MCAGCC TWENTYNINE PALMS
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Amphibious Assault Vehicle operators with 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, stage for a 50-kilometer, live-fire and maneuver exercise in support of Large Scale Exercise 15 in the vicinity of the Blacktop Training Area aboard the Combat Center, Saturday. The ground maneuver element was tasked with assaulting two objectives with support from artillery, mortars, tanks and close-air support.

'Lava Dogs' bring the heat

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PFC. LEVI SCHULTZ

One hundred twenty-degrees of heat bore down on the 'Lava Dogs' as they coordinated with artillery, mortars and close-air support, maneuvering across approximately 50 kilometers of desert to reach their objective as part of Large Scale Exercise 15.

Marines with 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment participated in a live-fire and maneuver exercise in the vicinity of the Blacktop Training Area aboard the Combat Center, Aug. 15.

"We performed live-fire and maneuver, supporting the large scale exercise for [2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade]," said Capt. Mariano Alvarado, company commander, 1/3. "We

See **Heat pg.** A6

A Marine with 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, sights in during a maneuver exercise in support of Large Scale Exercise 15 in the vicinity of the Blacktop Training Area aboard the Combat Center, Saturday. The ground maneuver element, consisting of fire support teams transported by Amphibious Assault Vehicles, was tasked with assaulting two objectives.

CLB-1 prepares for SP-MAGTF, LSE

Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 1, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, help a simulated casualty to a CH-53E Super Stallion during a casualty evacuation drill aboard the Combat Center, Aug. 10.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL. SULLIVAN LARAMIE

Marines and sailors with Combat Logistics Battalion 1, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, conducted mounted patrol training during the unit's Integrated Training Exercise aboard the Combat Center, Aug. 10.

The training prepared the unit for future Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force operations and Large Scale Exercise 15, a combined U.S. Marine Corps, Canadian and British exercise.

"We have convoys that will be going through during Large Scale Exercise 15," said Sgt. Vincent Tornabene, a platoon sergeant with the unit. "They're going to have similar situations. It's all a buildup leading into the LSE, so once we get through this it will make life easier."

ITX and LSE-15 are both designed to provide Marines and sailors with realistic training that will provide them with the skills needed if they are called into action and need to rapidly deploy in response to a crisis or contingency.

"A lot of the guys that we have here have never been to ITX or never been deployed," said. Cpl.

See **Exercise pg.** A6

A CH-53E Super Stallion with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 366 descends to a secured landing zone during a simulated casualty evacuation aboard the Combat Center, Aug. 10.

Marine Corps' Top Shot

Every week, thousands of fans cast their votes for the best photograph posted on the Corps' Facebook page. This week's top shot comes from Cpl. Elize McKelvey.

A U.S. Marine with Lima Company, Battalion Landing Team 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, engages his target during a deck shoot aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Essex, July 30.

MCEC hosts SPARC institute

More than 50 educators and parents gather at the 'Helping military children discover their strength, potential, aspirations, resourcefulness and confidence institute' at the Frontline Restaurant, Aug. 11. The Military Child Education Coalition hosted the class.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PFC. LEVI SCHULTZ

Permanent change of stations and deployments can be a difficult transition for military children. To better understand how to assist in coping with these issues, more than 50 educators and parents attended the 'Helping military children discover their strength, potential, aspirations, resourcefulness and confidence institute' at the Frontline Restaurant, Aug. 11.

"The purpose of the training today is to better educate the individuals who are working with our military children," said Thomas Cruz, Combat Center school liaison. "It's important to get all three groups; educators, base staff and parents, together to learn how to better meet the children's needs."

The class was hosted by the Military Child Education Coalition, an organization dedicated to

See **MCEC pg.** A6

This Week in Combat Center History

Reprinted from the Observation Post
August 17, 1960
Story by Staff Sgt. Don W. Martin

Reserves Wind Up Summer Training in Giant Operation

A mushrooming "atomic" cloud boiled up from the hot desert floor this morning as the final objective of "Operation Charger" fell to more than 4,000 attacking Marine Reservists.

The simulated atomic attack on Sears Field, located at the foot of the Bullion Mountains 35 miles from mainside, ended the Reservists' desert war. It was a climax to three days' hard, realistic fighting and chasing elusive aggressor forces across the rugged Mojave terrain.

The end of "Operation Charger" also marked the end of Twentynine Palms' role as host to the summer Reservists.

Thirteen ground and nine Air Reserve units from seven states participated in the exercise. Every phase of combat was thrown into "Charge." Artillery heading tanks, air strikes and vertical envelopment were included in the master battle plan.

"Preparing for 'Charger' was hard work," commented exercise director, Col. D. J. Preacher of Chicago's 9th Staff Group, "but the men were enthusiastic and everyone functioned as a well-knit team."

"The units that participated in 'Charger' packed a heavy punch," the colonel continued.

"Both the Battalion Landing Team and the aggressor company displayed great efficiency in the tactical employment of men and weapons under their command. The BLT was a hard-hitting combat team which fully utilized all supporting weapons with great emphasis on aircraft for close support."

"The aggressor company did an outstanding job in defending the area and in the employment of all supporting weapons, including aircraft."

"Operation Charger was designed to give maximum training to all participating Reservists. Our mission has been accomplished," Col Preacher concluded: "My congratulations to all."

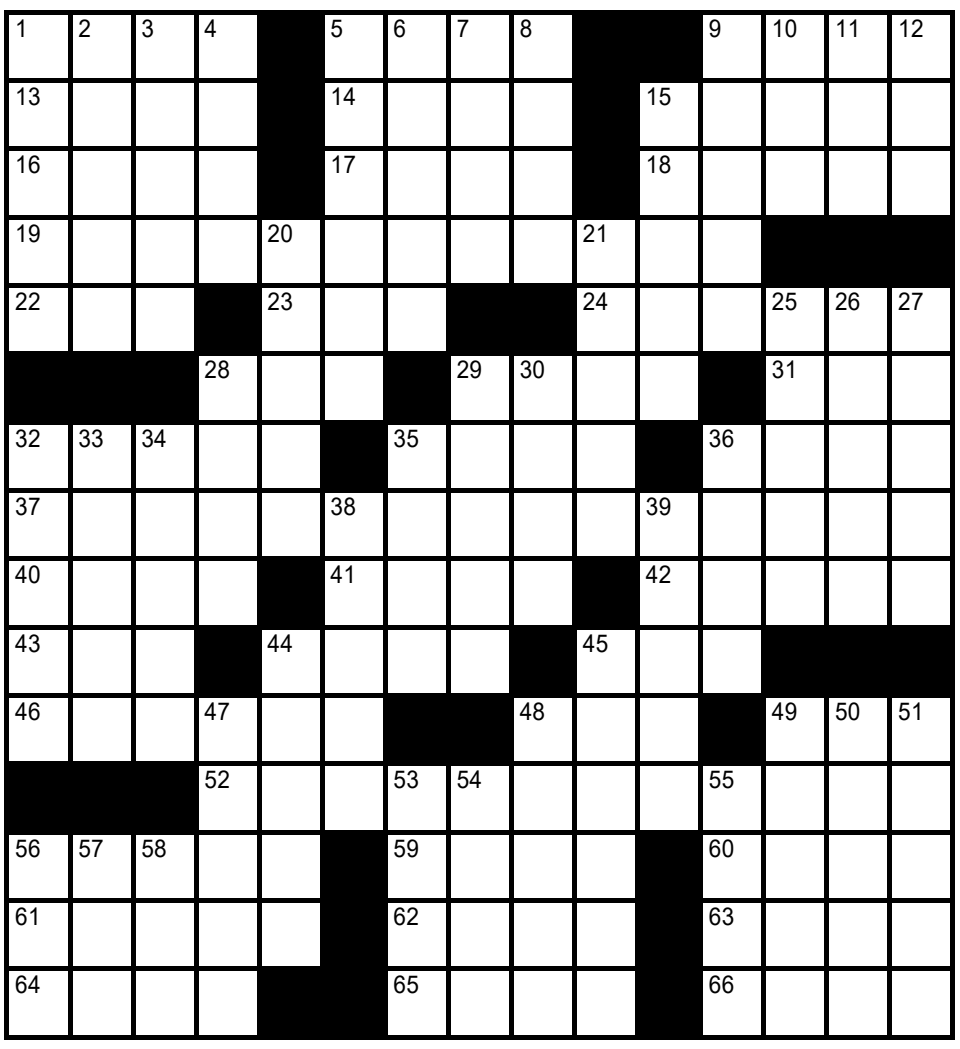
Col. Preacher's Staff Group had been creating the operation for several months, after receiving the assignment from the Commandant of the Marine Corps last December. They and Marine Air Reserve Group 12 from nearby Glenview, Ill., worked out the master plan for the exercise. Combined with the 22 Reserve units, they became Marine Air Ground Task Force 21.

Chicago's 9th Infantry Battalion furnished the bulk of the infantry troops for "Operation Charger." Their Reserve commander, Col. M. P. Patrone, served as commander of troops for the exercise.

Other infantry elements came from 91st Rifle Company, San Angel, Tex.; 20th Rifle Company, Rockford, Ill.; and the 79th Rifle Company, East Peoria, Ill.

Supporting elements were provided by New York City's 1st Comm. Support Battalion; the 1st Tank Battalion of San Diego; the 5th Comm. Company of Long Beach; 1st 105mm Howitzer Battery of Chattanooga, Tenn.; Phoenix's 9th Engineering Company; Sacramento's 6th Special Truck Company and a small detachment from the 1st Air Deliver Company of San Jose, Calif.

CROSSWORD



Across

1 Apple tablet computer
5 Yanks
9 Andy's TV son
13 C.I.A. worry
14 Four Corners state
15 Outlook alternative
16 Hula hoop support
17 Tomb Raider Croft
18 Caravan's stop
19 Big name in children's clothes
22 Darjeeling drink
23 Slam
24 Knife or club
28 Pallid
29 Piece of glass
31 Bemoan
32 Daisylike bloom
35 Vegetarian staple
36 In ___ (harmonious)
37 Quick severe punishment
40 Birthday party staple
41 Chalupa alternative
42 Hides a mike on
43 "___ to Joy"
44 Possesses, old-style
45 Outlaw
46 Muscle that tightens
48 Monetary risk
49 Tampa Bay NFLer
52 Doula's urging
56 Can't stand
59 Yours and mine
60 Length x width
61 Banished leader
62 Upscale hotel chain
63 Smooth (out)
64 Track event
65 Actress Winslet
66 "Stop that!"

Down

1 "Open a window!"
2 Aplomb
3 Letter opener?
4 School seat
5 A Sooner Stater
6 Ogden resident
7 Vestments, e.g.
8 Kind of carpet
9 D-Day beach
10 Dance step
11 Son of junior
12 Golfer Ernie
15 "Look for yourself"
20 Eyeball benders
21 Confess (to)
25 Comedian Richard
26 Cup division
27 Makes out
28 "Where ___ you?"
29 Way to cook eggs
30 Big top?
32 Broad necktie
33 Color variation
34 Arcade coin
35 "___ does it!"
36 Go up
38 Great balls of fire
39 Strip
44 Dwelling place
45 Blues legend Smith
47 Simple bread
48 Too well-done
49 Beast of burden
50 Apply to
51 Rooters' refrain
53 Catch
54 Night prowler
55 No longer due
56 Hesitation sound
57 Hacker
58 Coupling

SUDOKU

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	9						5	
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	5			3		8		2
		6		1		7		

Last week's answers

C	R	O	C		W	O	L	F	F		P	A	T	S
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			R	E	V		S	H	A	L	E	O	I	L
B	L	U	E		I	D	O		T	N	T			
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			N	A	W		F	A	X		L	E	N	S
T	O	O	D	L	E	O	O		T	W	I			
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E	L	O	I		L	I	T	T	L	E	O	N	E	S
O	A	R	S		E	V	O	K	E		U	T	A	H
N	Y	S	E		D	E	T	O	O		T	I	R	E

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

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ESTABLISHMENTS

MCIWest off-limits establishments guidance prohibits service members from patronizing the following locations. This order applies to all military personnel.

In Oceanside:
- Angelo's Kars, 222 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054
- Angelo's Kars, 226 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054

In San Diego:
- Club Mustang, 2200 University Ave.
- Club San Diego, 3955 Fourth St.
- Get It On Shoppe, 3219 Mission Blvd.
- Main Street Motel, 3494 Main St.
-Vulcan Baths, 805 W. Cedar St.

In National City:
- Dream Crystal, 15366 Highland Ave.
- Sports Auto Sales, 1112 National City Blvd.

Local off-limits guidance prohibits service members from patronizing the following locations.

In Twentynine Palms:
- Adobe Smoke Shop, 6441 Adobe Rd.
- STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Rd.
- K Smoke Shop, 5865A Adobe Rd.

In Yucca Valley:
- Yucca Tobacco Mart, 57602 29 Palms Hwy.
- Puff's Tobacco Mart, 57063 29 Palms Hwy.

In Palm Springs:
- Village Pub, 266 S. Palm Canyon Dr.
- Whispering Palms Apts., 449 E. Arenas Road
- NYPD Pizza, 260-262 N. Palm Canyon Drive

For the complete orders, but not off-limits, check out the Combat Center's official-website at http://www.29palms.marines.mil

WHAT I'VE LEARNED

Pablo ALARCON

Albuguerque, N.M. Warehouse chief, 1st Tank Battalion, 34

Alarcon enjoys spending time at the Combat Center's Wood Hobby Shop working on projects to give as going away and retirement gifts. Since he started woodworking a year ago he has made approximately 15 unique designs.

>I got into woodworking over a year ago when I was in Yuma, Ariz. My first project was a plaque for a Marine who was getting out of the Marine Corps. Unfortunately, the resources we had in Yuma were not adequate so it was just a simple piece of wood to put on their wall.

>I wanted it to be a little more unique, because whenever I make something, it's personal. When I work on a plaque I like to make it related to the Marine's occupation or something to do with their personality.

>I've been in the Marine Corps for 15 years but just started woodworking last year.

>What got me into woodworking was my Marines. It's up to us to let the Marines go to the civilian sector the best way we can. We always talk about taking care of our own and I think this is a way we can give them some type of memento.

>Every single project has something special about it, I always like to go one up and test the boundaries. I like the challenge of making a design I've seen with my own touch.

>Most of my projects are given as gifts. Half of my projects have been made as gifts to my Marines and the other half are requests by word of mouth.

>They will always remember their first day and they will always remember their last day. A lot of stuff in between, the Marines will forget, but they will always remember those days.

>It's a way to let Marines know that we appreciate the hard work they do. It's just a small token to let them know we wish them the best.

>The biggest thing is when you do a shadow box or plaque for someone, you can see they actually do appreciate it.

>Right now I'm working on my first footlocker, so it's a learning experience but when I'm done, I know I'm going to be doing a couple more.

>In my projects I like to use clocks, because everyone always uses a clock. When you get out and you're a civilian you can actually use it and always have something that describes who you were.

>Woodworking is relaxing because you're on your own and there is no pressure. There is no one there behind you and it gives you a sense of accomplishment.

>Before the Marine Corps, I used to do murals for the city. I guess you could say I have somewhat of an artistic side. It's been a while but I used to work with water colors and ink.

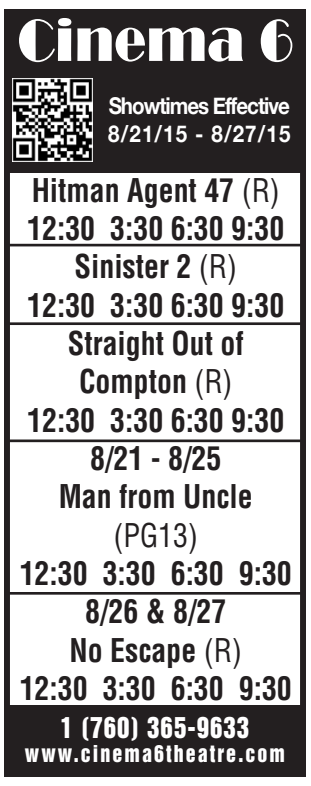
>My goal now is when I get out, I want to have my own woodshop. I want to start building my own furniture just to say I did it. I think I can come up with some good designs and put some unique detail in it.

>My favorite wood to work with is oak stained with ebony and any of the dark wood. When you engrave your design onto the wood it sticks out more. Oak has what I like to call tiger stripes. It gives your designs a little more personality.

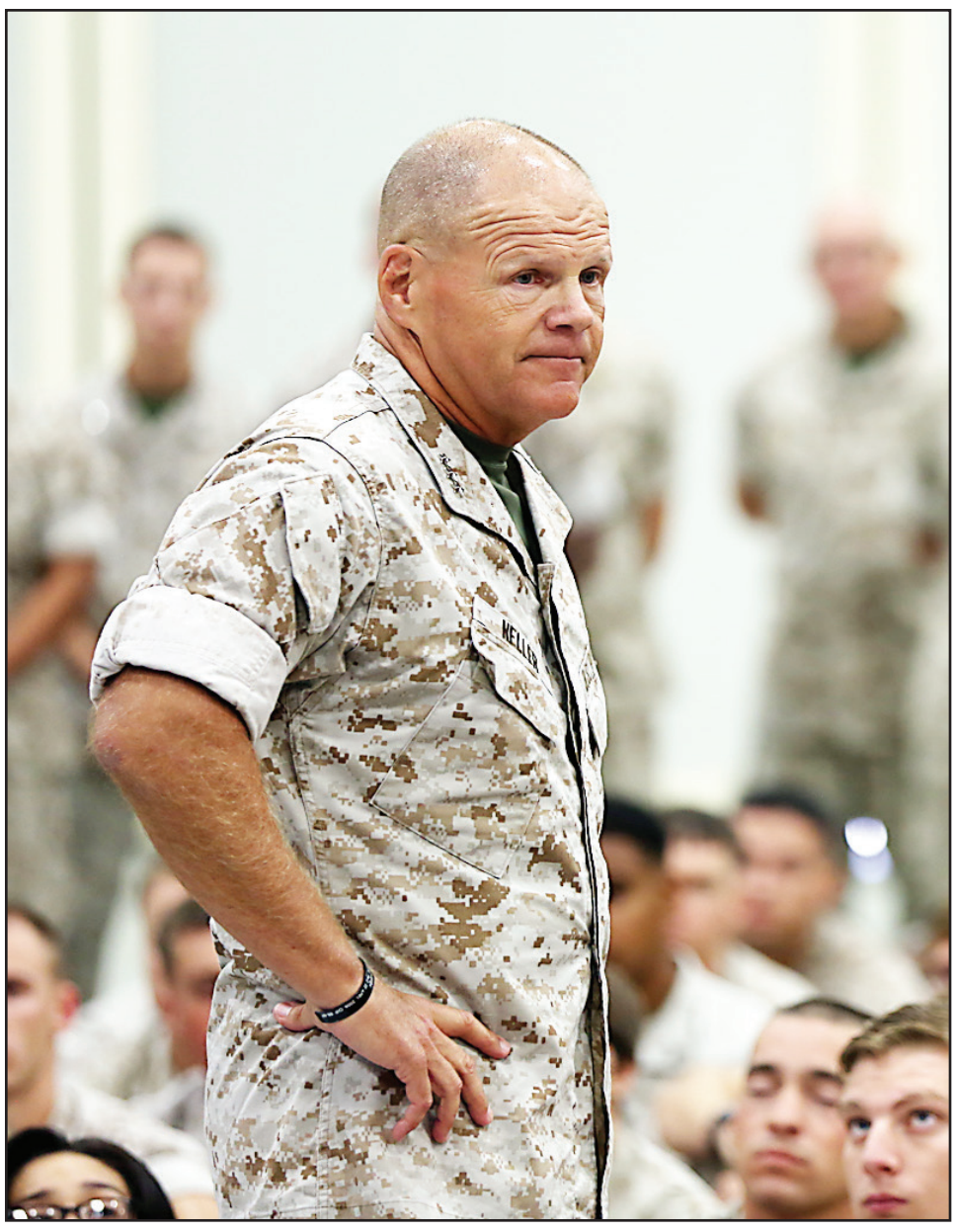
>I've done projects where I've messed up one cut and had to start all over again. I've learned when I start a new design to use a big piece of wood so if I make a mistake I can fix it.

>I'd encourage Marines who have nothing to do on a Saturday or Sunday to come check out the Wood Hobby Shop. A lot of Marines aren't mindful that this facility is available. Believe it or not, there are a lot of people like me who have zero experience that can come out here and get assistance and make really cool stuff.

Interviewed and photographed by Pfc. Levi Schultz



Future Commandant visits Marines, sailors in Italy



The future commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps addresses Marines, sailors and Coast Guardsmen with Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa Detachment A, Saturday, on Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy. Lieutenant Gen. Robert B. Neller, currently the commander of U.S. Marine Forces Command and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe, is making his way to speak with the crisis response forces throughout Europe as part of his farewell tour before he assumes the top seat in the Marine Corps next month.

The future commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps talks to Marines, sailors and Coast Guardsmen with Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa Detachment A, Saturday, on Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy. Lieutenant Gen. Robert B. Neller, currently the commander of U.S. Marine Forces Command and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe, is making his way to speak with the crisis response forces throughout Europe as part of his farewell tour before he assumes the top seat in the Marine Corps next month.

Photos by Cpl. Olivia McDonald

Lt. Gen. Robert Neller, commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command, speaks to Marines and sailors from Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa during his visit to Morón Air Base, Spain, Saturday. Neller, who has been selected and confirmed as the next commandant of the Marine Corps, spoke on the importance of maintaining training and readiness as the crisis response force for U.S. Africa Command.

STORY BY STAFF SGT. BRYAN PETERSON

The future commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps visited Marines, sailors and Coast Guardsmen with Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa Detachment A, Saturday and Sunday, on Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy.

Lieutenant Gen. Robert B. Neller, currently the commander of U.S. Marine Forces Command and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe, is making his way to speak with the crisis response forces throughout Europe as part of his farewell tour before he assumes the top seat in the Marine Corps later this year.

Neller stopped at Morón Air Base, Spain, prior to visiting NAS Sigonella to speak with Marines and sailors with the SPMAGTF-CR-AF command element. At NAS Sigonella, Neller spent his time touring SPMAGTF-CR-AF Det. A's headquarters, meeting Marines and sailors and expressing his gratitude to them, explaining that their role is now "the new normal," as he eluded to U.S. senators during his confirmation hearing with the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, July 23, 2015.

In his address to the Marines, sailors and Coast Guardsmen, Neller talked about the crisis response and theater security cooperation missions SPMAGTF-CR-AF will be involved in. He said it's the Marines who need to be postured to respond to a crisis and to train host nations' militaries to protect U.S. embassies and its people and to promote regional stability on the continent.

"The countries we train and assist want us (in Africa)," said Neller. "They don't want us there to do the job for them. They want us to help them, get a better idea of how to defeat these bad guys. They want to do it themselves and want to do it right. They want the Marines. They know who we are and what we are capable of."

During his confirmation brief, Sen. Kelly Ayotte, R-N.H., asked Lt. Gen. Neller how the Marine Corps would respond if another Benghazi-type attack happened.

In his response to the senator, Neller said the Marine Corps has an alert force that can respond within six hours, with units strategically spread across the Mediterranean in the event a similar situation happens or if there is an indication or warning of an attack on U.S. personnel or interests.

He echoed those statements, during his address to the Marines and sailors, reminding them they are in a position to make a difference, while simultaneously promoting regional stability in a variety of African nations through theater security cooperation missions.

He also fielded questions from the crowd about changes to the Marine Corps' tattoo policy and tightening budgets, while further explaining what his priorities will be in the near future.

"You guys and your tattoos," he said to laughter. "I don't want to go into that as there are a lot more important things the Marine Corps needs to address. There are a lot of big issues out there and, unfortunately, they have to do with money. But I will make sure that we are trained no matter what."

After speaking with Marines and sailors across his area of responsibility, Neller will return to the U.S. where he is expected to take the top seat as the 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps next month.

Prepare to March: 7th Marine Regiment Celebrates 98 Years

One by one, Marines with Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Central Command place a battle streamer on the Regimental Colors to symbolize the 7th Marine Regiment's unit awards during the 98th anniversary ceremony, held in an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, Saturday.

Col. Jay M. Bargeron and Marines with Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Central Command celebrate the 7th Marine Regiment's 98th anniversary after a ceremony, held in an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, Saturday.

Marines with Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Central Command stand across from the color guard during the 7th Marine Regiment, 98th anniversary ceremony held in an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, Saturday.

U.S. Marine Col. Jay M. Bargeron, commanding officer, 7th Marine Regiment, recounts the regiment's history and individual heroics during the unit's 98th anniversary ceremony, held in an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, Saturday.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. GARRET WHITE

The annals of the Marine Corps are filled with 240 years' worth of heroic actions and selfless service. These past actions continue to inspire the Marines of today's Corps, and challenge them to meet the same level of excellence and professionalism worthy of the units they represent.

While the 7th Marine Regiment may not be the oldest unit in the Marine Corps, it has no less of a storied past. Over the past 98 years "The Magnificent Seventh" has participated in some of the most famous battles of modern military history, and has had some of the most legendary Marines fill its ranks.

On August 14, in an undisclosed location in the Middle East, the SPMAGTF-CR-CC paused to celebrate the history and lineage of the 7th Marines. A ceremony, filled with the unit's Marine and Sailors, U.S. Air Force and international coalition partners, was held to honor and rededicate the unit's battle colors.

One by one, the battle streamers, each reflective of the many unit awards the 7th Marine Regiment has received, were hung and the history of each was read aloud to the crowd.

"It is important, and it's very fitting that we take opportunities like today to remember our history and recognize the service and sacrifice of those who came before us."

Colonel Jay M. Bargeron, commanding officer, 7th Marine Regiment, said as he addressed the Marines, Sailors, and coalition partners in attendance.

The current SPMAGTF is providing embassy security, advising and assisting the Iraqi Security Forces, working with regional partners, and flying combat sorties in Iraq and Syria, all possible due to the hard work and sacrifice to those now supporting Operation Inherent Resolve, he added.

"Today, on this deployment, right now, we're writing the next chapter in the regiment's history and doing it in a way that would make those who came before us proud," said Bargeron. "I think that when Marines and Sailors look back at this time, they'll think it's a big deal too.

After over a decade of near constant combat deployments, the men and women, Marines and Sailors who fill the ranks of 7th Marine Regiment continue to conduct themselves with the same excellence and professionalism of those who came before them. From John Basilone to Jason Dunham, Marines of the regiment continue to demonstrate why 7th Marines deserve the title The Magnificent Seventh.

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Enter to win!

One of our classifieds ads is **FAKE!** Find the fake ad & be entered into a drawing to win a **PRIZE!**

The **"fake ad"** will run weekly in the Hi Desert Star, Desert Trail & Observation Post newspapers. All entries for that week must be received by 5 p.m the following Monday. Winners will be notified each Tuesday.

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Bring the "Fake Ad" into our office, give us a call or mail us your entry.

For more info, call our office at 760-365-3315 or 760-367-3577.
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BEST Auto Retailer
BEST Auto Services
BEST Barber
BEST Beauty Salon
BEST Business Providing Building Improvements and Repairs
BEST Cafe or Diner
BEST Carpet and Tile Store
BEST Catering Company
BEST Chiropractic Office
BEST Cleaning Service
BEST Copy and Print Shop
BEST Contractor
BEST Computer Repair or Sales
BEST Craft and Hobby
BEST Cultural Attraction
BEST Cup of Coffee
BEST Daycare or Preschool
BEST Dentist Office
BEST Doctor's Office
BEST Dry Cleaner and/or Alterations
BEST Electrician
BEST Electronic News Source
BEST Entertainment or Gaming Venue
BEST Financial Services Taxes and/or Bookkeeping
BEST Florist
BEST Firewood Supplier
BEST Fitness Center
BEST Golf Course
BEST Hearing Aid Office
BEST Heating and Air
BEST Insurance Office
BEST Local Non-profit or Service Organization
BEST Landscaper
BEST Large Retail Store
BEST Legal Services
BEST Lender/Mortage Services
BEST Local Real Estate Office
BEST Lodging
BEST New Business (open 6 months or less)
BEST Optometrist Office
BEST Plant Nursery
BEST Pest Control Service
BEST Pet Service (non medical)
BEST Pharmacy
BEST Photographer
BEST Psychological Service Or Therapist
BEST Place to Buy Groceries
BEST Place to Eat
BEST Place to Drink
BEST Place to See a Movie
BEST Print News Source
BEST Plumbing Services
BEST Radio Station
BEST Recreation or Sporting Goods Store
BEST Senior Care Facility
BEST Small Local Retail Store
BEST Solar Contractor
BEST Tattoo Shop
BEST Tire Services or Sales Store
BEST Veterinarian
BEST Web Design
BEST Yard Clean Up and Hauling
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Heat from pg. A1

have to coordinate with artillery and mortars, while simulating the maneuver element that is attacking the objective."

The ground maneuver element, consisting of fire support teams transported by Amphibious Assault Vehicles, was tasked with assaulting two objectives with support from artillery with 1st Battalion, 10th Marine Regiment, 2nd Tank Battalion, 1/3 mortars, and close-air support from Marine Aircraft Group 29.

"It challenges our ability to synchronize our fire support teams and controlling fire as we move in on our objectives," Alvarado said. "It's pretty realistic training because we are using live artillery and mortars, so they have to be sure to cut off artillery at 800 meters and mortars at 400 meters to adjust to our troops as they would in a combat scenario."

Communication served a vital role in the execution of the exercise as the ground element had to coordinate movement with fire support.

"There are a lot of moving pieces, with all the supporting agencies: Fixed wing aircraft, rotary aircraft, artillery, mortars and tanks," said Sgt. John B. Black, joint terminal attack controller, 1/3. "It was difficult battle-checking friendly forces, especially with the room for error with so many moving parts."

LSE, held aboard the Combat Center annually, provides units with the physical dimensions required to train as a Marine Air Ground Task Force.

"The LSE allows a Marine Air Ground Task Force commander the ability to take everyone out to the field and give the friction of a live fight," said Maj. Joshua E. Cavan, exercise design branch head, MAGTF Staff Training Program. "It's an opportunity to deal with the challenges such as getting the headquarters set up and getting the Marines out in the field supplied with chow, water, fuel and everything they need to fight."

Upon the elimination of the objectives, the raising of a white flag from the command vehicle marked the end of the exercise.

"The Marines have been performing outstanding out here throughout ITX and today was just another repetition," Alvarado said.

Marines with 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, provide mortar fire in support of Large Scale Exercise 15 in the vicinity of the Blacktop Training Area, Saturday. During the exercise, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, provided live artillery supporting fire for a ground combat element as they assaulted two objectives.

Exercise from pg. A1

Derek King, a landing support specialist with the unit. "Coming here is an eye opener to what it might be like when they get over there. It's as realistic as we're going to get without deploying forward and being in a dangerous situation."

The patrols encountered ambushes designated by flares shot into the air and small explosives thrown by evaluators. Marines responded with machine gun and rocket fire directed at targets in the hills on both sides of the road, and finally an artillery strike on targets approximately 1,500 meters away.

An IED attack simulation left the Marines with a vehicle in need of towing by the unit's recovery vehicle and two wounded Marines awaiting evacuation by helicopter.

"This training is important for the Marines because it will help us when we go forward," Tornabene said. "It's not a question of whether or not they are trying to react, it's just them reacting based on everything we go through here."

Evaluators followed each vehicle throughout the exercise and assessed the Marines at each stage to ensure they understood the proper course of action during the training.

"Everything's graded and critiqued so we know what we have to improve on before we go forward and deploy to a hostile country." King said. "The Marines learned a lot of things about their jobs that they didn't know before. You'll never know exactly what your job entails until you hit the fleet and actually do exercises like this."

Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 1, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, fire on targets with M240 medium machine guns during a mounted patrol exercise aboard the Combat Center, Aug. 10.

MCEC from pg. A1

Zoe Trautman, instructor, Military Child Education Coalition, teaches the 'Helping military children discover their strength, potential, aspirations, resourcefulness and confidence institute' at the Frontline Restaurant, Aug. 11. Representatives, like Trautman, travel nationwide to teach and hold a class in Twentynine Palms every three years.

supporting military children. Representatives travel nationwide and hold a class in Twentynine Palms once every three years.

"The MCEC program's mission is to improve the lives of military children," Cruz said. "Their motto is to make sure our military children are heard and have the resources that they need. They also help us understand what those needs are to ensure that they can be successful and resilient children."

During the class, attendees learned about the struggles military children face and how to enable them to become thriving individuals.

"I think making it aware to the entire community benefits everybody," said Lee Risper, life skills trainer, Marine Corps Family Team Building, Marine Corps Community Services. "It's important we understand how military children respond and to be able to interact with them to make sure they are able to adapt to their environment."

The intent is that classes like this will better inform both the educators and parents who are responsible for influencing today's youth.

"These classes are very important to make sure adults can relate to the children coming up today and make that connection," Risper said. "It helps us to relate to them in ways that we can understand them and they can understand us."

OBSERVATION POST
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'First Team' takes gold

Members of 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment's 'super squad' display the Mitchell Cup outside of their headquarters building. The 'First Team' super squad was awarded the trophy after competing in and winning this year's Marine Corps Super Squad competition aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, July 30.

STORY AND PHOTO BY
LANCE CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO

A squad-sized element of war fighters trudge nine miles through the sweltering heat and unfamiliar terrain to the next objective. Their perseverance is tested, yet they do not give up. Instead, with support from one another, they fight through the adversity, quiet any doubt, and push on toward victory.

Marines of 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, competed in and won the Marine Corps Super Squad competition aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, July 30.

The Marine Corps Super Squad competition, held annually, is open to Marines and sailors from across 1st Marine Division. Within the division, each regiment chooses a squad to represent them. The competition is held as a means of testing each squad's endurance, occupational intelligence and cohesion. This is the first time in 10 years that 'First Team' has participated in the competition.

"When I first heard about 'super squad', my thoughts were on what went into it," said Cpl. Zachery Bennett, squad leader, 1/7. "We were briefly told we were going to be put up for super squad. When I heard that, I went back, did my research and found out a little bit more. It sounded like a pretty big honor to even compete in it."

Marines and sailors who participated in the competition were required to complete several events over the span of two days. The events for the first day included; a gear inspection, a combat fitness test, a 100-question written test, which covered basic infantry skills, and an operation order to conduct daylight patrolling.

"All of us knew each other's strengths and weaknesses so whenever there was friction we always knew how to handle it," Bennett said. "We kept each other motivated to keep pushing. One of the major challenges was acclimating to Camp Pendleton's temperature and terrain."

The patrol was conducted in the Juliet Training Area aboard Camp Pendleton. The Marines and sailors were required to navigate through harsh terrain to locate six checkpoints and call for fire from supporting assets, such as mortars. Competitions like super squad not only test the Marines' and sailors' mental and physical strength, but their ability to work together and rise above challenges.

"We didn't really have time to train because we have a really busy 'work-up' leading to our deployment," said 2nd Lt. Samuel Johnson, platoon commander, 1/7. "A lot of times, the Marines wonder how what we do applies to what we will actually end up doing and this accomplishment validates [their training and hard work]."

After the patrol, they moved into a defensive posture for the next portion of the competition and fended off a simulated attack. The next day, they started a timed nine-mile movement to Range 408. Once there, they conducted a live-fire attack and another three-mile movement followed by completing an unknown distance range as a marksmanship test for the final part of the competition.

"After the competition we formed up and the division general came out and spoke to us," Bennett said. "He let us know that we all did really well, regardless of who wins, and to take everything as a learning lesson."

After Major Gen. Lawrence Nicholson, 1st Marine Division Commanding General, addressed all of the squads, 'First Team' received the Mitchell Cup, named after Navy Cross recipient from the Battle of Fallujah, Cpl. Robert Mitchell. Members of 'First Team' also received the super squad badge in recognition of their accomplishments.

"I was really proud of them but I think it really spoke to how well we do things here at the Combat Center," Johnson said. "I think members of the squad were brought closer together, as is always the case when you go through real hardship and this was one of the hardest things some of these guys have done, especially the younger ones. I think whenever you go through challenges like that you learn to rely on each other and I think that's permeated throughout the platoon as well."

Super squad is a competition that combines several training elements utilized while forward deployed. This was the first time some members of the 'First Team' squad competed in an event of this caliber. For them, the competition embodies the spirt of what it means to be a Marine.

"It's a very big honor and there will be an even stronger brotherhood for having gone through that together," Bennett said. "It definitely makes us want to be better just because we now have to represent what that badge stands for. As far as making ourselves better goes, you don't obtain an accomplishment and then stop building. You have to maintain it and keep striving for greatness."

Liberty Call

Combat Center Events

Come visit Sandy Hill Lanes Bowling Center. With well-maintained lanes, large screen televisions, and a digital jukebox, it's a great facility for indoor recreational fun and relaxation. Tournaments are offered regularly and cosmic bowling runs every Friday and Saturday evening. For more information, contact the bowling center 760-830-6422.

Visit the Sand Trap Grill at the Desert Winds Golf Course, The Grill brings back old favorites like the charbroiled hamburger, salads, hot dogs and breakfast. Their expansive seating accommodates large groups of people. For more information, contact the golf course at 760-830-6132.

Are you a Marine or sailor looking to get into law enforcement? Stop by the Provost Marshal's Office anytime to apply for the Auxiliary Reserve Program. You'll be given the opportunity to serve the community while getting trained in practical applications, including live-fire drills. Walk-ins are welcome. For more information, contact the operations officer at 760-830-6095.

If someone you know has talent, come and watch the Marines Got Talent Show at the Sunset Cinema Theater, tonight from 6 to 8 p.m. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. For more information, contact 760-830-4767.

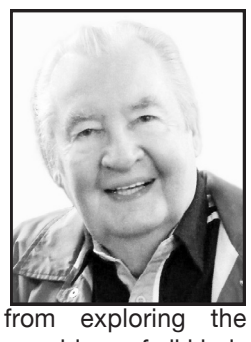
Head out to the free Music and Comedy show at Del Valle Field, September 12 from 6 to 10 p.m. The combined comedy show and musical concert will feature special appearances by Lupe Fiasco, Deray Davis and Shayma Tash. The event is open to all hands. Special seating will be available for all active duty members on a first come, first served basis. For more information contact MCCS at 760-830-5086.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, August 21
9:00 p.m. – Southpaw, R
Saturday, August 22
12:30 p.m. – Minions (3-D), PG
3:00 p.m. – Pixels (3-D), PG-13
5:30 p.m. – Paper Towns, PG-13
8:00 p.m. – Terminator: Genisys, PG-13
Sunday, August 23
12:00 p.m. – Minions, PG
2:30 p.m. – Ant-Man (3-D), PG-13
5:30 p.m. – Pixels (3-D), PG-13
8:00 p.m. – Southpaw, R
Monday, August 24
7:00 p.m. – Pixels, PG-13
Tuesday, August 25
5:00 p.m. – Minions (3-D), PG
7:00 p.m. – Ant-Man PG-13
Wednesday, August 26
5:00 p.m. – The Gallows, R
7:00 p.m. – Trainwreck, R
Thursday, August 27
5:00 p.m. – Terminator: Genisys, PG-13
7:30 p.m. – Magic Mike XXL, R
Friday, August 28
6:00 p.m. – Shaun The Sheep Movie, PG
8:30 p.m. – Vacation, R

TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt



I take great delight from exploring the philosophies, theologies, and new ideas of all kinds of people and groups. I hope that I will always be this way.

It was Einstein who wrote "Never lose a holy curiosity." And it is from this ceaseless quest for more knowledge that I have experienced my most profound and lasting satisfaction in life.

This reminds me of a humorous anecdote.

In one of his tall tales, Mark Twain tells how exercised he had become about the considerable amount of discord among God's creatures, and how he had decided to take the matter in hand.

"So I built a cage, and in it I put a dog and a cat. And after a little training I got the dog and cat to the point where they lived peaceably together. Then I introduced a pig, a goat, a kangaroo, some birds and a monkey. And, after a few adjustments, they learned to live in harmony. So encouraged was I by such successes that I added an Irish Catholic, a Presbyterian, a Jew, a Muslim from Turkestan, and a Buddhist from China, along with a Baptist missionary that I captured on the same trip. And in a very short while there wasn't a single living thing left in the cage."

Mark Twain was a superior writer, wasn't he?

Once during his marriage to Olivia, he said something he regretted the rest of his life. I'm going to tell all about it this Thursday, August 20, during my weekly seminar. I hope you attend.

This column sponsored by:

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Space Invaders

Adam Sadler and his shtick saves the planet in 'Pixels'

NEIL POND

"Pixels"
Starring Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Josh Gad and Michelle Monaghan
Directed by Chris Columbus
Rated PG-13

It's not summer at the multiplex unless the world is under space-alien attack. And this time, the malevolent E.T.s rain down destruction in the form of '80s videogames, gigantic 3-D versions of Pac-Man, Centipede, Galaga and other arcade classics from the era of Madonna, Mr. T and Max Headroom.

To echo another '80 classic, who you gonna call?

In the case of Pixels, you call Adam Sandler and his pals, a pack of game-arcade whiz kids back in the day. When the pixelated peril begins pelting major global cities, America sends its best to the front lines: guys who still remember how to win with a joystick and a pocketful of tokens.

How you feel about Pixels will probably square with how you feel about Adam Sandler and his movies in general, from Big Daddy to Happy Gilmore and Grown Ups. Even though he's made the occasional diversion, he's basically stayed true to his formula, that of an ever-aging grown-up with the stunted emotional maturity, hubba-hubba sense of humor and giggly gender enlightenment of a 13-year-old.

Sandler's go-to production and writing team make sure the project bears his distinctive stamp, even though the stylistic touch of director Christopher Columbus (Home Alone, The Goonies and two Harry Potter movies) seems to have a bit of comedic leavening effect on some of his more sophomoric tendencies.

Although Pixels generates some laughs, they are jumbled, jangled and uneven, and even Sandler seems tired and bored of playing basically the same character he's played in every movie. Josh Gad, who voiced Olaf in Frozen, is the conspiracy-theory crackpot Ludlow, one of Sandler's arcade buddies obsessed with a sword-wielding goddess from an '80s game called Dojo Quest. Peter Dinklage from TV's Game of Thrones plays Eddie, a trash-talking Donkey Kong champ with a checkered past. And Kevin James is the president of the United States—yes, Paul Blart has graduated from Mall Cop to the Oval Office.

One of the bones women often pick with Sandler's movies is that they are unabashedly boys' clubs, and Pixels certainly doesn't do anything to turn that perception around. Michelle Monaghan, Maggie Hart from last fall's season of True Detective, is the ostensible female lead, but she's only there to trade romantic snips and quips with Sandler, fall in love with him and cheer him on as he saves the world. She fares far better, even so, than Jane (30 Rock) Krakowski, who gets no lines of dialogue as the First Lady, and whose big scene is decorating a cake.

The only other female who gets any appreciable camera time at all, Ashley Benson, as the mini-toga-clad video-goddess-come-to-life Lady Lisa, doesn't even get to open her mouth all—except to kiss Josh Gad.

We never see the space aliens, who communicate through scrambled '80s TV transmissions: Ronald Reagan presidential addresses, sitcoms, commercials, MTV spots. At one point, a flummoxed U.S. military official (Brian Cox) reacts to the news that Sandler and his team apparently failed to stop the invasion.

"You heard Hall and Oates," he bellows. "You blew it!"

With this Pixel-ated pileup of Sandler shtick, I have to agree.

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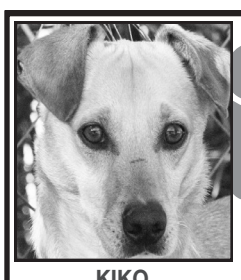

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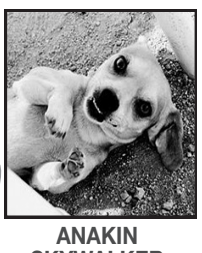
Hound Mix. Medium Young Male. MBHS



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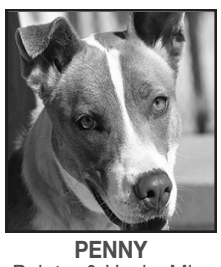

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Domestic Long Hair-black and white. Small Young Female. Palms n Paws AS

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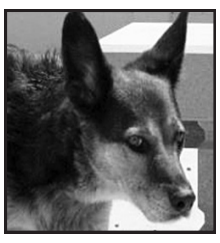
Corgi & Weimaraner Mix. Medium Adult Male. MBHS



BRANDI LEAH SANNY
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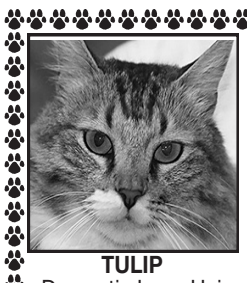
Domestic Long Hair - orange Mix. Medium Young Male. MBHS

ARETHA MOE MOUSE
Domestic Short Hair. Extra LargeAdult Female. YVAS



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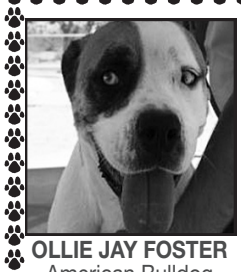

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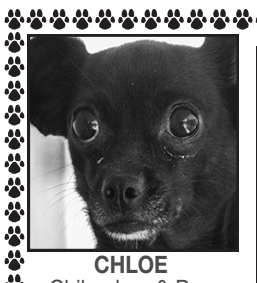

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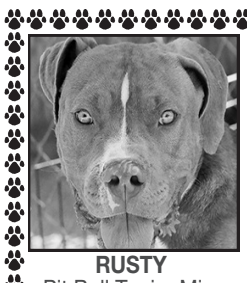

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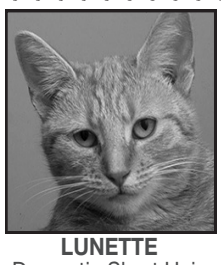
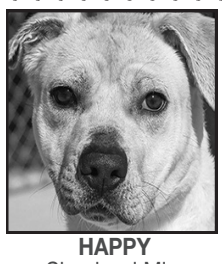
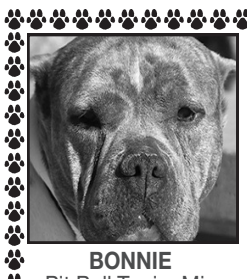


LUNETTE
Domestic Short Hair. Medium Young Female. MBHS



HAPPY
Shepherd Mix. Medium Young Male. Palms n Paws AS



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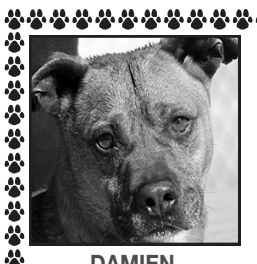

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2nd MEB, Coalition partners execute Large Scale Exercise 15

PHOTO BY CPL. MICHAEL DYE

A Marine with 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, sights in on a target in a preparatory exercise for Large Scale Exercise 15 aboard the Combat Center, Sunday. LSE-15 is a combined U.S. Marine Corps, Canadian and British Exercise conducted at the brigade level, designed to enable live, virtual and constructive training for participating forces.

STORY BY CPL. SULLIVAN LARAMIE

Marines with 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade alongside service members with the British 3rd Commando Brigade and 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group executed Large Scale Exercise 15 at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., Aug. 14-20.

LSE-15 is a service-level assessment at the brigade-level, composed of all four elements of the Marine Air Ground Task Force with live maneuver elements. It is designed to enable live, virtual and constructive training for the MEB command element as the primary training audience.

PHOTO BY CPL. MICHAEL DYE

An assault amphibious vehicle carrying Marines with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, travel to an objective point during a scenario-based event during Large Scale Exercise 15 aboard the Combat Center, Sunday. LSE-15 is a combined U.S. Marine Corps, Canadian and British Exercise conducted at the brigade level, designed to enable live, virtual and constructive training for participating forces.

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