"Shake and Bake!"

By Chaplain William Stewart

I heard one of the cutest sayings the other day that went, "What do you call Japan on a hot day? ... Shake and bake!" I believe that pretty much sums it up with the weather here that almost melts you and the earthquakes that rattle not only our buildings, but our nerves as well. Where I grew up in Oklahoma, it was not uncommon at all to have tornadoes stroll on down our lane, but I have to admit, I find the earthquakes a little more intriguing when it comes to Mother Nature's mysteries.

More earthquakes are detected and recorded in Japan than any other country in the world (although Indonesia may have more that are just not recorded). I don't know about you, but that makes me feel pretty special living here (wink)! It seems that the most difficult thing for many people to deal with regarding earthquakes is that they are so unpredictable and come with very little warning. According to the Japanese Meteorological Agency, an earthquake early warning system was established in October of 2007 to try and provide "…valuable seconds for people to protect themselves before strong tremors arrive." Wow, with the best technology in the world, we still only get literal seconds of notice before the world starts shaking!

It makes me think though… life is many times no different. Life is the most beautiful gift we have received from God, and yet we who have lived it for very long at all realize that it too is quite unpredictable. Each and every day, we start our routines thinking we know most of what will go on, but sure enough, we get a phone call, an e-mail, or news from somewhere that can be anything from a little change to one that seems to turn our world upside down. As I have said for years now as a proud member of the military, the only thing I really know for sure is that I know nothing for sure!

There are very few people in the world who do not desire and appreciate stability in their lives. I guess that is one of the greatest things I appreciate about God and my faith as a believer in him. When so much in the world is unstable and unpredictable, I can always count on him to be that stabilizing force for me no matter what happens. He is unchanging. He is always there. His love for us is never ending no matter how bad the earth-shaking circumstances seem to be at the time. It has been during some of the most difficult times of my life that these truths have brought me through and provided for me the stability I need.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. Selah. – Psalm 46:1-3

Simply put, God is so good and he will always be there for us, even in the most unpredictable times. May God bless each of you as we recognize him who created the entire universe!

Heads Up Yokosuka

Community Announcements

Cape Fox Professional Services Motorcycle Rodeo – A Motorcycle Rodeo will be held at the Yokohama North Dock Motorcycle Training Range to promote safe motorcycling from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sept. 11. All licensed Status of Forces Agreement motorcycle riders are invited to participate. Spectators are also welcome to attend. Cape Fox Professional Services certified motorcycle safety instructors will hold four primary events to include a slow speed race, poker run, a relay race and a timed circuit course. This event is sponsored by CFAY and Camp Zama Safety Offices. Contact Douglas Knight by e-mail to dknight@capefoxit.com for more information or to sign up. Advance sign-ups are requested, but are not required.

UMUC Asia Orkand Family Military Book Awards – University of Maryland University College Asia (UMUC Asia) is offering the Orkand Family Military Book Awards for active duty enlisted service members. Through this book award program, active duty enlisted service members attending UMUC Stateside, Europe and Asia can apply to receive a $100 award to help pay for textbooks. The awards will be available for the fall sessions and applications are being accepted now. For application and eligibility requirement, log on to http://www.asia.umuc.edu/finaid/orkand.cfm. Contact your local field representative or the UMUC Asia Financial Aid Office for questions regarding available financial aid programs.

USNH Yokosuka Seeking Volunteer Help – USNH Yokosuka is seeking a volunteer environment of care community representative who will represent patients and provide input to the hospital on topics such as patient flow, privacy, comfort and dignity, safety and security, fire prevention, utilities, facilities, medical equipment, hazardous material and waste, environmental issues, infection control and emergency management. This is a great way to gain experience in a medical treatment facility. Volunteer must be able to attend a quarterly meeting and contribute time throughout the year as needed by the hospital and as the volunteer's schedule permits. Contact Bill Heath at 243-8691/080-5444-8691 for more information.

CFAY PWD Adopt-A-Monument Eco-volunteer Program – CFAY Public Works Department Environmental Division is looking for eco-volunteers for the Adopt-A-Monument Program. There are more than 20 historical monuments on base that need routine attention. Eco-volunteers will be responsible for picking up debris and weeding the monument area at least once a month from March through September. Call Ryouko Araki at 243-5136/4100/9578 or e-mail to Ryouko.Araki.JA@navfacfe.navy.mil for more information.