



# OBSERVATION POST

November 25, 2011

Since 1957

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## Obama: Take time to honor troops, families

**BY ELAINE SANCHEZ**  
*AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE*

President Barack Obama pointed out the importance of honoring military families' contributions and sacrifices in his proclamation declaring Nov. 20-26 National Family Week throughout the country.

"Our troops and military families serve with valor at home and overseas, and as a nation we have a moral obligation

to serve these patriots as well as they have served us," the president wrote.

First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, launched the Joining Forces campaign earlier this year to better fulfill this promise to troops, veterans and their families, the president said.

The initiative is intended to raise awareness of the challenges military families face and to challenge Americans to make

a difference in their lives.

As loved ones gather for the holidays, Obama urged all Americans to pause to give thanks to those who share in the "trials and triumphs of our lives."

"Our families illuminate our days and bring meaning to our years, and their love has the power to see us through our greatest challenges," he said. "This week and throughout the year, let us strive to give back to our friends, families,

communities and neighbors, and to work together in pursuit of our highest ambitions."

The president urged states, communities and individuals to take part in ceremonies and activities that celebrate the nation's families throughout the week.

"This week, we celebrate the threads of compassion and unity that tie our families together, enrich our communities and strengthen the fabric of our nation," he wrote.



PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

Staff Sgt. Arnesto Guevara, instructor with Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School, watches his 2-year-old daughter Naylani as her friend Madison Bork, 4-year-old daughter of Staff Sgt. Randy Bork, instructor at MCCES, follows close behind during the MCCES family day at Felix Field Tuesday.

## YOU KNOW THE DRILL



PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. ALI AZIMI

Marines show off their left shoulder arms during the Combat Logistics Battalion 7's Change of Command Ceremony held at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Nov. 18.

Marines of Combat Logistics Battalion 7 showed off their drill prowess during the battalion's change of command ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Nov. 18.

Drill is a common skill taught to all Marines during recruit training. It is the basic tool drill instructors use to teach future Marines bearing, discipline and obedience to orders.

Marines of CLB-7 displayed these attributes proudly during the ceremony, as they stood motionless at parade rest and conducted each drill movement with precision and expertise.

They marched onto the field, each step in unison, following the commands shouted out to them.



Marines stand motionless at parade rest during the ceremony, keeping their bearing, ready for the next command.

## DEERS provides helpful hints for a smooth visit

**DIANE DURDEN**  
Public Affairs Specialist

Have you ever waited in line for hours to get a new identification card, only to be turned away because you didn't have all of the necessary paperwork?

For many Combat Center personnel this is a common occurrence at the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System office.

Being armed with the correct information and documentation before you head to DEERS will save you valuable time.

The DEERS office, located in the Village Center on Fourth Street, provides ID card services to active duty and reserve service members, retirees, family members, civilian employees and contractors.

Their customer base covers a nearly 100-mile radius around the Combat Center. The next closest DEERS offices are located in Barstow and China Lake.

Because of their large customer base, it is imperative to plan your visit to DEERS wisely.

Different situations require different documentation.

Service members who have been promoted, reenlisted or extended their contracts don't need any documentation as long as the Marine Corps Total Force

System has been updated to reflect their current status. This update is automatic, but may take a few days.

DEERS personnel rec-

### Copying military IDs is a felony

How often have you heard the phrase, "All we need is a copy of your military ID card for processing"?

It is not uncommon for businesses, such as car dealerships and hotels, asking patrons to verify military affiliation by providing a military identification card to confirm eligibility for government rates.

However, there have been incidents reported where these types of establishments have requested to keep a

**See ID, A8**

commend service members bring in their promotion warrants or reenlistment paperwork anyway.

"Having their paperwork [with them] will allow us to issue a new identification card even if the system hasn't been updated yet," said

**See DEERS, A8**

## Getting schooled with tuition assistance

### ■ The ins and outs of getting the most money for your education

**CPL. WILLIAM JACKSON**  
*COMBAT CORRESPONDENT*

It's back. MARADMIN 639/11 has restored the Tuition Assistance program for the 2011 fiscal year. Funding is authorized for vocational-technical, undergraduate, graduate, undergraduate developmental, independent study and distance learning programs.

The Marine Corps is allotted \$26 million, which is half of last year's total disbursement. Take advantage of it now and sign up for classes now before it's too late and funds run out.

Active duty enlisted and commissioned Marines can utilize up to \$4,500 to fund 100 percent of their tuition and fees, including lab, technology, and distance learning fees. The cost

must not exceed \$250 per semester hour for undergraduate or graduate courses. While not much of a decrease for undergraduate courses, this is a significant change for graduate courses. On average, yearly TA could cover six or seven classes, depending on the school you choose.

Only officers must return two years of service to the Marine Corps after using tuition benefits.

The process starts off easy enough for interested service members, but things can get a bit overwhelming if you haven't chosen an education plan. Contact a military representative for the school of your choice first. I would recommend a California state school because they offer in-state tuition for service members stationed

here. It'll help save some money so you can make the most of your benefits.

The school will get you processed with a course track and refer you to every resource that will help you get enrolled for school.

Next, visit the installation's education center. Sit through a short TA brief by an animated staff member, give a signature and speak with an education service specialist about cheap book websites and free educational programs the Combat Center has to offer. These include College Level Examination Program Tests, commonly known as CLEPs, DANTES Subject Standardized Tests, known as DSSTs. These all count as college credit hours which saves you time and money. The more help, the better.

Take advantage of as much government support as possible by submitting a free application for federal student aid, or FAFSA. The official web-

site <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov> will set you up for the Pell Grant, a federal grant that can assist you with up to \$5,500 toward any education cost you decide, including gas money to get to class, if you haven't earned your first bachelor's degree. FAFSA also lets you apply for the Stafford Loan, which promises lower interest rates for eligible applicants.

All in all, it takes a minimum amount of effort to take advantage of all the educational resources we receive as service members. The \$4,500 for tuition and fees, along with California in-state tuition rates had me ready to go back to school. The streamlined process to get set up with my classes had a huge role in my decision, too. Whether school is for you or not, the resources are out there, so go ahead and take advantage. You work hard for those benefits.

For more info...

**Fastweb.com –**  
**Grants and scholarships**

**Petersons.com –**  
**Online/distance learning search form**

**Chegg.com –**  
**Shool book rentals**

**Addall.com –**  
**Cheap school books**

**Navy Knowledge Online –**  
**Study material for CLEPS or DSSTs**

**educationmccs29.com–**  
**Education center information**

# This Week in Combat Center



Reprinted from the Observation Post dated November 28, 1962, Vol. 5, No. 47

## “Sling Shot” take off readied for hi-desert MC Base trials

AUTOR UNKNOWN

Another chapter of aviation history was written Nov. 28 when a Marine super-sonic jet fighter (F4D Skyray)<sup>1</sup> landed and refueled at the Short Airfield for Tactical Support (SATS)<sup>2</sup> that has been undergoing planning, construction and testing here for the last several months.

Capt. Jimmy L. Pappas, test pilot for the SATS project and the Air Field Operations Officer landing his jet aircraft with needle point precision, and will prepare to take off early tomorrow.

The concept of the air field enabled Capt Pappas and his high powered jet to land is similar to that of an aircraft carrier. That is, it has a “sling type” arresting gear.

The jet aircraft came in on its approach and caught onto a cable that was strung across the runway. Each end of this cable is in turn connected to nylon tape which is wound around reels which play out the tape as the aircraft engages the cable.

It enabled the jet to come in at approach speed of better than 160 knots<sup>3</sup> and to be brought to a complete rest within 700 feet, instead of the thousands of yards usually consumed.

The aircraft will be “slung” into the air and be completely air borne withing 1.000 feet.

The fact that jets can be effectively and rapidly landed, refueled, armed, and launched was proven yesterday. This concept is not only possible, but very practical. The theory that was proven fact yesterday at the world’s largest Marine Corps Base means that the long, time consuming task of construction the “old style” runway is now no longer necessary.

In the past, it took engineers weeks and weeks of round-the-clock construction to prepare a single landing strip capable of handling jet aircraft.Yesterday, these weeks were cut down to hours, thus enabling a team of engineers to set up a Short Airfield for Tactical Support quickly to handle the jets that support today’s fast Marine infantry units.

The SATS construction project here started in mid September. Sub Unit No. 2 from Marine Air Base Squadron No. 37, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing was established and sent to our Base with components of their supply communications, motor transportation control, crash crew, maintenance and administrative sections. These men have been doing their jobs in the field and living on

Base since the Sub Uniformation in September.

Actual engineering construction of the field was accomplished by the men of the Navy Mobile Construction Battalion from Port Hueneme.

The Base SATS site is the first air-field of its type capable of resting and catapulting jet aircract built from scratch. What was previously a patch of barren desert land 13 miles from the main area of the Base is now a teeming, busy, semi-permanent air field. It will be complete with all air traffic control services, weather instruments, refuelling apparatus, and all the facilities needed to coordinate a tactical jet airfield early in 1963.

### FOOTNOTES

1. The Douglas F4D Skyray was an American carrier-based supersonic fighter/interceptor built by the Douglas Aircraft Company. Although it was in service for a relatively short time and never entered combat, it was notable for being the first carrier-launched aircraft to hold the world’s absolute speed record, at 752.943 mph.

2. The Short Airfield for Tactical Support (SATS) is a rapidly constructed expeditionary airfield that can be erected near a battle area to provide air support for amphibious Marine forces.

3. A knot is a unit of speed equal to one nautical mile (approximately 1.85 km). 160 knots equals 184.1 miles per hour.

*Check back each week for a look at a reprinted Combat Center Observation Post article and footnotes for historical information. Articles can date back to the installations opening in 1957.*

## Hot Topics

### WINTER FESTIVAL

The Marine Corps Community Services will be hosting a Winter Festival Dec. 3 at Felix Field. Games, Santa, toys and beverages are available to the families in attendance. For more information, visit <http://www.mccs29palms.com>.

### 2012 NEW YEAR BOWLING BASH

Join us at Sandy Hill Lanes for New Years Bash 2012, Dec. 31. Youth and teens are invited to come at 5- 7 p.m. and adults 18 and older are welcome to come at 8:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. For the youth event the cost is \$6 per person or \$30 per lane. Adult prices are \$20 per person or \$90 per lane. For more information call 830-6422.

### ADOPT A MARINE AND SAILOR FOR THANKSGIVING

100 families from Coachella Valley Country Clubs will host 300 Marines and sailors for Thanksgiving Day. Marines and sailors will be departing at 10 a.m. and will arrive back at base at 8:45 p.m. Don't spend Thanksgiving in the barracks. For more information call 830-4767. Sign ups are online at <http://www.mccs29palms.com/pages/events/index.html#adopt>.

### FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS HAYRIDE

Take a hayride around the Desert Winds Golf Course under the stars and lights of the desert and see all the decorations Dec. 16, from 5-9 p.m. Enjoy complimentary hot chocolate and cookies. Extreme Pita will be open during the event for dinner.

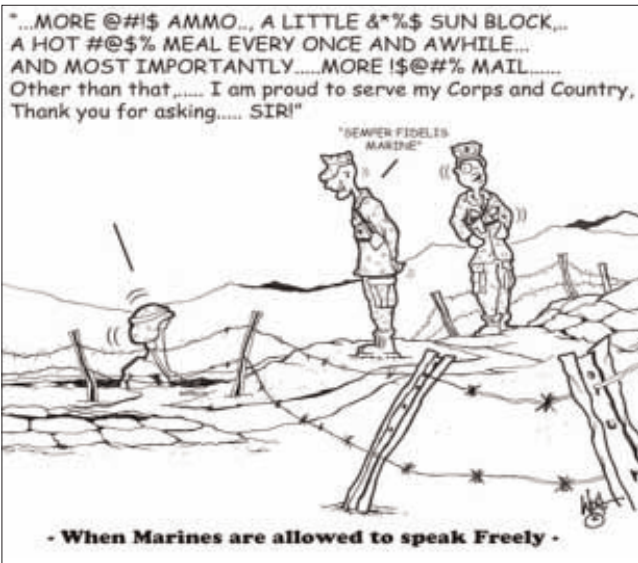


## Eagle Eyes

Immediately report any suspicious activity which may be a sign of terrorism, including:

1. Surveillance
2. Suspicious questioning
3. Tests of security
4. Acquiring supplies
5. Suspicious persons
6. Trial runs
7. Deploying assets

**830-3937**



## SUDOKU #2361-M

1		2	3			4	5	
		5				6	7	
	8				2			9
	5		7	8				
4	9						2	7
				1	4		3	
3			4				8	
	2	6				5		
	4	8			7	2		3

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2011 HOMETOWN CONTENT

## ANIMAL WARFARE

[Puzzle solutions on A8]

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18				19				
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				23				24	25					
26	27	28	29				30							
31							32				33	34	35	
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50							51				52	53	54	55
56					57	58				59				
60					61					62				
63					64					65				

### ACROSS

1. It may hang on your conscience
6. Game with a hole card
10. Jock's inventory item
14. Palmer, to his "army"
15. Try at filming a scene
16. "Nope"
17. Glove material
18. Animal warfare?
20. You're "in good hands" with them
- 22.Hall's "Maneater" partner
23. Corn or form lead-in
24. From the heart
26. Animal warfare?
31. Windows typeface
32. Void companion
33. Mushy food
36. Fisherman's "the one that got away"
37. Fliers in a skein
39. Oompah band
40. Machiavellian
41. Salty cheese
42. Screwup
43. Animal warfare?
46. Depressed feeling
49. Fashion of
50. Something squirreled away
51. Arp and his ilk
56. Animal warfare?
59. New York's \_\_\_ Fisher Hall
60. Sawbucks
61. Shoppe sign word
62. Silents star
- Novarro
- 63.Onetime Sinclair rival
64. Hippie's illicit purchase
65. Sarcastic

### DOWN

1. Inaugural ball, e.g.
2. Orsk's river
3. ILGWU part: Abbr.

4. Bunches of bull
5. Pertaining to a manuscript
6. Back talk, slangily
7. Sprint terminus
8. Tiny Tim's instrument
9. \_\_\_ Plaines, Illinois
10. Historian Will or Ariel -
11. "Oh, How \_\_\_ to Get Up in the Morning"
12. Crowd-scene actors, in the lingo
13. Community or hope follower
19. Snorkeler's milieu
21. Formicary inhabitant
24. Birds that provide red meat
25. Up to the job
26. Thoroughfares
27. Like some confessions
28. Mucky
29. Nuclear treaty result
30. Either "Paper Moon" costar
33. Give up the pigskin
34. Onetime labor chief I.W.
35. Scale down
37. Comprehends
38. Kin of -ule
39. Rugrat
41. React to a skunk, in cartoons
42. Some charity events
43. Lanza role
44. Walking on air
45. eBay offer
46. Not glossy
47. Field units
48. Nut jobs
51. Weekend rancher
52. "Fathers and Sons" novelist Turgenev
53. Jackknifing victim?
54. Walked over
55. End of a 1/1 song
57. Fiddle stick
58. Corrida cheer

## OBSERVATION POST

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**Layout, Design** - Leslie Shaw

**Correspondents**  
Cpl. William J. Jackson  
Cpl. Andrew D. Thorburn  
Lance Cpl. Ali Azimi  
Lance Cpl. Sarah Dietz  
Lance Cpl. D. J. Wu  
Diane Durden

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WHAT I'VE LEARNED

THE MVP

LANCE CPL. KENNETH BLACKWELL JR.  
INTEL ANALYST / BASE BASKETBALL MVP,  
21, SAN DIEGO

INTERVIEWED AND  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN

NOV. 2, 2011

A SPORTING CHANCE

- > **I play** point guard and forward.
- > **A coach facilitates** everybody. Like between a commanding officer and a squad leader, they have ultimate command, but if the team wants something, they go to me, and I go to him.
- > **You get an order**, and if that's not working out, you have to be able to give

something else to the team so they can be successful.

- > **It's what our coach** always tells us. He sees basketball like the Marine Corps. We're a small team. We may have little, we may not have a lot. But we take what we got and do what we can.
- > **I like** going to the gym, lifting. Sports, no matter what it be. I like to be active, anything to get my mind off the work day. And eating. I love eating.
- > **I've been in**, like, any kind of sports. Soccer for, like, eight years. I tried volleyball for a year. I even tried hockey.
- > **I try to** experience everything.
- > **All my life**, if I'm not good at something, I try to find the passion and the drive to do it.
- > **I don't look up to** professional athletes. I've been learning to be more humble. There are not many athletes today who look like they play the sport because that's what they love to do. They're cocky. I used to be like that.
- > **To change from a good athlete** to a great athlete, you need to learn to be humble.

FUNNY BONES

- > **I'm just** a goofy person.
- > **Tell jokes? Nah.** I'm an on-the-spot joker. I don't got jokes.
- > **People got their moments.** Everybody's got their moments. I know I've had mine.
- > **Have you seen** the new Kevin Hart? He's a comedian. Very funny. You should YouTube him.

FAMILY TIES

- > **My dad was a Marine.** He deployed a lot. We moved around a lot.
- > **He still gave me** a pretty good life. My athleticism came from him. My passion for sports, I got all that from him.
- > **Everybody knows my dad** was a Marine. He knows what I'm doing right now. And I haven't even talked to him today. It's just funny. It's like, "Oh man, this guy." You gotta laugh.
- > **I didn't understand** when I was young, but now being in the Marine Corps, I understand he did his part. He did what he had to do.
- > **No matter what happened**, my mom was always positive. She was like my best friend. I can talk to her about anything. Girls, sports.
- > **She always got mad** at my teachers for calling me Kenny, because my dad's name is Kenny. "His name's Kenneth." I don't know, sounds too proper for me.
- > **My mom taught me** how to cook. Otherwise, it'd be Top Ramen and cereal.
- > **I like anything.** Chinese food. Steak. Ribs. I love steak and ribs. So good. And Italian food. Chicken parmesan.
- > **Oh, I can cook.** Get a hot plate, some MRE heaters. You're good to go.
- > **It's the big brother complex.** You always want to be a hero to your little sister. So you do whatever you can so she's proud of you.
- > **I'm protective of her**, but I know she'll make the right decisions. I'll always be there for her. She's a smart kid.

LIFE IN THE CORPS

- > **Craziest thing I've ever done?** I don't know. Went to boot camp?
- > **Being in the military**, you grow up. You find out what's real and what's not. You need to actually build something. Like, "What can be the worst possible outcome, and how can I get around that?"
- > **With Intel**, you have your computer knowledge, your public speaking. Instead of doing something that's only going to last for now, I'm looking to do something that's going to benefit me for the future.
- > **I'm trying to** go to school now.

WORDS TO THE WISE

- > **The only thing you ever have** is what you do. It's the only thing you can show for this life.
- > **Don't let anybody** hold you back from what you're trying to accomplish.
- > **You can't let other people's thoughts** and opinions change what you want to do. At the end, it's not their life, it's yours.



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<http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO>



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and video streams. Find them at  
<http://www.flickr.com/thecombatcenter>

# WeekINPhotos

## 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Fwd)

**[Right]** Staff Sgt. Jason Kirklighter conducts maintenance on a CH-46E Sea Knight Nov. 16. Kirklighter is a 32-year-old Fredericksburg, Va., native and the staff non-commissioned officer in charge of avionics, Detachment B, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268 (Reinforced). The squadron is the aviation combat element for the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, which embarked on USS Makin Island, USS New Orleans and USS Pearl Harbor in San Diego Nov. 14, beginning a seven-month deployment through the Western Pacific and Middle East regions.

**[Bottom]** A CH-46E Sea Knight with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268 (Reinforced) lands on the flight deck of the amphibious transport dock USS New Orleans Nov. 16.

**[Bottom Right]** Marines with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268 (Reinforced) exit a CH-46E Sea Knight aboard the amphibious transport dock USS New Orleans Nov. 16.

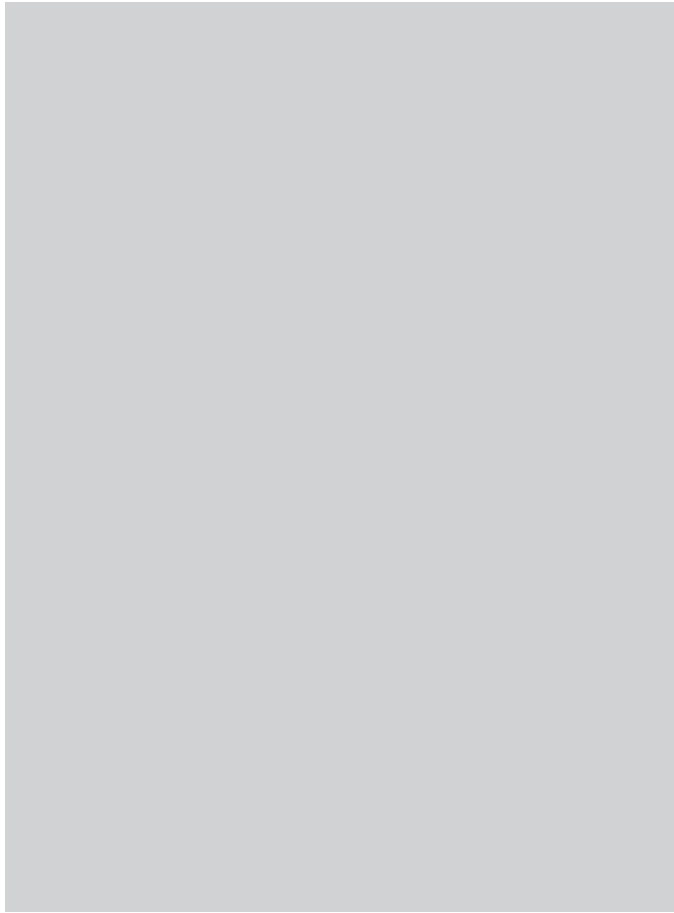
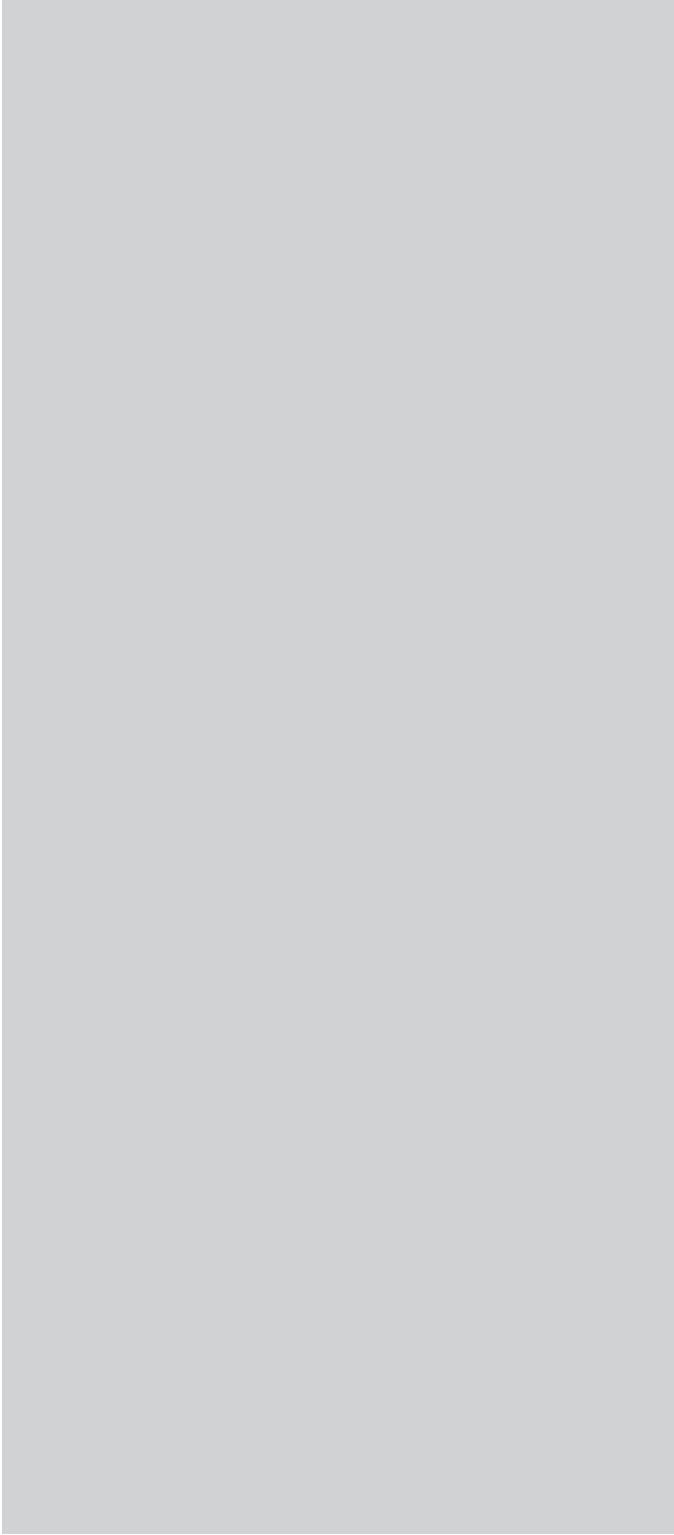
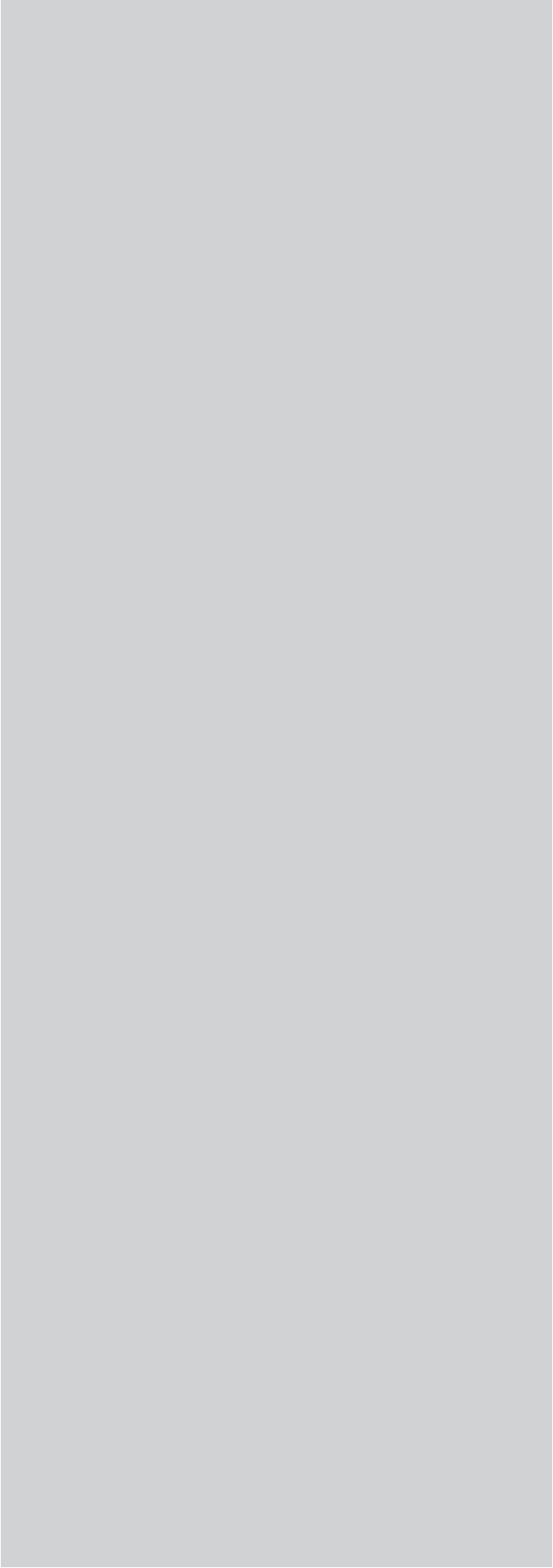


PHOTOS BY CPL. RYAN CARPENTER





Whatever you're looking for, you can find it in the **Observation Post Classified** section



# Artillerymen: Fastest guns in the West

LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines sit around a 7-ton vehicle, laughing and joking, throwing rocks, sleeping, a normal field op for the Marines awaiting orders for a mission. Suddenly, “Fire mission! Fire mission!” comes over the radio. Everyone jumps up and assumes their positions. The gunner and assistant gunner sight in, the powder and round are loaded, the order “FIRE!” comes through the radio and then a loud boom is followed by silence. Such is the life of an artilleryman. The Marines make sure the M777 howitzer is ready when need then sit tight while they wait for an order. Patience is a trait artillerymen must learn. But when the mission comes over the radio, there is no room for complacency. “It’s intense, gets your adrenaline pumping,” said Australian Army Lance Bombardier Karl McGrith, artilleryman, 1st Brigade, 8/12th, who trained at the Combat Center with Marines.

On average, the M777 howitzer has a 10-man gun crew, each member knowledgeable in all roles of the crew, while maintaining their individual responsibility. “Cannoneers can do any job, so everyone is well-rounded. In case anyone goes down, we can jump in and fill their spot,” said Cpl. Greg Jenkins, an artilleryman for 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment. The recorder receives the information first, always keeping the radio to his ear to wait for the order to fire. Immediately when the order is called in, he shouts the coordinates out to his team. The gunner and A-gunner then set the howitzer. A Marine lowers the tray while another loads the round. Others work the breach and put the powder and primer in place. All this is done with the section chief watching over for safety, completion and speed. In 15 to 20 seconds, the round goes off. The team is quick, concise and ready at all times, with a rhythm that creates impeccable teamwork. “If one part gets jacked up, it messes up the whole thing,” Jenkins said.



PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. ALI AZIMI



**[Top, far right]** Marines from Gun 3 of Sierra Battery, 5th Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment, provide support fire in helping 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment in their pre-deployment training, Sept. 22 at Lava Training Area.

**[Above]** Marines from Gun 4 of Sierra Battery, 5/10 position their M777 A2 Howitzer during Enhanced Mojave Viper.

**[Left]** Marines with 5/10 load up the M777 A2 Howitzer.

### Relax with the paper

Hi-Desert Star  
The Desert Trail  
The Observation Post

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# Machiko “Mama-san” Hamamoto named honorary Marine for lifetime of service

*Lance Cpl. Kenneth K. Trotter Jr.*  
*Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni*

Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 in Iwakuni, Japan, recognized Machiko Hamamoto, affectionately known as “Mama-san,” as an Honorary Marine for her many years of dutiful service in a ceremony at the Strike Fighter Squadron 94 hangar here Tuesday.

The title of Honorary Marine is an award bestowed on civilians who have made extraordinary contributions to the Marine Corps.

The award is approved solely by the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

“She’s a big proponent for advocating all the good things the U.S. military does,” said Lt. Col. Charles A. Redden, MALS-12 commanding officer.

Redden went on to describe how much Hamamoto’s influence extended past the station and into other areas of Japan.

“Whether it’s an earthquake or tsunamis, we’ve always helped in any kind of disaster, but it’s always been through Mama-san’s efforts to get a point of contact and a place to go,” said Redden. “She’s helpful to the U.S.-Japanese relationship, particularly with MALS-12, but it’s more than just that; it’s MAG-12, the air station and the Marine Corps as a whole.”

Hamamoto, 82, has spent 43 years working alongside Marines, organizing cleanup and community relations projects. She also collects Christmas gifts for local handicapped children and for children at Shobara Sakura Gakuen orphanage. Her helping hand has reached even to the U.S. She received an American Red Cross Certificate of Appreciation for her role in delivering Red Cross services after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake near San Francisco.

Hamamoto was also able to strengthen the bond between the U.S. military and Japan during the subsequent aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami that struck the northeastern region of Japan on March 11, 2011.

In June, Marines from MALS-12 volunteered their personal leave to go to the city of Higashimatsushima to aid relief efforts. Hamamoto helped spearhead getting service members there to help over several days.

“It wasn’t a surprise to us when right after the (disaster), Mama-san put in a call to the commanding officer requesting to go there,” said Jeffrey A. Fleming, MALS-

12 Family Readiness Officer. “Mama-san wanted to go immediately and lead the charge. She was the communicator for us all, the (liaison).”

Fleming, who first met Hamamoto when he arrived as part of MALS-12 in 1990, spoke highly of his experiences with her and how she has helped afford him and countless others an opportunity to not only aid relief efforts, but experience Japan from a different perspective.

“It’s something I will always treasure,” said Fleming.

Seeing the impact Hamamoto has had on many Japanese residents has helped many service members be appreciative, be thankful for the circumstances in their lives and lend a helping hand to those less fortunate.

“You’ve got to appreciate her for taking you there, getting that experience and helping others.”

Humbleness and appreciation are also what grounds Hamamoto as she continues in keeping the relationship strong between service members and Japanese residents. She works hard to arrange community relations projects and organize orphanage visits.

Modesty was apparant as she comprehends the magnitude of the award presented to her.

“I was surprised, almost like it was a dream,” said Hamamoto. “I feel I don’t deserve it. I can’t believe it happened.”

Though she now has the official designation of Honorary Marine, Hamamoto has considered herself a part of the Marine Corps family well before reaching 43 years of dutiful service.

“(The Marines) are like my family members,” said Hamamoto. “Even when I take one day off, they miss me. They’ll ask where I am, call me and look for me.”

It is this close, family-like relationship she has had with Marines, especially junior Marines, that has helped many transition when stationed here.

Hamamoto was able to bring a small reminder of home for some by taking them to different places around Japan said Cpl. Marcie L. McWaters, MALS-12 supply personnel administrative division clerk. McWaters, a self-described country girl, who after being here for nearly two years, grew homesick and looked for different ways to remind her of her home.

“One day, she took me out in town to a horse farm.” McWaters said.

Hamamoto’s generosity extends well beyond that, sometimes inviting service members to her home to experience Japanese



LANCE CPL. KENNETH K. TROTTER JR.

Cpl. Matthew L. E. Doyle, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12 community relations coordinator, escorts Machiko Hamamoto, Honorary Marine recipient, during an award ceremony at the Strike Fighter Squadron 94 hangar Tuesday. The title of Honorary Marine is an award bestowed on civilians who have made extraordinary contributions to the Marine Corps. The award is approved solely by the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

lifestyle and to get off the station and see all that Japan has to offer.

Even though she’s now officially an Honorary Marine, it is quite clear that many of the Marines already consider her as one. With the amount of dedication she has shown toward the Marine Corps over the years, it may safely be assumed Hamamoto still relishes the experiences and opportunities she has taken to help improve the perception of the Marine Corps and improve its relationship with the people of Japan.

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# Afghans improve critical intersection in Marjah

## ■ Marine engineers help locals repair bridge to benefit local and military travel



PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. ALFRED V. LOPEZ

[Above] Cpl. Samuel Escutia Jr., combat engineer, Alpha Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 1, and 21-year-old native of Reedley, Calif., cuts through a wing-wall Nov. 12. Marines of Co. A are currently repairing the support structure on a bridge located at a major intersection that connects Marjah and Nawa districts. The bridge receives heavy foot and vehicle traffic due to the local bazaar, as well as Afghan and coalition military convoys.

**LANCE CPL. ALFRED V. LOPEZ**  
*REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 5*

MARJAH, Afghanistan— Combat engineers with Alpha Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 1 and local workers improved road conditions by repairing a key bridge here Nov. 12.

The bridge, which needed critical foundation repairs, is vital for both local travel and military missions on a major intersection between Marjah and Nawa.

“Today’s project involves a bridge which has wing-walls that are eroding,” said 1st Lt. Steven Thomas, platoon commander with Co. A, CLB-1 and a 25-year-old native of Lancaster, Calif. “Our goal is to replace those wing-walls to make them last longer and make the bridge more stable for the civilian and military traffic.”

Wing-walls provide the bridge with structure to support the heavy amount of foot and vehicle traffic passing through the intersection.

“The water flowing through here

also provides water for the farmers, and this bridge is vital to the locals traveling to the bazaar,” added Thomas.

“By improving this intersection, the travel conditions will improve for the locals, as well as our convoys that come through,” said Cpl. Logan Homstad, fire team leader with Co. A, CLB-1 and a 26-year-old native of Drake, N.D.

The combat engineers managed to control local civilian traffic while completing their work, leaving local commerce unaffected.

“The biggest challenge is that it’s right next to a bazaar,” said Homstad. “There’s a lot of traffic moving around the area.”

“We have to keep the locals out of the way because there’s a lot of heavy equipment moving around,” explained Thomas. “We don’t want any of them to get hurt, as well as impeding our progress.”

Some of the locals even lent a helping hand to the Marine engineers, as they clearly understood repairs to the bridge would be beneficial to the local

community, Thomas added.

The mission was easier because of the support and manpower of the locals, said Cpl. Travis Dye, 22-year-old combat engineer and native of Jacksonville, Fla.

The Co. A Marines worked expeditiously, digging out the existing structure with heavy equipment, and emplacing the new wing-walls that will keep the bridge supported in the years to come.

“My Marines were outstanding... They had to wade into the water, sometimes getting waste deep into the mud,” explained Thomas. “Some even had to get pulled out with the help of a few Marines, because the mud was so thick.”

The bridge is one of Co. A’s many projects supporting infrastructure development here in southern Helmand.

“We’re happy to be here,” said Homstad. “We’re happy to do projects that matter.”



# Protect your home against fires this holiday season

**DARLENE HULL,**  
**ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF**

COMBAT CENTER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Did you know that the number of home cooking fires on Thanksgiving Day in 2009 was three times the national average of fires per day for the rest of the year? No one plans to get hurt, or to burn the house down at Thanksgiving, but fire departments respond to 155,000 cooking fires each year.

The Thanksgiving holiday is focused around family, good times, and food – lots of food. That means there is a lot of cooking and an increase in potential for fires.

Important Thanksgiving cooking tips to keep you and your family safe:

- Keep children and pets out of the kitchen.
- Never leave your cooking area unattended. This includes BBQ, fire pits and turkey fryers, using a timer to prevent burning food and having a

plan for unintended fires.

- If you use a turkey fryer, know what to expect from it. The typical turkey fryer has no heat limiting switch and can very quickly go bad if not following the directions. Read the manual and do not attempt to fry a turkey inside or near the house. Cooking oil heated to a boil can easily ignite from the flame at the burner, and once it is on fire it is a challenge to put out.
- Have a plan. Thanksgiving is a good time to ensure your evacuation plan is up to date, your fire extinguisher works and the manufacturer hasn’t placed a zip tie on the safety pin. Make sure your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are working.
- Put a label on your phone or post it nearby so that you (or anyone that might be using your phone) will know the address in case you need to report an emergency. Location is one of the first things an

emergency dispatcher will ask.

- Talk to your kids. Teach them how to get out of their bedroom window if the house is on fire and where to meet if you need to evacuate. Teach them how to call 9-1-1, and drill them occasionally to see if they can readily recall their address and phone number. Show them how to stop, drop and roll if their clothes catch fire, and have a discussion on how to cool a burn.

Thanksgiving comes and goes every year for millions of families without incident – fire and burn prevention is deliberate and proactive and can keep you from being a statistic.

To report an emergency at the Combat Center, call 9-1-1. From a cell phone or Internet phone call (760) 830-3333. Program this number into your phone so it is easy to find.

For more information on fire safety call the Combat Center Fire Administration Office at 830-5400.

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DEERS, from A1

Carla Lanza, the site supervisor for the Combat Center DEERS office.

Although issuing ID cards for updated rank and end of active service is a large portion of their customer base, adding family members seems to cause a majority of the complications when issuing ID cards.

Sponsors must be present when applying for family member ID cards. If the sponsor is not available, the family member must have a DD Form 1172, Application for Identification Card/DEERS Enrollment, signed by the sponsor or a power of attorney.

Combat Center Family Readiness Officers have a checklist of required documents for each type of situation. Local service members and their families are asked to refer to this list prior to coming to the DEERS office. All other customers can contact the DEERS office directly.

Original documents are required and must be scanned into the system. This is a Department of Defense requirement. Certified true copies are not acceptable, except when certified by the issuing authority.

“The better and more accurate information the customer provides, the better product and service we can give,” said Larry Ward, officer in charge, Center Personnel Office.

Recent changes affecting the information presented on

ID cards include replacing the use of social security numbers with a DOD ID number, known as an Electronic Data Interchange – Person Identifier. This change affects all cards containing SSNs.

DEERS will not do a mass reissuance of cards to remove SSNs. Cards will be replaced as they expire or to update rank and end of active service.

To avoid long wait times, customers are encouraged to schedule appointments. Officers, staff non-commissioned officers, retirees, family members and civilian employees can schedule appointments by calling 830-1922. Active duty and reserve members, E-5 and below, can also schedule appointments, but must walk in to do so.

ID, from A1

photocopy of the ID on file. The photocopying of U.S. Government identification cards is a violation of Title 18, U.S. Code Part I, Chapter 33, Section 701 and punishable by fine and imprisonment.

“Whoever manufactures, sells or possesses any badge, identification card or other insignia of the design prescribed by the head of any department or agency of the United States for use by any officer or employee thereof, or any colorable imitation thereof, or photographs, prints, or in any other manner makes or executes any engraving, photograph, print, or impression in the likeness of any such badge, identification card, or other insignia, or any colorable imitation thereof, except as authorized under regulations made pursuant to law, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than six months, or both.”

Although asking for military/government identification is totally permissible by commercial establishments, many government personnel are unaware of the prohibition on duplication of government identification.

There are no safeguards in place to insure a government identification card won't be counterfeited or "cloned" based on a photocopy by a commercial establishment. Criminal elements and terrorist organizations place U.S. Government identification as a high value logistical element when planning acts against the U.S. military.

The federal statute is clear about the prohibition.

Many institutions don't know the law and ask for a photocopy of a military ID card because that is the way they have always done it. You cannot be denied service by failing to provide a photocopy of your military ID card.

Some establishments may even put up a fight about this. The biggest hurdle is those establishments who have always photocopied military ID cards,

don't know the law and refuse to listen. A driver's license will suffice along with “showing” a military ID card or a written statement of verification of military service which can be provided by your chain of command. If the establishment still demands a copy, simply take your business elsewhere.

Certain military/government agencies that require a photocopy of a military ID card, like TRICARE, the Veterans Administration, and law enforcement, do so “FOR OFFICAL USE ONLY” and are permissible.

Although the law is not agency-specific about the photocopying of ID cards, one could make a logical assumption that the photocopy would be safeguarded in accordance with government regulations.

For more information, contact the base legal assistance office or you're supporting IG office. Find the complete U.S. Code at <http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/18C33.txt>.

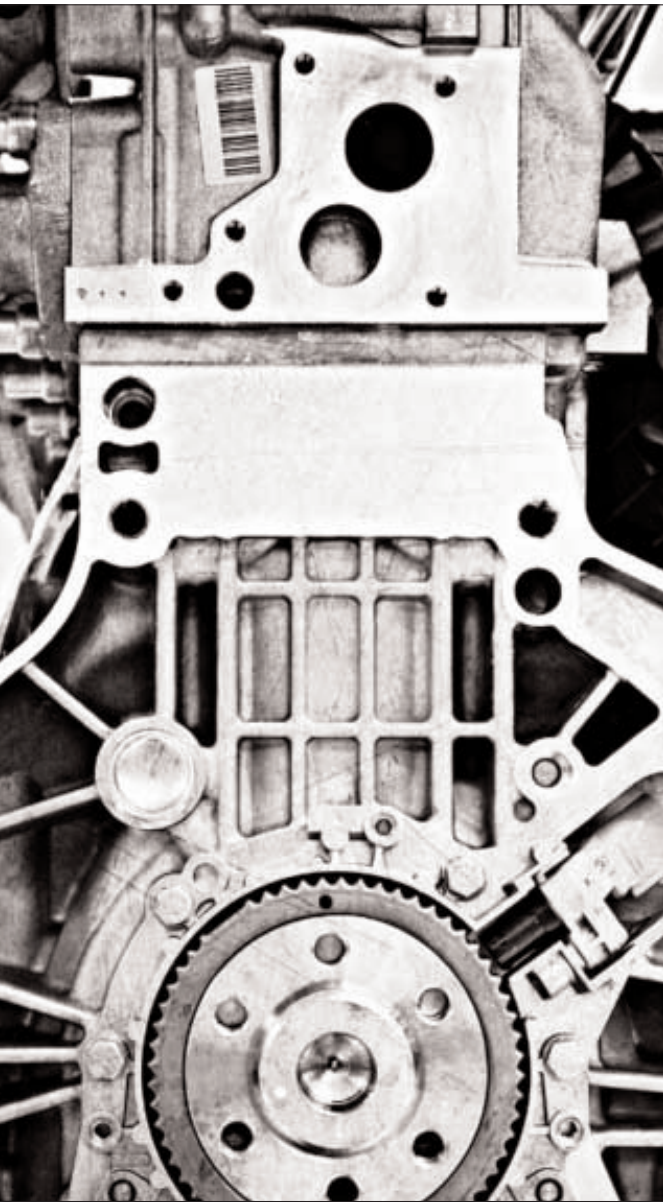
PUZZLE SOLUTIONS, FROM PAGE A2

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LOOKING for local entertainment?  
See page B2 for our LIBERTY CALL section

**By Lance Cpl. D. J. Wu**





# Your Car: Keep it Running — Keep it Safe

**SGT. JIMMY D. SHEA**  
*MARINES MAGAZINE*

Neglecting the maintenance of your car can be one of the worst things you can do to your social life. Poor maintenance can lead to a dent in your wallet, your liberty fun, and worst of all, it can lead to death or serious injury.

Simply put, taking care of your car is a huge deal.

Although some of today's crashes are due to driving while intoxicated or distracted, it's best to keep your vehicle in tip-top shape in order to prevent a mishap. Many dangerous situations can be avoided with a few simple checks and attention to your vehicle.

"Vehicle maintenance is vitally important," said John Waltman, Traffic Safety Program Manager at the Headquarters Marine Corps Safety Division. "It's something a lot of us overlook, but the results can be fatal."

There are approximately 250 million passenger vehicles in the United States. In 2009, 33,808 people were killed in traffic collisions, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Of those killed, 4,872 were pedestrians.

The NHTSA estimates that about 400 fatalities, annually, may be attributed to tire failures. Under- or over-inflation of tires, overloading of vehicles, road hazards, improper maintenance, structural defects, and improper installation and tire aging are prime factors in tire failure.

"Tires have expiration dates and most people don't know that," said Waltman. "Vehicle owners need to check the expiration date written on the side of the tire to ensure the safety of the vehicle and its passengers."

The Marine Corps lost 26 Marines to automobile accidents in 2010. Sgt. John Garcia, a

car. It had come off the truck in front of me. I didn't have much time to react. I went to the left to avoid it and went into a ditch."

Fortunately, Garcia wasn't seriously injured, thanks to his keen situational awareness.

While the safety and maintenance of vehicles on the road is dependent on other driv-

brakes and suspension check."

When oil changes are forgotten and checks overlooked, many problems may arise.

"The engine will break down, causing oil leaks, which will cause engine failure," Pham said. "Failure to check tires can cause premature wear on suspension and steering parts. Low pressure will cause lower gas mileage, slower steering response and longer braking distances."

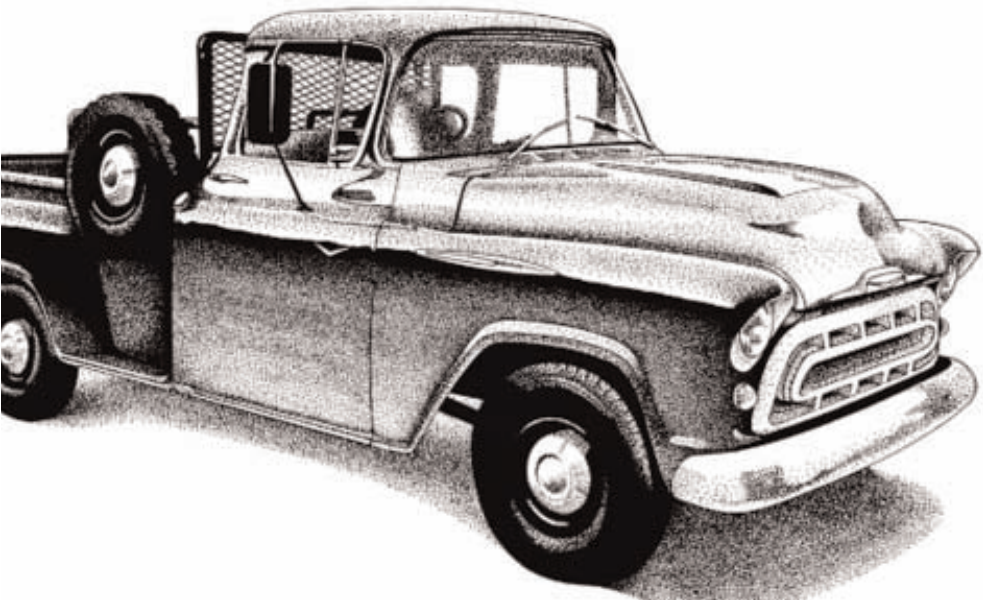
These problems can lead to serious threats to safety, Pham stressed.

"If brakes are not checked, they can cause accidents from being unable to stop — loss of control," Pham said. "Suspension should be checked for looseness in steering and suspension travel. Leaks in the struts and shocks can cause the car to veer one way or another. Worn tires can cause longer brake distances, from the lack of grip."

However, oil changes aren't the only time to improve the safety of a vehicle. It's a good idea to check under the hood when filling up on gas or even when washing your car.

Pham stresses never to put off the maintenance of your vehicle. If something sounds strange, it must get checked immediately.

A Marine and his rifle is one of the world's deadliest weapons, as the saying goes. Losing control of thousands of pounds of metal full of oil, gas, wires and plastic is one of the world's most deadly situations. Ensuring the proper maintenance and checks are performed on a vehicle is one of the best ways to keep people safe.



motor transport operator who was stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., came very close to becoming part of that statistic during a close encounter with another vehicle on the highway.

"I had my seatbelt on and was doing everything correctly," Garcia said. "Next thing I know, there's a tire bouncing right towards my

ers, there are plenty of things drivers can do to ensure the safety of their own vehicles.

"The most common things on a car people forget to maintain are oil changes and checking tire pressure," said David Pham, a 26-year-old automobile mechanic and car shop owner in Washington. "Every oil change should include a tire pressure, tire wear, lights, wipers,

