Ten Days of Repentance

By Rabbi Harry Pell

There is a traditional section of the Jewish liturgy for the High Holidays that reads: "On the New Year, the Book of Life is opened and written in, and on the Day of Atonement, the pronouncement is sealed."

The New Year, known in Hebrew as 'Rosh Hashanah' began this year on Friday evening, Sept. 18, and the Day of Atonement, 'Yom Kippur' always falls precisely 10 days later, and will take place primarily on Sept. 28 this year.

The 10 days in between are known as the '10 Days of Repentance' and are traditionally seen as an opportunity to appeal to Heaven for a good pronouncement for the upcoming year.

In addition, I believe that this time of year has a more universal message that can appeal to people regardless of their faith tradition.

In truth, as people, we would all benefit from being reflective every day of the year.

Yet, just like we don't do fitness reports on a daily basis, most of us don't take the time every day to think about our successes and failures, and how we can do better the next time around.

These 10 days in September are a reminder that even if all year we haven't thought about our actions and their impacts, on ourselves and others, that there is still time.

For 10 days Jews are commanded to take a moral inventory of their actions over the previous year, and their hopes and dreams for the coming year, but one need not be Jewish or even religious to ask these questions:

• Have I achieved my goals this past year, or have I let myself and those around me down?

• What are the areas in which I have grown this past year, and where do I still need to work more to be better?

• What mistakes might I have made in this past year, and how will I avoid repeating them in the coming year?

According to Jewish tradition, these 10 days are set aside for asking forgiveness from God and one's fellow man for missteps in the previous year, but the 10 days can be even more fruitful if they are also used to think about how we can do even better in the coming year.

Best wishes to one and all for a sweet new year.

Heads Up Yokosuka

Community Announcements

Seasonal Flu Vaccine – USNH Yokosuka will provide the seasonal influenza vaccine to all USNH beneficiaries Oct. 19 from 1 to 6 p.m. at Ikego Elementary School and Oct. 20-23 from noon to 6 p.m. at the Kinnick High School cafeteria. All beneficiaries are encouraged to attend and get the seasonal flu vaccine. Call 243-2608 for more information.

Yokosuka Fire Prevention Week kick-off Parade – The parade will be held Oct. 5th at 8:30 a.m. The proposed routes will begin at the Yokosuka Fire Station on 1st Avenue, straight on "L" Street, turn left on Fourth Avenue, turn right on Third Avenue, turn left on "D" Street, and back to the Fire Station by turning left on First Avenue. The 2009 theme is "Stay Fire Smart! Don't Get Burned." They will have emergency response vehicles and Children from The Sullivans Elementary School, and Seventh Fleet Dixieland Band. Please join them for the base fire safety event

20th Annual Ekiden Friendship Road Race – The 20th annual Ekiden Friendship Road Race will be held Oct. 4 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Sagami General Depot Sagamihara. Call Bob McKeta at 263-7980/5995 or e-mail to robert.mcketa@us.army.mil for more information or to obtain a registration form.

High Rise Tower Housing Fire Evacuation Drills – As a life safety requirement of Fire Prevention Month, the CNFJ Regional Fire Department will be conducting annual high rise tower housing fire evacuation drills. Each drill will last approximately 20 minutes. During the drills, please use the stairwells to evacuate, not the elevators. After evacuating, please go downstairs to the party room for a briefing. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. The location and drill schedules are as follows:

Yokosuka:

• Oct. 17 10 a.m. – noon and 1-3 p.m. at Ichiban, Niban, Sanban, Yonban, Goban, Rokuban, Nanaban, Hachiban, Kyuban, and Jyuban towers.

• Oct. 18 10 – noon and 1 – 4 p.m. at Bara, Ume, Himiwara, Asagao, Shobu, Tsubaki, Satsuki, Ajisai, Ayame, Fuji, and Sakura heights.

Ikego:

• Oct. 24 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Disaster preparedness includes periodic insurance policy reviews

From Commander, Navy Installations Command Public Affairs

The Fleet and Family Support Program (FFSP) recommends that Sailors and Navy families review their personal insurance policies each September as part of Disaster Preparedness Month.

Local Fleet and Family Support Centers (FFSC) can help review insurance policies and accompanying documentation before a disaster strikes.

"The effort of getting your policies in order is what is going to get you through a disaster, because it's a very emotional time," Carl E. Weiscopf, director, Fleet and Family Support Center San Diego, said. "What you want to do is eliminate the financial issues that might be associated with it. So, you have to know what you have in the way of insurance, how you go about purchasing it and how you file a claim after a disaster. It's so important. Everyone needs to consider this."

Weiscopf, a retired Navy captain, speaks from personal experience. He lost his home in the October 2003 Cedar wild fire in San Diego. He and his family had 20 minutes to evacuate. They left with the clothes on their backs, their cat and a few pictures. They evacuated at 8:30 a.m., and at 10:30 a.m. they saw their burning house on television.

Weiscopf describes the day as one of the darkest of his family's lives. Today, they consider themselves as survivors, not victims. They rebuilt on the same lot and financially are about the same as when the fire occurred.

During Disaster Preparedness Month, the FFSP reminds Sailors and Navy families that not having an insurance plan or a poorly managed policy in place can be a financially and emotionally costly mistake.

Insurance planning begins with a detailed assessment of insurance needs. These needs change as lives change. Everyone goes through a number of major events in life, and these will have an impact on insurance needs. It is important to make changes to policies as necessary when major events occur.

Weiscopf added that people often don't pay attention to the amount of and value of the electronics and games they acquire over time.

Along with choosing the right policy, look carefully at all the 'fine print' to find provisions that can save a lot of money after a disaster. Some examples include demolition coverage, dislocation coverage and landscaping coverage. It is also important to provide documentation of home improvements, such as a new roof or patio cover.

Local FFSCs can provide information to help determine insurance needs and analyze policies, so that Sailors and Navy families can select what is best for them.

FFSCs won't act as an insurance agent. They will discuss the purpose of different types of policies which companies offer (property and casualty, auto, umbrella, health, long-term care insurance and life). They can help compare policies, and they provide tips for choosing an agent.

The FFSP provides information about insurance to single Sailors as well as married Sailors and their families members. It is part of the Personal Financial Management program which is designed to prevent potential personal problems that could cost valuable time and money and could detract from mission readiness.