were a lot of great matches that were fun to watch, Perez said.

At each tournament, awards are presented to the first, second and third place finishers in each weight class. Open tournaments are available to anyone who wishes to participate regardless of experience and participants are not required to qualify for them.

The next tournament is scheduled for Nov. 18 at Camp Hansen’s House of Pain Gym. Anyone interested in competing can register at any MCCS athletic facility by Nov. 10. On-site registration is from 7 to 8:15 a.m. the day of the competition, and there is a $10 entry fee.

TOURNEY TALLY

WINNERS

NORMAN CLIFFORD
145-pound weight division

MATT VANDERWEIT
163-pound weight division

RANDALL PORR
185.5-pound weight division

JESSE SYFERT
210-pound and 210-pound-plus weight divisions

Matt Vanderweit (right) tries to take down Justin Fown. Vanderweit defeated Fown and took first place in the 163-pound weight class.

“Although more Marines are used to (collegiate style wrestling), we run a freestyle tournament because the All-Marine wrestling team only does freestyle and Greco-Roman,” Morano said. “We want the Marines to be familiar with the style in case they wish to try out for the All-Marine wrestling team.”

Some competitors had wrestled in high school and college but were unfamiliar with the difference between freestyle and collegiate style wrestling.
**IN THEATERS NOV. 3-9**

Start times are subject to change without notice. Call in advance to confirm show times.

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**KADENA**
- **FRIDAY** The Wicker Man (PG-13), 6 p.m.; The Departed (R), 9 p.m.
- **SATURDAY** Invisiclip (PG), noon; The Wicker Man (PG-13), 6:30 p.m.; The Departed (R), 9:30 p.m.
- **SUNDAY** Invisiclip (PG), noon; The Wicker Man (PG-13), 3 p.m.; The Departed (R), 6 p.m.
- **MONDAY** The Departed (R), 7 p.m.
- **TUESDAY** Invisiclip (PG), 7 p.m.
- **WEDNESDAY** Invisiclip (PG), 7 p.m.
- **THURSDAY** Flags of Our Fathers (R), 7 p.m.

**FOSTER**
- **FRIDAY** The Wicker Man (PG-13), 7 p.m.
- **SATURDAY** Material Girls (PG), 1:30 p.m.; Invisiclip (PG), 3 p.m.; Running with Scissors (PG), 6 p.m.
- **SUNDAY** World Trade Center (PG-13), 7 p.m.
- **MONDAY** World Trade Center (PG-13), 7 p.m.
- **TUESDAY** Closed
- **WEDNESDAY** Flags of Our Fathers (R), 7 p.m.
- **THURSDAY** Closed

**FUTENMA**
- **FRIDAY** Crossover (PG-13), 7 p.m.
- **SATURDAY** World Trade Center (PG-13), 7 p.m.
- **SUNDAY** World Trade Center (PG-13), 7 p.m.
- **MONDAY** Closed
- **TUESDAY** Running with Scissors (R), 7 p.m.

**SCHWAB**
- **FRIDAY** Material Girls (PG), 7 p.m.
- **SATURDAY** Crossover (PG-13), 7 p.m.
- **SUNDAY** World Trade Center (PG-13), 7 p.m.
- **MONDAY** Running with Scissors (R), 7 p.m.
- **TUESDAY** Flags of Our Fathers (R), 7 p.m.
- **WEDNESDAY** Closed
- **THURSDAY** Closed

**KINSTER**
- **FRIDAY** The Wicker Man (PG-13), 7 p.m.
- **SATURDAY** Invisiclip (PG), 3 p.m.; Invisiclip (PG), 7 p.m.
- **SUNDAY** The Wicker Man (PG-13), 6 p.m.
- **MONDAY** Closed
- **TUESDAY** Invisiclip (R), 7 p.m.
- **WEDNESDAY** Running with Scissors (R), 7 p.m.
- **THURSDAY** The Departed (R), 7 p.m.

**COURTNEY**
- **FRIDAY** The Wicker Man (PG-13), 6 p.m., 9 p.m.
- **SATURDAY** The Marine (PG-13), 6 p.m., 9 p.m.
- **SUNDAY** Invisiclip (PG), 2 p.m.; The Wicker Man (PG-13), 5 p.m.
- **MONDAY** The Wicker Man (PG-13), 7 p.m.
- **TUESDAY** Running with Scissors (R), 7 p.m.
- **WEDNESDAY** Invisiclip (R), 7 p.m.
- **THURSDAY** Invisiclip (R), 7 p.m.