When the past comes crashing into the present

By Chaplain Jack L. Carver

The headline of a recent news story included the words "New York," "flight," "airline" and "emergency." I did not wish to read further. I'm speaking of the initial media report involving US Airways Flight 1549, which on Jan. 15 was forced to land in the Hudson River after encountering engine problems. Images from the carnage and traumatic incidents that occurred on Sept. 11, 2001 came to mind before I could blink an eye.

Eventually, though, I read the story. In reading the story, I learned the event was not a terrorist or hijack attempt. Instead, I was touched by the heroics of a pilot and his crew in making a split-second decision that saved the lives of 156 passengers. To read about the rescue teams who immediately appeared on the scene to ensure the safety of all the passengers and crew was a heart-warming experience. I was happy I decided to read the story, after all.

In reflecting about this experience, it dawned upon me that if I had not read the story, I would have missed the reassurance that human beings continue to rise to the occasion in courageous, selfless ways. The choice not to read the story after seeing the terms which connected me with a negative experience would have left me without the blessing of learning something positive.

It occurs to me that past challenges often hinder our ability to see the potential good of the present.

A friend recently shared with me the story of how he and his wife met. Prior to meeting his wife, he stated he asked several ladies to accompany him to dinner, but they declined his offers. Hurt and preoccupied by the pain of feeling rejected, he went through life trying to "reject the rejection." Hence, he decided never to ask anyone else on a date. The pain of the past kept him from enjoying present opportunities. Eventually, however, he was introduced to a beautiful and intelligent young lady who he asked to go for a date, and eventually married.

Often, it's good to learn from history and not repeat past mistakes. That does not mean that we have to allow the past to haunt the present breath you take, though. Life changes. New people come into our lives. We grow. We become smarter, stronger and more tolerant. We develop new skills to help us handle life's complications.

From my religious tradition, I gain much perspective by focusing on the portion of the Lord's Prayer which states, "Give us this day our daily bread." Living for this day, as opposed to the past, gives me fresh a perspective of the opportunities I encounter.

Head's Up Yokosuka!

Community Announcements

Indoor Window Insulation Kit Now Available – The Housing Self-Help Center has the vinyl sheeting available for all residents as a do-it-yourself project to help stop cold drafts and prevent frosty windows/doors. There are three sizes available to fit townhouses and towers and easily mounts to the aluminum or painted frame by using double-faced tape, scissors and a hair dryer. Call 243-9067 for more information.

YOSC Charities Season Begins – The Yokosuka Officer's Spouse's Club (YOSC) charities season has begun. Applications are now available for 2009 charitable contributions. Applications are available at Second Hand Rose Thrift Shop, Takusan Treasures Gift Shop, the Officer's Club foyer or by e-mailing to yosccharities2009@yahoo.com. Deadline for application submissions is Feb. 11. E-mail to yosccharities2009@yahoo.com for more information.

American Red Cross Community Courses and Training – If you'd like to become a volunteer, register to attend one of our volunteer orientations held the first and third Wednesday of every month at 10 a.m. Call 243-7490 for more information or register by visiting our office located on the 2nd floor of the Community Center.

Japanese Imperial Navy Monument Missing – CFAY Public Works Department Environmental Division is looking for information regarding a missing monument which was constructed to remember the establishment of the Japanese Naval Shipyard. This monument was constructed in 1915 and was last seen about 10 years ago at the Chief Petty Officer's (CPO) Club which used to be the headquarters of the Japanese Naval Shipyard. It could have been possibly removed, relocated or disposed of during an air conditioning replacement project at the CPO Club where the monument was located. If anyone knows the whereabouts of this monument, please call 243-5136.

CFAY Qualified Recycling Program – The CFAY Qualified Recycling Program (QRP) recycles various items such as paper products, scrap metals, used vehicles and etc. Customers are able to dispose of items at no cost and QRP will be able to make a profit once a new QRP recycable materials contract is awarded. Profits are used to pay for approved base improvement projects. Call 243-6592 for more information.

Disney celebrates U.S. Military with free admission to U.S. parks

By The Walt Disney Company

As Disney Parks ask "What will you celebrate?" and invite guests to turn their personal milestones into magical family vacations in 2009, America's military personnel will have one more reason to celebrate: Free multi-day admission to Disney's U.S. theme parks.

With the "Disney's Armed Forces Salute" offer, active and retired U.S. military personnel, including active members of the United States Coast Guard and activated members of the National Guard or reservists, can enjoy complimentary, multi-day admission into Disney's U.S. theme parks, great rates at select Walt Disney World and Disneyland Resort hotels and additional special ticket offers for family members and friends.

"For so many of the men and women who serve in our U.S. military, time together with their families is cause enough for celebration," said chairman of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts Jay Rasulo. "We are grateful for their service and hope 'Disney's Armed Forces Salute' will allow our troops to create wonderful, magical memories with their family and friends."

At Disneyland Resort in Southern California: Through June 12, each active or retired member of the U.S. military can receive one complimentary three-day "Disney's Armed Forces Salute" ticket valid for admission to both Disneyland and Disney's California Adventure parks. During the offer period, active or retired U.S. military personnel also may make a one-time purchase of an adult or child three-day "Disney's Armed Forces Salute Companion" ticket for up to five family members (including spouse) or friends for the price of an adult one-day Park Hopper ticket.

Disneyland Resort hotels are also offering special room rates for active or retired military personnel. For example, at Disney's Paradise Pier Hotel, active or retired members of the military and their families may find hotel rooms starting at $119 per night during value season, with great savings during other times of the offer period. This offer is available through June 12, 2009 and the number of rooms available at these special rates is limited.

For information regarding "Disney's Armed Forces Salute" at the Disneyland Resort, or to make reservations, military personnel may call 714/956-6424.

At the Walt Disney World Resort in Florida: Through Dec. 23, each active or retired member of the U.S. military may obtain one complimentary five-day "Disney's Armed Forces Salute" ticket with Park Hopper and Water Park Fun & More options. This ticket is valid for five days of admission into the four Walt Disney World theme parks, plus a total of five visits to a choice of a Disney water park, DisneyQuest Indoor Interactive Theme Park or certain other attractions. During this offer period, active or retired U.S. military personnel may also make a one-time purchase of up to a maximum of five, five-day "Disney's Armed Forces Salute Companion" tickets for $99 per ticket, plus tax, for family members (including spouse) or friends. Although this ticket for family members and friends does not include either the Park Hopper or Water Park Fun & More options, this ticket can be upgraded to add either such option, or both, for an additional $25, plus tax, per option. All tickets and options are non-transferable and must be used by Dec. 23.

Ask about the great rates that may be available at select Walt Disney World or Disneyland Resort hotels for active or retired U.S. military personnel during this offer period.

For information on the "Disney's Armed Forces Salute" offer at the Walt Disney World or Disneyland Resort, or to make reservations, active and retired U.S. Military personnel may call the ITT office on their base. Information is also available at www.disneyworld.com/military.

What will you celebrate? Military personnel taking advantage of this offer will find even more to celebrate during their stay. Beginning in January, Disney Parks will embrace a newly identified nationwide travel trend called "celebration vacations," in which Americans mark special occasions in their lives with a family vacation.

In 2009, Walt Disney World and Disneyland Resorts ask guests "What will you celebrate?" and lead this growing trend with new entertainment and services that allow guests to turn their personal milestones such as a birthday, an anniversary or any special occasion – into magical Disney experiences.