

Hawaii MARINE

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March 8, 2002

PacDiv tests marksmanship



Sgt. Richard W. Holtgraver Jr.

Marines, Sailors and civilians participated in the PacDiv Championships at Pu'uloa Range.

Sgt. Richard W. Holtgraver Jr.
Combat Correspondent

PU'ULOA RANGE FACILITY — More than 140 shooters took aim with M16A2 rifles and M-9 pistols at top marksmanship honors from Feb. 19 to March 1, during the Pacific Division Championships as the Competition-In-Arms Program entered its 101st year.

Annually, the Division Championships are held at four locations around the Marine Corps; Okinawa, Japan, Camp Pendleton, Calif., Camp Lejeune, N.C., and MCB Hawaii.

Combat Service Support Group 3 and 1st Radio Bn. shined this year during the competition with each unit taking two of the four top awards.

A score of 1129.63 by a CSSG-3 rifle team earned them the Smith Trophy, which is given to the top rifle team in the Pacific Division Championships.

Combat Service Support Group 3 had further reasons to celebrate as Staff Sgt. Gregory T. Schardein, roadmaster for Motor Transport Co., shot the top individual rifle score of 575.49.

The pistol team for 1st Rad. Bn. took home the Finn Trophy, taking first place with a score of 1047.17, and Gunnery Sgt. Jerome Sanders, motor transport chief for 1st Radio Bn., earned top honors in the individual pistol match with a score of 536.05.

The Championships are also used to pick the top 10 percent

See PACDIV, A-6

Marines use AAVs to assist Mother Nature

Sgt. Richard W. Holtgraver Jr.
Combat Correspondent

Eight-ounce endangered birds received help from an unlikely source Feb. 26 and 27, as four 27-ton Amphibious Assault Vehicles reinvigorated their nesting grounds at the Nu'upia Ponds Wildlife Management Area aboard MCB Hawaii.

More than a dozen Marines from Combat Support Company, 3rd Marine Regiment, took part in the annual event which allows Marines a chance to operate the AAVs over different terrain, which in turn creates a better nesting environment for several different species of endangered birds.

"What took place here was some much needed assistance from the Marines and their Amphibious Assault Vehicles in the combat against invasive species," said Dr. Diane C. Drigot, senior natural resource man-

agement specialist for MCB Hawaii's Environmental Department.

The best place for the birds to nest is on top of dirt mounds, according to Drigot, but in the Nu'upia Ponds Wildlife Management Area, an abundance of invasive plants, such as mangrove and pickleweed, literally crowd the birds out of their nesting habitat.

"In Hawaii, the unique species that evolved here — primarily, in this case, the Hawaiian Stilts and other birds — use this area for nesting," said Drigot. "One of their biggest enemies are the weeds that take over their habitats, so they can't lay their eggs and raise their young."

Since the early 1980s, the Marines and their AAVs have taken part in the annual "Mud Ops" that combine important training while providing Mother Nature with a helping hand.

See AAVS, A-6

On the heels of history



Sgt. Robert Carlson

The Pacific War Memorial is scheduled to be dedicated and gifted to the Marine Corps in a ceremony March 16 inside the front gate of MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. See page A-3 for details on the history of the Pacific War Memorial.

Quality of Life team surveys K-Bay, collects impact data

Sgt. Alexis R. Mulero
Combat Correspondent

More than 225 active duty Marines and spouses stationed at MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, were surveyed Feb. 28 and March 1 by a survey team from Headquarters Marine Corps to study how past quality of life programs have impacted life in the Marine Corps.

The survey was administered at the base Enlisted Club by the Headquarters Marine Corps Quality of Life (QOL) survey team, which randomly selects active duty Marines — and for the first time, family members, here — to obtain feedback on a variety of important QOL issues.

Marines were asked a wide range of topics affecting their

quality of life to include housing, marriage, income, recreational activities and standard of living.

"When Marines are confident that the Corps's first instinct is to work for their benefit, they can concentrate on mission accomplishment. When our families share this confidence, they will contribute to mission accomplishment by being sup-

portive of our way of life and calling," said the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. James L. Jones, in his guidance on the importance of quality of life.

The Marine Corps is interested in determining how, if at all, QOL perception has changed, particularly in light of increased funding in past QOL programs.

The purpose of the study is to determine the quality of life

views of current Marines and family members, compared to those Marines in past studies, and understand the impact it has had on readiness and retention.

"The results from this survey will certainly change where the Marine Corps puts its emphasis on QOL over the next couple of years," said Jacquie Thurman, an analyst for the survey team.

Prime Minister visits



Brigadier Gen. Jerry C. McAbee, commanding general, MCB Hawaii, welcomes The Right Honourable Jean Chretien, prime minister of Canada, at Hangar 105 on Feb. 28. The prime minister took the opportunity to briefly observe Marine Corps Air Facility during a brief refueling stop.

Sgt. Richard W. Holtgraver Jr.

Coalition's 'turning up pressure,' but battle's not over, says Rumsfeld

Army Sgt. 1st Class Kathleen T. Rhem,
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Afghan and coalition forces are turning up the pressure on Al Qaeda and Taliban troops in the mountains south of Gardez, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said today.

Still, he told Pentagon reporters, "The battle will likely take some time to play out." Rumsfeld said enemy forces fighting coalition troops near Gardez are hardened fighters without many options. "Real dead-enders," he called them, but added he believes they will surrender or be killed "in the days ahead."

U.S., Afghan and coalition forces have been fighting a pocket of Al Qaeda and Taliban hold-outs in a 60-some-square-mile area since March 2 (Afghan time) in an effort dubbed Operation Anaconda. Eight U.S. servicemen have been

killed in the fighting.

Army Gen. Tommy Franks, commander of U.S. Central Command in Tampa, Fla., said U.S. commanders in the area have brought in a number of additional Marine attack helicopters and 200 to 300 more troops to assist with the operation. This brings the total number of U.S. troops involved to over 1,000.

"That has not been in response to surprise. It has been in accordance with our plan to reposition our forces inside the objective area over time as necessary in order to completely clear it," Franks said.

Central Command is responsible for operations in the region around Afghanistan. Franks was in Washington to brief Rumsfeld and President Bush on Anaconda's progress.

Rumsfeld stressed the coalition actions in

See PRESSURE, A-4

See page A-3 for the 1st in a series on Iwo Jima

MCBH NEWS BRIEFS

MARINE RAIDERS

Marine Forces Pacific will join the U.S. Raider Association in dedicating the Marine Raider Memorial at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl) today at 2 p.m. The ceremony will take place at the Overlook at the top of Memorial Walk and will feature the Marine Forces Pacific Band and color guard, an honor detail from 1st Radio Bn. and wreath presentations.

Brigadier Gen. John G. Castellaw, deputy commander of Marine Forces Pacific, will be the guest speaker.

Less than three years ago, the remains of 19 missing Raiders from the battle for Makin Island in World War II were recovered and repatriated by the Central Identification Lab, Hawaii, which is currently undertaking a search for the remains of nine more members of that unit, believed to be buried on the island of Kwajalein.

The Marine Raider Battalions were among the forerunners of the current Marine Reconnaissance units. Members of the 4th Force Reconnaissance Co., based at MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, will be in attendance.

For more information, contact Chuck Little at 477-8309.

WAIMANALO CLEANUP

The Waimanalo Cleanup Coalition needs volunteers to help clear illegal dumping of cars and trucks in the woods of Olomano Gardens, Saturday at 8 a.m. Support is needed to haul the abandoned vehicles to the street for City and County crews to tow away.

Meet at Olaomano Gardens, 41-1140 Waikupanaha Street. Call 259-0223 to help.

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

March 23: Roman Catholic Mass at 5 p.m.

March 24 (Palm Sunday): Roman Catholic Mass at 9:30 a.m.; Protestant Services at 8 and 11 a.m.

March 26: Catholic Penance at 7 p.m.

March 28 (Holy Thursday): Roman Catholic Mass at 5 p.m.; Protestant Service at 6:30 p.m.

March 29 (Good Friday): Roman Catholic "Stations of the Cross" at 12 p.m.; Solemn Good Friday Service at 5 p.m.; Protestant Good Friday Service at 2 p.m.

March 30 (Holy Saturday): Roman Catholic Vigil Mass at 5 p.m.

March 31 (Easter Sunday): Easter Sunrise Service at 6 a.m. at the Rifle Range; Roman Catholic Mass at 9:30 a.m.; Protestant Services at 8 and 11 a.m.

All services are located in the MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, Base Chapel, Bldg. 1090.

Hawaii MARINE

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C.G.'S MAIL BOX

'I recommend a community council to support Housing.'



BRIG. GEN. MCABEE

- Submitted by Alana Havenstrite, military spouse

I am a spouse of an active duty member. This is our first time living on a military base and our family is enjoying the community feel that MCBH provides.

Our neighbors are friendly and I feel very safe here.

However, there are constant concerns throughout our neighborhood. In talking with several other neighbors and friends, many are complaining about how their concerns are handled, or are not handled, at the housing office.

I can be very specific should you request.

A solution!

Have a community council that can confront some of the issues and get answers, a council that will listen to the concerns of the active military community and find solutions.

The council would be made up of volunteers and be supportive of both the military community and the housing office.

This could create a positive relationship for everyone involved.

This council would also be a great way to welcome new members of the community.

Very respectfully,
Alana Havenstrite

Dear Ms. Havenstrite,

Thanks for participating in the CG Mail program.

I have been asked by the Commanding General, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, to research and to respond to your email of Feb. 5, since your recommendation falls

within my staff responsibility.

The base does agree with you that it is important for our personnel and their families to be heard. The CG Mail Program is just one example of our commitment to listening to your ideas.

As you know, MCBH does not presently have a community council as you have described; however, the base welcomes such an organization.

To assist you in your endeavors, should you decide to develop this council, I have enclosed a copy of Base Order 5760.3A, which outlines the requirements for establishing and operating a private organization aboard MCBH.

Presently, the base attends many neighborhood boards. If your organization would like to invite the base to attend one of your meetings, please contact our Public Affairs Office at 257-8840.

The Commanding General has assured me he will personally meet with your council, to listen to your concerns and recommendations, as well.

Additionally, I'd like to provide you with some established avenues for this same kind of information to be relayed to the appropriate agencies. For example, our Housing Office is committed to providing excellent service to the base. If you or anyone you know have a housing complaint, please contact Mr. Glenn Lambert at 257-1257 (ext 201).

If you have a concern about the

way Family Housing has handled an issue, please contact Mr. Dave Buffum at 257-4005.

Furthermore, to assist newly arriving personnel, the "Base New Arrivals Orientation," goes every month and is sponsored by our own Marine Corps Community Services.

This brief goes the first Thursday of every month, and everyone is welcome, including family members.

People are briefed by at least 10 separate key note speakers. There are door prizes, free coffee and donuts.

If you are interested in more information concerning the New Arrivals' Orientation, please contact Ms. Marie Jesus at 257-7788.

Similarly, a quarterly "Spouses Aloha Orientation" is also operated by Marine Corps Community Services.

It provides spouses the various resources and services aboard MCBH to enhance their lives, while on tour here.

It is a wonderful opportunity to meet other spouses and forge new friendships. Free day care is provided for those spouses that sign up in advance.

For more information concerning the Spouses Aloha Orientation, please call 257-7790.

Again, I want to thank you for your participation in this program.

Very Respectfully,

Maj. Chris Hughes
Public Affairs Officer, MCBH

The commanding general invites input from the base community via C.G. Mail on the following topics: What are we doing that we shouldn't be doing? What are we not doing that we should be doing? What are we doing that we should be doing better?

Responses should include a recommendation that will help solve the problem and must include your name and return address so that staff may respond.

For more information about how to send C.G. Mail, see the MCB Hawaii C.G. Mail page at www.mcbh.usmc.mil/command/cgmail.htm.

Top medical officer reviews K-Bay facilities, discusses readiness issues

Lance Cpl. Jason E. Miller
Combat Correspondent

The Medical Officer of the Marine Corps, Rear Adm. Robert D. Hufstader, visited MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, Friday, talked with his Sailors and toured base medical facilities.

The purpose of the visit was to assess the needs and concerns of supported line commanders and to discuss present and future medical readiness and health issues.

"Another focus of discussion was facilities. In particular, finding improved facilities for the Marine Corps battalion and regimental aid stations, as well as a site for a new Sports Medicine Complex to mirror the successful introduction of a sports medicine complex on Okinawa," said Lt. j.g. Lana Wilson, assistant director of the Branch Medical Clinic at K-Bay.

Rear Adm. Hufstader first visited the Branch Medical Clinic,

where he met with medical officers and enlisted leaders. His tour then took him to Combat Service Support Group 3's dental and medical aid stations, as well as the 3rd Marine Regiment's, Regimental Aid Station.

He concluded his visit with a stop at the Aid Station of MAG -24.

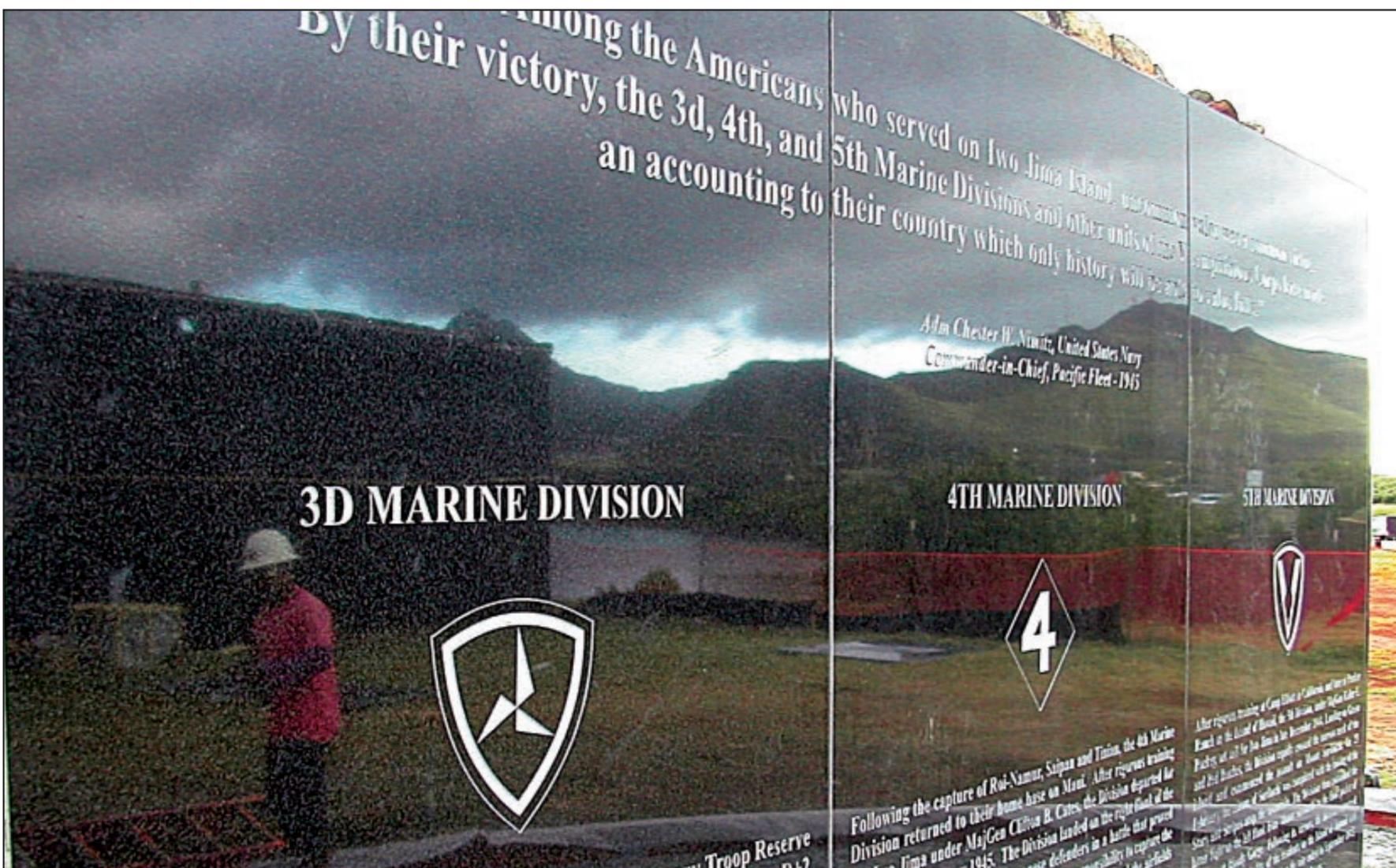
"It was nice to have a medical leader come down to the trenches and talk about issues affecting the medical field and all the new modernization plans for the base," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Jesse Quinonez, a corpsman at the Branch Medical Clinic, Kaneohe Bay.



Lance Cpl. Jason E. Miller

Commander Mary Condon, director of the Kaneohe Branch Medical Clinic, led Rear Adm. Robert D. Hufstader on a tour of the facilities.

See next week's Hawaii Marine for Part 2 of our series on the Pacific War Memorial.



Sgt. Robert Carlson

In the reflection of the engraved granite slates which surround the base of the Pacific War Memorial, the crew from Dick Pacific Construction puts the finishing touches on the base of the memorial and readies it for the dedication ceremony March 16. "Walkway of Honor" bricks will be installed later this spring.

Iwo Jima sculpture will greet all entering K-Bay



Cpl. Dustin Senger

Mrs. Alice Clark, chair of the Pacific War Memorial Association, stands by a model of the Pacific War Memorial during the 55th anniversary celebration of the Battle of Iwo Jima.

Sgt. Robert Carlson
Press Chief

What started as an idea at a reunion for Marines of the 28th Regiment, 5th Marine Division — who trained at Camp Tarawa on the Big Island — has become a reality in Hawaii.

The dedication ceremony for the Pacific War Memorial Association's Pacific War Memorial is set for Saturday, March 16, at 10 a.m.

The monument will be gifted to the Marine Corps and will be located inside the front gate of MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay.

The statue portion of the monument is a replica of the National Iwo Jima Memorial in Newington, Conn., which was erected in 1995.

The six figures in the monument stand nine feet tall.

Since 1996, Alice Clark, chair of the Pacific War Memorial Association, has worked toward a goal of having the monument erected here in Hawaii.

When the association was invited to locate the memorial at MCB Hawaii, plans went into full swing to erect the first memorial in the Pacific to recognize the sacrifice made by all services in the region during World War II, and the much-appreciated support of the people of Hawaii.

The front side of the monument



Photo courtesy of the Pacific War Memorial Assn.

Chris Messer, project coordinator, Dick Pacific Construction, poses with the crated memorial. The memorial was uncrated Feb. 13 and placed upon the base on Feb. 14.

shows Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal's image of the second flag raising on top of Mount Suribachi on Feb. 23, 1945.

Beside Rosenthal's image is a photo of the first flag raising, by Marine photographer Sgt. Lou Lowery, as well as Pfc. Robert Campbell's photo of the flag exchange.

Inscriptions on the reverse side of the monument recognize the contributions of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Marine Divisions during the battle.

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz' famous quote, "...Among the Americans who served on Iwo Jima, uncommon valor was a common virtue" is inscribed across the top.

End panels on the base of the

monument feature an Iwo Jima map, depicting the plan of the attack, and the civilian support provided by Hawaii residents for those who trained and regrouped in Hawaii for Iwo Jima and other Pacific battles.

The bronze memorial was cast by Salvatore Perrotta of Sculpture House Casting in New York, from the original molds used for the monument in Connecticut. Dr. George Gentile, who heads the National Iwo Jima Survivors' Association, made the molds available for the Hawaii memorial.

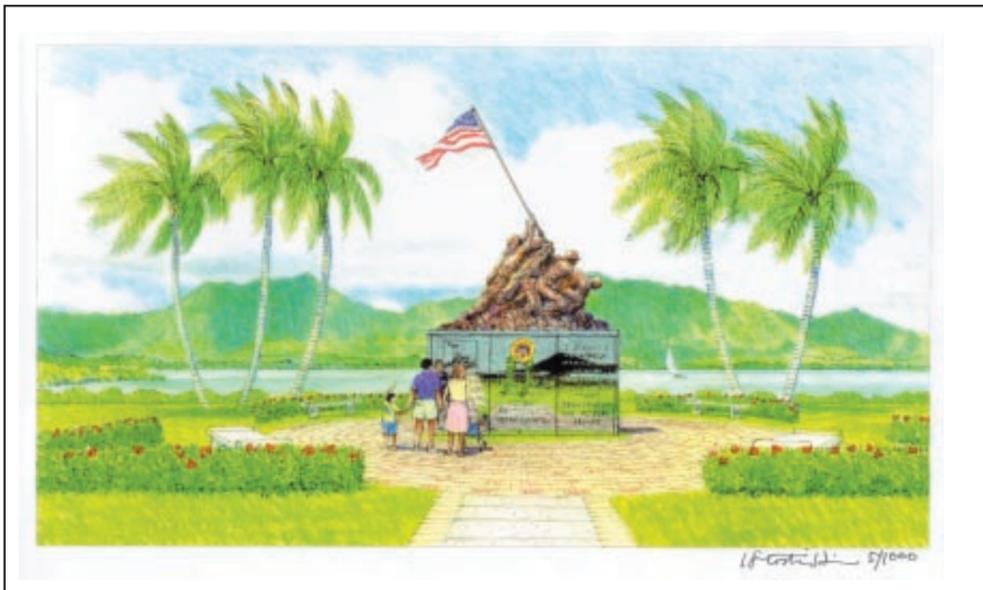
The molds were originally created by artist Joseph Petrovics, using battle artifacts shared by Iwo Jima Survivors.

The bronze memorial arrived at K-Bay Feb. 13 and was placed on the base Feb. 14. Construction of the concrete base was completed by Dick Pacific Construction.

The granite panels which surround the base were inscribed by Columbia River Monuments in Hermiston, Ore.

Bricks in the 'Walkway of Honor,' inscribed with the names of veterans, loved ones and supporters, will be installed later this spring.

Inscribed bricks can be ordered until March 31 through the Pacific War Memorial Association's website at www.PacificWarMemorial.org.



Cpl. Dustin Senger

Above — Lieutenant Gen. Frank Libutti, then commander, Marine Forces Pacific, greets the veterans of the Battle of Iwo Jima during the 55th anniversary celebration at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. Left — Artist Hitoshi Hida provided the Pacific War Memorial Association his rendering of the completed Pacific War Memorial.

CDC promotes child passenger safety through checkup event



Sgt. Robert Carlson

The Base Safety Center set up its child passenger restraint inspection station in front of the CDC March 1.

Sgt. Robert Carlson
Press Chief

Volunteers from the MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, Child Development Center teamed up with the Base Safety Center and Marines from Combat Service Support Group 3 March 1 to host a child passenger seat safety checkup event in front of the CDC.

The event was the first opportunity where parents were able to make appointments to have their vehicles inspected for proper child passenger restraints installation.

The Base Safety Center and certified volunteers from around the base have hosted several events both on and off of the installation, and this latest event was a prelude to many more scheduled checkups coordinated with the CDC.

Kristin Darling, the CDC's Children, Youth and Teens Program training and curriculum specialist,

has been a certified inspector since November and said the program has had a domino effect with other CDC staff members and parents.

"We'll probably schedule four or five of these events a year, and we're already working to educate as many parents as possible about the program."

In addition to getting the CDC staff certified as child passenger restraint inspectors, Darling said the center also plans to conduct special presentations for parents and family child care providers.

With the staff at the CDC, and the family child care providers, Darling and the Base Safety Center have the opportunity to reach 400 to 500 parents with their message.

The Base Safety Center has worked closely with the Keiki Injury Prevention Coalition (KIPC) Hawaii to help prevent and reduce injuries to children resulting from improper installation of child pas-

senger seats. Safety checkups are just one way the center helps increase awareness.

To find out more about the child passenger restraint checkup program, contact the Base Safety Center at 257—



Sgt. Robert Carlson

Kristin Darling, Children, Youth and Teens Program training and curriculum specialist, demonstrates the proper child passenger seat installation for one of dozens of visitors to the CDC's event March 1.

PRESSURE, From A-1

Afghanistan aren't "revenge" or "retribution" for the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States.

"Rather, it is to protect our country and our people from further attack," he said. "A terrorist under fire in the mountains of Afghanistan is a terrorist who has bigger problems than trying to plan the next attack on the United States."

He said America's mission hasn't changed since Sept. 11 — to deny safe haven to terrorist networks. That is why U.S. troops are also working to train and equip military forces in the Philippines and Yemen, he said.

"It's to help them eliminate the possibility of their countries becoming sanctuaries for terrorists," Rumsfeld remarked.

He said the "service and sacrifice" of the service members who died and those who continue to put themselves in harm's way should serve as a lesson to those who would attack the United States.

"If you attack the United States, if people try to kill our men, women and children, we intend to stop them. There will be a penalty," Rumsfeld said, adding that the U.S. soldiers are "as relentless as they are courageous."

Single Marine & Sailor Program Funds



Sgt. Roman Yurek

Brigadier Gen. Jerry C. McAbee, MCB Hawaii commanding general, accepts a \$2,000 check, on behalf of the Single Marine and Sailor Program, from Capt. Rex Sappenfield, adjutant for Marine Aircraft Group 24. Sappenfield was part of a group of 30 Marines who volunteered to help the Friends of Hawaii Charity at the Honolulu Garlic Festival and the Professional Golfers' Association of America Sony Open.

Mokapu students deliver award-winning speeches

Children submitted speeches in Mokapu's 'I Have a Dream Too' contest, during African-American Heritage Month activities at MCB Hawaii

Submitted by:
Jan Velasco, 4th Grade
1st Place Speech

I have a dream that one day this nation will have peace and be free of hate-ness and evil.

I have a dream that one day people will live together and treat others as they should be treated.

Not because they are black or white. This is my hope and faith.

With this faith we will be able to change the world and live peacefully.

This will be the day when our country will be free of hate and evil and replace it with hope, love and most important with peace.

Submitted by:
Armani Batoon, 5th Grade
1st Place Speech

I have a dream that one day this nation will treat each other the same and there will be peace.

I have a dream that one day people will be fair to others and respect each other.

This is my hope and faith.

With this faith, we will be able to reach our goals and be proud of what we have.

This will be the day when the whole nation celebrates their color and have freedom.

Submitted by:
Krystian Johnson, 6th Grade
Part I, 1st Place Speech

I have a dream that one day this nation will unite with all other nations and peace will spread throughout the world.

I have a dream that one day people will look up to other people as brothers and sisters not as enemies.

This is my hope and faith.

With this faith we will be able to live our lives peacefully and happily and we will have no trouble with wars and battles.

We will finally be able to depend on others to do the right things and to care



Courtesy of Nico Duncan

Nine winners were selected from the 4th, 5th and 6th grades during Mokapu Elementary School's "I have a dream, too" speech contest.

for you through deaths and difficulties.

This will be the day when people don't discriminate others for their looks, color, religion or any other appearances.

It will also be when people can depend on others and let them be able to trust you.

That's my dream.

Submitted by:
Shevonne Simpson, 6th Grade
Part II, 1st Place Speech

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise with this earth and stop all the discrimination.

I have a dream that one day people will be more respectful to each other.

This is my hope and faith.

With this faith we will be able to achieve our goals and accomplish our missions.

This will be the day when our world will be filled with happiness and be powered with joy.

1st, 2nd and 3rd place Winners

4th Grade

- 1st Jan Velasco
- 2nd Vince Palacios
- 3rd Shawn Voutour

5th Grade

- 1st Armani Batoon
- 2nd Brianna Nieland
- 3rd Shaina Foster

6th Grade, Part I

- 1st Krystian Johnson
- 2nd Kirk Birkin
- 3rd Marlene Garcia

6th Grade, Part II

- 1st Shevonne Simpson
- 2nd Ashley Shaffer
- 3rd Jasmine Goodrich



'Girls Day'



Sgt. Robert Carlson

Maria Parker, 6, shows off her family's Doll Festival display aboard MCB Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, March 1. The dolls are dressed in ancient Japanese court costumes and are thought to bring good fortune and health. Japanese people around the world celebrated Girls Day Sunday, and dolls like these are traditionally displayed as part of the celebration. Maria, who is Japanese-American, said she always shares her cultural background with her friends and classmates.

PACDIV, From A-1

of marksmen who will compete in the Marine Corps Championships taking place from April 4 to May 7 at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

This year's competition posed a unique, yet surmountable obstacle for shooters and instructors alike.

Normally, the championships have distinguished shooters participating in the program who help with the ranges, and assist with coaching younger shooters. Due to events brought on by Sept. 11, many of those distinguished shooters were unavailable for the event, according to Gunnery Sgt. David S. Myers, Operations Chief for Puuloa Training Facility.

"Most of the shooters we had this year were relatively inexperienced," said Myers. "This year we didn't have any experienced, distinguished shooters to help assist with the range."

Since none of the Marines in this year's championship were prior distinguished shooters, it leveled the playing field, giving young Marines the confidence, and room to step up and improve their performance, added Myers.

The Competition in Arms Program was started more than a hundred years ago to bring young and old riflemen together so they could share and pass on marksmanship knowledge.

At the end of each CIAP, those Marines who participated in the program returned to their units full of marksmanship information to pass to others.

"I think the competition builds

their confidence as marksman, because they learn (tips and advice) from the more experienced shooters," said Gunnery Sgt. Tamara L. Fode, Legal Chief for Headquarters Battalion Legal Services Center.

Although Fode did not enter the competition as a distinguished shooter, she was an exceptional marksman as a rifle expert (10th award), and a pistol expert (6th award).

Younger Marines who participated in the two weeks of marksmanship instruction and competition of the Pacific Division Championships, found it to be a productive and informative time.

"I learned physical fitness plays a key role in the firing of the pistol, especially in the off-hand position," said Cpl. Ivan Del Valle, a Javelin section leader for 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment.

As a first time participant in the championship, Del Valle was able to understand why there is a Competition-in-Arms Program.

"It's a good program," said Del Valle. "Because people who come



Sgt. Richard W. Holtgraver Jr.

The CSSG-3 rifle team poses with Colonel Paul D. Adams, their commanding officer, and the Smith Trophy, which is given annually to the top rifle team in PACDIV. From left to right are CWO Parker, Staff Sgt. Schardein, Adams, Gunnery Sgt. Lobes, Sgt. Joseph M. Abrams and Cpl. Luis A. Bazan.

here are able to take back valuable information to their units and pass it on to other Marines."

"A lot of Marines don't realize the important benefits and opportunities the CIAP has to offer," said Fode. "Because they feel there isn't enough time to get away from their units to participate in the program."

"Commanding officers and staff noncommissioned need to push Marines towards this program more. Who knows, they could be sending the Marine Corps' next number one shooter."

No matter how many Marines participate in the Competition-in-Arms Program every year, they return to their units with greater confidence in their marksmanship abilities.

AAVS, From A-1

"With these heavy vehicles, they can crush the weeds, but they can also shape the mud flat in such a way that it makes it a nicer place to nest and feed," said Driggot. "By disturbing the mud, it kicks up the little fish and the insects they live on. So, when it's under controlled conditions like this, it's actually helpful for the birds."

The population of Hawaiian Stilts nesting at the ponds, in 1984, was approximately 60. Almost 20 years later, with the annual assistance from the Marines, that population has more than doubled.

The state's total estimated number of Hawaiian Stilts is between 1,500 to 1,800

birds, making the Nu'upia Pond stilts almost 10 percent of Hawaii's total population.

Since adult Hawaiian Stilts tend to nest in the area where they were born, the importance of providing these endangered birds with a suitable breeding environment is beneficial not only for the birds, but also the Marines.

"It's a good idea that we are able to



Sgt. Richard W. Holtgraver Jr.

Marines from CSC Co., 3rd Marine Regiment, crush mangrove and pickle weed with their AAVs, to help improve endangered birds nesting grounds.

growth of endangered species within the Nu'upia Ponds. But, the two days of training the Marines received operating

something to help out the environment and the local wildlife," said Pfc. Phillip A. Troop, an AAV crewman and driver for Combat Support Company. "It's cool, what we are doing."

The main focus of the "Mud Ops" is to preserve and promote the training the Marines received operating

the AAVs in this sanctuary is invaluable, according to Staff Sgt. David R. Hickman, platoon sergeant, Combat Support Co.

"The Marines get the opportunity to learn how to negotiate difficult, muddy terrain and perform vehicle recovery if one gets stuck."

"This is the only area in Hawaii where the AAVs can conduct this type of open terrain driving," he added.

After two days of churning and tearing up mangrove weeds, both the Marines and the birds have something valuable to show for it: The Marines received much needed open terrain driving and the Hawaiian stilts received a better environment to breed.

EVERY CLIME AND PLACE

31st MEU intensifies training during MEUEX II

Lance Cpl. John Hoellwarth
31st MEU Combat Correspondent

CAMP HANSEN, OKINAWA, Japan — The 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) recently completed MEU Exercise II (MEUEX), moving a step closer to reaching its special operations capable (SOC) certification.

The MEUEX II was conducted here Feb. 19-22 in various Okinawa training areas.

The bi-annual exercise is the third of four major training evolutions the MEU will undergo in preparation for Special Operations Capable Exercise 01-2 (SOCEX). It focuses on SOCEX mission profiles in day and night environments, ensuring that the basics of Marine air ground task force (MAGTF) mission execution are fully understood and practiced in a safe training environment.

"The MEUEX is designed to expose our Marines to every potential mission they may see during a SOC qualification

exercise. As separate units, each MEU element works hard to ensure it is ready to fulfill its role. The team did well in this respect," said Col. James M. Lowe, 31st MEU commander.

Interoperability between the MEU's major subordinate elements (MSE) is the key to simultaneously executing multiple missions, according to the MEU commander.

"Every individual and assigned team brings a lot to the fight, but interoperability is the name of the game at the MAGTF level. This is where the Navy/Marine Corps Team is joined at the hip," Lowe said. "When each unit and detachment reaches the point where it realizes interoperability at the tactical level equates to increased combat capability and greater operational tempo, I know we have achieved success. That's when the 31st MEU/Phibron-11 team becomes a dangerous organization with which to wrestle."

During MEUEX, the MEU conducted

mission planning and execution while using the Rapid Response Planning Process (R2P2) to further facilitate full integration as a MAGTF and to improve overall proficiency in the planning and execution of MEU(SOC) missions. Understanding the team concept was imperative, as the MEU's overall success was dependent on the MSEs working closely together.

The relationship between the MSEs was good and steadily improving, according to Lieutenant Col. Carl E. Mundy, commanding officer, Battalion Landing Team 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment.

"The MSEs have established a good working relationship with each other. Every mission reinforces the critical importance of working together as one team; last week highlighted that fact," Mundy said.

The MEUEX II combined a multitude of training evolutions, ranging from boat landings, helicopter-borne operations and operational ground maneuver. The MEU carried out a full range of MAGTF mission profiles to include: a noncombatant evacuation operation; a visit, board, search and seizure; flight operations; tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel; a mass casualty situation; a mechanized raid; and an amphibious boat raid on simulated enemy training sites.

Marines of III Marine Expeditionary Force's Special Operations Training Group administered the training package for each event during the MEU Exercises. In addition to serving as site controllers and evaluators of the training, these Marines focused on the MEU's ability to carry out mission profiles as a MAGTF during day and night operations.

The MEU's training follows the crawl-walk-run method. Upon successfully completing the crawl and walk stages, MEUEX I and II, the MEU is now ready to take to sea all that it has learned and practiced during its land-based exercises. It will do this during Amphibious Ready Group Exercise (ARGEX), its next



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Petty Officer Second Class Christopher Hansen, 31st MEU, Combat Service Support Element, conducts triage of simulated casualties during massive casualty drill Feb. 21. The drill was done to evaluate the MEU's ability to respond to an incident involving numerous casualties.

major training exercise.

"Based on the present world situation and the 31st MEU's mission as a primary contingency response force, our normal training program this cycle was accelerated even more so than normal. Still, the MEU met every challenge and, in some critical areas, exceeded my expectations," Lowe said. "The Marines and Sailors of the MEU know what may be required of them in the immediate future and they are ready to demonstrate their considerable capability."



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Corporal Arzina Brown, 31st MEU combat service support element, attends to a simulated casualty during massive casualty drill Feb. 21.