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Boat Race

Aim High!

Relations

in Okinawa



Marines from Marine Corps Air Station Futenma participate in the Ginowan Hagoromo Harii Festival at the Ginowan Port, July 7, 2024. Marines were invited by the late Masanori Matsugawa, the Ginowan City mayor.

2024年7月7日、沖縄県宜野湾市の宜野湾港マリーナで行われた宜野湾はごろもハーリー大会で、宜野湾市の故・松川正則市長の開会の挨拶を聞く海兵 隊普天間航空基地の隊員ら。彼らは、同市長から声をかけられ大会に参加。

🖊 🕻 I was honored to get the invite," said Col. William C. Pacatte, camp commander for MCAS Futenma. "The fact that he thought of us to come out to take part was an extreme honor and it shows our friendship that we have between Futenma and the City of Ginowan.

Matsugawa, also a committee

*This is a shorten version of an original story due to the space, it continues to the bottom of the page 21.



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NOTE: The stories start from here for English readers. Big Circle's first page starts based on the Japanese style.

注: 日本語読者は反対側から読み進めてください。こちらは最 後のページです。

Gonowan Harii - continued from page 22

member for the event, said that if he reached out to Futenma, they would come because they have been supportive of city events; not just Pacatte, but also commanders in the past. He said that the city of Ginowan and MCAS Futenma has built a relationship with trust.

Two teams from MCAS Futenma, totaling 30 Marines, including Pacatte, joined the event. Although the event was canceled due to the bad weather and only one of the two teams was unable to race, Lance Cpl. Jesse Goodlow, aircraft recovery, still found something meaningful from the event. Because they participated with their shop members, Goodlow said that they were able to bond more as a team. "Now we're all closer together."

普天間航空基地司令官のウィリアム・C・パカ ティー大佐は、「招待を受け、光栄に思います。 彼が私たちのことを思い、私たちが参加できる ように考えてくれたことは、非常に名誉なことで あり、普天間(基地)と宜野湾市との友好関係を

示すものだと思います」と述べた。

このイベントの実行委員でもあった松川氏 は、普天間基地はパカティー大佐だけでなく、 過去の司令官たちも市のイベントに協力的で あったため、彼らに声をかければ参加するので はと考えたといい、宜野湾市と普天間基地は信 頼関係を築いていると話した。

同基地からは大佐を含めた2チーム、総勢30 名の海兵隊員が参加した。悪天候のため、残り 2レースと決勝を残し、イベントは中止となった ため、2チームのうち1チームはレースに参加で きなかったが、航空機回収業務のジェシー・グッ ドロー伍長は意義深いものを得たという。

班のメンバーと一緒に参加したことで、チー ムとしての絆が深まった。「今、僕たちは皆、より 仲良くなっているよ」と伍長は笑った。

Story and Photos by Yoshie Makiyama

は、必ずしも海兵隊や米国政府、 米国防総省の公式見解である とは限らず、またそれらによって 推奨されているものでもありま せん。当機関誌はキャンプ・バト ラー米海兵隊太平洋基地広報 企画運用部(COMMSTRAT)が https://www.dvidshub.net/

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Farewell from Editorial Room

22ページの写真に関連した記事です。

carry "sabani storage

Participants give a Hail Mary to celebrate the safe and successful 閉会式で大会が無事に終了したことを称え万歳する参加者ら。

A Marine team cheers when they reach shore in first place out of four in the final race of the qualifying competition. 予選大会の最終組で4チーム中1位で岸に到着し、歓声を上げる海兵隊員ら。

The Silver Bullet, the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, currently assigned to the 4th Marine Regiment at Camp Schwab, sinks as its "sabani" fills up

with water in the final race to close out the day's competition

この日の競技を締めくくる決勝レースで、サバニが満水となり沈没する現在キ ャンプ・シュワブの第4海兵連隊に配属されている第7海兵連隊第3大隊から のチーム・シルバーブレット。



Hare is back!! Schwab Marines Enjoy Okinawan Traditional Dragon Boat Race

his year, "Hare," Okinawan's traditional dragon boat race event returned. Whether it is held as a ritual or as a tourist attraction, many cities, towns and districts in Okinawa have carried out this traditional summer event and people in the region have enjoyed it for many years.

takes place to pray for the safety of participants in events held at sea.

(中央左)。日本では、海での安全を祈り、「酒」を使ったお清めがよく行われる。

Henoko District of Nago City is no exception. The Henoko Hare was held at the Henoko Matsuda-nohama beach, south of Camp Schwab, for the first time in five years on June 30, 2024. The district has not had a race since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Henoko's Hare is an annual event that has been performed for the 'God of the Sea,' in asking for an abundant harvest of fish and other food from the ocean. People compete in a hand-paddled race on a fishing boat called "Sabani." The boats Henoko District used for the race have been in use long before fiberglass and other materials became prevalent.

Over 40 teams, 10 from residential districts of Henoko, 25 from outside the district composed of work

colleagues and friends, and nine from Camp Schwab, participated in this year's event. A team consists of 12 individuals: 10 rowers, one drummer who sits in front to set the stroke rhythm and a helmsman in the back to control the direction of the boat.

Shigeru Shimabukuro, Henoko District mayor, center left, pours sake on the hands of Col. Richard S. Barclay, camp commander for Camp Schwab, center right, before the Henoko Hare at Henoko Matsuda-no-hama beach, Nago City, June 30. In Japan, a purification ceremony with "sake" often

6月30日、名護市辺野古の松田の浜で辺野古区ハーレー大会の前に、シュワブ基地司令官リチャード・S・バークレイ大佐(中央右)の手に酒を注ぐ島袋茂辺野古区長

"We always have many foreign participants," said Shigeru Shimabukuro, the Henoko district mayor. "It is fun to have many foreign participants, not just service members from Camp Schwab, because when we have them. the liveliness and atmosphere is different."

Shimabukuro, 63, recalled that ever since he was a child. Marines from Camp Schwab had participated in the event. The Hare event in Henoko has been held since before World

Known as Dragon Boat Race, when "Hare" (pronounced ha-ray), normally referred in the north, or "Harii" (pronounced ha-ree), referred in the south, actually began is unknown. However, it is said to have come from China during the Ryukyu Dynasty period, roughly

600 years ago, according to Visit Okinawa Japan, an official Okinawa travel guide. The race usually takes place in early to mid-summer.

There are three parts to the event. The first part consists of races done by the Henoko residential district groups, and the second half was races by public entries, including teams from Camp Schwab. The event is a timed competition where the four fastest teams would move onto the final race. The course was about 500 meters to-and-from the flag post.

The first team to race from Camp Schwab, under Henoko District 11th residential flag, was the Hooligans, with members from 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, currently assigned to 4th Marine Regiment on Camp Schwab. Unfortunately the Hooligans also became the first team to turn over their boat. The boat was flipped over after they tried to turn at the flag. They lost balance while over correcting after the turn.

"Not a lot of people get to flip a big wooden boat or flip a boat ever!" said Lance Cpl. Colton D. Froeba,

⇒ 3/7 Logistics. "We are short two people, and we put all our big boys in the front. It was a lot harder than I thought, but we were told that even if we flip, it'll be a good show. We were kind of having fun with it."

end of the event at the closing ceremony.

Even having lost some of their belongings, the Hooligans still smiled with their shared experience in the Hare, shouting the importance of staying in sync and willingness to

participate again in this one-of-akind cultural event.

Col. Richard S. Barclay, camp commander for Camp Schwab, was invited by the Henoko mayor and observed the event with his wife, Kelly, for the first time.

"It's a really good team-building event. It takes a lot of energy and discipline to work together for a paddle and work as a team,"

said Barclay. "We learn from the Okinawan people how to do it correctly. And if we don't listen to them, then we end up in the water swimming back."

Barclay was happy to see how quickly the safety boats came to rescue all the Marines who were thrown from the boat. He expected

Continued on Page 18 ► Hare

Hare ▶ Continued from Page 19

that the teams after the Hooligans would learn how to handle the boat by watching how others row and stay in the race.

For all the Marine teams, this was their first time on the boat. Most teams made it to the goal except one: the only team from 4th Marine Regiment on Camp Schwab led by Sergeant Maj. Christopher L. Rivera, sergeant major of Camp Schwab. They rowed out at the latter half of the public entry race. Although Rivera had a laugh at the Hooligans boat flip, his team also lost their race since they rowed outside of the course's assigned area.

"It's very difficult, but there's a lot of appreciation for the culture," said Rivera after the race. "We bumped into the other boat, 'Gomen-nasai,' but it was not intentional. We tried to push away and then we got caught in the current. Once we turned left, there was no going right."

The event ended with nine consecutive wins for the Eighth residential district and team Silver Bullets, 3/7, placed fourth. Shuta Kayo, the leader of the winning team, native of Henoko, said that Marines' participation is something indispensable and unique.

"This atmosphere is special to Henoko," said Kayo. "They help us, cleaning and doing everything together. The Marines here have been a part of our life ever since I can remember."

At the end of the event, the residents and service members carried away boats to the storage location, where the boats would be washed down with fresh water, dried, oiled and stored for next year's event.

According to Barclay, the Marines helped clean the beach prior to the event by picking up the trash and



The 4th Marine Regiment from Camp Schwab, left, heads off course after colliding with another boat, foreground right, while spectators look on at the Henoko Hare at Matsuda-no-hama beach in Henoko,

6月30日、名護市辺野古区松田の浜での辺野古区ハーレー大会で観客が見つめる中、他のボート(手前右)にぶつか った後、コース外へと向かうキャンプ・シュワブの第4海兵連隊チーム(左)。



opening ceremony for the Henoko Hare at Henoko Matsuda-no-hama beach, Nago City, June 30.

6月30日、名護市辺野古区松田の浜で開催された辺野古区ハーレー大会の開会式 を前に、辺野古区第11班の旗を持って整列する海兵隊参加者ら

A team from the 4th Marine Regiment from Camp Schwab comes back safely after going in the wrong Spectators laugh hard at the boat going in the wrong

seaweed. He said that the Marines are competitive, so when they heard

コース外へ向かったキャンプ・シュワブの第4海兵連隊チームが無事帰還。

"A lot of the Marines are only going to be here for six months or so. They'll remember the food and they'll remember times with their friends and training," said Barclay, to remember are being on a boat not happen back where they are from."

Two Henoko residents in their 70's

came to the event after hearing the loud cheers saying that they cannot live without Hare and because of the service members' participation, the event got livelier and more exciting.

"Even though there are concerns about the Camp's existence, there are good people and bad people on both ends, Japan and the U.S., we just have to enjoy ourselves. We've seen the Marines since we were little and they're a lively bunch, so we kind of miss them when they're not around."

about the event, they wanted to participate.

"But the things they're really going out here in the water and doing this very unique competition that does

Story and Photos by Yoshie Makiyama



伝

行

沖縄の伝統行事で

ョンとしてあろう、あるいは観光

置する辺野古区松田の浜で5年ぶり

た恒例行事だ。人名海の安全や五穀

間違った方向に進むボートに大笑いする観客たち。

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Aim High! Service Members Practice Eisa

Path

Eisa is an Okinawan culture and folk-dance centering on taiko drums. It is normally performed a few months before and after the Obon period in the lunar calendar, which falls in summer. When Obon approaches, young people in the district of each town who joined a group, normally called young adult association, practice Eisa for "michijune," a parade through the community that honors their ancestors' spirits with dance.

Some people believe that Eisa can be spread from Okinawa to the world not only through the Okinawans, but also through service members and their families.

Camps Foster and Lester have built a relationship with two local Eisa groups, Eguchi and Jaagaru Young Adult Associations from Chatan Town, through Eisa. They teach Marines and Sailors Eisa, so they can perform every year in front of audiences on base.

This tradition of Eisa performance on base is still fairly new. It started on Aug. 21, 2022, when Col. David M. Banning, the former commander for Camps Foster and Lester and current assistant chief of staff, Marine Corps Installations Pacific, G3, invited the Jaagaru Young Adult Association to perform "michijune." It was the first attempt at having a local Eisa group complete a drum performance while marching through the streets on

At that time, most of the spectators were military families residing on base. Some were not very familiar with this Okinawan culture. However, Okinawan specific culture making its way onto the base where military families reside is one method to teach U.S. residents about the host nation that they live in.

In March 2023, Banning created a new group with Marines and Sailors who were interested in Eisa to practice and perform Eisa themselves. They met twice a week for practice with teachers from Eguchi and Jaagaru Young Adult Associations.

"The first event was just to show them the dance, and now it's a chance to participate," said Banning, March 21, 2023. This was the next step in bringing his idea of sharing Eisa culture with the military community to life. "It is an attempt to try to make up for lost time, COVID pandemic, and to help show both sides (Okinawan and U.S. community) that we want to make these connections. We want to not just reconnect, but make our relationship stronger."

Two months later in May, the group performed for the first time in front of audiences on base. They performed one more time each both on and off base through the rest of the year.

The team again appeared in front of spectators, May 12, 2024, for their second Eisa festival with the full support from Eguchi and Jaagaru. The gates were open for Okinawan residents to come and enjoy the joint Eisa performances at the parking lot by the Camp Foster Exchange.

According to Hiroko Tomimura, Camps Foster and Lester community relations specialist, the U.S. team performed as guests and practiced themselves by recording their own performance until the end of the last year, then started practicing again in March this year with local groups. "It's like an Eisa Club," Tomimura said.

Due to the unforeseen events or leaving Okinawa for another station, not all the original members could participate in the practices or the actual events. However, the team added new members to join those who remained on the U.S. Forces in Okinawa Eisa Team. According to Tomimura, the average number for the team is around 30, including

councilor, who coordinated

children of the members.

Junichiro Hirata, Chatan Town

The U.S. Forces in Okinawa Eisa Team with Chatan Young Adult Federation march into the venue at the Foster Eisa festival on Camp Foster, May 12. 5月12日、キャン・フォスターで行われたエイサー祭りで、 寅舞しながら入場する北谷町青年連合会と在沖米会の



the events with Banning and Tomimura, said that members of the associations and the service members became friends and socialized together after exchanging contact information. "It is a good opportunity for those who are in the U.S. military to learn about Okinawan culture and the local atmosphere," said Hirata.

While practicing and performing together for over a year, the U.S. and local Eisa dancers built friendships.

"I still love doing this, and practice at home," said Master Gunnery Sgt. Cyrus Williams of 3rd Marine Logistics Group, a new member who came to Okinawa last July and participated in practice a few weeks before last September's "michijune." Due to the short practice period, he could not join the performance, but he continued practicing with them

Lance Cpl. Cristian Rafael Cardenas, with Headquarters and Support Battalion, has been with the team from the start. Although he could not participate in a few Eisa performances due to his work schedule, he said "it was just super fun last time and I'm

Continued on Page 14 ▶ EiSa



ぜひ参加

沖縄の文化であり

Eisa ▶ Continued from Page 16

back now. I'm super excited." Cardenas said he was happy when they started the Eisa practice. He described it as not just a practice but also a place to talk and interact with local residents, with a calm and friendly environment and the beating of the drums creating a great atmosphere.

Banning stated, "To participate in a cultural exchange program where you're not just interacting a little bit with the local community, but you're meeting the same people over and over again and making friends... that's kind of the whole goal."

Performance day

The festival started with the performance of the U.S. Forces in Okinawa Eisa Team with Chatan Young Adult Federation, consisting of some members from Eguchi and Jaagaru Young Adults Associations, followed by Kadena Firebird young drummers, then Eguchi Young Adult Association and Jaagaru Young Adult Association.

The U.S. Forces in Okinawa Eisa Team, with their own newly made uniforms and a flag, added a new song to the original five. Yuka Tamashiro, a repeat visitor from last year and a resident of Tobaru District, Chatan Town, said, "The drums are in sync with the music, and you can tell they've been practicing hard."

Issei Ameku, a vice leader of the Eguchi Young Adult Association, who has helped the U.S. team for over a year, stated that the service members are fast learners and are able to match the sounds. It seems that everyone is confident, relaxed, and having fun dancing without looking around at other performers.

"Even with the new song, each one of them had learned their own parts and was able to perform quite fast." After the performance of the U.S. Forces in Okinawa Eisa Team, Banning introduced instruments and the roles of the performers to the spectators as well as the differences

between traditional and creative

Eisa, "sosaku-Eisa." Creative Eisa

is the drum dance applied with

modern music and with their own styles, which they would see in the performance of Kadena Firebird young drummers. On the contrary, traditional Eisa is played by young adult associations, or "seinenkai," in the districts, called "ku," in every town. The U.S. team performed the traditional Eisa with Eguchi and Jaagaru Eisa groups.

"I hope that both sides can see that an event like this is something that we can bond over," said Banning. "Very good music, interesting historical cultural dances. I think it helps bring each side together and expose them to something that they don't get to interact with every day." Ameku agreed with Banning's note, saying that no matter what may have happened in the past, we all mingle together, even though our races and cultures are different, at the same place and with the same feelings which we share is a very good thing.

"I had a blast. Awesome time! I'm glad I was able to practice and see the effort come to fruition," said Williams after the performance. He and his two children, who also joined the team with him, smiled and said, "We are ready for the next one!"

Aim high

Toru Yonaha, a Ryukyuan classical musician, as a Jikata, singer and sanshin player from the Chatan Town Young Adult Federation, just returned in April from Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival in San Francisco where, as a guest, he saw a Yosakoi dance performance, dressed

in elaborate costumes with Naruko instruments. He said it would be a dream come true if they could perform Eisa themselves there with the same members: those service members and their families, who performed at Camp Foster Eisa festival.

"Eisa, regardless of the origin of the performers, is already there!" exclaimed Yonaha. "If I think of world expansion of Eisa, I want to support this type of event as much as I can. As long as we communicate and exchange our cultures, we should be able to understand each other better."

As Yonaha's words were proven, there was an American who participated in the event from the U.S.. Despite it being Mother's Day, Christi Hall, the spouse of a Marine stationed at Camp Hansen, and a mother of three, visited the island just to perform Eisa.

Due to her husband's relocation, her family was in the midst of moving to the U.S., but when she heard about Eisa restarting in March, she wanted to join. Since then, she has been back and forth between the U.S. and Okinawa.

"I'm making time to do this because it's important," said Hall. She joined the team when Banning sent an email to all his Marines last March and her husband asked her if she was interested in participating. "I consider it a privilege because I'm an American, and this is Okinawa. It's very much an honor to do this and be a part of this culture."

The second Eisa festival at Camp Foster had more than 1000 Japanese visitors, according to the Provost Marshal Office. Ten Marines and Sailors and 16 family members showed all of their hard work with a memorable performance.

Members of the U.S. Forces in Okinawa Eisa Team show off their jumping

5月12日、キャンプ・フォスターで開催されたフォスターエイサー祭りで、ジャンプ

performance at the Foster Eisa festival on Camp Foster, May 12.

を披露する在沖米会のメンバー。

Story and Photos by Yoshie Makiyama



center of the venue for "Kachashii," a festive folk dance with hand movement showing happiness, at the end of the eisa event, May 12 5月12日、エイサーイベント締め恒例のチャーシーで演舞場中央に集まる参

実はまだかな

関

米軍と地

Camp Courtney and Hamahiga's Untold Story of Community Relations

very year, on the Okinawa Memorial Day, June 23, Okinawan people remember the loss of over **200,000** people in the Battle of Okinawa. People gather for the memorial service at Okinawa Peace Memorial Park in Itoman City, the southernmost city in Okinawa, and it is broadcasted Japan-wide. At the same time, in Hamahiga, Uruma City, a tiny island off the Katsuren peninsula on the east coast of central Okinawa, residents also gather to mourn.

On June 23, 2024, Hama district residents gathered for a compared to mainland Okinawa. The island's water memorial service. Three U.S. Marines stood among them, dressed in their Service "C" uniforms for the formal occasion. Col. Eric A. Meador and Sgt. Maj. Antonio G. Lopez, the camp commander and sergeant major of Camps Courtney and McTureous, stood with Sgt. Andres Fernandez, a data systems administrator with G-6, III Marine Expeditionary Force, to represent the Marines.

"Civilians as bystanders are a byproduct of those injuries and things that happened," said Meador as a student of warfighting in history. "That's why I think it's important for the Okinawan Memorial Day to remember the civilians, and particularly these monuments."

In front of Meador, a monument for the local villagers and a monument for Col. Kermit H. Shelly, a former commanding officer of 3rd Force Service Support Regiment, today's 3rd Marine Logistics Group, stood next and chocolate," said Chie Oshikurane, a 91-year-old to each other on the hillside of a Hama Park.

Local residents quietly hold a memorial service for their fellow villagers every year and the Marines from Camp

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Courtney also join them, not only to pay their respects to the villagers who had fallen during the war, but also their comrade who made a great impact on the area in 1967 to his death in 1968.

During his tour, Shelly initiated and worked to improve the infrastructure of Hamahiga by building schools, houses and a church. The island didn't have a bridge vet to connect to Okinawa itself. Life lines such as running water and electricity were behind on this island reservoir system that Shelly built is still in use today.

Mineo Maehama, mayor of Hama District, gave Meador incense to place them in the pot to cleanse the area and their spirits in front of the monument filled with fruits and flowers. Fruits and flowers were offered by the

"It communicates the culture of the Okinawan people that are very giving, very hospitable," said Meador. "Not only are they doing it for the memory of their fallen, but also the monument for Col. Shelly."

The story of Shelly has only been passed down through word of mouth, and as the time goes on, fewer and fewer residents are able to share their memories of Shelly's contributions to the Hama area.

"Americans came to the playground and gave us clothes resident. Although her memory is hazy, she said that she still remembered that every Saturday the Marines brought food, clothes and other necessary items for

Col. Eric A. Meador, camp commander of Camps Courtney and McTureous,

commanding officer of 3rd Force Service Support Regiment, today's 3rd Marine

Logistics Group, on the Okinawa Memorial Day at Hamahiga Island, June 23.

6月23日、沖縄慰霊の日、浜比嘉島で行われた慰霊祭で、現在の第3海兵兵站群であ る第3戦力支援連隊の元司令官カーミット・H・シェリー大佐の記念碑に書かれた文

reads the words on a monument for the Col. Kermit H. Shelly, a former

字を読むコートニー&マクトリアス基地司令官、エリック・A・メドアー大佐

→ the villagers.

Itsuo Oshikurane, 62 years old, the son of Chie Oshikurane, after listening to his mother's talk, said when he was still an elementary student, every resident gathered at the community center to receive supplies from the Marines. With them giving flour and oil, the villagers enjoyed "tempura" on those days. He also recalled that at Christmas, Santa Claus came down by helicopter, and they held a barbecue and celebrated

Col. Eric A. Meador, center, camp commander of Camps Courtney and McTureous, talks to Mineo Maehama, mayor of Hama District at the memorial service, June 23. 6月23日、浜比 嘉島での慰霊祭にて、浜区の前浜嶺男区長と話をするコートニー& マクトリアス基地司令官、エリック・A・メドアー大佐(中央)

and McTureous, offers incense at the monument for the faller villagers of Hama area during the Battle of Okinawa on the Okinawa Memorial Day, June 23. 6月23日、沖縄慰霊の日、浜区の 沖縄戦戦没者慰霊碑に献香するコートニー&マクトリアス基地のア ントニオ・G・ロペス最先任上級曹長。

Christmas together with the elementary school band on the playground.

Meador stated that Shelly's lasting contribution to the Hama area seemed to still be remembered by the residents, and it shows that the Marines seemed to have a good relationship with people then and now. "Our profession is not always just fighting. It is helping our host here and helping other folks," said Meador.

Story and Photos by Yoshie Makiyama

2024年 9月号 — 11

.S. Marine Corps Camp Schwab

他の2区は個別

ずが待って

の住民は1956巾議会議員の古波 の関係

From front left to right, Col. Erick T. Clark, former camp commander of Camp

Schwab, his wife Jane, Col. Richard S. Barclay, new camp commander for Camp Schwab, and his wife Kelly, listen to the remarks the local leaders give at a farewell party for Clarks at the Henoko Community Center, May 27.

辺野古区公民館で5月27日に行われたシュワブ基地司令官送別会で、区長らの挨拶 に耳を傾ける、前列左から、前シュワブ基地司令官エリック・T・クラーク大佐と妻ジェ ーンさん、新基地司令官リチャード・S・バークレイ大佐と妻ケリーさん。

"There have been incidents and trouble, but

not all the Marines are at fault," said Hajime Nishikawa, a Henoko resident, who has lived in Henoko for 48 years. "We have to cherish our friendship even though there may be some negatives. If we dwell, we cannot get ahead. We need to think in positive terms."

community is proof of it.

Col. Richard S. Barclay, the new

is on his fourth tour of Okinawa.

Schwab has changed a lot since

Even though he noticed that Camp

2002, when he was stationed there

Program, he said that the niceness

of the people around the Henoko

area and the relationships has not

According to Futoshi Kohagura,

mayor and

of Nago City

in Henoko

formed a

friendship

with Camp

Schwab.

committee in

1956 and they

have deepened

their relationship

current member

Council, villagers

Henoko/Schwab

another former Henoko district

changed.

as a member of the Unit Deployment

camp commander for Camp Schwab,

Clark stated that the bond was built upon for over half a century and he was happy to have been part of the long line of great relationships. He looks forward to such relationships continuing for many years.

Barclay after attending the party. "Because of what Eric and Jean (Clark's wife) have done for the last couple of years, I can tell that it's something that we look forward to progressing and continuing in their manner."

Story and Photos by Yoshie Makiyama

in Okinawa and its neighboring community in Nago City has a long history. Ever since the camp became a permanent installation for the Marine Corps in 1959, the people of the former Kushi Villages have shared their lives with the Marines.

The closest district to Camp Schwab is Henoko, then Toyohara, south of Henoko, then Kushi, further south. They are referred to as three districts of Kube for their school district.

According to history introduced

on the home page of Henoko District Office, part of Camp Schwab was built upon the current Henoko District. Leaders of this farming village agreed to provide their land for building a military base for regional development under the economic footing of the U.S.

military, and construction began in 1957.

Over time, Camp Schwab was recognized as part of Henoko's community and given a flag that designated Schwab as the 11th residential section of Henoko. Marines have participated in festivals, such as Henoko Hare, tug of war, Okinawa-style sumo wrestling, sports day, and various cultural exchange programs, and have built friendly bonds with local residents.

On May 27, Henoko community leaders hosted a farewell party for Col. Erick T. Clark, former camp commander of Camp Schwab, at the Henoko Community Center, to express their appreciation for the role he played in strengthening the relationship between Camp Schwab and the surrounding community for last two years.

time, all three districts joined in on the tradition. Until this year, the other two districts individually said farewell to the commanders.

Connecting to the Next Generation, Commu-

"Whenever the next commander

party for the outgoing commander

to wish them good luck. We also

want to welcome the incoming

commander and to get to know

each other as well," said Shigeru

"We want all commanders to take

The party has been a tradition in

decades, but this year for the first

Henoko District alone for over three

good memories back to their home

Shimabukuro, Henoko district mayor.

comes along, we hold a farewell

nities: Henoko and Camp Schwab

countries."

Shimabukuro stated that Henoko and Camp Schwab have been good neighbors for 65 years, and he has always felt that their relationship is mutual and this kind of relationship is unique in Okinawa.

"While there are so many things that separate people in this world; different languages, different countries, different jobs, different lifestyles, the one thing that brings us all together is friendship," said Clark.

Munekatu Kayo, one of the former district mayors of Henoko, said that the idea of caring about the community has been passed down with each successive commander.

Henoko community leaders host a farewell party for Col. Erick T. Clark, former camp

辺野古区の地元有志が5月27日、辺野古区公民館でシュワブ基地の前基地司令官エリック・T・

commander of Camp Schwab, at the Henoko Community Center, May 27

クラーク大佐の送別会を開いた。

Their interaction with the local

"I've got big shoes to fill," said

Camp Foster Opens Doors to Families on Workers' Day

nen you drive Route 58 in Okinawa, you see fences border that separates the U.S. military bases from the neighboring Okinawan communities. There are many bases in Okinawa, but to some local residents, the bases are a mystery. To cross the fence is an immigration-like process. Until you are inside, all you know about the base is what you can see through the fence or what you get through something like the media.

However, there are people who can step inside the fence every day. They are local workers employed with a Master Labor Contract (MLC) or Indirect Hire Agreement (IHA) to work on base with military personnel.

Each year, Camp Foster holds a MLC/IHA Appreciation Day and opens its gates for workers to bring their families and friends. It was started in 2013 to express gratitude for their valuable contributions to the Marine Corps in Okinawa.

"Back then, after the success of the first try, the leadership hoped to make it an annual occurrence," said Hiroko Tomimura, community relations specialist for Camps Foster and Lester. She has been assisting camp commanders and translating during briefs at the Camp Foster Theater.

This year, Col. David M. Banning, former camp commander of Camps Foster and Lester and current assistant chief of staff, G3, and Sgt. Maj. Timothy D. Anderson, sergeant major of Headquarters and Support Battalion, Marine Corps Installations Pacific, appeared on American Forces Network radio a week before the MLC/IHA Appreciation Day. They announced the event and encouraged Japanese employees to bring their families and friends on base and to their offices.

Banning stated on air that this is a chance to show their family members their workplace, introduce them to their co-workers, and show them what they do. He was concerned that because most MLC/ IHA workers do not have escort privileges to bring their family members onto base, it may act as a divide between what they do at work and the rest of their life off

"The importance is that the U.S. bases rely so heavily on the MLC and IHA workforce," said Banning. "But sometimes there might not be a high level of understanding with their families about the kind of work they do on the base, and how important it is for U.S.-Japan

To keep the audience with young children more attentive, they prepared stickers with the Marine Corps Installations Pacific logo as right gave a big smile when they received their prize.

"I want to thank the families for supporting members on base," said Anderson after the game. "It is very important to us that your

Over the years since the first attempt, the battalion has made a few changes to the event at the theater. Instead of having a presentation, this year's MLC/IHA day at the theater, May 3, 2024, started with entertaining activities. Banning and Anderson asked participants to give the answers to a few questions written on flash cards, such as their specialties or their spouses' names.

prizes. Children who got an answer





Children show the stickers with the Marine Corps Installations Pacific logo that they received as prizes for participating in the games, May 3. 5月3日、ゲームや質問の参加賞として受け取った景品のロゴステ

Children participate in the games during the local national employee day at the Camp Foster

5月3日、フォスター基地映画館で開催された基地従業員感謝デーにてゲームに参加する子供達。

relationship," additionally he said, "This is a chance for us to share that with them so that they understand how important their family members work is to the alliance."

Camp Foster has the largest population among the U.S. Marine Corps Bases in Okinawa. It spreads out to four cities and towns: Chatan Town, Kitanakagusuku Village, Ginowan City and Okinawa City. Of all the Marine bases, Camp Foster is the only one to open its gates to local workers in order to bring their families and friends to show them around. Some employees live in distant areas but still work at Camp Foster.

family members are employed here because it helps us do all the things that the Marine Corps needs to do, and without you, we could not do those things."

Banning then took questions from the participants. He gave a sticker as an award to the first speaker, praising their braveness to speak up.

When one child asked Banning "with what kind of feeling do you approach your work?" Tomimura thought it was a difficult question but Banning replied that it was actually a simple question. "My Japanese staff cooperate and are always kind, and everyone is

Continued on Page 4 ▶ Family Day

Newcomers' Orientation Welcomes, Educates Base Workers in Okinawa

very year, thousands of people apply for jobs on the U.S. military bases via the Labor Management Office in Okinawa. Whether they are seeking a stable and secure job or a place to improve their English language skills, there are always challenges and benefits.

Due to their unique circumstance as employees of the Japanese government working for the U.S. Forces, the Civilian Human Resources Office of Marine Corps Base Butler, Marine Corps Installations Pacific, holds a one-day New Employee Orientation. Known as NEO, it provides employees information and knowledge to develop understandings of the work environment, and establish a familiarization of the work relationship as "base" employees.

"We used to hold the NEO in our classroom: however. there was a restriction on the number of participants due to the size of the room," said Ayako Higa, personnel clerk of CHRO Workforce Development. "We now conduct this orientation at the theater twice a fiscal year to provide an opportunity for many new employees, including existing employees, to participate in this training."

On June 13, 2024, 75 employees attended the orientation held at Camp Foster Theater, of which seven were refreshers. According to Higa, CHRO categorized new employees as those who were hired between Oct. 2023 and April 2024 and were unable to attend the orientation last November. Refreshers are those who have already served as full-time employees in other U.S. Forces branches and transferred to the Marine Corps, or those who have worked as base employees for many years but applied to participate as part of refresher training.

Yuka Konno, counter attendant at Camp Schwab Beach Head Restaurant, who attended with two co-workers, stated that it is easy to work on base compared to the off base agencies. She hoped to pick up English while working as a base employee.

The NEO covered the mission of working on base, outlines of Marine Corps Installations Pacific, and the respective duties of each division of the Marine Corps. It also talks about organizational functions of the CHRO, and available employee services, policies and regulations, prevention of sexual and power harassment, and safety and fire protection programs. According to Airi Kaneken, employee developement officer of CHRO Workforce Development, they recently added a cross-cultural training, talking about the cultural differences in systems and manners.

"In Okinawa, the jobs on base are highly competitive, and while approximately 4,000 people apply to LMO each year, the Marine Corps only hires a narrow pool of only 100 to 150 as permanent employees," remarked Junko Mae Taira, labor specialist, CHRO. "I believe that all of you who are here today are receiving this orientation because you are hired for your skills, experiences and efforts that you have

cultivated up to this point. Please have confidence and keep up with your hard work in your new jobs."

Taira explained the difference between the employment system: Master Labor Contracts and Indirect Higher Agreement. The MLC was signed in 1957, followed by the IHA in 1961, both by the U.S. and

Japanese governments. They were concluded under the Status of Forces Agreement of 1952, which was updated in 1960.

Although their names are different, employment status, treatment, and benefits are almost the same. The only major difference is that dependents of military personnel or service members are not allowed to be hired as MLC. The ratio for MLC/IHA in the Marine Corps on Okinawa is about 85% MLCs and 15% IHAs.

Izumi Irabu, employee and staffing technician, explained the types of employment, such as limitedterm, permanent, temporary and post-retirement. She then explained the salary, promotions, social security, and benefits. Because most of the workplaces require English communication skills, the employees' English proficiency test results are used to categorize employment opportunities.

To know their own jobs well, Irabu informed attendees to read through their position descriptions (PD) and task lists, which employees should be given by their supervisors at the time of their onboarding. The task list shows what the employee in that position does. Irabu told audience members if they were not aware of their PD and task lists, they needed to check with their supervisors. If they have any concerns on their task list, they can consult with their bosses since it is the supervisor's responsibility to maintain the accuracy of the task list and communicate it to employees.

CHRO staff then talked about the work schedules, including holidays and leave, and rules and procedures, such as employee's code of conduct and harassment within the workplace. There are numerous types of leave, whether paid or not. CHRO explained each type of leave in

Azusa Matsuoka, administrative specialist, command element, III Marine Expeditionary Force, attended NEO because she wanted to learn the rules and procedures for the Marine Corps, saying the instructions and procedures vary depending on the branch you work for.

Although Matsuoka started working for the Marine Corps last year, she has been a MLC for about 24 years, originally hired for the Navy and transferred to Army before her probation period was up in Navy. She recalled that CHRO for Navy and Marine were together back then, and the Army had a similar orientation hosted by the Air Force.

6月13日、フォスター基地映画 New local national employees

of Marine Corps Installations instructor's brief at the new employee orientation at the 業員ら。 Camp Foster Theater, June 13

館での新入社員研修会にて、 講師の説明に耳を傾ける米海 兵隊太平洋基地の新人基地従

ションの中

→ "No matter where you work, all the local national employees should be treated the same," said Matsuoka. "But in reality, each branch has its own form and rules and procedures. Hence, I need to know the right things in the Marine Corps."

She expressed concern about the training that if you are really new to the military working environment, you would probably be at a loss because of all the special terminology, and be afraid to raise your hand for questions since you may not even know if your question is relevant.

"However, it was nice to be able to attend this as a refresher as well as a new one," said Matsuoka. "With only an employee handbook, it is difficult to decide. On top of that, it was a great help knowing about PD. Now I know that we can review it when we are full of problems."

At the beginning of the session for the conduct, Tetsushi Okuhira, employee management relations technician, said, "We want everyone here to stay focused until the end." He explained the types of remedial actions which would be taken for employee violations or problematic behavior. He stated that a lot of violations, such as tardiness, can be avoided if you are always carefull.

Okuhira, however, also gave several cases as examples which occurred due to the cultural differences, reminding the attendees that their supervisors are mostly from different cultures. Even suggesting to a supervisor something with a good intention sometimes can be taken as disobedience to orders. Physical violence, such as kicking things, will be taken seriously.

が挙げ、上司のほ文化の違いから

"After 10 to 20 years from now on until you retire, I don't want you to see us," Okuhira said and continued, "As a subject matter for investigative hearings for disciplinary action against employees."

During the talk about rules and workplace policy, CHRO stated how not to be either a victim or a harasser by showing how to prevent potential topics of such harassment in advance.

Elena Shimabukuro, information and editorial specialist, Communication Strategy and Operations, MCIPAC, became as a MLC last October and transferred to the current section in May, 2024, was impressed that there is a call line in case of sexual and power harassment and surprised that the brief covered micro-management issues as well.

"They said that even though we are Japanese, we are not treated as outsiders, but we are needed." Shimabukuro continued, "Which reaffirmed to me that I am glad I came here. Human rights are protected."

During the introduction of the safety and occupational health program, Jun Shimabukuro, safety program administrator and general safety and health manager, MCIPAC Safety Office, started with the history of the industrial revolution and how it related to the development of safety awareness worldwide. He stated the Marine Corps in Okinawa have been on a mission to ensure the safety and health of its employees and to create a better work environment.

Shimabukuro discussed Japanese and U.S. occupational health and safety laws and Marine Corps safety regulations,

Continued on Page 4 ▶ **NEO**

6 — September 2024

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その目

NEO ▶ Continued from Page 5

explaining that Japanese employees are under a joint management system shared by both Japan and the United States. He also stated that though they are on base, they must comply with Japanese laws and regulations.

In his 50-minute-long presentation, Shimabukuro covered unique rules to Marine Corps Bases; during Colors in which both national anthems played, everyone outside has to stop whatever they are engaged in; when a bus is stopped, you cannot pass it; at a stop sign, the first vehicle to stop proceeds first, or the right side of the road has priority if they stop at the same time.

Shimabukuro also talked about work-related accidents, giving examples and detailed explanations of what to do in the event of an accident. He also mentioned the obligation to report to the supervisor in the event of such an accident, including accidents while commuting, and what to do in case of an emergency like a natural disaster.

Yuta Nakamatsu, a new hire as an auto mechanic, Motor Transport Branch, Marine Corps Base Butler, started in April, 2024. His previous job off base was also an auto mechanic. Although he heard the training was about harassment from his shop seniors before he came to NEO, he still hoped that the training would introduce facilities on base. However, he felt relieved after hearing the safety brief that the safety awareness in the Marine Corps in Okinawa is high and the environment for the workers is good.

"I was just inspired by the safety brief," said Elena

Shimabukuro of COMMSTRAT. She has felt protected on base as an employee even before listening to the safety brief, but now she said that she confirmed it once again.

Taira from CHRO explained to the attendees that MLC/IHA employees provide the workforce to help the U.S. Forces in Japan to accomplish its mission which make them crucial to both the security of Japan and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. She hoped that all of them will take pride in the fact that each of them contributes to the safety of Japan through their daily efforts, and that they will serve the Marine Corps until retirement, if

Story and Photos by Yoshie Makiyama

In the fire prevention session, Marine Corps Installations Pacific Fire and Emergency Services showed two types of fire alarms, and explained the differences between Japanese and American fire extinguishers. The speaker emphasized the number for the emergency call is different from on or off bases; 911 from on base and 098-911-1911 from off base. Attendees were informed that the voltage on base is 125 volts versus 100 volts in Japan, and also type B plugs can be seen on base and if a third-round grounding wire on a plug is broken, they should not use it.

年6月13日、 今回は2023 ーショ 昨年11月 -基地内映 多くの LMOに応募してきますが、海事は競争倍率が高く、年間約4

安全と

「沖縄県内においては基地従業

合され、日米地とれらは52年の後の

ほとんどの職場

一司から渡されるべき職種自身の仕事をよく知るた

約24年になる。当時は海軍と海終わる前に陸軍に異動したため、めは海軍で採用され、海軍での

各支部には

特殊な用語が多く戸惑うだ基地で働く環境が本当に初 知識を知っておく必要がある

平良順子民間人人事部人事課 労務専門職

6月13日、フォスター基地映画

館での新人研修で基地従業員

の任務や基地概要を説明する

A slide shows a Marine guide the traffic for the safety of the base employees at Camp Foster Theater, June 12. 6月13日、フォスター基地映画館 での新人研修にて、米海兵隊太平洋基地安全部が海 兵隊の安全に関する取り組みを紹介。

Family Day ▶ Continued from Page 8

working toward the same goal," said Banning in fluent Japanese. "I work every day in a pleasant mood."

The event offered the visitors a range of activities and displays, including the activities with Camp Foster leadership at the theater, a bounce house, a giant inflatable soccer dart, K-9 demonstration, military equipment displays, and some other activities.

Yuka Yamashiro, niece of Mika Nakamichi, budget analyst, G8, MCIPAC, arrived late with her children, ages one and three, for the first time. When Banning agreed to take a picture with them, Yamashiro was surprised. She thought the military and civilians were different. She did not expect military people to be friendly.

Also surprised by the English conversation at the food court and at her aunt's office, Yamashiro said, "Her boss is really a foreigner, and they really speak English! It's like a

petit overseas trip." Next year, she said, she would participate in the MLC/IHA day from the beginning.

According to Tomimura, the date was set to match the Japanese long holidays, but without disturbing Children's Day, and this year nearly 650 MLC/IHA with their families and friends, including people from Nago City and even mainland Japan, entered Camp Foster. Although employees need to take leave for a few hours or a whole day, Tomimura hopes even more workers take advantage of this event as an opportunity to bring their families and friends.

Sara Omi, an administrative specialist, the External and Foreign Affairs office, G7, MCIPAC, attended the theater event with her friends from mainland and was also present at the radio show as a representative of MLC employees, said that, for the workplace, having the employee's family members visit the office helps build trust

and better communication with supervisors and U.S. counterparts. In turn, this will lead to a cycle of appreciation for the work environment, increased motivation among employees, and improved efficiency in daily operations.

Junko Mae Taira, labor

specialist, Civilian Human

Resources Office, briefs

new employees at Foster

Shoko Jones who brought her husband, son and her sister with her children to the event said, "This kind of event allows us to bring them (to base and the office), it makes me want to work even harder." She previously worked at Camp Kinser as an MLC, and transferred a year ago to Camp Foster's Installation Personnel Administration Center.

"My previous workplace didn't have this kind of program, so I thought it was interesting, and I am also looking forward to showing my family my new workplace," said Jones. "It's nice for them to know what I do and know that there is this kind of job as well so they can tell their friends about it."

Story and Photos by Yoshie Makiyama

4 — September 2024

それを従業員に伝えるのは上司あると訴えた。業務内容の正確

2024年 9月号 — 3

|司の責任だな

れぞれの休暇につい体暇には数多くのなさなどが話された。

もくじ

- 「大きな輪」編集担当より お別れのご挨拶 / イベント情報
- 在沖米海兵隊、日本人基地従業 員へ新人研修を実施
- キャンプ・フォスター、日本人基地 従業員の家族に門戸を開く
- 辺野古とシュワブ: 次へ繋ぐ、地域へ繋ぐ
- コートニー基地と浜比嘉島の 知られざる地域交流
- 目標は高く! エイサー楽しむ在沖米軍関係者
- ハーレーが帰ってきた! 地元伝統行事を楽しむ海兵隊
- 普天間海兵隊、宜野湾ハーリー を体験 (関連写真ページ22)



from Chatan Young Adult Federation perform Eisa at the Foster Eisa Festival on Camp Foster, May 12, 2024. (Story page 16)

2024年5月12日、フォスター基地で行われたフォスター エイサー祭りにて、北谷町青年連合会のエイサーメン バーと共にエイサーを披露する在沖米会の演舞者ら (記事13ページ)

ig Circle 大きな輪

Dear readers,

I apologize for the short notice but this is my final issue. I have accepted another job as of Aug. 1. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to our readers for your support.

While covering events, I met a lot of people and heard many stories. Most of the time, what I heard was something I didn't expect, which reminded me once again of the importance of throwing out assumptions and stereotypes. This was really my dream job as a journalism student, and I always tried to keep in mind to be "fair and accurate" when writing. There may have been some shortcomings, but your feedback was really

I hope you have enjoyed the magazine as much as I enjoyed making it. Please look forward to the next chapter of the Big Circle.

Thank you!! FAREWELL Yoshie Makiyama _{読者の皆様} お別れのご挨拶

急なお知らせで申し訳ございません。私事となりますが、今号が 私が編集担当として手掛ける最後の「大きな輪」となりました。8月1 日を持ちまして在沖米陸軍のお仕事に携わることとなりました。読 者の皆様にお伝えできる最後の機会となり、この紙面上にてご挨拶

「大きな輪」の制作では、本当に楽しい思い出しかありません。イ ベントを取材しながら、たくさんの人に出会い、たくさんのお話を聞 くことができました。そのお話の大半が、私の想定外のもので、思い 込みや固定概念を捨てることの大切さを幾度となく思い知らされ たものです。「大きな輪」はジャーナリズム生だった私にとっては夢 のような仕事であり、編集にあたっては、「Fair(公平)かつAccurate(正確に)」をいつも心がけるよう努めました。至らない点もあったか と思いますが、皆様からのご意見やご感想は本当に心強いもので した。5年間の皆様のご支援、ご協力に心より感謝申し上げます。

最後になりますが、私が「大きな輪」の制作を楽しんでいたのと 同様に、読者の皆様もこの雑誌を楽しんでいただけていたのなら 幸いです。これからの「大きな輪」の新章にご期待ください。

5年分の感謝の気持ちを込めて、Thank you。。。

Upcoming Events

Futenma Flight Line Fair ・ 普天間フライトラインフェア 日時/date and time

10月5日 & 6日 13:00~21:00

Courtney Festival・コートニー・フェスティバル 日時/date and time

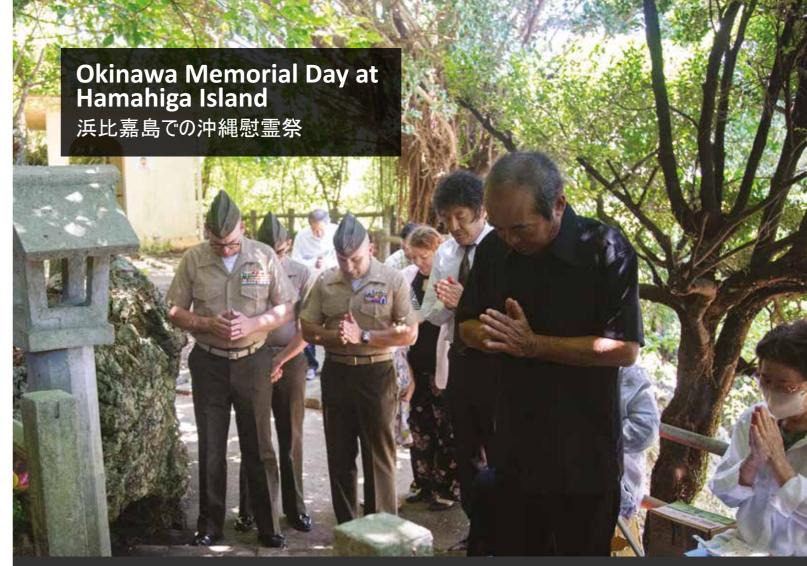
10月26日 & 27日 13:00~21:00

Comic Con Okinawa ・コミコン沖縄 日時、場所/date and time, location

12月8日 10:00~17:00、キャンプ・フォスター

フリーマーケット最新情報

電話:098-970-5829(英語のみ)と下記のURLからご確認を https://www.japan.marines.mil/Event/



Residents and Marines from Camps Courtney and McTureous pray for the deceased villagers from the Battle of Okinawa during an Okinawa Memorial Day ceremony in Hamahiga Island, Uruma City, June 23, 2024.

Col. Eric A. Meador, camp commander, left, and Sgt. Maj. Antonio G. Lopez, sergeant major of the Camps, center, attended the memorial service with the local residents to remember not only to commemorate the villagers who had fallen during the war, but also their comrade who made a great impact on the area in 1967 to his death in 1968. For the detailed story, see page 12.

2024年6月23日、沖縄慰霊の日、うるま市浜比嘉島にて沖縄戦で命を落とした村民の冥福を祈る地元住民とコートニー&マクトリウス基地の海兵隊員ら。 同基地司令官のエリック・A・メドアー大佐(左)とアントニオ・G・ロペス最先任上級曹長(中央)は、先の戦争で倒れた村人たちだけでなく、1967年から 1968年に亡くなるまでの2年間、この地域に大きな影響を与えた先人の冥福をも祈るために参列。詳しい内容は12ページへ。

〒901-2300

北中城村石平

在沖縄
米海兵隊基地

BLDG.1,

COMMSTRAT

(UNIT 35001)

大きな輪

編集係

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(098)970-

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各基地渉外官へのお問合せ

基地渉外官は、在沖縄米海兵隊各基地と地域 社会との架け橋です。各基地の渉外プログラム については下記までお問合せください。電話で のお問合わせは以下の通り。メールでご連絡さ れる場合は、MCBPAC.MCBBUTLER.O@usmc. milまで。件名の欄にお問合わせ先のキャンプ 名をご記入ください。

キンザー	普天間	コートニー
(浦添市)	(宜野湾市)	(うるま市)
[交換]	[交換]	098-954-956
098-970-5555	098-970-5555	シュワブ
[内線]	[内線]	(名護市)
637-1728	636-2022	[交換]
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