



Combat Center Commanding General, Brig. Gen. William F. Mullen III and Salvador Diaz, Staff Sgt. Christopher Diaz's father, unveil the road sign during the renaming ceremony of Calcite Road to Diaz Road, April 14, aboard the Combat Center. The road was renamed in honor of Staff Sgt. Diaz who made the ultimate sacrifice to help a brother in arms while conducting combat operations in Helmand Province, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

# Gone but never forgotten: Diaz Road christened

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO

"Brotherhood means I will always come for you, no matter the cost."

April 14 began as another breezy desert day, but gradually, family, friends and service members old and new began to gather on the road in front of the military working dog kennels. The weather calmed, almost as if Mother Nature recognized the occasion and chose to pay her respect. The crowd had gathered to bear witness to the official renaming of a road aboard the Combat Center in honor of Staff Sgt. Christopher Diaz, a Marine, father, brother and friend, who made the ultimate sacrifice to help a brother in arms.

"The first time he was able to deploy, he called me to brag that he was getting ready to go to Iraq," said then Sgt. Diaz's older brother Ray Diaz, a Marine Corps veteran. "I knew he

was a Marine but all I saw was my baby brother. The last deployment he went on, I talked to him and told him to take care and be safe. When we got word that he gave his life to take care of another Marine's, I knew he'd made a sacrifice that no one could ever repay."

### The Ultimate Sacrifice

On Sept. 28, 2011 Sgt. Diaz was serving as a military working dog handler with 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion. He was conducting a combat patrol in the Upper Gereshk Valley of the Helmand Province in Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom when he was tasked with clearing a reported improvised explosive device from inside a checkpoint. After

See **Diaz Road** A6



Ray Diaz, Staff Sgt. Christopher Diaz's older brother, gives his remarks during the renaming ceremony of Calcite Road to Diaz Road, April 14, aboard the Combat Center.

## Breakfast honoring civilian employees



LANCE CPL. MALIEK FOWLER

A dining placement is set at the Combat Center Commanding General Brig. Gen. William F. Mullen III house as part of a military honors to civilian employees breakfast at Mullen's House, April 14.



LANCE CPL. MALIEK FOWLER

Combat Center Commanding General, Brig. Gen. William F. Mullen III and Combat Center Sergeant Major, Sgt. Maj. Michael J. Hendges recognize Jonell Kosa, encroachment manager, G-5 Government and External Affairs as part of a military honors breakfast to civilian employees at Mullen's House, April 14.



LANCE CPL. MALIEK FOWLER

Combat Center Commanding General, Brig. Gen. William F. Mullen III and Combat Center Sergeant Major, Sgt. Maj. Michael J. Hendges, recognize Combat Center personnel as part of a military honors breakfast to civilian employees at Mullen's house, April 14.

## Combat Center orders updated

STORY BY CPL. THOMAS MUDD

The Combat Center is committed to providing a standard of excellence in managing facilities, services and support to the operating forces, and families in order to ensure readiness of the tenant and resident commands aboard the Combat Center. Combat Center Commanding General, Brig. Gen. William F. Mullen III recently released updated versions of Combat Center Orders 1630.6B and 1630.8F which outline the regulations for motor vehicles and traffic as well as discipline and law enforcement to help improve the installation and the residential life.

The intent of the orders are to provide for the safe and efficient movement of personnel and motor vehicles; reduce traffic deaths, injuries, and property damage; and remove

See **Orders** A6

## Inside the Observation Post

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- B2..... Movie Schedule



Army's Armor Basic Officer Leaders Course graduation ceremony

See page B1

## 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 Lance Cpl. Sarah Petrock.



Lance Cpl. Logan Jones, an assaultman with Marine Rotational Force Europe 17.1, fires a shoulder-fired multi-purpose assault weapon during a live-fire range in Israel, March 27. The U.S. and Israel enjoy a strong enduring military-to-military partnership built on trust developed over decades of cooperation.



Reprinted from the Observation Post  
April 21, 1978

# 1st time used in helo-o

The ultimate weapon, "1st Battalion, 4th Marines was used for the first time in a helo borne operation during Palm Tree 5-78 last week.

At 5 a.m. on April 13, an aggressor force comprised of men from the 1stBn. 4thMar. was helo lifted and Inserted into an "enemy" controlled area.

The objective was to seize and secure three primary targets, OP Left, OP Sally and an outpost in the Crystal Mine area. Among the secondary

objectives were the Regimental Landing Team-5 Command Post and 1st Field Artillery Group Headquarters.

During Alpha Company's initial assault, OP Left was found to be occupied by tanks and infantry units. Disregarding the primary goal, the attack then concentrated on the secondary targets.

Within 10 minutes, RLT-5 and FAG Headquarters were in Alpha's control. Prior to the onslaught on enemy positions, electronic warfare was

employed to jam and hopefully shut-down all radio communications. Alpha was credited with shooting down several aircraft including an OV-10 Bronco; Chinook 46 helicopter, A4 Skyhawk, A6 intruder and an AVI Harrier. At approximately 11 a.m. "A" Company's first line of defense was hit by armor, mechanized Infantry and air strikes. Falling back to the second line of defense, the fight continued until Alpha was overtaken more than an hour later.

Bravo Company was unopposed when their objective was taken in the Crystal Mine area and as a blocking force was being set up, air strikes were called in on them by the 1st Reconnaissance Battalion from Camp Pendleton.

Bravo was assaulted and overrun by an infantry and tank counterattack following the air attack. Setting down on a hot landing zone, Charlie Company had two platoons wiped out by Redeye missile and 106 Recoilless Rifle fire.

The remaining platoon continued the advance and seized a battery of '8-inch guns' which were used to temporarily halt a tank counterattack before the position was finally overrun. Colonel W.H. Cooper, Deputy Tactical Exercise Coordinator said, "It was a well-planned and coordinated insertion which tested unit's involved in the exercise problem and greatly increased the reality of Palm Tree 5-78. It provided challenging command and control opportunities."

## CROSSWORD

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62					63					64			65	66		
67										68				69		
	70												71			72

### Across

- Blue
- Change states, in a way
- Camping gear
- "Buona \_\_\_" (Italian greeting)
- Assortment
- Met expectations?
- Not straight
- Beach shades
- Romance, e.g.
- Car dealer's offering
- Makeup, e.g.
- Copper
- "Don't give up!"
- Lying, maybe
- "Dig in!"
- Born's partner
- Carry on
- "Chicago" lyricist
- Structure devoted to something holy
- Exclusive
- Compete
- Booty

### Down

- A.I.
- Bundle
- Matterhorn, e.g.
- Bed board
- Wastes times
- \_\_\_ Dee River
- Best seller
- Actor's goal
- Come together
- Cracker spread
- Not just "a"
- "Unimaginable as \_\_\_ in Heav'n": Milton
- Boris Godunov, for one
- In-box contents
- Roswell crash victim, supposedly
- Above
- Misfortunes
- Beat
- Fries, maybe
- Lady Macbeth, e.g.
- Convene
- \_\_\_ bean
- "\_\_\_ calls?"

### Down

- Ratty place
- Deck out
- Quite a while
- Bon \_\_\_ (witticism)
- Flying high
- Like composition paper
- Chuck
- What "it" plays
- At attention
- Opening time, maybe
- Mountain pool
- Preserve, in a way
- Undertake, with "out"
- At money
- Be a snitch
- Drone, e.g.
- Affirmative vote
- It's boring
- Ale holder
- Axis of \_\_\_
- Tab
- Flower fanciers
- High-five, e.g.
- Burrow

- Catch, in a way
- Boozehound
- Dracula, at times
- Congratulations, of a sort
- "Ain't \_\_\_ Sweet"
- Bounce
- Convened
- Certain surgeon's "patient"
- Make fun of
- "Silly" birds
- Place for a barbecue
- Claw
- Ravines, etc.
- "... or \_\_\_!"
- Accident
- Astringent
- Game piece
- Back talk
- Actress Sorvino
- After expenses
- \_\_\_ green

## SUDOKU

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Difficult

### Last week's answers

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30	E	R	R		31	L	E	T	32	T	E	R		34	G	A	L	A
35	P	R	I	C	Y		37	E	O	N		38	B	E	G	O	T	
39	R	O	A	R		40	B	A	T	T	E	R		42	A	P	E	
43	O	R	D	E	R		44	R	E	R		45	E	A	R	N	E	R
				47	E	A	T		48	F	A	R	C	E				
50	R	A	P	T		52	R	E	L	I	E	F	53	M	A	P	56	
58	F	I	L	E	T		57	O	R	A	L		58	O	A	F	S	
59	E	N	T	R	Y		60	V	A	R	Y		61	R	Y	A	S	
62	E	G	O	S		63	E	L	M		64	M	A	R	T			

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

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## OBSERVATION POST

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 Lance Cpl. Natalia Cuevas

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## OFF-LIMITS ESTABLISHMENTS

- MCIWest off-limits establishments guidance prohibits service members from patronizing the following locations. This order applies to all military personnel.
- Off Limit Establishments as of Oct 25, 2016**
- Adobe Smoke Shop, 6441 Adobe Road, Twentynine Palms
  - STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Road, Twentynine Palms
  - Puff's Tobacco, 57063 29 Palms Highway, Yucca Valley
  - Yucca Tobacco Mart, 57602 29 Palms Highway, Yucca Valley
  - NYPD Pizza, 260-262 North Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs
  - Sam's Smoke Shop, 16520 West Main Street, Barstow
  - Teazer's Bar & Grill Nightclub, 14269 Seventh Street, Victorville
  - Angelo's Kars, 222 & 226 S. Coast Highway, Oceanside
  - Denny's Parking Lot, 692 E Street, Chula Vista
  - Burger King & McDonald's, 28th Street (parking lots), San Diego
  - Club Mustang, 2200 University Avenue, San Diego
  - Club San Diego, 3955 4th Avenue, San Diego
  - Get It On Shoppe, San Diego
  - Main Street Motel, 3494 Main Street, San Diego
  - Trolley Stations, Palomar Street & San Ysidro, San Diego
  - Vulcan Baths, 805 W. Cedar Street, San Diego
  - Dream Crystal, 1536 Highland Avenue, National City
  - Sports Auto Sales, 1111 National City Boulevard, National City

WHAT I'VE LEARNED

# Julian

Edcouch, Texas Corporal, personnel administrator, Headquarters Battalion

# GUERRERO

GUERRERO IS A SMALL BUSINESS OWNER WHO IS TRANSITIONING OUT OF THE MARINE CORPS. HE ORIGINALLY JOINED THE MARINE CORPS TO PAY RESPECT TO A FRIEND WHO PASSED AWAY.

**> Back in High School my best friend and I made a pact** to join the Marine Corps. When he passed away I felt I needed to honor that pact and serve my country for him.

**>At first my family was a bit shocked** when I surprised them and told them I was leaving for boot camp. Now they're all very proud of me and it's good to have their support.

**>I served my first two years with** Unmanned Vehicle Squadron 1. Some of the best times I had were during Integrated Training Exercise and Weapons and Tactics Instructors course.

**>My favorite experience was going** to the Yuma Proving Ground during WTI with artillery. It was good building camaraderie and being back with the boys. We hadn't showered for weeks on end but we had fun and enjoyed it.

**>I'm an online business owner.** I'm teaching people how they can market themselves online. Currently the business supplements half of my income. Hopefully when I transition out of the Corps it will at least match what I'm making now.

**>Owning a business takes a lot of** my free time, but I spend a lot of time reading and researching. I talk to my business mentor, Jason Stone, and he's helping me with that aspect.

**>When I first joined, I was** pretty much a rebel and was pretty reckless with my actions. I didn't really like to take responsibility. After about two years in the Marine Corps, I started to realize I serve a bigger purpose; not only for my Marine Corps or my family, but my future family. When I realized that, it all changed. I went from partying and drinking, to studying and reading. It was a big transition in my life.

**>The military is really what you make of it.** I learned to always see the positive, even when things get rough.

**>I've had a lot of really great mentors** in the Marine Corps. My biggest role model was my first gunny. He would always tell it like it is. From him, I learned that if you know what you're saying is right, stick with it and don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

**>Aside from following my business aspirations,** I'm also going to travel the world when I get out. The Marine Corps has been a great experience. I've learned to prioritize my life and am a definitely a better person today than I was when I joined.



Interviewed and photographed by Sgt. Connor Hancock

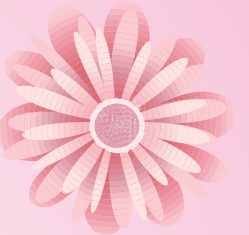
Whatever you're looking for, you can find it in the **Observation Post Classified section**



Published every Thursday

Enter our contest & tell us

# Why I love my mom



because

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**MOTHER'S DAY LETTER CONTEST:** We want children to write a brief 100 words or less letter to us about "Why I love my Mom...." Only 1 entry per child is allowed. All entries may be mailed or brought in to the Hi-Desert Star or The Desert Trail by 5 pm May 8th. Winners in each age category will be notified by phone before Mother's Day. 1st, 2nd & 3rd place winners will be published in the newspaper and be given a gift certificate for them & their mother.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
AGE \_\_\_\_\_  
SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_



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For more MDMRA information, visit [www.urecycle.org](http://www.urecycle.org) or call 888-URECYCLE.



Participants of the annual Earth Day Fun Bike Ride arrive back at Felix Field aboard the Combat Center, April 13. Natural Resources and Environmental hosts the event annually to raise environmental awareness of Combat Center residents and the local community in the weeks leading up to Earth Day.

# NREA Combat Center patrons bike for Earth Month

LANCE CPL. NATALIA CUEVAS

On a tranquil spring morning, 16 Combat Center patrons departed the installation for a 22-mile-long bike ride, in support of the Earth Day Fun Bike Ride, April 13, to raise awareness on carbon emission.

The riders began their journey at Felix Field here aboard the Combat Center and they spent two hours biking through Tortoise Rock Casino and near Joshua Tree National Park, on streets that were specially chosen for the road-style bike ride. At the conclusion, all riders arrived

at the Combat Center exhausted but satisfied with the workout and the awareness they raised about Earth-friendly transportation.

"Not only are we out here to enjoy the ride, we are here to promote the minimizing of carbon emissions," said Lt. Col. Timothy Pochop, director, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs.

NREA hosts the event annually to raise environmental awareness amongst Combat Center residents and the local community in the weeks leading up to Earth Day.



Participants for the annual Earth Day Fun Bike Ride cool off after arriving at Felix Field aboard the Combat Center, April 13.



Participants of the annual Earth Day Fun Bike Ride take off from Felix Field aboard the Combat Center, April 13.

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29 Palms

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Wed. Bible Study 6:00pm - 7pm

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Sun. Service 9:30 10:30 1:30  
Wed. 6pm

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Sunday Gospel Meditation 9:00 am  
Tues. 12 Step Church 6:30 - 7:05 pm  
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# Combat Center Marines help clean local community

Photos by Cpl. Julio McGraw



Pfc. Isaac Skiff and Pfc. Mohammad Jaber, students, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, carry mattresses dumped in a vacant lot during an Earth Day cleanup in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Saturday. Combat Center Marines volunteered for the cleanup co-sponsored by Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs and the city of Twentynine Palms, the group picked up enough trash and debris to fill a 60 cubic yard dumpster.



Lance Cpl. Tumunkh Amarsaikhan, motor transportation operator, 1st Tank Battalion, helps clear a couch dumped in a vacant lot, during an Earth Day cleanup in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Saturday.



Pfc. Brandon Stewart, student, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, rakes garbage and leaves during an Earth Day cleanup in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Saturday.



CPL. JULIO MCGRAW

Pfc. Malik Allen, student, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, picks up fronds during an Earth Day cleanup in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Saturday.

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 (PG13)  
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**Going In Style**  
 (PG13)  
 12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

**The Fate Of The Furious**  
 (PG13)  
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 Add toast - 1.50

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 Add a cup a granola - 1.50

Breakfast Sandwich - 6.95

2 Eggs, cheddar or Swiss cheese, Black Forest ham on a bagel or croissant.  
 Add fresh fruit - 1.50

Veggie Breakfast Sandwich - 6.95  
 2 eggs, choice of cheese and lettuce, tomato & avocado.  
 Add fresh fruit - 1.50

Bowl Of Oatmeal - 5.95  
 Served/cream or milk and honey or brown sugar.  
 Add raisins or fresh fruit - 1.50

### A La Carte

Bagel w/ butter & jam - 3.50  
 Muffins - 2.50  
 Brownie - 3.00

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## Diaz Road From A1

the team's explosive ordnance disposal technician was severely injured by an explosion, Sgt. Diaz immediately reacted without regard for his own safety and moved to treat his injured team member. Fully aware of the enemies' tendency to emplace secondary improvised explosive devices in the immediate vicinity of the primary charge, Sgt. Diaz and other first responders attempted to evacuate their injured Marine and there was a second explosion, immediately killing him and two others.

For his selfless actions, Sgt. Diaz was posthumously promoted to the rank of staff sergeant and awarded the Bronze Star medal with Combat "V".

"I read a good bit about [Staff Sgt. Diaz], and one of the key things that was said was, he never thought about himself first and that final act of his; you can't get much more selfless than that," said Combat Center Commanding General, Brig. Gen. William F. Mullen III. "The most important part to me is how we remember people. As long as we can remember them, especially if we honor them, they never really go away. They'll always be with us."

### Making of a Warrior

Staff Sgt. Diaz, born Sept. 4, 1984, was raised alongside two brothers by loving parents. Upon graduation from La Cueva High School in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Staff Sgt. Diaz followed in his older brother's footsteps and enlisted in the Marine Corps in 2003.

"When I graduated from Marine Corps boot camp and saw my brothers' faces when I walked out on the parade deck it gave me pride because I knew I'd set a higher standard for them," Ray said.

According to Ray, after his brother joined the Corps it became somewhat of a friendly competition between the two of them.

"I remember going to Okinawa and bringing home a small bottle of sake for my dad. Chris went to Okinawa and brought him back a 64 ounce bottle of sake," Ray said with a smile. "He was just always trying to outdo me."

The Diaz boys hail from a long line of military tradition, which includes their great-grandfather, their grandfather, and their father having all served in the armed forces. Despite being fully aware of the risks that could come with his career, Staff Sgt. Diaz enlisted and honorably served the nation and the comrades to the left and right of him.

### A Hero Remembered

During the ceremony, the Combat Center Color Guard presented the National and Marine Corps colors as the National Anthem played. Afterward, Mullen and Ray gave their remarks. Following their address, Mullen and Staff Sgt. Diaz's father, Salvador Diaz, officially unveiled the street sign to a thunderous round of applause.

"This is a fantastic honor for me to be able to designate this street in the name of [Staff Sgt. Diaz]," Mullen said.

Following the ceremony, family, friends and guests headed toward the military working dog kennels to enjoy barbeque and celebrate Staff Sgt. Diaz's memory.

"This is something that I didn't expect. Christopher touched a lot of people with his demeanor and his smile and I think the love that he spread is what brought a lot of these guys out here today," said Sandra Diaz, Christopher's mother. "Knowing that Christopher stepped these grounds before he died means so much. It's an honor knowing that his memory will live on here."



The Combat Center Color Guard prepares to present the National and Marine Corps colors during the renaming ceremony of Calcite Road to Diaz Road, April 14, aboard the Combat Center. The road was renamed in honor of Staff Sgt. Christopher Diaz who made the ultimate sacrifice in service of another while conducting combat operations in Helmand Province, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Maj. Daniel Lammers, Provost Marshal, the Combat Center, speaks to Salvador Diaz, father of Staff Sgt. Christopher Diaz, during the renaming ceremony of Calcite Road to Diaz Road, April 14.

## Orders From A1

intoxicated drivers from the Combat Center's roadways as well as ensure good discipline of all personnel aboard the installation.

The changes made to CCO 1630.6B include:

- Civilians may refuse vehicle inspections however, they must forfeit their

ID cards and access to the Combat Center. Civilians who refuse must reapply to gain access to the base.

- Weapons must be registered within five working days of being brought to the base or purchased.

- Knives don't need to be registered; however they

must be legal in the state of California to carry.

- "Key chain" pepper spray is authorized for carry aboard the base.

- If firearm ownership is transferred or sold, the Provost Marshal's Office must be notified within 24 hours of purchase or next

business day.

Other changes to the CCO1630.8F include:

- Failure to appear to non-mandatory appearances to traffic court will default to guilty pleas and appealing the citation is the responsibility of the recipient.

- Suspended license vehicles may remain on base, but cannot be operated.

- Fix-it tickets must be repaired within 5 working days and the owner must report to the Traffic Court Clerk to show the necessary work has been completed.

These orders should be

reviewed in their entirety by all personnel aboard the Combat Center per the Commanding General's intent. To review the full orders visit 29palms.marines.mil and look for the instruction manuals on the Provost Marshal's Office webpage.

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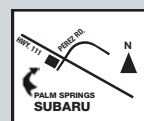
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# Marine tank officer makes history

STORY BY LANCE CPL. TROY SAUNDERS

Second Lt. Lillian Polatchek, a New York native, was commissioned in November of 2015 after attending Connecticut College. After graduating The Basic School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, she reported to the Marine Corps Detachment at Fort Benning, Georgia to attend the U.S. Army's Armor Basic Officer Leaders Course.

The Armor Basic Officer Leaders Course is a five-month course which both trains and inspires armor officers in order to provide the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, and allied nations with confident, competent and agile armor officers capable of conducting and leading unified land operations as part of a combined arms team.

"It teaches them the fundamentals and tactics that apply to armor," said Gunnery Sgt. Justin Gindlesperger, an ABOLC instructor. "It also teaches them the basic technical knowledge they'll need to know just to operate the tank safely and effectively. It's also where they're introduced to what it takes as a leader of a crew, first, and then a platoon."

ABOLC is broken down into three phases: the foundation phase, the crew phase and the mission phase.

During the foundation phase, students are taught a foundation of how to effectively plan and execute a tank mission from a leadership position. Throughout this phase, students will be expected to compete in a series of additional physically demanding events in both a team and as individuals.

Students are also given the opportunity to become certified in the Modern Army Combative Program and conduct an initial Ranger physical assessment test for placement on the Order of Merit list for an opportunity to attend Ranger School.

"The first phase is primarily where we learn tactics and the orders writing process," Polatchek said. "It's really a helpful refresher for all the Marines who learned the start of those tactics at an infantry level at TBS, but then learning to adapt it to the speed and firepower that tanks have was probably the most challenging part."

ABOLC students spend the first 12 training days of the second



LANCE CPL. MOLLY HAMPTO

2nd Lt. Lillian Polatchek poses in front of an M1A1 Abrams tank at Fort Benning, Georgia. Polatchek is the first female Marine Tank Officer after graduating as the distinguished honor graduate of her Army's Armor Basic Officer Leaders Course on April 12.

phase learning about and training on the tanks. Polatchek and other Marine students specifically trained on the M1A1 Abrams tank. Each student receives a five-day block of instruction on each vehicle that includes hands-on training and simulator training. Day 11 of the crew phase is a comprehensive day of testing that includes the Gunnery Skills Test and Gunnery Table I at the firing range. Completion of this event signifies student's readiness to execute live fire.

During the range density of this second phase, Marine students have the opportunity to execute Machine Gun Baseline and Tank Live Fire. Machine Gun Baseline serves as a bridge between the simulated engagements that the students have been executing and actual execution on the M1A1 Abrams tank-platform.

During the Tank Live Fire, students execute five distinct engagements which test their comprehension of the tasks that they have been taught, as well as demonstrate all of the skills that are necessary to succeed in crew-level gunnery assignments at their first respective-units.

"We learn the technical skills that we'll need and we learn to



LANCE CPL. TROY SAUNDERS

An M1A1 Abrams tank named "Buster" is parked outside of Marine Detachment Fort Benning Headquarters, Georgia. Marine Detachment Fort Benning is where Marines live while attending the Army's Armor Basic Officer Leaders Course to earn the military occupational specialty title of tank officer.

do basic maintenance as well as gunnery skills," Polatchek said. "It gives you a real appreciation for what the gunners are going to be doing. For all of us here at ABOLC, we're going to be in the tank commander seat, as a platoon commander, so we got a better feel for all the skill that goes into the other positions. I think it's really important for each of us to know what our Marines are doing, even if those aren't roles that we're fulfilling ourselves. You shouldn't really ask your Marines to do anything that you couldn't do yourself. It was really important for us to learn at least the basics of what each crew member is going to be doing."

The third and final phase of ABOLC combines both the tactical skills learned from phase I and the technical skills of the second phase. It consists of 27 training days designed to train and assess students in a tactical field environment. Four days of Phase III are spent in a classroom or simulator environment, in either the train/educate mode or in a simulated graded practical-exercise. These days are designed to review doctrine and the operation order process with the students in order to prepare them to successfully lead a tank or scout platoon in a tactical field environment.

Students spend 11 days in this

third mission-level phase conducting Situational Training Exercises focused on tank platoon, scout platoon and troop-level operations. Following successful completion of STX, students transition to the Competitive Maneuver Exercise for a seven-day summative assessment of information learned in the course through hands-on application and demonstrated proficiency of the student's accumulative learning and ability to effectively plan and execute a tank mission.

"Phase three was pretty high tempo," Polatchek said. "There's a pretty quick turnaround from the planning process, but phase three was also easily the most fun part of ABOLC. It's where everything really comes together and you get a chance to be out there doing what you've spent all that time preparing to do."

The Army's Armor Basic Officer Leaders Course is the only school Marines can attend to earn the MOS title of Tank Officer.

"What makes this course unique is it's the only place in the Marine Corps where you train officers to be tankers," Gindlesperger said.

"The small group of Marines in the class worked really well together and that reflects in the class rankings," Polatchek said when explaining how the course

was unique in the Marine Corps.

Polatchek's graduating class had five Marines in a class of 67 total students, with four of the five graduating on the Commandant's List, which honors the top 20% of the graduating class.

"With the course being from a school that's from another service, you get a chance to work with some of our peers from the Army, which is also just a great experience," Polatchek said. "You almost, in a way, learn more about the Marine Corps seeing how the Marines do things differently."

Polatchek expressed her eagerness to lead Marines using the knowledge she learned from ABOLC.

"Learning the importance of planning, maintenance, and understanding your platform as best as you can is what I took away the most from the course," Polatchek said. "A tank platoon has 16 Marines, and that small leadership-size really gives you, as a platoon commander, the ability to directly work with the Marines you're leading. I'm excited to take everything we've learned here and to get a chance to go out to the fleet and apply it"

Polatchek will now report to Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and serve as a Tank Officer with 2nd Tank Battalion.



LANCE CPL. TROY SAUNDERS

2nd Lt. Polatchek presents an instructor with a graduation gift during the Army's Armor Basic Officer Leaders Course at Fort Benning, Georgia, April 12. Polatchek graduated at the top of her class and is now the first female Tank Officer in the Marine Corps.

# WeekINPhotos

## Marines conduct training during CBAF operation

Photos by Pfc. Taylor W. Cooper



PFC. TAYLOR COOPER

Lance Cpl. Johnathan Folker fires an M203 grenade at targets 200 meters away while in the prone position at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, April 10. Marines participated in a qualification to ensure they could properly utilize the weapon system. Folker is with 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment.



PFC. TAYLOR COOPER

Cpl. Brandon Smith instructs Marines on the process of properly dressing the Mission Oriented Protective Posture gear at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, April 9. The Marines received classes on the proper application of MOPP gear to protect them from chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents. Smith is a CBRN defense specialist with Headquarters Battalion, 2nd Marine Division.



PFC. TAYLOR COOPER

Marines rush a simulated enemy firing position at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, April 9. The Marines were participating in battle drills to practice squad movement and unit integrity. The Marines are with 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment.



PFC. TAYLOR COOPER

Lance Cpl. Jakob Wabrek engages targets at close range with his M4 rifle at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, April 10. The Marines participated in shooting tables five and six, utilizing fire and movement, to increase proficiency with their weapon systems. Wabrek is with 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment.



PFC. TAYLOR COOPER

LCpl. Brendan White fires a round from an M203 grenade launcher at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, April 10. The Marines participated in grenade launcher qualification to ensure their proficiency with the weapon system. White is with 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment.

### Sunset Cinema

**Friday - April 21**  
1:30 p.m. - Ice Age: Collision Course (NDVD - Free Admission), PG  
3:40 p.m. - I Am Legend (NDVD - Free Admission), PG-13  
6:00 p.m. - Beauty and The Beast, PG  
8:50 p.m. - Power Rangers, PG-13  
11:30 p.m. - CHIPs, R

**Saturday - April 22**  
10:00 a.m. - Earth to Echo (NDVD - Free Admission), PG  
12:00 p.m. - After Earth (NDVD - Free Admission), PG-13  
2:30 p.m. - Beauty and The Beast (3-D), PG  
5:30 p.m. - Before I Fall, PG-13  
8:00 p.m. - KONG: Skull Island, PG-13  
10:30 p.m. - Independence Day: Resurgence (NDVD - Free Admission), PG-13

**Sunday - April 23**  
12:00 p.m. - CHIPs, R  
2:10 p.m. - Beauty and The Beast, PG  
4:50 p.m. - Power Rangers, PG-13  
7:30 p.m. - Life, R

**Monday - April 24**  
6:30 p.m. - Life, R

**Tuesday - April 25**  
6:30 p.m. - Power Rangers, PG-13

**Wednesday - April 26**  
6:30 p.m. - Logan, R

**Thursday - April 27**  
6:30 p.m. - The Shack, PG-13

**Friday - April 28**  
5:30 p.m. - Beauty and The Beast (3-D), PG  
8:30 p.m. - Power Rangers, PG-13  
11:30 p.m. - Life, R

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Interested candidates who do not currently hold a lifeguard certification are welcome to enroll in the Town's upcoming certification course on May 5th - May 7th and May 12th-14th. The fee for the course is \$220.00. Successful candidates that complete the course will have the opportunity to interview for summer positions with the Town of Yucca Valley Aquatics program and, if hired, may be eligible for a 50% fee reimbursement.

Closing date: Tuesday, May 9, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

**Kennel Technician**  
\$13.93/hr - \$20.17/hr

Part-time, Non-benefitted position:

Under general direction, performs a variety of duties involved in maintaining the Animal Shelter areas in a clean and sanitary condition; care for, feed and exercise impounded animals; provide customer service in the shelter during afternoon office hours; assist in placement or disposal of animals; and assist w/ethanizing animals when necessary. Min. Quals: H.S. diploma or equivalent w/1 year experience in care and handling of animals or equivalent related field required. This position requires availability on the weekends and holidays.

All positions require the successful candidates to pass a post offer criminal background screening, tuberculosis and drug screening; and possess a Class C California driver's license with a satisfactory driving record.

Applications available at Town Hall/Yucca Valley or visit the website at [www.yucca-valley.org](http://www.yucca-valley.org) for application, job announcement and job description.

Closing date: Thursday, May 11, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

All positions require the successful candidates to pass a post offer criminal background screening, tuberculosis and drug screening; and possess a Class C California driver's license with a satisfactory driving record.

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The City of Twentynine Palms is Accepting Applications for the Following Part-Time Seasonal Positions in the Recreation Department:

**Part-Time/Seasonal: Summer Day Camp Aide- Starting Hourly Rate \$11.01**  
Under general direction performs a variety of duties in the Recreation Department for the Summer Day Camp Program including but not limited to planning, organizing and implementing daily weekly and monthly activities for all age groups and the community as a whole through the City's Recreation Program. The successful applicant must pass a nationwide background check and possess or have the ability to obtain current certifications in CPR and First Aid upon hire. Experience working in a day camp/day care setting is highly desirable. Applicants must be at least 17 years of age. The period of employment for this part-time seasonal position is from June 12, 2017 to August 18, 2017, at a minimum of 20 hours per week. Closing Date: Thursday, May 4, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

**Part-Time/Seasonal Lifeguard- Starting Hourly Rate \$10.74**  
Under general supervision performs a variety of duties in the Recreation Department for the Luckie Park Pool including but not limited to enforcing swimming pool rules and regulations; patrols swimming pool areas; corrects unsafe practices; assists swimmers in distress; performs CPR and first aid as required. The successful applicant must pass a nationwide background check and possess or have the ability to obtain current certifications in Lifeguarding, CPR and First Aid upon hire. The period of employment for this part-time seasonal position is from May 27, 2017 to September 3, 2017, at a minimum of 20 hours per week. Closing Date: Thursday, May 4, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

Applications and full job announcements are available on the City's website at <http://www.29palms.org/> or may be picked up at Twentynine Palms City Hall and at the Park and Recreation Office at 74362 Joe Davis Road, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277. Return completed applications to City Hall, 6136 Adobe Road, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277.

Got an older car, boat or RV? Do the humane thing. Donate it to the Humane Society. Call 1- 800-743-1482 (Cal-SCAN)

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U.S. Marines with Black Sea Rotational Force 17.1 conduct a formation run wearing their M50 gas mask aboard Adazi Military Base, Latvia, Saturday. The Marines are in Latvia for Exercise Summer Shield, a multinational training evolution designed to train with NATO Allies in Europe.

CPL. SEAN BERRY

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SGT. EMMANUEL RAMOS

U.S. Marine Sgt. Matthew O'Clair, aircraft maintainer, Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 367, Marine Rotational Force Darwin 17.2 (MRF-D), oversees the offload of an AH-1 Cobra from a C-17 Globemaster III during a strategic lift, Wednesday. Marines with HMLA-367 received and offloaded two AH-1 Cobras that will take part in this year's MRF-D rotation. O'Clair, 24 years-old, is from Orlando.

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