A lesson from Nemo

By Chaplain William Stewart

Becoming a father has been one of the greatest blessings ever bestowed upon me; a lot of hard work, but definitely a tremendous blessing. Along with parenthood come many benefits as well. One of my favorites is that I get to sit down with the kids and watch children's movies, claiming all along that I'm just doing it for the kids. If the truth be known, what usually happens is we start the movie, and a little ways into it, I look around and I'm the only one still watching; and yes, I most always keep watching it to the very end! And, I could swear that sometimes I hear the kids say, "Let's just get daddy started on a movie so we can get some 'real work' done around here." Truth is, I just love the kids' movies and some of them have such wonderful lessons of life embedded in them.

"*Finding Nemo*" is one of my favorites. As an extremely overprotective clown fish stemming from past events, Nemo's father Marlin doesn't want to let him leave the protection of the home in the anemone. Later on he is asked why he can live in an anemone and why it doesn't hurt him when he is stung by sea creatures. He sort of explains why he can do it, but there's actually a fascinating story as to why clown fish can live safely within the stinging tentacles of an anemone.

The phenomenon is called symbiosis and exists in many places in nature. The general concept is that two life forms live together, provide for one another and many times protect one another from enemies unique to each. In this case, the clown fish protects the anemone from other fish that would otherwise eat the anemone while the anemone provides domestic protection for the clown fish from predators that would normally eat them. They simply would not be able to make it without one another.

After watching this movie again the other day (for about the 100th time), something occurred to me. We really aren't so different here on this base. Granted, we are not different species, but there are so many people with so many different jobs, many of which I don't understand or probably even know about. More importantly, our jobs and lives are actually interconnected, even if we sometimes don't see the relationship.

I could go down the list of how this happens, but lets just take the food we enjoy, for example. Everyone needs food, but how it gets to us takes so many people to make it happen. We have folks at the galley getting up at wee hours in the morning to make sure meals are waiting on us; we have folks at the commissary, Navy Exchange, and various shops around the base working hard every day ensuring we have what we need. We have the many clubs on base that give us a great escape, we have security making sure the truck drivers delivering the food are getting where they need to go, we have laundry services ensuring the uniforms and linens are clean… the list just doesn't stop. That's just some examples of how everything and everybody are interconnected. We simply cannot make it without each other!

I believe that God understands this more than anyone. Scriptures in the Bible continually mention the need to recognize, love and help one another; to think of others at least as much as we think of ourselves. This world in which we live is so mysterious and so beautiful, but it is most beautiful when we see it as a home for all creation living together. We are indeed a family here in Yokosuka; a family that depends on one another. The Chapel of Hope is yet another warm home for you and I to visit as this family. I invite you to come and share time together and worship with us at one of the many services we provide. May God bless you and thank you so much for the incredible work that you do each day for all of us!

The Chief asks:

"Did you know the fouled anchor as a naval insignia got its start as the seal of Lord Howard of Effingham?

"Howard was the lord admiral of England at the time of the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. During this period, the personal seal of a great officer of state was adopted as the seal of his office.

"The fouled anchor still remains the official seal of the lord high admiral of Great Britain. When this office became part of the present Board of Admiralty, the seal was retained on buttons, official seals and cap badges. The U.S. Navy adoption of this symbol and many other customs can be directly attributed to the influence of British naval tradition. The fouled anchor is among them.

"If you didn't know, now you know." – MCC(SW/AW) Eric Hannah, CFAY Public Affairs

See Japan with help from Information, Tours and Tickets

Story and photo by MC3 Devon Dow,
Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan

For Sailors and family members of the Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) community interested in exploring the culture and sights of Japan, the Information, Tours and Tickets (ITT) Office provides many opportunities to assist in the Japanese experience.

Providing on and off base information and travel packages, ITT offers their expertise with the hopes of making the CFAY community's stay in Japan a memorable one.

"We try to be a liaison to customers here and inform them of things that are going on and off base," said ITT Manager Alfred Maige. "We even have some customers who come in and are not sure about what they want to do. We learn about their interests and try to tailor to their wants."

ITT offers information on concerts, sale of advanced tickets for summer blockbuster movies, special events taking place in Japan, sightseeing guides and travel packages for those interested in travel throughout the country. According to Maige, they even handle requests tailored specifically to individuals.

"The other day we had someone come into the office looking for a place in Japan that sold hand-crafted copper tea pots," he said. "Through investigated research, we were able to locate train directions and guidance for them to where they could shop for that specific item. It does take some knowledge of little things which show a niche value to the customers."

Popular requests from customers range from the traditional sightseeing tours in Tokyo to the relaxing Onsen or hot springs spas throughout Japan. The most popular, Maige said, is the country's ancient sport of sumo.

"There is a huge following of people interested in sumo," he said. "They want to witness it and experience the cultural aspect of it."

Seaman Tony Contreas of San Antonio, Texas, said ITT is a good starting point for Sailors who initially arrive in Yokosuka.

"This is a good way for Sailors to learn about things that go on in Japan," Contreas said. "They are able to provide a lot of information about things I like to do and with my schedule, it is nice that ITT can adjust to the Sailor's lifestyle."

Anna Bartlett of Hamlet, N.C., is a regular at the ITT Office. She said while her husband is on deployment, she and her daughter enjoy traveling around Japan.

"I enjoy taking advantage of the opportunities that are offered at the ITT office," she said. "They have a little bit of everything for anyone who wants to get off base and do some sightseeing; this is a beautiful country."

"Having the chance to come to a country as colorful and cultural enriched as Japan is an amazing opportunity," Maige said. "Japan has so much to offer. Literally, if you have a certain interest, it's somewhere here."

The ITT Office is located across the street from the Navy Exchange, Call 243-3498 for more information.

Sailors head to the Information, Tours and Tickets (ITT) Office during their lunch break for travel information Feb. 25. The ITT office provides Sailors and family members with information, package deals on travel, tours and sightseeing guides tailored to Japan.