

NREA strikes first on new water standard

STORY BY LAUREN KURKIMILIS,
 DEP. PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

A public announcement from Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs addressing Hexavalent Chromium levels in the installation's groundwater hit doorsteps throughout Lincoln Military housing this morning. For many, the mandated letter served as an introduction to the topic and overall, it informed Combat Center residents of California's newly-adopted standard and the measures being taken by the base to meet that standard.

In July 2014, California became the only state in the nation to implement a maximum contaminant level in groundwater for Hexavalent Chromium, also known as Chromium-6. The Combat Center has always met and exceeded all water quality requirements and there have never before been separate regulations in place for Chromium-6. As a result of the change in regulations, the Combat Center, along with many water districts in California, is now out of compliance.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency website, cfpub.epa.gov, Chromium is a naturally occurring element in the earth's crust. The three main forms of chromium found in the environment are Chromium-0, Chromium-3 and Chromium-6. Chromium is widely used in manufacturing processes, and it can be found in many consumer products such as wood treated with copper dichromate, leather tanned with chromic sulfate, and stainless steel cookware. But in the case of the Combat Center, small traces of Chromium come from natural sources in the environment.

"The Combat Center has always complied with the most current environmental and natural resources practices," said Chris Elliott, water resources manager, NREA. "but as regulations change, we are addressing them in the timeliest practical manner in order to meet today's stricter standards."

The new standard in California for Chromium-6 is a Maximum Contaminant Level of 10 parts per billion, and according to a sample taken in the second quarter of 2015, two of MCAGCC's eight wells are reported to have 14 and 18 ppb. The Combat Center's 2014 Consumer Confidence Report stated the installation's average Chromium-6 levels to be sampled at 12 ppb.

In 2014 Consumer Confidence Reports from throughout the local



area, Desert Water Agency detected 1.06 ppb of Chromium-6 in Palm Springs; Hi-Desert Water District reported Yucca Valley at 3.3 ppb; Twentynine Palms Water District reported 9.75 ppb; and Joshua Basin Water District sampled at 24 ppb in Joshua Tree's ground water supply.

In August 2013, California Department of Public Health proposed the 10 ppb MCL for Chromium-6 and announced this proposal for public comment and final decision, according to the State Water Resources Control Board. As a result of this initial concern over Chromium-6, the Combat Center took action to address any possible issues before the potential implementation of a new standard by researching ways of treating the installation's groundwater for Chromium-6. According to Elliott, this preemptive measure put MCAGCC ahead of the game when it comes to meeting the standard as quickly as possible.

"We recognized the issue prior to the regulatory change," Elliott said. "Early on, MCAGCC started contract negotiations and scope of work for a drinking water feasibility study. The focus of the study is to look at options for construction of a drinking water treatment plant."

The first phase of the study

will look at all available treatment technologies for treatment of Chromium-6. MCAGCC will assess these options and determine what option best fits the needs and capabilities of the installation based on the installation's location, manpower and budget. Additional factors taken into account will be energy consumption, water loss due to the treatment process, and potential hazardous material disposal costs, Elliott added.

"The third component of this study is the development of a Corrective Action Plan," Elliott said. "This plan is essentially a roadmap we will be using in moving forward. It will be submitted to the state, identifying how the Marine Corps will be addressing this issue. That plan will be finalized and submitted by Oct. 15, 2015."

As of Thursday, the top two treatment options had been selected and will continue to be further scrutinized for best compatibility with the installation's capabilities and needs. The final selection will be identified in February 2016 once the study is completed.

For official information on California's groundwater standards and Chromium-6, please visit www.waterboards.ca.gov.

Important information about your drinking water

This is not an emergency

Este informe contiene informacion muy importante sobre su agua potable. Traduzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

The Combat Center collects and tests the drinking water constantly throughout its system to ensure the water delivered to you is in compliance with regulatory requirements at all times. As a result of the required testing, the Combat Center recently received a notice of non-compliance for exceeding the Hexavalent Chromium drinking water standard. When a regulatory violation occurs, public notification may be required. Although this is not an emergency, you have a right to know what you should do, what happened, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

What happened? What is being done?

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) adopted a new standard of 10 parts per billion (ppb) for

Hexavalent Chromium on July 1, 2014. California is the only state to regulate hexavalent chromium in drinking water. The Combat Center exceeded 10 ppb during the second quarter of 2015 at wells 3B and 4A. Well 3B sample result was 14 ppb and well 4A sample result was 18 ppb. This hexavalent chromium exceedance is due to naturally occurring minerals in the soil and not a result of any contamination.

To address this compliance issue, the Combat Center is working with the SWRCB to develop a compliance plan, to be completed by October 15, 2015. Also, the Combat Center has been conducting a critical drinking water study since April 2014. This study, due by February 2016, will provide the Combat Center with information needed to construct the proper treatment processes for the effective removal of Hexavalent Chromium from the drinking water.

This is not an immediate risk. You do not need to use an alternative water supply (e.g., bottled water). If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. However, some people who drink water containing Hexavalent Chromium in excess of the regulatory standard (known as the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)) over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer. If you have other health issues concerning the consumption of this water, you may wish to consult your doctor.

This notice was developed jointly with SWRCB staff and approved for public release. Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in the barracks, schools, and businesses). If you have questions regarding this report or related issues please contact Mr. Chris Elliott, Water Resources Manager, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs (NREA) Division at 760-830-7883 or chris.elliott@usmc.mil.

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. Matthew Bragg.



A 3rd Marine Regiment color guard takes its place, July 25, during a repatriation ceremony in Tarawa, Kiribati. The ceremony honored the remains of approximately 36 Marine who fought and died during the Battle of Tarawa during World War II, and were loaded onto a C-130J Hercules aircraft to be transported back home to the United States.

'Rough Riders' cruise through motorized operations course



A Marine with Truck Company, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, assists a fellow Marine to an aircraft to be evacuated for notional injuries suffered from a simulated improvised explosive device during a motorized operations course aboard the Combat Center, July 30. The Marines were evaluated on their performance to determine whether their standard operating procedures were effective or ineffective.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
 SGT. OWEN KIMBREL

course (MOC) aboard the Combat Center, July 30.

The training allowed the Marines to perform in scenarios they might face in forward deployed situations. The Marines were evaluated on multiple areas to ensure they were prepared in real-life scenarios. See **Riders pg. A6**



Reprinted from the Observation Post

August 7, 1962

By Pfc. S.E. Domurath

3rd HARB makes first amphibious landing

The Heavy Artillery Rocket Battery left MCB, Twentynine Palms, Monday morning, July 23, for Camp Pendleton to take part in the landing exercise. They loaded their trucks and equipment aboard a landing Craft Utility in very heavy surf on Tuesday. The LCU transported the equipment and men aboard the USS THOMASTON, Landing Ship Dock, which was anchored off the coast.

This was the first time that the unit had boarded ship, and it was a new and interesting experience for the men.

They became accustomed to ship life fast. They learned to step over hatches and to duck low. These Marines became familiar with what to do in case of fire, attack, man overboard, ect. They learned fast and well.

The ship remained anchored off the beach overnight, and at day-break, Wednesday, the battery made its first landing. It was more or less a practice run, it was the first time, and it was conducted slowly. After all vehicles were ashore, they immediately re-loaded aboard the THOMASTON, and sailed for San Diego Bay that night.

Thursday morning, the troops found themselves off the shore of Coronado and shortly after breakfast, the ship dropped anchor. Thursday was spent floating off-shore, and the time was passed telling sea-stories, fishing, and learning about ship life. Weapons had to be cleaned, and personal gear had to be squared away. Furthermore, the plans for the landing Friday had to be reviewed—the men didn't have any trouble finding

things to do.

After a couple days of ship life and all that goes along with it, most men would rather take the sand and the sun than the ocean. Being a part of the largest Marine Base, it is hard to get used to living on a small ship. It's too confusing—too many flags and strange terms. No real room to stretch out.

Making a tactical landing involving heavy and delicate equipment is a very touchy and difficult task to accomplish. The trick is in getting the various trucks and rocket launchers off the ship in a specified order. For example, you wouldn't want to unload all the rocket launchers without getting the assembly and communication equipment ashore with them. Therefore, equipment and men must be ashore so that they will be

able to deploy their rocket immediately upon landing.

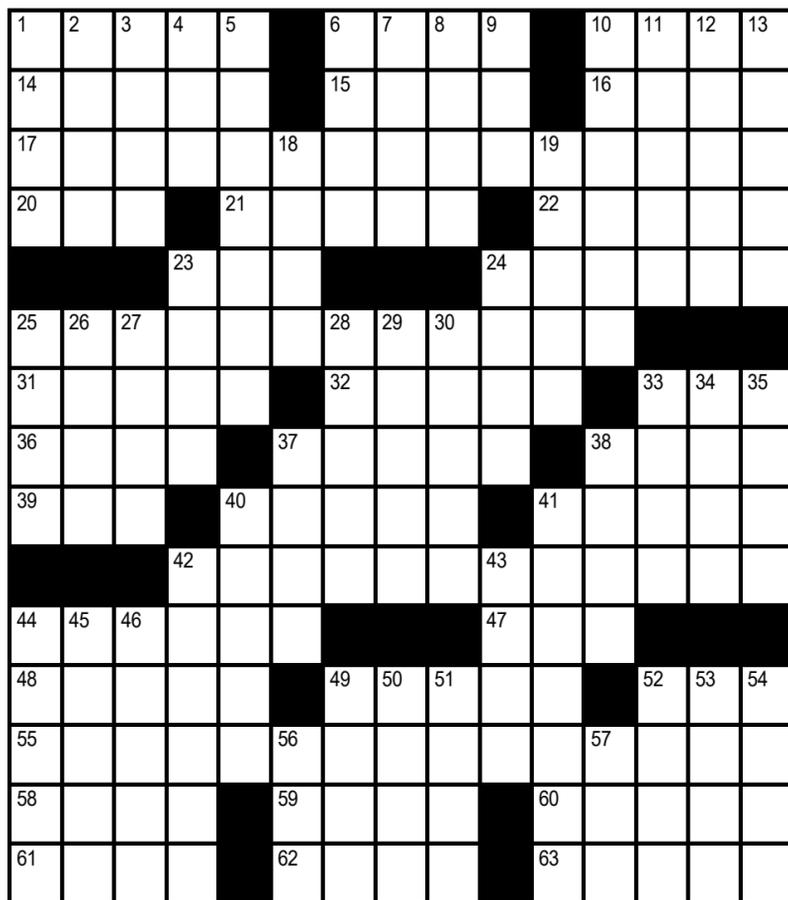
The landing Friday showed just how this was done. The LCU's floated into the LSD, and immediate, equipment was loaded aboard and in perfect order. There were two LCU's and they made many trips back and forth from ship to beach. The first trip took reconnaissance ashore. Soon reports came to ship on weather, terrain, enemy situation, ect., And then equipment went ashore.

Had this been a real landing, the battery would have gone ashore and into hiding while they waited for the rest of the equipment, but this was training, and the trucks and launchers came ashore, and formed convoy for the long ride back to Twentynine Palms.

CROSSWORD

Across

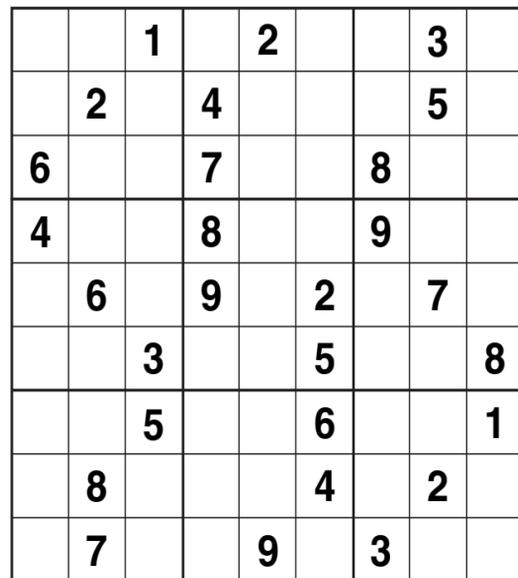
- 1 Coffee addition
- 6 Gyllenhaal of "Zodiac"
- 10 Flour producer
- 14 Cast mightily
- 15 Fishing locale
- 16 Novel by Melville
- 17 Planters product with no sodium
- 20 Honey maker
- 21 Pull on, as a child might to a parent's clothing
- 22 Drink a little
- 23 Ether or ethane
- 24 Medical school graduate
- 25 Instrument smaller than a baby grand
- 31 Rental paper
- 32 Golf's Palmer, informally
- 33 Demolition material
- 36 Twigs in trees, maybe
- 37 Hot rods?
- 38 High, in Bonn
- 39 Dadaist sculptor
- 40 Blue shoe leather
- 41 Village in 1968-'69 news
- 42 Insurance that covers everything
- 44 Recording artists?
- 47 There was much of this in Shakespeare
- 48 Big name in math
- 49 Stun
- 52 "Iron Horse" Gehrig
- 55 Publisher of academic books
- 58 XL or XXL, e.g.
- 59 "How awful!"
- 60 Church passageway between pews
- 61 Observatory function
- 62 React to a great poker hand?
- 63 Gyrocompass part



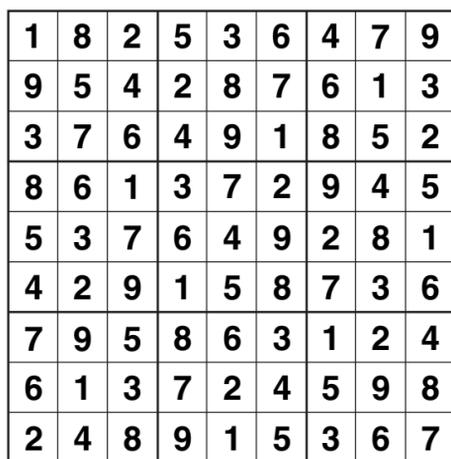
Down

- 1 Minnow cousin
- 2 Actress Russo
- 3 Take a load off
- 4 Gardner biography
- 5 What the spring thaw brings
- 6 Uploaded pic, often
- 7 Elton John/Tim Rice Broadway musical
- 8 Hung onto
- 9 Before, poetically
- 10 Monte Carlo locale
- 11 "___ be crazy"
- 12 Number-guessing fund-raiser
- 13 Short straw drawer
- 18 Backside
- 19 Pay back (for)
- 23 Pith
- 24 Lectern's location
- 25 Humerus adjunct
- 26 Mr. Gynt
- 27 Carpenter's file
- 28 Long candle
- 29 Leonine bunch
- 30 Chip producer
- 33 Ring, as a bell
- 34 Three-division sports grp.
- 35 Sparsely distributed
- 37 B-team members
- 38 Doc's needle
- 40 Campout treat
- 41 Did as expected, in golf

SUDOKU



Last week's answers



OBSERVATION POST

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Installation Sgt. Maj. - Sgt. Maj. Karl Villalino
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 - 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.

- 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

Justin

Combat Center Equal Opportunity Advisor

BOOKER

>**My father always told me** to have a clean car. A car says a lot about a man.

>**When I was thirteen**, my sister's car got a flat tire. I figured out how to fix it but I didn't really know what I was doing. That's when I realized I need to know more about fixing vehicles.

>**Soon after**, I got a job at Circuit City installing car stereos and worked with my dad detailing vehicles. My dad taught me how to properly use rotary buffers, dual action polishers, and how to clay-bar vehicles.

>**Cars and football** are my passion. I love detailing vehicles and working on cars. I own a 2002 BMW X5 4.4 and a 2012 BMW 550 IX M Sport.

>**I saved up** and bought a 1997 BMW 528i. It was a horrible car when I first got it, but I put a lot of work into it and it was absolutely stunning after that.

>**The military understands** that car problems are a nightmare. The on-base auto hobby shops are a resource I use to save money. Most of the time, you'll spend half the money doing it yourself compared to having someone else fix your vehicle.

>**I like to help** other Marines with their cars. If a Marine tells me they're having a problem I'll scan their vehicle and find out what the issue is.

>**I also have a passion** for football because it teaches you a lot about life. It teaches you about team work, hard work and perseverance in difficult times.

>**My favorite thing about football** is the defense. When you're a linebacker and you're tired on 4th and 1, you have to challenge yourself to make the play. The challenges build confidence as a person.

>**My dream job** is to be the defensive coordinator for the Baltimore Ravens.

>**I love the Ravens** because their whole team is built around their defense. When the defensive team comes on the field, the crowd erupts.

>**The Ravens are unique** because they do everything on or off the field as a team. I like how the players talk about the organization as a whole.

>**It's similar to the Marine Corps**. You might not always get along with the people you work with, but when everyone's focused on accomplishing the mission, that's effective teamwork.

>**My favorite football player is** Terrell Suggs. He has that mean mug that sums up what a football player should be. When a player is passionate about football, they're also passionate about life.

>**Everyone in my family** is a football fanatic. My mom is a Redskins fan and my father is also a Ravens fan. My dad has been a big influence on me.

>**He has a lot of quotes**; one of my favorites is about intelligence. He said, "Every time a man is in the presence of an attractive woman, his IQ goes down 20 points. If he doesn't have 20 points to spare, he could be in big trouble."

>**My mom taught me** how to be strong. She told me, "Do justice, love kindness and walk humbly before your God."

>**I came into the Marine Corps** as an infantry rifleman and my present [military occupational specialty] is a fire support man.

>**I've always treated my Marines** with dignity and respect. This led to me becoming the Equal Opportunity Advisor on base.

>**It's been a change** for me because I'm used to being in the field and being

Booker has been in the Marine Corps for 18 years and has been on seven deployments. He has a passion for cars and football and hopes to become the defensive coordinator for the Baltimore Ravens.



in charge of Marines. I've never really had an office before. It's a shock because I've been deploying my whole career.

>**I'm happy** with what I've done and I wouldn't change anything.

>**The Marine Corps taught me** a lot. I'm a little more knowledgeable now. I don't take as many risks as I did when I was 18, but sometimes in life, you have to take risks. You have to find the point where success and risk taking meet.

>**If I could give junior Marines advice** it would be to have options. Even if you've decided to end active service, also prepare to re-enlist. Life throws changes at us, and it's important to have options.

>**I would tell a young lance corporal** to invest time into increasing their chances of getting promoted. Investing a little time into doing MCIs every day might save you if your family happens to need the money. You never know what is going to happen a year from now.

>**I want to provide Marines** with an environment where they can voice their issues.

>**Advice is something all Marines** can benefit from. When an upset Marine snatched my ID card from me at the front gate in Camp Lejeune, I could tell something big was bothering him. Most master sergeants I know would have gone off on this guy. I wanted to get to the source of the issue. I sat down on the stoop with this Marine for two hours. He explained that his wife took his kids and left town. He didn't know how to deal with it. By taking a little time, I was able to make a positive impact on this Marine.

Interviewed and photographed by Lance Cpl. Connor Hancock

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4th Tanks enga

PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. JULIO MCGRAW



An M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank crew with Company A, 4th Tank Battalion, fires its 120 mm main gun during the company's pre-qualification tank gunnery at Range 500, Tuesday. The live-fire exercise tests tank crews on their ability to work together on target acquisition and accuracy.

STORY BY PFC. LEVI SCHULTZ

A tank rumbled through the desert advancing to its firing position. Coordinates and instructions directed the crew of Marines to their objective. With crosshairs on target, the crew received an order to fire, prompting an earsplitting blast from a shell leaving the tank's barrel and obliterating the target.

Company A, 4th Tank Battalion, participated in a prequalification tank gunnery at Range 500, Tuesday. The live-fire exercise was held to test the M1A1 Abrams Main Tank crews on their ability to work together on target acquisition and accuracy. The tank crews must qualify on the gunnery exercise annually through day and night, stationary and moving, as well as offensive and defensive engagements.



An M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank crew with Company A, 4th Tank Battalion, acquires its target during the company's pre-qualification tank gunnery at Range 500, Tuesday. The tank has both day-time and thermal optics allowing it to be used during night and day operations.

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anges in gunnery



An M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank crew with Company A, 4th Tank Battalion, advances to its firing position during the company's pre-qualification tank gunnery at Range 500, Tuesday. The tank weighs approximately 70 tons and is capable of reaching a top speed of 45 mph.



Tank crewmen of Company A, 4th Tank Battalion, load ammunition into M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tanks before their pre-qualification tank gunnery through Range 500, Tuesday. Tank crews must pass their tank gunnery exercise on a yearly basis and the company performed its qualifications in the days to follow.



An M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank crew with Company A, 4th Tank Battalion, fires its 120 mm main gun during the company's pre-qualification tank gunnery at Range 500, Tuesday.



2nd Lt. David Fitzgerald, platoon commander, and Cpl. Steven Griffin, tank crewman, Company A, 4th Tank Battalion, prepare their M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank before a run through Range 500 during the company's pre-qualification tank gunnery, Tuesday.

Visit the official MCAGCC facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter>

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Riders from pg. A1

narios. The "Rough Riders" went through the proper steps in the event of convoy operations, possible improvised explosive devices, unblocked ambushes and IED strikes with casualties.

"This type of training is important because it gives us the opportunity to stay in a tactical mindset," said 1st Lt. Daphne Williams, platoon commander for Truck Company. "These are the only ranges that give us a realistic look at what we would be dealing with if we were deployed in country, and it allows us to practice our immediate action drills in real time so we are prepared in a real-life situation."

The Marines conducted each exercise under the vigilant eye of course evaluators, known as coyotes. The coyotes closely follow the Marines taking notes on which operations were effective and ineffective. The Marines were able to see how efficient they were from employing the M240B medium machinegun during an ambush to communicating grid locations with aircraft for casualty evacuation. Once the training scenarios ceased, the Marines were able to receive vital feedback on their performance.

"I love it here, it's really good training," said Cpl. Matthew Ezell, a vehicle commander with Truck Company. "The more times we reiterate tactics and standard operating procedures to our Marines, it makes us better."

While the training gave the Marines the opportunity to see where they were proficient, more importantly, it showed them where they needed to focus their attention.

Overall, the Rough Riders agreed the training reinforced their understanding of standard operating procedures and honed their tactical mindset—ultimately preparing them should they be forward deployed.



Marines with Truck Company, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, standby for explosive ordnance disposal to arrive while keeping vigilant for possible enemy combatants during a motorized operations course aboard the Combat Center, July 30. The Marines performed the exercise to better themselves in the event of a real-life scenario.



Marines with Truck Company, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, used smoke to signal to aircraft the landing zone for a casualty evacuation during a motorized operations course aboard the Combat Center, July 30. The training allowed the Marines to conduct multiple scenarios in order to receive vital feedback on operating procedures.



Lance Cpl. Tyler Henderson, a radio operator with Truck Company, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, sets up a road block after discovering a possible simulated improvised explosive device during a motorized operations course aboard the Combat Center, July 30. The Marines set up road blocks and conducted a 360 degree area of security until explosive ordnance disposal arrived to neutralize the threat.

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PHOTOS BY CPL. SETH STARR

A combat engineer with Company C, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, calls out for other Marines to take cover from grazing enemy machine gun fire just above their position. 1/3 Marines conducted a company level live-fire assault during an Integrated Training Exercise aboard the Combat Center, July 29.



Machine gunners with Company C, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, sprint to a hilltop to establish a support by fire position in order to provide suppressing fires for several platoons of riflemen. 1/3 Marines conducted a company level live fire assault during an Integrated Training Exercise aboard the Combat Center, July 29.



A squad leader with Company C, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, signals to his Marines giving them a one minute warning before assaulting an enemy position. 1/3 Marines conducted a company level live fire assault during an Integrated Training Exercise aboard the Combat Center, July 29.



Combat engineers and assault men with Company C, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, assemble in preparation for an obstacle breach and hold several M1A2 Bangalore breaching charges. 1/3 Marines conducted a company level live fire assault during an Integrated Training Exercise aboard the Combat Center, July 29.

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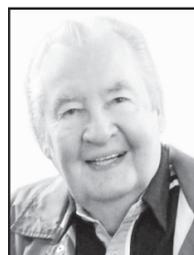
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TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt



Art Kunkin is one of the most interesting men in our Hi-Desert. What a background! You name it and he has not only done it, he has excelled at it. Let me quote from his business card:

"I am an alternative investigative journalist who founded the L.A. Free Press and edited it from 1964 to 1972. I am also a past President of the Philosophical Research Society. For the last 30 years I have studied laboratory alchemy. I now teach others how to make the legendary Philosopher's Stone that can give a person many additional years of life. Please open <http://www.alchemyrevealed.com> to read about the Stone. I am an herbalist, artist, author, tribal elder, master machinist, grateful father and friend. I am also a teacher and student of meditations that heal, balance and evolve the four human bodies (physical, emotional, mental and spiritual). These powerful techniques help people become happy, healthy, kind, successful, calm, powerful and awake."

In my judgment Art is one of the most intelligent men I know. He has an open mind, heart, and spirit and is growing in knowledge every day of his life. Art is 87 years of age with a trigger-sharp mind and a gentle spirit. I really admire this man.

Now, for some really exciting news, Arthur will speak at my Thursday morning Positive Living Seminar August 13 at 10:00 AM. There is no charge and Skip Wulf provides lots of food and drink. Come and enjoy.

I really believe Art's insight and wisdom will assist any person who attends.

This column sponsored by:

Anonymous

(Here's a hint for many of you. Ms. anonymous not only knows how to spell anonymous but lots and lots of other words that would stump most of us.)

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WeekINPhotos

'Animal' gone TRAP'n

PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. CLARENCE LEAKE



U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Tayler Huey, squad leader, and Lance Cpl. Brandon Parmeter, both with 1st Squad, 1st Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, provide security while conducting a tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel mission in response to a scenario-based incident during an Integrated Training Exercise (ITX) aboard the Combat Center, Saturday.



U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Christopher Macelveen, squad leader with 1st Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, annotates instructions for his squad aboard a CH-53E Super Stallion, before conducting a tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel mission in response to a scenario-based incident during an Integrated Training Exercise (ITX) aboard the Combat Center, Saturday.



U.S. Marines with 1st Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, board a CH-53E Super Stallion to conduct a tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel mission in response to a scenario-based incident during an Integrated Training Exercise (ITX) aboard the Combat Center, Saturday.

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Fullbird retires his wings



Col. John E. Kasperski, assistant chief of staff G-4, sits beside family and friends during his retirement ceremony at the Combat Center Protestant Chapel, July 31. Kasperski retired after 29 years of service in the Marine Corps.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PFC. LEVI SCHULTZ

Col. John E. Kasperski, G-4 assistant chief of staff, Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command, brought his distinguished 29-year Marine Corps career to an end during his retirement ceremony at the Protestant Chapel, July 31.

During the ceremony, Kasperski was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal along with an American flag that was flown over the Combat Center, in recognition of his service, July 11.

"It's great and I hold all the letters and awards in high regard," Kasperski said. "I have been very lucky to have great non-commissioned officers who served around me as well as to have been blessed with great leadership."

Kasperski attended the University of Tulsa on an athletic scholarship for football and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Advertising and Public Relations. Combat Center Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Lewis A. Craparotta served as the retiring officer for the ceremony and shared remarks on Kasperski's extensive career

as a logistics officer.

"He was good enough to sign with the New York Jets and made 3 preseason games before, unfortunately for the team and fortunately for his country and Corps, he didn't make the final cut," Craparotta said. "He went back to Tulsa and in his words, 'still looking for adventure,' walked into the [Officer Selection Office] where he signed up to be a Marine Corps officer."

Craparotta went on to talk about the different capacities in which Kasperski had served throughout his career to include; commander of Combat Logistics Battalion 11 and Combat Logistics Regiment 37, camp commander at Camp Kinser, Okinawa, Japan, and Commandant of the Marine Corps Logistics Fellow at Pennsylvania State University. Craparotta also praised Kasperski's many accomplishments while serving as an assistant chief of staff aboard the Combat Center.

"I'm nothing but impressed by the depth of knowledge that he had over the broad expanse of what is the G-4," Craparotta said. "He has worked very closely with [Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs] in both

water and energy conservation. Quite frankly, his work with NREA has put us on the forefront for the Marine Corps and in many cases the Department of Defense."

Capt. Julie Markow, motor transport company commander, Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, worked under Kasperski as a maintenance management officer.

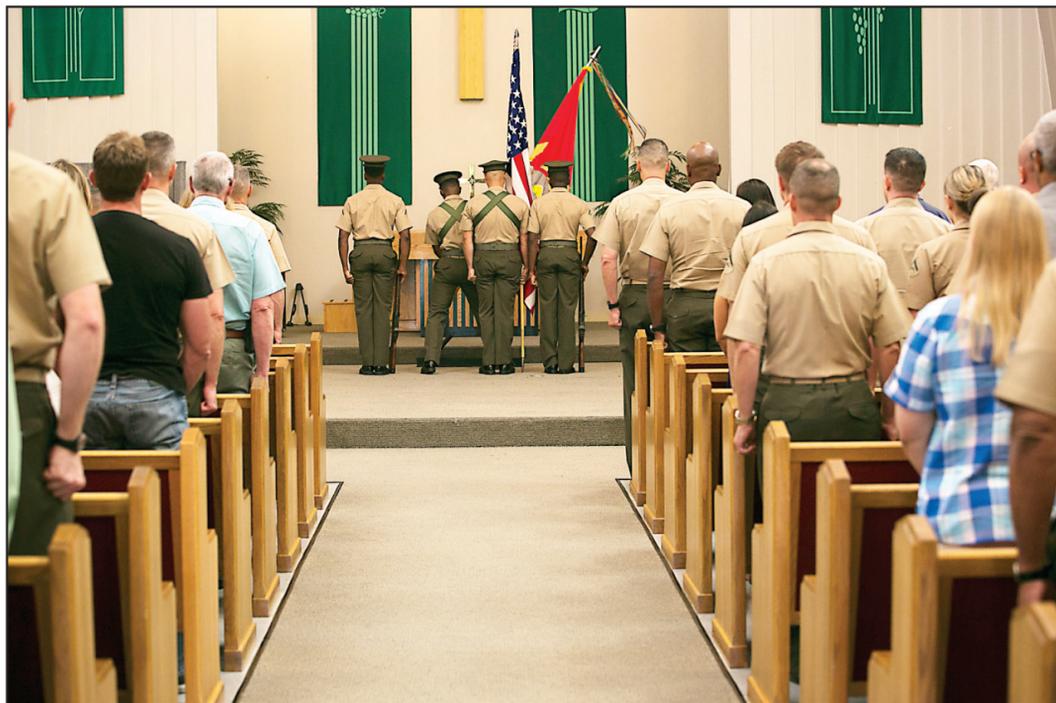
"Working with him was an awesome experience, he gave you the freedom to make decisions and get things done," Markow said. "He always had the trust in his Marines to get things done the way they needed to happen and when you really needed the assistance he was always there to help."

While Kasperski's Marine Corps career has come to an end, he sees it as a new beginning and has accepted a job with the Department of the Navy.

"Over the years, I've worked for great people, but more importantly I've worked with great Marines," Kasperski said. "Overall, I think it was a great career and I'm glad I stuck around. I've had diverse assignments and worked and served with fantastic Americans. What else can you ask for?"



Col. John E. Kasperski, assistant chief of staff G-4, Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command, was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal by Combat Center Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Lewis A. Craparotta during Kasperski's retirement ceremony at the Protestant Chapel, July 31. Kasperski retired after 29 years of service to the Marine Corps.



The Combat Center Color Guard retrieves the colors during the retirement ceremony of Col. John E. Kasperski, assistant chief of staff G-4, at the Protestant Chapel, July 31. Combat Center Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Lewis A. Craparotta served as the retiring officer for the ceremony.



Col. John E. Kasperski, assistant chief of staff G-4, thanks the officers and enlisted Marines he worked alongside throughout his 29 years of service during his retirement ceremony at the Protestant Chapel, July 31. During the ceremony, Kasperski was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal along with an American flag that was flown over the Combat Center, in recognition of his service, July 11.

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 at 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.

Visit the Mameluke's Pub for a fun 90's Themed Trivia Night, August 13 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Come in your best themed attire while competing to win prizes throughout the night. Food and drink specials will be available. For more information, contact the Mameluke's Pub at 760-830-8429.

Come celebrate the end of the summer and prepare for a new school year at the Back to School Bash. The bash will be held at the Frontline Restaurant, August 14 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tickets will be available on July 13 for pre-sale at Information Tickets and Tours for \$8 and sold at the door for \$10. For more information, visit MCCS29Palms.com.

If you or someone you know has talent, come and perform live at the Marines Got Talent Show at the Sunset Cinema Theater, August 21 from 6 to 8 p.m. Auditions will be held August 11, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. For more information, contact the Sunset Cinema at 760-830-4767.

Sunset Cinema

<p>Friday, August 7 6:00 p.m.- Self/Less, PG-13 9:00 p.m.- The Gallows, R</p>	<p>Monday, August 10 7:00 p.m.- The Gallows, R</p>
<p>Saturday, August 8 12:30 p.m.- Inside Out, PG 3:00 p.m.- Dope, R 6:00 p.m.- The Gallows, R 8:30 p.m.- Magic Mike XXL, R</p>	<p>Tuesday, August 11 7:00 p.m.- Self/Less, PG-13</p>
<p>Sunday, August 9 12:00 p.m.- Inside Out (3-D), PG 2:00 p.m.- Terminator: Genisys (3-D), PG-13 5:00 p.m.- The Man from U.N.C.L.E (sneak preview), PG-13 7:30 p.m.- Self/Less, PG-13</p>	<p>Wednesday, August 12 5:00 p.m.- Terminator: Genisys, PG-13 7:30 p.m.- Magic Mike XXL, R</p>
	<p>Thursday, August 13 5:00 p.m.- Inside Out, PG 7:00 p.m.- Dope, R</p>
	<p>Friday, August 14 6:00 p.m.- Minions (3-D), PG 8:30 p.m.- Trainwreck, R</p>



Yellow Fellows

'Minions' breaks out 'Despicable' sidekicks for solo shenanigans

"Minions"
Starring *Sandra Bullock & Jon Hamm*
Directed by *Pierre Coffin and Kyle Balda*
Rated **PG**

NEIL POND

Their sideline shenanigans got some of the biggest laughs in *Despicable Me* (2010) and its 2013 sequel. Now the minions, those little nubby, yellow, evil-enabling assistants, headline their own madcap spinoff about their long, crazy quest to find the "most despicable master" of all to serve.

And what a quest—it begins, we find out (as guided by the narration of Geoffrey Rush) in primordial ooze and quickly bops through various incidents across the centuries as the minions seek out a succession of "bad guys" from dinosaurs and Dracula to an Egyptian pharaoh, Napoleon and an abominable snowman. But they always bungle things, with comically disastrous consequences.

So they keep moving, throughout the centuries and around the globe, until a trio of minion explorers (Kevin, Bob and Stuart) lands in New York City in 1968. Then things shift into comedic high gear as directors Pierre Coffin and Kyle Balda riff on the vibrant sights and sounds of the era (the movie has a killer soundtrack of groovy late-'60s tunes) and serve up a buffet of pop-cultural cleverness for all ages.

When Kevin, Bob and Stuart see a late-night TV ad for Villain-Con, an upcoming Comic-Con-like convocation of baddies, they know they have to hook up with event's headliner, the queen of mean, Scarlett Overkill (Sandra Bullock).

The minions have always had an instant appeal to kids, for obvious

reasons: They look like wobbly toddlers, they speak gibberish (a goo-goo gush of Euro-babble, provided by director Coffin) and there's an innate goodness and innocence underneath whatever "bad" they might otherwise be trying to do. They're guaranteed laughs from children by just walking onto the screen.

But there's so much more to the humor here; parents will be greatly entertained by the vocal performances of Bullock as the preening villainess (which some major unresolved childhood issues); Jon Hamm as her groovy spy-gadget-guru husband; and Michael Keaton and Allison Janney as a bank-robbing mom and pop.

The plot zips and zings through dozens of silly sight gags, especially when things move to England and a scheme to steal the queen's crown. A minion on stilt-like, spy-suit extension legs runs amok in the streets of London to the tune of the Kinks' "You Really Got Me." Two minions flee a buzzing bee round and round on a cathedral chandelier, and with every frantic lap the fixture unscrews more and more. Rays from a "hypno hat" cause a trio of royal guards strip down to their undies—and break into a gonzo chorus from the musical *Hair*. The minions intrude on The Beatles' photo shoot for the cover of *Abbey Road*.

Stay for a closing-credits montage that brings the minions full circle with Gru (Steve Carell), their master in the two *Despicable* movies—and a delightful ensemble treat from the whole cast.

At times it made me think of what the Three Stooges would be like if Moe, Larry and Curly were recast for the modern age as pint-size, goggle-wearing, butter-hued niblets. It may not be high humor, but boy, it sure made me laugh.



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PMO, community strengthen bond during National Night Out



Courtney Dolmer, 1, daughter of Staff Sgt. William Dolmer, instructor, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, interacts with the Drug Abuse Resistance Education's mascot, Daren the Lion, at the Felix Field Sports Complex for America's Night Out Against Crime, Tuesday.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
LANCE CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO

Combat Center residents gathered for America's Night Out Against Crime, which was held in conjunction with National Night Out, at the Felix Field Sports Complex, Tuesday.

National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes positive relationships between the police force such as the Combat Center's Provost Marshal's Office and the community in an effort to foster camaraderie and involve neighborhoods in the safety of the community. This is the Combat Center's first year participating in the Night Out.

"I feel like it's important because typically we only interact with the community when an incident happens and we don't want that to be the first or only time we meet members of the community," said Gunnery Sgt. Natalie Calderon, criminal investigation command chief, PMO. "We would like them to be able to know who we are and know that we're

working with them to prevent crime."

The community event included various entities from Marine Corps Community Services, as well as information stands from the Joshua Tree National Park's Search and Rescue Service, PMO's Search and Rescue Team, Accident Investigation Division and a K-9 demonstration. There were also bounce houses, a rock climbing wall and a special appearance was made by the Drug Abuse Resistance Education's mascot, Daren the Lion.

"We hope to make it an annual event and continuously bring the community together to prevent crime and raise awareness," said Staff Sgt. Joshua Gerland, physical security chief, PMO.

Not only does National Night Out enhance the relationship between residents and law enforcement, it provides an opportunity for police and neighbors to come together under positive circumstances.

"I thought it was a great event," said Allison Ortega, military spouse. "Nights like these provide my family and I with an opportunity to interact with the police department and learn something new in a fun way."



Cpl. Ryan Davis, military working dog handler, K-9 unit, Provost Marshal's Office, releases CChaz, military working dog, from a perpetrator during a simulated attack during a demonstration at the Felix Field Sports Complex for America's Night Out Against Crime, Tuesday.



Kayla McGhee, 9, daughter of Gunnery Sgt. Bryan McGhee, engineer equipment chief, Mountain Warfare Training Center, ascends a rock wall at the Felix Field Sports Complex for America's Night Out Against Crime, Tuesday. Bounce houses, a rock climbing wall and a special appearance made by the Drug Abuse Resistance Education's mascot, Daren the Lion, were some of the festivities offered at the Night Out.

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