Retiring Vikings

By Chaplain Norbert J. Karava

Okay, the meat is cured, the fish are dried, the skins are tanned, the cows have more than enough hay, and the milk, butter and cheese are in abundance whilst the chickens are contentedly laying their eggs. Let's see, what else? More than enough mead, the roof's not leaking, the firewood laid up and a lovely fire roaring in the chimney, neighboring clans and tribes beaten down into submission, not posing a threat. Oh and yes, breeding rights secured. What else would a successful Viking need for his wintering?

And yet, and yet, staring into the fire, even after having rehearsed the numerous proofs of his success, he cannot bring the conclusion of his argument here, to resonate with his very self, there, an argument cast in Viking images and words, obsessively made and remade, but an argument we know all too well: if successful, then happy. Given: successful. Therefore: happy.

But, no, in fact, not happy! He cannot get his self to follow the lead of his mind, no matter how hard he tries, and to make matters worse, the harder he tries, the worse this state of affairs becomes. The more heads he splits in two, the more villages he pillages, the drunker he becomes with mead, the more listless and tired with life he becomes.

But he will split more heads in half, pillage more villages, drink more mead and deflower more maidens, not even because there is any joy in this anymore, but because these things afford him a momentary distraction from his listless and joyless self to which, he must always return.

What our internal Viking has discovered is one of the universal themes of our species: the worst thing that can happen to us is that we succeed, in the sense of getting and having our way, for if we completely get and have our way, after having spent a lifetime on that quest, we are left completely with ourselves… buried somewhere in the dumpster of our loot. We learn the bitter lesson that if this mysterious thing called a "self" is not given away, it becomes quite poisonous, and the more we cling to it, the more we gorge it with the plunder of our rapacious desires, the more poisonous it becomes.

And then there is Valhalla, that projection and an extension of ourselves as successful people, winners who have gotten and have their way: endless head-splitting and village pillaging. Nowadays, this is sometimes confused with retirement. Vikings end up, if they're winners, in Valhalla, and discover too late that they really are irreparable losers. The good news, however, is that no one is born a Viking, and that as being in the image and likeness of someone else, we really are happier not splitting heads in half, and not pillaging villages.

Sullivans 100th day celebrated

By Steve Parker, The Sullivans Elementary School Public Affairs

Valentine's Day and George Washington's Birthday are fun holidays but, at The Sullivans Elementary School, The biggest holiday in February is Day 100, the 100th day of the school year. Teachers and students have a variety of interesting ways to celebrate.

Many of us have long forgotten the beginning days of school when counting to 10 swelled our chests with pride. If you can remember those days, you can possibly recall that sense of power achieved when you first counted past 10, all the way to 100. This is the magic moment of revelry our students mark with a festive base-10 celebration unlike any other, Day 100 at the Sullivans.

Sullivans first-grade student Jesserae Delossantos proudly displays her number 100 poster using 100 hearts she made for Sullivans 100th day of the school year celebration Feb. 15.

Photo by Linda Childs

First-grade teacher Linda Childs and her students wait for Feb. 15 all year. Students were invited to bring in collections of 100 things. Some of this year's most popluar collections were 100 cotton balls in the shape of a girl's name and 100 heart stickers spelling out 100. Students also did activities involving the number 100 on that day, such as seeing who can stand for 100 seconds. Students wrote about what they would and wouldn't like to have 100 of, and what they could and couldn't eat 100 of. Students also measured to see how long 100 inches or 100 blocks was in the room.

"It's a good day to learn without realizing it," Childs said.

For most of the school, Day 100 happens Feb. 15. Kindergarten started later than the rest of the school this year, so they celebrated Day 100 Feb. 23. In Lillie Sharp's Kindergarten class, the celebration included making a trailmix of 100 things (10 each of 10 different items). Their trail mixes this year, consisted of cheerios, popcorn, sunflower seeds, froot loops, Goldfish crackers, pretzel sticks, marshmallows, peanuts, raisins and M & M candies. The students then enjoyed eating the trail mixes as a snack. Following their snack, They filled the classroom with a 100 day cheer.

"Extra, extra, hear all about it! It's Day 100 and we're proud to shout it! 10-20-30-40-50-60-70-80-90-100," shouted the children in unison.

Annual road tax collection, decal issuance season has begun

From CFAY Security

Road tax is paid every spring. Yen payments for regular size cars and trucks can be made at the Kanagawa Tax Office (KTO). Payments for motorcycles and mini-cars can be made at the local city hall or ward office, starting April 1.

KTO representatives will collect road tax at the Community Readiness Center in room 212, March 24, 25 from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 - 2:30 p.m. and April 12, 14 and 15 from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 - 2:30 p.m. This service includes Ikego residents. Road tax collection for Negishi will be at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation classroom, Bldg. 19045, in Negishi March 29 from 9 – 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 – 2 p.m.

Vehicle owners can obtain the 2011 base decal at the respective Vehicle Registration Office (VRO) after road tax has been paid. In order to obtain the base decal the following documents must be presented:

- Satus of Forces Agreement (SOFA) ID card
- Proof of payment of the 2011 road tax
- Military Registration and Certificate of Title of Motor Vehicle (DD Form 430)
- Japanese title
- Current base inspection sheet
- Japanese Compulsory Insurance (JCI)
- Liability Insurance (a minimum of $300,000 or 30,000,000 yen for bodily injury and $30,000 or 3,000,000 yen for property damage)
- SOFA driver's license
- Parking Certificate (if applicable)
- DBIDS registration.

The amount of road tax depends on the type of vehicle, which can be determined by the number shown on the top of the license plate. The respective tax amount is as follows:

- 40/400Y and 50/500Y plates - 7,500 yen
- 30/300Y plates 4.5L and below - 19,000 yen and 22,000 yen for 4.6L and above
- 11/100Y plates - 32,000 yen

Call VRO at 243-5011/5896 for more information.