



Brandon Ryder, shooter, Apple Valley Gun Club, fires an M1 Garand while wearing World War II era Army attire during the D-Day Match sponsored by the High Desert Competitive Shooting Club at the Combat Center Rifle Range, Saturday. The D-Day invasion was the largest amphibious assault by Allied Forces in history.

Marines aim down sights from greatest generation

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
 LANCE CPL. THOMAS MUDD

Operation Neptune, the largest amphibious assault in history better known as D-Day, began June 6, 1944, as Allied Forces liberated Normandy, France.

In memory of D-Day, the Marines of the Combat Center Shooting Team participated in the Combat Center D-Day Match sponsored by the High Desert Competitive Shooting Club. The match was held at the Combat Center Rifle Range, Saturday and Sunday.

“This event allows us to experience a piece of history,” said Cpl. Kevin Evans, statistics non-commissioned officer, Combat Center Shooting Team. “History is a huge part of the Marine Corps, and being able to use an event like this to remember an historical event like D-Day is a great opportunity.”

The match consisted of five events along the course of two days. On the first day, shooters participated in an M1-Garand Rifle Match, a Springfield Rifle Match and an Excellence in Competition Pistol Match.

During the M1-Garand and Springfield matches, the participants shot three courses of fire from the 200 yard line. First, the competitors shot 10 rounds slow-fire in the prone position. During the course



Lance Cpl. Austin Richey, team leader, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, aims an M1 Garand during the D-Day Match sponsored by the High Desert Competitive Shooting Club at the Combat Center Rifle Range, Saturday. The event consisted of five events over two days.

of fire, officials scored and marked the shooters’ targets after every shot. The next portion of the competition was the rapid-fire phase in the prone position. The shooters would fire 10 rounds within 80 seconds and all 10 shots were scored after the allotted time. During the final slow-fire por-

tion, the participants fired 10 rounds from the standing.

“Having the opportunity to participate in an event like this is a great experience,” said Sgt. James Marker, head coach, MCAGCC Shooting Team. “The courses of fire for these

See **WWII pg. A5**

MFLC offers ‘Port in the Storm’

STORY BY GUNNERY SGT. NICHOLAS ROSS

To support families facing multiple challenges, the Department of Defense implemented the Military Family and Life Counselor Program. The MFLC program is comprised of Master’s-level and Doctorate-level licensed counselors who provide short-term, non-medical counseling services to service members and their families at no cost.

The counselors can address a number of different issues to help military service members and their families understand the impact of deployments, and assist families with the adjustment of redeployment. Counselors work in tandem with other military support services and can offer flexible service delivery to individuals, couples, families and groups. With the exception of child abuse, domestic abuse, and ‘duty to warn’ situations, services are private and confidential, and no written records are maintained.

Counselors of the MFLC program often work with individuals around the following issues: anger management, stress management, communication skills, relationship issues, conflict resolution, parenting, decision-making skills, deployment stress, coping skills, homesickness, relocation adjustment, reintegration issues, separation, building resiliency, sadness, grief, and loss.

Some counselors in the MFLC program are embedded within specific units, some within schools, and some circulate around the military installations where they are based to conduct sessions essentially anywhere that is convenient and comfortable for the client.

MFLC counselors also offer a number of other services at no cost to the participant. Under the Caregiver Initiative, a MFLC counselor runs a monthly support forum for caregivers of wounded, ill, or injured service members. This free forum offers an hour-and-a-half long meeting that emphasizes peer-to-peer support, encouraging the sharing of challenges beset upon strategies to address these concerns.

Currently, the forum takes place in the Wounded Warrior building on base bldg. 1433 (next to the Post Office) and meets on the third Tuesday of each month from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

To RSVP and confirm attendance, please contact either Teri Templeton at 909-963-8776 (teri.templeton@apogee.us.com) or Georgia Lewis at 909-963-9117 (Georgia.lewis@apogee.us.com).

Otherwise, to access MFLC services, simply call 760-218-9497 and a representative will speak with you.

U.S. Marines, U.S. Army Soldiers Practice MV-22 External Cargo Lifts



PHOTO BY CPL. LEAH AGLER

An MV-22 ‘Osprey’ takes off during External Cargo Lift Training conducted by Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-165 Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force—Crisis Response—Central Command, in an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, June 5, 2015. See **pg. A6**

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. Andre Dakis.



U.S. Marines assigned to Force Reconnaissance Platoon, Maritime Raid Force, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), conduct a high altitude low opening (HALO) jump during category 3 sustainment training in Louisburg, N.C., June 2.



Reprinted from the Observation Post
June 8, 1973
Story by Cpl. Doug Jacobs

Field Skill Training: The Key to proficiency

Field Skill Training at 7th Engineer Battalion teaches a Marine to perform a wide variety of skills on the battlefield, in civilian disaster areas, and wherever their knowledge and inventives are needed.

Gunnery Sergeant Elmer Foster is the Operations Chief at Company A (Rein), 7th Engineer Battalion. He has also been the field Skill Training supervisor since November of last year.

The engineer assigned basic Military Occupation Specialty (MOS) 1300 learns how to develop the theories and ideas which have been tested in the field.

The Field Skill course is broken into seven

phases and varies in lesson plan from the basic engineer techniques and instruction on the correct use of the hand tools to the complex workings of land mine warfare and demolitions.

The basic engineer takes refresher courses in mathematics and algebra. He learns the operation of pulleys and the value of them, the workings of rigging and exterior painting. Field fortifications such as the digging of proper lighting holes, barbed wire entanglements and camouflage are also taught.

A field Skill Training Marine must sometimes work with hazardous equipment such as mine-field devices and booby traps. He is taught the proper recording and charting of mine fields,

the procedure for mine removal and the techniques used – including proper removal of his own minefield – and the patient skill demanded.

But, always, the work he does reflect upon his commander and unit. The task performed by the engineer unit compliments or disgraces the unit.

The construction and foundation work for a prefabricated steel and tin building is now being done near building at Camp Wilson are other examples of the services provided by our 7th Engineer Battalion. There are many others.

The ability and proficiency of the engineers is indispensable in war and essential in peace. Field Skill Training helps keep it that way.

CROSSWORD

- Across**
- 1 Essential to life
 - 6 Japanese verse
 - 11 Stamper's ink source
 - 14 Hut material
 - 15 Antiquated
 - 16 Night before
 - 17 "Sweet Caroline" singer
 - 19 TV Chihuahua
 - 20 Presidents' Day event
 - 21 Prescribed meds
 - 22 Wet
 - 24 Scratch (out)
 - 25 Devoted
 - 27 Part of a simple bouquet
 - 31 "The Maltese Falcon" detective
 - 33 Moved like a worm
 - 35 Prevent
 - 36 New Age singer from Ireland
 - 37 Parenthetical comment
 - 39 Face up to
 - 43 Blakley of "Nashville"
 - 45 Issue
 - 47 Singing group
 - 50 Saw
 - 51 Hanukkah top
 - 52 Horse bit
 - 54 New Age musician from Greece
 - 55 Burning
 - 56 Reply to "Shall we?"
 - 60 Weight abbr.
 - 61 Military decoration
 - 65 Draft choice
 - 66 Lexicographer's concern
 - 67 Magazine copy
 - 68 Old video game inits.
 - 69 Whale finder
 - 70 Expensive

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65						66						67			
68						69						70			

- Down**
- 1 Moving vehicles
 - 2 Light bulb, in a cartoon
 - 3 Hard work
 - 4 Talented
 - 5 Was ahead
 - 6 Deceptive tricks
 - 7 "___ for the poor"
 - 8 Wedding promise
 - 9 Author Follett
 - 10 Remove veils
 - 11 Sentence ender
 - 12 Park or Fifth
 - 13 France's patron saint
 - 18 Bug
 - 23 Fearful
 - 24 Look at
 - 25 "T. J. Hooker" actor Adrian
 - 26 Perfumer Lauder
 - 27 Go out
 - 28 Cape ____, Mass.
 - 29 Aloof
 - 30 Get a piece of
 - 32 Bye word
 - 34 Social
 - 38 Order to a broker
 - 40 Laundry room brand
 - 41 Scrambled fare
 - 42 Simple top
 - 44 "___ Rex" (Sophocles)
 - 46 Welcome ___ (item at the door)
 - 47 '40s pinup Betty
 - 48 Telescope parts
 - 49 Water heater
 - 51 "Blowin' in the Wind" singer Bob
 - 53 Did lunch
 - 55 Links org. for women
 - 56 For fear that
 - 57 Deftness
 - 58 False's opposite
 - 59 Bit of choreography
 - 62 Kind of show
 - 63 Headed
 - 64 ___ Master's Voice

SUDOKU

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	6		8	9				3
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Last week's answers

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

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

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 - STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Rd.
 - K Smoke Shop, 5865A Adobe Rd.
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 - Puff's Tobacco Mart, 57063 29 Palms Hwy.
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 - 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

Gabriel GEORGE

Joliet, ILL., Lance Cpl., Special Intelligence System Communicator, Headquarters Battalion, 23 years old

>When I was three or four years old I used to say when I grew up I was going to join the 101st Airborne Division and fight Nazis. Then a couple of years later I learned what time was and realized I couldn't do that.

>I grew up in Joliet, Ill. which is located about 40 miles from Chicago.

>I read a lot and in the past five months I've been through about 26 books. I like science fiction, romance, action and thriller but I read just about anything.

>I have a pretty strong imagination so it's easy for me to get lost in the book. I'll throw in my headphones and listen to music that can draw me into the world of the story.

>I like that fact that I can experience the lives of all these fictional characters.

>You can immerse yourself in a movie as well but a book lasts so much longer. Books pull you out of the world you're actually in and bring you into a completely unique world with different people who have varying outlooks on life.

>I'd recommend the 16 book series, 'Pip and Flinx', by Alan Dean Foster, also John Green is a big upcoming author with books like 'The Fault in our Stars', 'Looking for Alaska', and 'Paper Towns.'

>My dad was the person who got me interested in the science fiction genre when I was young.

>My 'to-read list' is so big I'll probably never be able to finish it in my lifetime.

>One of the best jobs I've ever had was as a delivery boy.

>The man I worked for used to be in the Marine Corps and was a drill instructor. He started a sandwich delivery shop in downtown Joliet, Ill. As long as the delivery was less than a mile away we were allowed to take it by foot. The good thing about that was I got a lot of running done, about 12 to 13 miles a day.

>It didn't pay very well but I worked with a lot of good friends.

>I didn't listen to AC/DC until I started delivering to a judge in our town who would order the same thing every day. She would listen to AC/DC and when I would bring her order, she would invite me in to have a conversation. I met a lot of people that I never would have met if I didn't have that job.

>I have a fraternal twin brother who joined the Marine Corps two years prior to me. When he joined I realized that just because I couldn't be in the 101st Airborne didn't mean I couldn't join the military.

>I thought "if my twin can do it, I could too." Instead of wasting my time not doing anything with my life I decided to try something I've always wanted to do.

George is an avid reader who had the childhood dream of joining the 101st Airborne Division and fighting in World War II. Due to the impracticality of his childhood dream, he followed in his twin brother's footsteps and joined the Marine Corps.



>I've been in the Marine Corps for a year and three months. I work as a Special Intelligence System Communicator with the Special Security Office.

>Before I joined the Marine Corps, I lived back home with my family. I didn't really know what I wanted to do with my life so I

didn't want to waste money trying to figure out.

>If I could go back in time, there is no way that I'd choose something else. The friends and people that I've met mean so much to me.

>Everything in life is an experience, that's how I've always looked at it.

Interviewed and photographed by Pfc. Levi Schultz

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La Contenta shows appreciation for Combat Center Marines

PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO



Lance Cpl. Julio McGraw, press chief, Public Affairs Office, receives letters written by students during a visit to La Contenta Middle School in Yucca Valley, Calif., June 5. Each year, students write letters thanking Marines and sailors for their service.



Lance Cpl. Julio McGraw, press chief, Public Affairs Office, speaks to students about the Marine Corps during a visit to La Contenta Middle School in Yucca Valley, Calif., June 5. The purpose behind the visit was to pick up letters written by the students for Marines and sailors of the Combat Center.



Lance Cpl. Julio McGraw, press chief, Public Affairs Office, addresses students about the Marine Corps during a visit to La Contenta Middle School in Yucca Valley, Calif., June 5. The purpose behind the visit was to pick up letters written by the students for Marines and sailors of the Combat Center.



Lance Cpl. Julio McGraw, press chief, Public Affairs Office, answers students' questions during a visit to La Contenta Middle School in Yucca Valley, Calif., June 5. During the visit the students received an opportunity to ask McGraw any questions they had pertaining to the Marine Corps.

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WWII from pg. A1

matches are similar to what the armed forces were doing during that time. This event allows us to experience what kind of marksmanship the Marines and soldiers of that era would have [practiced].”

During the Pistol EIC match the participants used competition versions of the M1911 pistol throughout three courses of fire. The shooters first fired 10 rounds, with a time limit of 10 minutes and from 50 yards away. They then moved to the 25 yard line and fired two magazines of five rounds each with a time limit of 20 seconds per magazine. The last course called

for participants to fire two magazines of five rounds with a time limit of 10 seconds per magazine at the 25 yard line..

“We held the EIC matches so the participants can earn points to become distinguished marksmen,” Evans said. “The other matches give everyone a chance to fire some weapon systems they may not get the chance to use very often, which is why participating in events like these are a great opportunity. The EIC matches allow the participants, especially the Marines, to earn something from participating.”

On the second day, the participants

competed in the Vintage Rifle Match and the Rifle EIC Match. During the Vintage Rifle Match, participants ran the same courses of fire as the M1-Garand and Springfield matches while using any rifle from the WWII time period.

“Not everyone has a M1-Garand or a Springfield,” Evans said. “Giving the shooters the opportunity to use their other rifles allow for more people to participate.”

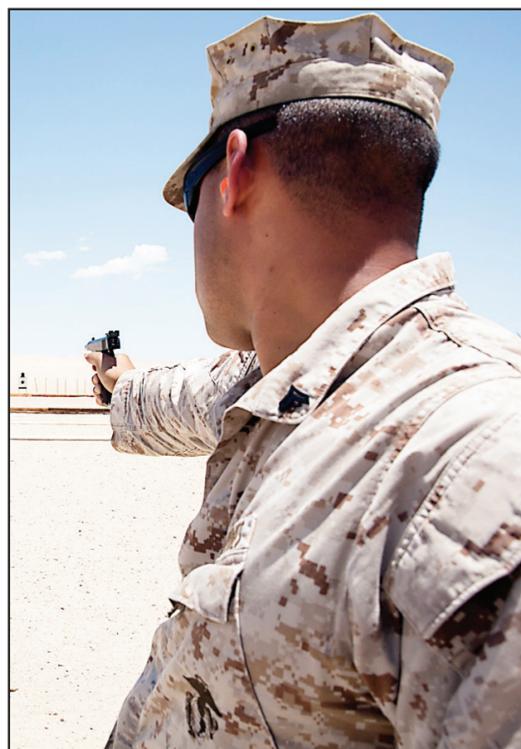
The Rifle EIC match held at the end of the second day consisted of several courses of fire from the 200, 300 and 600 yard

line. At the 200 yard line the participants shot a slow-fire course and a rapid-fire course. At the 300 yard line the shooters fired a rapid-fire course from the kneeling or sitting position and finally, the participants fired a slow-fire course in the prone position from the 600 yard line.

“The rifle EIC match shows how the armed forces have improved since WWII,” Marker said. “The main point of this event is to remember D-Day and have some fun firing weapon systems most [current] service members never have the opportunity to use.”



Lance Cpl. Egder Piza, shooter, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Shooting Team, reloads his Mosin-Nagant Model 91/30 while participating in the D-Day Match sponsored by the High Desert Competitive Shooting Club at the Combat Center Rifle Range, Saturday. The event consisted of M1-Garand, Springfield, Vintage Rifle, Excellence in Competition pistol and EIC rifle Matches.



Cpl. Nathaniel Jones, shooter, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Shooting Team, finishes firing an M1911 pistol during the D-Day Match sponsored by the High Desert Competitive Shooting Club at the Combat Center Rifle Range, Saturday. The Excellence in Competition Pistol Match consisted of firing from the 50 yard line and the 25 yard line.



Capt. Richard Quinn Martinez, company commander, Marine Wing Support Squadron 372, fires a M1-Garand during the D-Day Match sponsored by the High Desert Competitive Shooting Club at the Combat Center Rifle Range, Saturday. The course of fire for the M1-Garand was 10 rounds slow-fire in the prone position, 10 rounds rapid-fire in the prone position and 10 rounds slow-fire while in the standing position.

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U.S. Marines, U.S. Army Soldiers Practice MV-22 External Cargo Lifts

PHOTOS BY CPL. LEAH AGLER



U.S. Marines and U.S. Army soldiers move away from an MV-22 'Osprey' during External Cargo Lift Training conducted by Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-165, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force—Crisis Response—Central Command, in an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, June 5.



An MV-22 'Osprey' takes off during External Cargo Lift Training conducted by Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-165, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force—Crisis Response—Central Command, in an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, June 5.



U.S. Marine Maj. Thomas Kershul, an MV-22 'Osprey' Pilot with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-165, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force—Crisis Response—Central Command, briefs Marines and U.S. Army soldiers before External Cargo Lift Training in an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, June 5.



A U.S. Marine landing support specialist and U.S. Army soldiers prepare to hook up a 1,000-pound load to an approaching MV-22 'Osprey' during External Cargo Lift Training conducted by Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-165, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force—Crisis Response—Central Command, in an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, June 5.

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MARINES FIRST TO 'FIGHT NIGHT'

PHOTOS BY PFC. LEVI SCHULTZ

Kirby McKenzie, mixed martial arts fighter, strikes at his opponent, Robert Marsters, during the Leatherneck IV Mixed Martial Arts Fight Night at Del Valle Field, June 5.

STORY BY LANCE CPL. CONNOR HANCOCK

Combat Center patrons gathered at Del Valle Field for a night of intense entertainment during the Leathernecks IV Mixed Martial Arts Fight Night, June 5.

The Single Marine Program hosted the event which featured Ultimate Fighting Championship Hall of Fame inductee, Randy Couture, as part of the 'For the Leathernecks' campaign. SMP, Semper Fit, Headquarters Battalion and Marine Corps Community Services Special Events worked with MVP Sports to put the event together. More than 700 Combat Center patrons attended the fight night and enjoyed food and drinks, prize giveaways, and music from disk jockey Big Mike.

"The best part of fight night is everyone coming together," said Lance Cpl. Matt McGiff, rifleman, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment. "Hopefully I'll be here for the next one."

The fights began with Chris Hansen tapping out Trey Branch in the first round of the opening match. Each fight consisted of the UFC standard for non-title matches of three rounds at two minutes each. Three of the ten bouts ended by decision, six ended by submission, and the main event hurled the crowd into a verified uproar when it ended with a knockout.

The event was put on to provide Marines and sailors with entertainment while promoting the Marine Corps warrior ethos.

"It gives me something to do when I'm missing home," said Pfc. Taylor Sandidge, student, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School. "It's good that people set up events like this so that we can go out and have fun."

Randy Couture attended the fight night to socialize with Marines and sailors, and give away prizes. Couture served in the 101st Army Airborne Division from 1982 to 1988 before starting his professional fighting career.

"I think there's a particular mindset that the military services breed, both in mental toughness and in discipline," Couture said. "I think all of those things translate into fighting and [competing] in combative sports."

According to Couture, combative programs like the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program and the Modern Army Combatives Program relate to the mindset that MMA fighters and service members share.

"You have to make sure you strike first and when you strike, make him respect your power," said Kirby McKenzie, MMA fighter, who also won against Robert Marsters by decision.

The main event between amateur MMA fighters, Kid Carradus and Ernie Necochea ended in the first round when Carradus knocked out Necochea with a kick to the head. After the fight, Carradus expressed his gratitude for the military.

"I'm a big supporter of the Marines," said Carradus. "I would do anything for these guys and I'm glad I could put on a show for them."

Carradus' uncle was a Marine, who served in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Carradus' personal ties to the Marine Corps gave him reason to give back to the Marines.

"At the end of the day, we're entertainers," Carradus said. "If I can take a little bit of time and have the [service members] enjoy their Friday night to help take their minds of their duties, that's the most satisfying thing for me."



Randy Couture, Hall of Fame inductee, Ultimate Fighting Championship, answers questions asked by Summer Altice, host of the fight night, during the Leatherneck IV Mixed Martial Arts Fight Night at Del Valle Field, June 5.



Mixed martial arts fighters, Raymond Maciel and Christian Leon, attempt to subdue their opponents during the Leatherneck IV Mixed Martial Arts Fight Night Del Valle Field, June 5.



Michael Cerna, mixed martial arts fighter, breaks away from his competitor, Alberto Trujillo's, hold using leg strikes during the Leatherneck IV Mixed Martial Arts Fight Night at Del Valle Field, June 5.

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 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.

Come rock out at the Enlisted Excursions Club on Rocking Karaoke Night. It is held every Thursday from 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. For more information, contact 830-4140 or visit MCCS29Palms.com.

For a fun night with dinner and dancing come visit the Hashmarks Staff NCO Club for Latin Night. The event is held every second and fourth Friday of the month 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. For more information, contact 830-5035.

Sunset Cinema

- Friday, June 12**
 4:00 p.m. – Pitch Perfect, PG-13, Free Admission
 6:30 p.m. – Ex Machina, R
 9:00 p.m. – Hot Pursuit, PG-13
 11:30 p.m. – Pitch Perfect 2, PG-13
- Saturday, June 13**
 10:30 a.m. – Strange Magic, PG, Free Admission
 1:00 p.m. – Little Boy, PG-13
 3:30 p.m. – Avengers: Age of Ultron, PG-13
 6:30 p.m. – The Water Diviner, R
 9:00 p.m. – The Age of Adaline, PG-13
 11:30 p.m. – Hot Pursuit, PG-13
- Sunday, June 14**
 12:00 p.m. – Hot Pursuit, PG-13
 2:00 p.m. – Pitch Perfect 2, PG-13
 5:00 p.m. – Mad Max: Fury Road, R
 7:30 p.m. – Avengers: Age of Ultron, PG-13
- Monday, June 15**
 7:00 p.m. – Ex Machina, R
- Tuesday, June 16**
 7:00 p.m. – Mad Max: Fury Road, R
- Wednesday, June 17**
 6:30 p.m. – Avengers: Age of Ultron, PG-13
- Thursday, June 18**
 5:00 p.m. – Little Boy, PG-13
 7:30 p.m. – The Age of Adaline, PG-13
- Friday, June 19**
 5:00 p.m. – Avatar, PG-13, Free Admission
 8:30 p.m. – Avengers: Age of Ultron, PG-13
 11:30 p.m. – Mad Max: Fury Road, R



George Clooney goes back to the future

NEIL POND

"Tomorrowland"
 Starring George Clooney, Britt Robinson & Hugh Laurie
 Directed by Brad Bird
 Rated PG

Walt Disney always wanted his parks to be "magical." Here's a movie that takes that idea and really runs with it. Actually, Tomorrowland takes that idea and flies with it—with rocket packs, no less—into the teeming, gleaming futurama of Uncle Walt's dreams more than half a century ago when he opened the gates to Disneyland.

In Tomorrowland, George Clooney plays the modern-day, grownup version of a bright young lad, Frank, who lugs along his homemade jetpack to a science-fair competition at the 1964 World's Fair—where Disney unveiled four major attractions. Frank and his contraption are rejected, alas, but he gets a special invitation to hop aboard Disney's new ride It's a

Small World, which turns out to be much more than just a poky boat cruise through an international chorus of singing animatronic children: It's a secret portal to the future!

Frank has a glorious time in the splendid world-yet-to-come, a fabulous sky-tropolis called Tomorrowland. But he can't stay there forever. We eventually find out why he must leave, and why, decades later, he's compelled to return.

Director Brad Bird, who's shown his skill in both animation and live action with The Iron Giant (1999), The Incredibles (2004), Ratatouille (2007) and Mission: Impossible—Ghost Protocol (2011), mixes brisk, old-school adventure and a spirit of boundless idealism onto a palette of gorgeous, eye-popping visuals. The script, which he co-wrote with Damen Lindelof (Lost, Prometheus, World War Z, Cowboys and Aliens) and Jeff Jensen, crackles and pops

mystery and suspense, wit and whimsy, and deeper, more passionate themes about science, technology and ecology.

Britt Robertson—recently seen saddling up in The Longest Ride—plays Casey, the spunky teenage daughter of a NASA scientist (country singer Tim McGraw) "chosen" for her own trip to Tomorrowland. British actress Raffey Cassidy is Athena, a mysterious young girl who connects both Frank and Cassidy across time. Hugh Laurie plays Tomorrowland's top dog, who turns out to have quite a bite. Keegan-Michael Key from Key and Peel and Kathryn Hahn, who stars in Showtime's Happyish, have a Men in Blackish scene as a couple of space-odddity souvenir-shop owners.

The movie doesn't note it, but Disney fans will certainly be aware that Tomorrowland was one of the five original "lands" of Disneyland, opening in 1955 to give visitors an

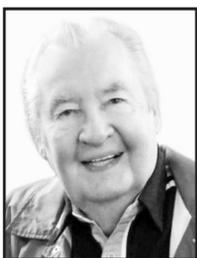
imaginative taste of the future and outer space. Its silent "background" presence in the film deepens the movie's make-believe mystery about just how forward thinking the House of Mouse might have really been.

There's quite a lot happening, sometimes almost too much, and the cartoonish violence—aliens blasting people away, humanoid robots being bashed and decapitated—may unsettle some little ones. Plot points become muddled in the rush to keep moving, and the movie's message gets a bit preachy.

But, like Frank says at one point, "Can't you just be amazed?" Any movie that can get young people thinking about the future—the future of the planet, their future, our future—and about not giving up, even in the face of doom and gloom, is pretty amazing in itself. Maybe it really is a small, small world, after all. And now I'm super-curious about the secret purpose of Mr. Toad's Wild Ride.

TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt



My friend David has been a resident (patient) at the Hi-Desert Continuing Care Center for the past several weeks and he is receiving absolutely fabulous care in every possible way from the entire staff.

His friends JoAnn, Mark, Nancy and the others speak highly of the Hi-Desert Continuing Care Center. And well they should.

Michelle Amdahl is the administrator and has just received a national award for leadership from the American College of Health Care Administrators!

Patty and I have lived in the Morongo Basin for more than 20 years and we know what a fine place the Hi-Desert Continuing Care Center is. I have walked their halls, visited in room after room, conducted worship services of various kinds, eaten their nutritious meals, been good friends with many of the dedicated staff, and I know for a fact it really is an excellent "home away from home."

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