This year’s Halloween photos submitted by Stripes’ readers were amazing! We had many submissions and many votes. This year, Austin Siegel from Korea won the $50 prize; Rose Betts and her family from Japan won the $30 prize in the group costume category; and, Sarah Arellano Santos from Yokota Air Base won the $20 prize in the individual category. Check out their submissions as well as some other honorable mentions below. And, don’t forget to follow us at Facebook.com/StripesPacific for more great contests like this!
CAMP FOSTER — Airman 1st Class Leonard Cantrell Jr., 28, knew something wasn’t right as he watched a Japanese mother struggle to keep her young daughter’s head above water.

The computer technician with the 18th Communications Squadron at Kadena Air Base kept a close eye on the situation as he gingerly walked around the lip of the pool at Okinawa’s Tataki waterfall taking photographs on a day back in April.

The woman had attempted to swim across the deep, picturesque pool carrying the small child on her shoulders. The signs of distress were immediate.

“She realized it was too far and she tried to turn back,” Cantrell told Stars and Stripes in an interview Nov. 5. “I started noticing their heads were bobbing up in the water and I’m like, ‘That’s not good at all.’ I’m like, ‘I think I need to act now.’”

Cantrell dove into the icy water and pulled the woman and her daughter to safety. He told no one about what he had done, but his airmen friends reported his actions to leadership.

Cantrell, who had been in the service for approximately one year at the time of the rescue, was awarded the Air Force Achievement Medal at the beginning of September. The medal is awarded for outstanding achievement or meritorious service on behalf of the Air Force, but “may also be awarded for acts of courage,” according to the Air Force Personnel Center website.

“We’re neighbors here on this island,” Cantrell said. “I was just glad to be in the right place at the right time.”

The day started for Cantrell and a small group of friends with a hike to Tataki waterfall to relax and swim and enjoy the natural environment. He said the water was too cold for a swim. Instead, he planned to shoot photographs to show his family back home in Chicago.

His friends marveled at how deep the water was when they first arrived. He estimates it was over 30 feet.

Cantrell walked around the edge of the pool to the falls, he said. A friend snapped a photograph of him. That’s when he saw the mother entering the water with her two small children. Her young boy touched the cold water and turned back.

The mother and daughter began to swim across the pool. “There’s not anything close; there’s no footing; there’s no anything,” Cantrell said.

“That’s how I knew something was going to go wrong.”

After Cantrell pulled the mother and daughter to safety, his military training kicked in, he said. He stayed with them to make sure they weren’t going into shock.

Once he realized they were OK, he went back to his friends. Before leaving, the woman thanked him one more time. His friends ribbed him, calling him “hero.”

“I don’t think I was a hero,” he said. “Anybody else could have done it.”

The family being safe was the most important thing, he said.

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Somewhere between Okinawa’s main island and Kagoshima’s mainland, you’ll find Amami Oshima, an island of beauty with lots of untouched nature sure to make even the traveled tourist fall in love.

The island is about two-thirds the size of Okinawa’s main island, and its population is a fraction of the size in comparison. It is because of this that you’ll find untamed subtropical forests, exquisite flora and fauna and plenty of Amami Oshima’s designated natural treasures—the Amanino kuro usagi rabbit and the kenaganezumi long-tailed rat.

There are other similarities between Amami and Okinawa you’ll discover when you visit. This is because Amami Oshima came under the Ryukyu Kingdom jurisdiction in the mid-15th century, according to Amami City’s online museum. Though the governing system ended when the Shimazu clan, who ruled the island that was then known as Satsuma, invaded the Ryukyu Kingdom in 1609, there are still remnants of the past, which you’ll find in some of their dialect. One being they both call their folk songs “shima uta.”

Though some of Amami’s features may seem familiar if you’ve visited Okinawan islands, you’ll soon find that its unique beauty and landscape are incomparable to any other. For great trekking and canoeing head to Kinsakubaru Genseirin, a forest with countless mangroves and ferns that is home to the island’s many rare species. Or, for a heart-pumping climb, head to Mt. Yuwan, which boasts the highest elevation on the island at 694 meters above sea level. There are also several waterfalls to explore in the...
Amami Oshima

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Beyond what Amami Oshima offers on land, its surrounding waters aren’t any less enticing. Tsuchimori Kaigain is often mentioned as one of the best among the beautiful beaches of Amami. The emerald green ocean is less than a 10-minute drive from Amami Airport. And, while you’re there, check out Ayamaru Misaki or Cape Ayamaru, which offers a great view of the ocean and the island.

Surfers will want to head to Tebiro Kaigan beach, known for its amazing waves. In 2011, an international surfing competition was held there, contributing to the popularity of this mecca of surfing. Bathrooms, showers, and lodging are available nearby to support surfers.

On the northern coast, Ohama Kaihin Koen, or Ohama Seaside Park, offers a beautiful sunset view. Tourists and local alike visit this spot for the golden sunset in this amazing setting.

When it comes to food, Amami has many unique dishes. A good example is Keihan chicken rice, a local specialty featuring rice in a savory soup cooked with chicken and dried shiitake mushrooms. Top that with dried laver, red pickled ginger, and pickled radish and more to perfect the dish to your taste. Gomazata is a sweet made from brown sugar and sesame seeds, which couples the Amami’s signature brown sugar with neighboring island Kikaijima’s sesame seeds. The sugar is also coincidentally used to produce Kokuto Shochu, a signature distilled spirit of Amami Oshima.

One of the great things about Amami Oshima is the cultural and historical ties it has with its neighboring islands. Let this island enchant you with its pristine beaches, impressive waves and untamed nature which cannot be replicated.
Burritos are not common in Japan. To top that, putting one together can prove a challenge.

Former Third Eye Blind bassist Leo Kremer (who is also a co-founder of his own burrito chain) once compared making one to “making one car.”

Beans, guacamole, sour cream, cheese, lettuce, and more – the options for the inner workings of a great burrito are endless. Burritos are complicated and are defined by the preferences of the person making it and the person who will eat it.

In Okinawa, Rollup Burritos is taking the challenge and giving its customers options to customize a masterpiece of their creation rolled into a tasty tortilla.

Located in a compact orange building along the Sunabe Seawall and about a five-minute drive from Gate 1 of Kadena Air Base, Rollup Burritos really draws a crowd for lunch.

The joint looks like a beachfront food shack in the U.S. Its interior walls are adorned with menu items printed on chalkboard, colorful photos of burritos and side dishes, plus T-shirts with the shop’s logo, exuding a fun and fashionable mood.

If you see customers filling out what looks like a horse-race slip, don’t worry, it’s actually an order form to pick all of the delicious fillings you want in your burrito.

First, decide between a burrito bowl or two sizes of burritos: 9-inch or 12-inch. Then, choose from the 10 burrito bases offered, like vegetable, taco, teriyaki chicken, sausage and egg, just to name a few. Now here comes the fun part – customize your burrito with the many different topping options the shop offers, from various types of rice and vegetables to cheese and salsa.

With many options on the slip, first-time customers may find it hard to decide what to choose. But the employees are friendly and can assist you in deciding on right ingredients to fit you taste.

As a Mexican-food newbie, I asked Mari Nagano, one of the employees, for advice. At her suggestion, I ordered the 9-inch shrimp and guacamole burrito and a 9-inch steak burrito (790 yen, about $7.35 each), which, she noted, are popular among servicemembers.

Nagano helped me with the customization, and my slip for shrimp and guacamole burrito got check marks for beans, Mexican rice, Mexican dressing, shredded cheese, lettuce, green tomato salsa, and cilantro. For the steak burrito, I checked guacamole, hash brown, garlic rice, steak dressing, melted cheese, lettuce, salsa, and fresh vegetables.

As for side dishes, Rollup offers quesadillas, nachos, herb chicken, hash browns, salt chips, fries and more. My stomach, however, did not have room for sides, so I just stuck with the burritos.

At first taste, my shrimp and avocado burrito had afruity taste, which stimulated my appetite a lot. The texture of the beans, cheese and other toppings together was great.

The surprise was when I bit into my steak burrito. The garlic rice and chopped steak ensemble created an addictive sweet and spicy taste I was not expecting.

The burritos went well beyond the size of a meal I would normally eat, but it didn’t take me long to finish every last bite of these two Mexican delights. Not once during this meal were my taste buds bored, and the depth in flavor and textures made a robust eater out of me.

I washed down these masterpieces with Rollup’s original lemonade. It deserves equal credit because its delicate sweetness and distinct sourness cooled me down and set me up for one bite after another of the burritos.

Whether you are die-hard Mexican food enthusiast or newbie like me, Rollup Burritos is worth a visit. Fill out the slip and get ready to be wowed by their burrito offerings.
**Say My Name!**

Are you a quarterback? If so, I’m in your nightmares. I’m not that weak offensive lineman on your team. No, I ate him for breakfast. That strict diet led me to the 2016 NFL Defensive MVP award with my former team. Nowadays, though, I play for a franchise known for its defense. Who am I?

**Answer**

Khalil Mack

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**Biweekly Sudoku**

Week of 11/23/20

**Kanji of the Week**

Atama (Head)

**Language Lesson**

Why don’t you join us?

Goishoni ikaga desuka?

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**Biweekly Crossword**

Week of 11/23/20

**How to Solve:**

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

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**NEW TO THE PACIFIC?**

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Luke’s Lobster brings the taste of New England to Okinawa

A lot of American-style restaurants in Japan promise a taste of home, but nowhere is that promise better fulfilled than Luke’s Lobster in southern Okinawa.

Luke’s, a New York City-based chain, is one of only a few that have not only crossed the pond but also set up shop outside major metropolitan areas like Tokyo. You’ll find it on the second floor of the new Iias Okinawa Toyosaki mall, four miles south of Naha Airport, next to Toyosaki Seaside Park.

The restaurant opened with little fanfare in June amid the coronavirus pandemic. It offers Maine-style lobster, shrimp and crab rolls with the seafood slightly chilled to preserve its natural sweetness and tenderness, according to a pamphlet picked up at the Toyosaki location.

The new restaurant offers outside seating so American service members under coronavirus liberty restrictions can safely and responsibly enjoy a lobster roll.

Luke’s was founded in Manhattan in 2009, the pamphlet said. The brand’s philosophy has always been to offer authentic lobster rolls without having to visit a fancy restaurant. In fact, the Luke’s location at the Toyosaki mall is small and inviting, with photographs of lobstermen and Maine license plates decorating the walls.

Luke’s has made a concerted effort to push into the Japanese market with four Tokyo locations and seven in the country, to include a food truck that can be followed online.

Its most popular item is the 4-ounce lobster roll, which sells for 1,380 yen plus tax, or about $15, the pamphlet said. It features fresh lobster, seasoned with lemon butter and secret proprietary ingredients, in a toasted bun.

There’s also a smaller 2-ounce version for 980 yen. “All lobster rolls are made to order,” the pamphlet said. “This is to make sure only the freshest lobster rolls will be handed to the customers.”

Luke’s also offers crab rolls for 1,380 yen, shrimp rolls for 980 yen, half lobster and half shrimp for 1,380 yen, half lobster and half crab for 1,580, crab and shrimp for 1,280 yen, and Luke’s trio, which is three half rolls each of lobster, crab and shrimp, for 1,980 yen.

If you’re looking for warm seafood, Luke’s has a lobster grilled cheese sandwich for 1,380 yen, a crab grilled cheese for 1,080 yen and a shrimp grilled cheese for 980 yen. In late September, the restaurant offered a special shrimp and avocado sandwich for 900 yen. Combo meals come with various sides like French fries, crab cakes, coleslaw, shrimp salad, clam chowder or bisque and drinks for an added 400-500 yen.

Only on Okinawa, Luke’s offers a surf and turf plate featuring a lobster roll, French fries and sliced roast beef for 1,580 yen. Luke’s offers party boxes with rolls and sides and roll kits so you can put your own rolls together at home. It also does catering.

The lobster at Luke’s was light and fluffy, with good flavor, and it came in copious amounts, just like being back home. The shrimp burst from its casings with each mouthwatering bite.

The lobster grilled cheese was delicious, with the inside a steaming, oozy mix of lobster and cheese. The bread was thick and appeared buttered and grilled to perfection.

However, the bread was slightly chewy, indicating it had been heated in the microwave, which was a shame. Same was true for the shrimp and avocado sandwich. The contents came topped with a delightful cream sauce, but again, the bread was just a bit chewy.

The clam chowder didn’t have a lot of clams but would pass muster in lower-tier New England eateries.

All in all, my party craved a taste of home, but it was enough to keep the homesickness of living abroad at bay and conjure a little nostalgia.

Published: October 29, 2020
STORY AND PHOTOS BY MATTHEW M. BURKE, STARS AND STRIPES
Published October 29, 2020

Luke’s Lobster is small and inviting, with photographs of lobstermen and Maine license plates on the walls.

The lobster grilled cheese sandwich from Luke’s Lobster in the new Iias Okinawa Toyosaki mall.