

Integrated Training Exercise 5-17

The Combat Center's 29-day Integrated Training Exercise is the longest-lasting training exercise that occurs aboard the Combat Center, covering all four elements of the Marine Air Ground Task Force. It is comprised of an intense training cycle involving a series of progressive, live-fire exercises that assess the ability and adaptability of a force of approximately 3,500

active-duty or Reserve Fleet Marine Force personnel. The Combat Element contains the MAGTF headquarters and other units that provide operations, intelligence, logistics, communications and administrative support. The Ground Combat Element is task-organized to conduct ground operations to support the MAGTF mission and includes infantry, artillery, reconnaissance, armor, light

armor, assault amphibian, engineer and other forces as needed. The Logistics Combat Element provides the full range of combat logistics functions and capabilities necessary to maintain the continued readiness and sustainability of the MAGTF as a whole, and the Aviation Combat Element conducts offensive, defensive and all other air operations to support the MAGTF mission.

GCE: 'First of the First' prepare to fight

STORY BY LANCE
 CPL. ISAAC CANTRELL

The Ground Combat Element, or GCE, is the land force of a Marine Air-Ground Task Force, is primarily comprised of infantry units, supported by armor (tanks), and artillery. Serving as the MAGTF's integral component, the GCE is capable of maneuvering against the enemy and applying a combination of direct and indirect fires supported by the Air Combat Element. The ability to provide combined arms capabilities and adapt its size to counter any obstacle makes the GCE critical in establishing dominance on the battlefield.

Marines with Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton in Oceanside, Calif., conducted live-fire training exercises at

range 410A in support of Integrated Training Exercise 5-17 aboard the Combat Center July 25.

'First of the First' is organized around fire and maneuver warfare. In order to optimize their effectiveness and lethality, they must learn to fight in climates that vary from their native, according to 1st Lt. Jack Boger, Assistant Battalion Intelligence Officer for 1/1. "Coming out to Twentynine Palms, [Calif.], from Camp Pendleton offers a very different environment for our Marines to train in," Boger said. "It's a good opportunity to see what it may feel like if they do go down range and serve in some challenging desert environments."

The mission of 1/1, as is the mission of all infantry battalions, is to locate, close with and destroy the enemy by fire and maneuver, or to repel the enemy's assault

fire and close combat. The training that 1/1 conducted on range 410A not only offered the chance to practice their mission, but was designed to exercise their live-fire and maneuver skills concurrently with combined arms training.

"It's a pretty unique opportunity to train at Twentynine Palms, [Calif.], because we actually get to see how combined arms can be used," said Cpl. Phillip Williams, a squad leader in 3rd platoon. "That's something that some of our junior Marines haven't seen in this capacity."

Combined arms is the integration of infantry and support elements. It was the use of combined arms that made this exercise a success. Mortar men sent 60mm rounds down range to provide cover for

See GCE A4



PFC. MARGARET GALE

Lance Cpl. Kyle Hollenback, mortarman, 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, loads a while Pfc. Sean Carlson, mortarman, 1/1, stabilizes the stand during an individual training exercise at Range 410A aboard the Combat Center, July 25. 1/1 is based out of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, and is serving as part of the GCE during ITX 5-17.

ACE: 'Untouchables' rise to the occasion during ITX 5-17

STORY AND PHOTOS
 BY CPL. MEDINA
 AYALA-LO

The Aviation Combat Element, or ACE, plays an invaluable role within the Marine Air Ground Task Force, conducting offensive, defensive, and all other air operations to support the MAGTF mission. Marine aviation provides the MAGTF with

the operational flexibility it needs to accomplish its mission across the range of military operations such as delivering fires, facilitating integrated command and control, enhancing mobility and maneuver, providing force protection, sustaining combat power, and collecting intelligence. Majority of aircraft usage within the ACE is for close air support or to transport for the

Ground Combat Element or Logistics Combat Element. When the sky is the limit for technology, air superiority has become absolutely essential to winning wars, without ACE no major war can be won.

Marine Wing Support Squadron 272 is providing aviation ground support to the Ground Combat Element for this year's fifth iteration of ITX.



Marines with the Expeditionary Firefighting and Rescue team for Marine Wing Support Squadron 272, put out a simulated fire as part of a drill aboard the Combat Center during Integrated Training Exercise 5-17, Saturday. MWSS-272 is supporting the Aviation Combat Element of the ITX. The ACE conducts offensive, defensive, and all other air operations to support the MAGTF mission.

The 'Untouchables'

"Our unit provides aviation ground support to a composite Marine Aircraft Group 26, which is our parent headquarters back in New River, North Carolina," said Lt. Col. Matthew Bain, commanding officer, MWSS-272. "Aviation ground support encompasses billeting, power, medical support, food service support, air field support, fuel and emergency services for the

air base." Although not required for this exercise, MWSS-272 is capable of constructing an airfield similar to the Combat Center's Strategic Expeditionary Landing Field, and providing Explosive Ordnance Disposal services to the air wing. "Tactical Training Exercise Control Group has a training package designed specifically for Marine Wing Support

Squadrons in terms of pushing us to the limit in all of our functional areas," Bain said. "The most complicated event is probably the Base Recovery After Attack (BRAAT), which is a simulation of the base getting attacked and the MWSS working quickly to get it back up in operational conditions."

Within MWSS-272 there are more than 70

See ACE A4

Inside the Observation Post

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Careers in construction open to Marines

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. Stephen Campbell.



A U.S. Marine with Marine Wing Support Squadron (MWSS) 171, based out of Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, shoots an M249 machine gun during phase two of Eagle Wrath 2017 at Combined Arms Training Center Camp Fuji, Japan, July 5, 2017. Phase two consisted of conducting live-fire training exercises to give MWSS-171 the knowledge and confidence to utilize weapons systems effectively in a deployed environment.



Reprinted from the Observation Post
Aug. 8, 1969

Shadow walks, stalks prey during rifle range guard stint

BY LANCE CPL. BENJAMIN JOHNSON, JR.

Who knows what evil lurks among the nooks and crannies of the Base Rifle Range? The shadow woof.

Shadow, as one might suspect, is a black dog who thinks he is a sentry dog. However, he lacks one major qualification, he never attended the sentry dog course at Lackland Air Force Base.

After hearing many spine-tingling stories about post five — the rifle range — I boarded the guard vehicle and bade farewell to those I had met at the guardhouse. Many thoughts about "the end" flashed through my mind.

I first met shadow when I drew lonely post five on that inevitable guard stint. Actually, he scared me to death and I nearly turned white with fright.

As the guard truck pulled off in a cloud of dust I slung my M-14 to my shoulder and intensely listened for mysterious sounds.

I turned slowly and then I saw it! Two eyes were staring at me. I prepared to lock-and-load thinking that the Yucca Man had come for me when I realized that it was a dog.

Once overcoming my fear, he and I became great friends during the graveyard watch.

Walt Disney was a great believer in animal stories and all of his animal characters could communicate with their human friends. My belief in this "animal language" waned after I turned 15 — but that was before I

met Shadow.

After carefully sniffing me out and checking my animal humanity by growling at me, Shadow decided to let me into his confidence and told me his story, in his own arf-arf fashion.

"My name is Cpl. Rolf Shadow. I work at the Base Rifle Range as a sentry dog — among other things.

After my birth six months ago, I was acquired by a bright young Navy Corpsman from a Marine Palms family. It appears that my parents' litter was too large for the house so a few of my brothers and sisters (and me) were given away.

When my new owner, HN1 Rick Hopkins, was appointed the job of range corpsman I went with him. Rick was soon moved back to the Base Hospital but he donated me to the Marines at the range whom I liked so well.

My first MOS came shortly after that when one of the guards let me out of my pen to keep him company. I liked the job of walking post with the guard so I kept it.

Since then jobs have increased. I am NCO in charge of morale boosting during the rifle requalification period.

As an NCO I have to be a strict disciplinarian, in my own way, of course. About two months ago during a firing session, one Marine pulled my tail and kept harassing me.

After he got down into the prone position to fire I taught him a lesson, I grabbed his cover and carried it off to bury it in the sand.

Another of my tasks is to accompany the Base Rifle Team to weekend meets as mascot and good luck charm. So far I've traveled to Boulder City, Nev., and Phoenix, Ariz.

My life amidst the sands of the 29 Palms desert presented a problem on my trip to Phoenix.

When I got out of the car, I was so enhanced by the vast amounts of green grass surrounding me that I was hesitant about checking into the hotel."

As the four-hour relief came to a fast end, Shadow continued to expound on his short but eventful life. Some of his story, such as his bout with three coyotes, was doubtful, but I dared not tell him so. He also told me about the Marine he appreciates most at the range, GySgt. R.D. Furgeson, "who treats me like a son."

The next relief arrived within the next half-hour and all he could see of us on that moonless night were two sets of eyes and teeth. Before my relief found out about Shadow the way I had — the hard way — I told him about my new-found friend.

Shadow seemed to forget me as he became interested in the scent of the second relief. I wondered if the new relief would hear the story of Shadow's life as I had, or if he would be able to translate all the barks, growls and whimpers or had I imagined it all?

Editors note: The writer has since been reminded of the seventh general order — To talk to no one except in the line of duty — among others.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

DESHAWN D. DAVENPORT
Born on July 11, 2017
Born to Deshawn and Lauren Davenport

OLIVER S. ROMAN RIVERA
Born on July 13, 2017
Born to Jeancarlos Roman Perez and Nicole Rivera Hernandez

ELI S. GARCIA
Born on July 20, 2017
Born to Jose and Yuri Garcia

JUSTYCE F. PALACIOS
Born on July 21, 2017
Born to Jamie and Joe Palacios

SUDOKU

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4	3		5			9		

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Last week's answers

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
P	A	I	R	S	O	R	E	S	A	C	N	E		
14	I	S	L	E	T	H	O	R	P	D	I	E	S	
17	P	I	L	G	R	I	M	A	G	E	A	T	O	P
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39	G	I	G	K	I	R	T	L	E	S	T	A	P	
42	E	V	E	Y	E	A	S	T	Y	P	E	S	O	
45	S	E	T	T	O	L	Y	E	B	E	S	E	T	
49	A	R	T	S	D	A	R	N						
53	R	A	T	I	O	N	A	L	Z	I	N	G	E	R
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64	T	O	O	T	R	E	V	U	E	M	A	G	E	
67	A	N	N	E	F	R	A	N	C	E	Y	E	D	

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

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CROSSWORD

Across

- Greek cheese
- Alpine transport (hyph.)
- Neon, e.g.
- Bikini, e.g.
- One who cuts wood
- Back, in a way
- Commercial district
- Churchill's "so few": Abbr.
- Heir's concern
- Vision test (2 wds)
- Marathon
- Alone
- Of many kinds
- One who sets aside money
- A pint, maybe
- A fake
- Gets licked
- Highs and _____
- Clinch, with "up"
- Bat's home
- Doofus
- Advances
- Grassland
- Boxer's bane
- Safety device in a car
- Icelandic epic
- Highlands hillside
- Strong wine of Greece
- Wet slapping sounds
- Away
- Flickering light
- Bauxite, e.g.
- "Die Lorelei" poet
- Like "The X-Files"
- In favor of
- Halftime lead, e.g.
- Certain protest

Down

- Notability
- Flight data, briefly
- Cause for a lawsuit
- Sodium, e.g.
- Cooking meas.
- Bundle

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
12			13		14			15		16		
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51							52					
53	54				55	56		57		58	59	60
61				62			63					
64				65					66			
67				68					69			

- "Shoo!"
- Alcove
- Selling used items at one's home (2 wds)
- Delicate
- Allowing someone to disembark
- Relating to the rectum
- Andrea Bocelli, for one
- Devastation
- Lens
- Washington locale, with "the"
- Cool
- Periodical issued report
- Dual singing parts
- Celebrate
- Dork
- Accommodate
- Top competitors, often
- Salad slice
- Analyze, in a way
- Mainstay
- A branch of Dakota Indians
- Conviction
- Good vantage point
- Coin featuring Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man
- Bone-dry
- Spiritual, e.g.
- City on the Yamuna River
- "Get ___!"
- "Let it stand"
- Drone, e.g.

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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

Stephen

Walla Walla, Wa. Staff sergeant, legal chief, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Headquarters Battalion

COOK

>I'm from Walla Walla, Washington. It's a small town, I believe the population was 38,000 people when I was growing up.

>I have two brothers and one sister who I grew up with. I'm the oldest child and there isn't exactly a huge difference in age between us.

>I grew up very close with my brother, who is right under me. My brother and I played a lot of sports and participated in a lot of after school activities, so the amount of time we spent at home was very limited.

>I got to play baseball with my brother and two of my cousins. The three of us were always on the same team. Growing up, we didn't have a lot of money so a charitable program would pay for our gear.

>Besides my father and mother's generation, every generation before them had a substantial amount of people who served in the military. My grandma was a military brat and even though she didn't serve actively I would definitely consider her a military member because of the way she lived and conducted her life.

>Growing up, I was very close to my grandmother and grandfather. They had a homestead, so if we weren't spending time in the trailer we spent it at the homestead. At the homestead they had livestock, small patches of fruit and vegetables, two apple trees, a bunch of chickens and llamas.

>It was absolutely wonderful. My most vibrant memories are from the homestead. I even got married there.

>My grandfather was a Marine. He served in the Vietnam War. While he was there he wrote two different types of letters whenever he wrote home.

One was to his mom saying everything was fine and then one was to his dad explaining what was actually happening.

>My grandfather was a huge influence in my life. As a child I remember growing up sitting on his lap in the house at the homestead watching the history channel. I'm the oldest grandchild so I knew if I joined I would be the first to start the tradition back up. My grandparents were very patriotic so growing up it wasn't until I was a bit older that I learned it wasn't a requirement to join the military. When I found out that wasn't true I still wanted to start the tradition back up and join the Marine Corps. As good of a person as my grandfather was, I figured if he joined it must've been a good place.

>I've been in the Corps for nearly 8 years and I would like to stay the full 20.

>I did take the [non commissioned officer] creed to heart and one specific part of that is to train the new and influence the old. I think

my favorite thing about being a Marine is being able to do that.

>My favorite thing about the Marine Corps has changed many times, because of time and rank. Now, as a staff NCO I have to say the best thing in the Marine Corps for me is having an influence on both the new and the old Marines.

>On MarineNet there was a course that teaches you how to listen better. I would have to say that had a very huge impact on my life. A lot of it is quite obvious but I truly took it to heart and it had a very big impact on my life.

>I've got a 3D printer at home, which has really helped me out on a personal and Marine Corps level. I made a prosthetic arm for my little brother and I made an action figure of my previous [officer in charge] for his farewell gift. I got a photo of the front and side of his face and I modeled him on the computer then printed it off, and gave him his own action figure.

>What got me started in 3D printing was a remote controlled submarine with a live feed camera. You can't get one for about \$5,000 and I thought that was ridiculous so I decided to build my own. When I first started building it I was using the things that are in my house and it was getting very agitating. My first design had an old diaper dispenser as the main hull of the submarine. But then I designed one on the computer and bought the pieces for it. Altogether it cost just under 100 dollars. That cost included the battery pack, all of the controls and a little screen for it.

>I am part of the Warfighting Laboratory. I've attended events that present technology, I've gone to John Hopkins University's applied physics lab and seen what they work on and got to talk to their robotics engineer. I've also talked to an individual who designed and created the rover that's on Mars. I am absolutely humbled to be able to have that experience in a field that I have so much passion for.

>I also develop video games and apps. I attempted to make a cartoon but it was too time intensive for what I was already doing. Now I'm completing my first class for a degree in computer science and programming so I have the proof to back up my knowledge.

>I recently received an invoice for my CNC Mill, which allows me to use a computer for metal working. Once it arrives I'll be able to make things like mini V8 engines.

>The V8 engine I plan on making actually runs like a regular engine and you would expect it to have a high pitch to it because it's smaller but it still has a low gurgle like a muscle car. I will

COOK ENJOYS 3D PRINTING. HE IS CURRENTLY IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING A MINIATURE V8 ENGINE THAT WILL LATER BE USED IN A BAT MOBILE FOR HIS 4-YEAR-OLD SON.



be putting a V8 engine into a Batmobile and the mini-boat that my father and I are currently working on for my 4-year-old son.

>My step-dad, the person I call dad, made working with my hands a thing for me. We were always doing something. Whether it was working on, making or building vehicles.

>Besides one intro to computer science class, I don't have any formal schooling in additive manufacturing. Most of my learning was through Youtube and google. I'm a strong believer that you can learn anything via those platforms. I've never done any work with metal but I'm learning now, buying the machine and making mini V8s.

>Hopefully in August I'll be teaching a 3-day class to wounded warriors and medical staff about how 3D printing can better their lives including making their own prosthetics and on the medical side how to apply additive manufacturing to better their field.

>While making video games I make riffs, and background music. I absolutely love the free choice of being able to do what I would like to do.

>I don't receive any monetary compensation for the things I create. I hope to have a maker's shop that would allow me to help others bring their inventions to life. And for a reasonable price, just over the price of the materials.

>I love science. There's a lot of it that is unknown and I think that's what I like about it. Everyone's an inventor. Whether they've thought about it or not if you sit down with someone and ask what would make their life better, they'll come up with something.

>As I like to tell people, I may have all these things and technology is convenient, but it's a thing. I'd be fine without it.

>My grandmother taught me not to value material things. As a child I remember leaving a parking lot with my grandmother and as we're pulling out there was an individual asking for money. It was quite obvious what he was going to use that money for but my grandmother still pulled over and gave him all the money in her pocket. She told me it doesn't matter what they are going to use it for, if they're asking for it you always give help.

>My mom always taught us to leave things better than how we found them. We would go to rivers and swim in them but they were being closed down at a frequent rate because people weren't cleaning up after themselves. So we'd go and she kept telling us to pick up other people's trash and as kids we were pissed off. I understand now. It means a lot that my grandmother and mom instilled certain values in me.

>If I had to give advice to someone it would be, in the words of Joe Dirt, life's a garden dig it.

Interviewed and photographed by Medina Ayala-Lo



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GCE From A1



PFC. MARGARET GALE

Cpl. Christopher Stephens, mortarman, 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, prepares rounds for Pfc. Thomas Curtis, mortarman, 1/1, during an individual training exercise at Range 410A aboard the Combat Center, July 25. 1/1 is based out of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. and is serving as part of the GCE during ITX 5-17.

machine guns to move into a covering position. Once set, the machine guns suppressed deep targets while riflemen and combat engineers advanced on their objective. As the riflemen and engineers neared the

objective and mortar fire became obsolete, the riflemen had to rely on fire and maneuver movement and the support of the machine guns to advance.

Overall, leaders on all levels throughout the com-

pany found the training to be very rewarding. One squad leader, Sergeant Alexander Miller, found many shortcomings within his squad, which he sees as an opportunity for improvement.



PFC. MARGARET GALE

Marines from 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, prepare for a rapid fire on the enemy target during an individual training exercise at Range 410A aboard the Combat Center, July 25. 1/1 is based out of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., and is serving as part of the GCE during ITX 5-17.

ACE From A1

Marine Occupational Specialties, all of which enable the unit to provide sufficient support to the ACE and the ITX overall. Below are just a few of the MOSs that contribute to the ACE's lethality.

Fueling

While there are many elements that contribute to the functionality of the ACE, arguably the most important is ensuring aircraft have the fuel they need to get where they are going. The fuelers with MWSS-272 are crucial to that mission.

"Every morning we come in, test fuel, restart the lines, collect our samples and then we wait for aircraft to come in," said Cpl. Jared Williamson, assistant crew leader, MWSS-272.

It goes without saying that without fuel, the aircraft are inoperable. Testing the fuel ensures that bad fuel isn't being distributed, which would hinder the mission and create unsafe flying conditions.

"Our first priority is

always sortie generation," Bain said. "Sortie is getting the aircraft in the air to do their mission. Even with all the training that we do out here, our No. 1 priority is to support the aircraft, getting them out to get the mission complete, and supporting the infantry that way."

Welfare and Security

"Our mission here is to provide the health and well-being of the Marines who support the ACE and the MAGTF here at ITX," said HM1 Kameron Williams, corpsman, MWSS-272. "We have several different components working together and our job here with the wing is to ensure that they're able to provide the air escorts in the event of an emergency as well as transport troops goods and weapons."

To fulfill their missions, the Marines must remain healthy. Daily, corpsman conduct elements of triage training for worst-case scenarios. While medical support is a crucial component of

ensuring Marines' safety, the personnel and equipment within the camp must remain secure when imminent danger is on the horizon. That's where guard force comes in.

"I make sure that I have Marines posted at four different posts between the ACE compound," said Sgt. Seth Pearson, sergeant of the guard for the ACE compound, MWSS-272. "I ensure that my Marines all have live rounds, they know what they're doing, they're fed, and they're in the right place at the right time."

Communications

Upon arriving at the Combat Center, communications Marines ensured that all of MWSS-272's communication systems were in place, enabling them to provide support to the Marines. On a daily basis, communications trains to troubleshoot any problems that arise.

According to 2nd Lt. Patrick Reed, communication officer-in-charge, MWSS-272, the mission of communications is to



A Marine with Marine Wing Support Squadron 272, observes a hot refuel at the Strategic Expeditionary Landing Field aboard the Combat Center during Integrated Training Exercise 5-17, Saturday. MWSS-272 is supporting the Aviation Combat Element of the ITX.



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ACE From A4

provide communication support for the entire ACE within the airfield, by providing both computer and radio assets.

“Considering the level of training that’s going on here and the operational tempo of what we’re doing, I think ITX is good training for what could potentially come,” Reed said.

Command and Control

“ITX is a great stepping stone,” said Master Sgt. Felicia Contreras, operations chief, MWSS-272. “The reason I say that is because we go through daily operations here supporting the MAGTF and the ACE, which is what we’re in direct support of. We also aid in any of the training evolutions that TTECG puts on for MAGTF 8.”

S-3’s direct support to the ACE is to provide any logistical support needed, including admin supplies, loading up aircraft, offloading cargo from tractor-trailers, setting up the camp and ensuring survivability.

Motor Pool

The motor pool’s mission is to ensure that troops and equipment are transported in a safe and timely manner. Through pre-combat checks and pre-combat inspections, the Marines in the motor pool ensure that their trucks are always up and running, and ready to respond to any scenario.

“I think ITX helps a lot,” said Pfc. Jeroy Campbell, motor technician operator, MWSS 272. “Because of this training, if we’re out in country and we come across an [improvised explosive device] we’re prepared to evacuate the wounded, bring them to the corpsmen, set up an landing zone and call in a chopper to [medically evacuate] the Marines, all while recovering the downed vehicle from the incident.”

Engineers

“We’ve been given the task of demilitarizing four guard posts and constructing four new towers,” said 2nd Lt. Salvador Guzman, engineer platoon commander, MWSS-272. “General engineering exercise focuses on horizontal, vertical and survivability construction. It gives the engineer some experience out here building up something that they might build up in country.”

The guard posts are built using designs tailored to the post’s location. Engineers also take into account the enemy’s point of view when constructing the towers. In addition to the guard posts, the Marines also are building Southwest Asia huts, which are small, one-room buildings used for work space in the field.

“The foundation really takes up the most amount of time for any project,” Guzman said. “Once you get your foundation set, everything else falls into place. If you rush through your foundation you end up with errors on the back end and we’re building structures that are going to house Marines, so that’s a big deal.”

According to Guzman, a guard post can be completed in approximately two days while a SWA hut takes about four days to complete. On each project there is a project lead. At the end of every major piece put together the project lead performs a quality inspection. Once that inspection is complete, engineers move to the next phase of building.

“The SWA huts and guard towers that we construct stay once our unit moves on,” Guzman said. “So not only does our training benefit the engineers in our unit, but this [forward operating base] will take on any Marines who want to lock it on for training in the future.”

Constructing elements of the FOB encompasses only a portion of the engineers’ mission. Forward aviation combat engineering is another part of their mission and

includes repairs to the different runways.

“In the event of the airfield getting bombed, there’s a process we go through and at the end of that process we determine what size minimum operating strip is needed for the airfield,” Guzman said. “Whatever is damaged in that minimum operating strip is where the engineers come in and fix that.”

Expeditionary Firefighting and Rescue

Keeping aircraft in the air is MWSS’s No. 1 priority, but remaining prepared for mishaps is critical to the mission of the ACE.

“Expeditionary Firefighting and Rescue’s mission is firefighting, rescue operations, salvage and overhaul procedures,” said Gunnery Sgt. Joshua M. Atkinson, staff non-commissioned officer in charge, EFR, MWSS-272. “We pretty much are an insurance policy for MWSS.”

Atkinson said that upon arrival to ITX 5-17, none of the Marines were used to working together because they come from different stations. They trained every day for the first week and a half to work together as a cohesive team and to standardize their emergency response.

“We had our first evaluated drill on July 28, for an emergency response to an MV-22 crash landing on the airfield,” Atkinson said. “Everything came together greatly and we received excellent remarks. The evaluator thought we’d been working together on drills like that on our station for years. It’s really a testament to our Marines’

maturity and how well they come together.”

In addition to the initial drill, EFR will be evaluated during the BRAAT drill. During the drill, EFR will have Marines augmented to the quick reaction force, but a majority of the Marines will be on the airfield to put down any firefighting situations that might arise.

“We are all emergency medical responders so we support the corpsmen in the event they are overwhelmed by patients,” Atkinson said. “If we were in country doing our job, we would be providing firefighting support to any forward refueling operations, any facilities that we erect in those locations and we’d also be providing airfield service support.”

Response, scene safety, rescue operations, and salvage and overhaul are the four stages of emergency response. During drills, EFR compartmentalizes each stage, then conducts drills specifically on each one so the Marines can perfect their response and learn how to transition into the next more smoothly.

“The training here at ITX prepares us for a complexity of scenarios based on the history of the Marine Corps’ war on terrorism,” Atkinson said. “The BRAAT drill specifically shows us exactly how we would function in the scenario of an airfield attack. We don’t get that kind of opportunity when we’re at New River.”

“I am proud of my Marines. I’m glad I’ve been able to come out here with such a passionate group of Marines who want to help and assist,” Bain said.



Marines with the engineer platoon for Marine Wing Support Squadron 272, cut wood for a Southwest Asia hut aboard the Combat Center during Integrated Training Exercise 5-17, Saturday. MWSS-272 is supporting the Aviation Combat Element of the ITX.

“They share a vision of life safety and emergency response that enables me as a leader to provide maximum effort for any kind of operation.”

Bain believes ITX is one of the best opportunities his unit has to train for combat. ITX is designed specifically to train and then evaluate units in their most critical mission areas. Because the coyotes who observe the exercise have evaluated more than half of the MWSSs in the Marine Corps, MWSS-272 learns from the coyotes as well as the squadrons who came before them.

“One of the chal-

lenges of an MWSS is at home station, a lot of our Marines have to work for the air station so they work for the station firefighting department, or they work at the station chow hall, or they work at station fuels so they don’t really get to be part of the squadron team until we pull them out to work together in this sort of mission,” Bain said. “This exercise is a great way to build unit cohesion, and small unit leaders get to know each other. That’s what I’m most proud of; is how my Marines are finding new ways every day to improve the quality of support.”



A Marine with Marine Wing Support Squadron 272, performs a cold refuel at the Strategic Expeditionary Landing Field aboard the Combat Center during Integrated Training Exercise 5-17, Saturday.



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WeekINPhotos

Northern Strike 17: 4th Reconnaissance Helocast Operations

Photos by Lance Cpl. Imari Dubose



U.S. Marines with Echo Company, 4th Reconnaissance Battalion, 4th Marine Division, Marine Forces Reserve, execute a helocasting exercise during Exercise Northern Strike 17 in Lake Margrethe, Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center, Michigan on Monday. Helocasting is an airborne technique used by small units and special operations for insertion into military areas of operations. Exercise Northern Strike is a National Guard Bureau-sponsored training exercise that unites service members from multiple branches, states and coalition countries to conduct combined ground and air combat operations.



U.S. Marines with Echo Company, 4th Reconnaissance Battalion, 4th Marine Division, Marine Forces Reserve, execute a helocast exercise during exercise Northern Strike 17 in Lake Margrethe, Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center, Michigan on Monday.



A Sikorsky SH-60 Seahawk with Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 22, departs after inserting U.S. Marines with Echo Company, 4th Reconnaissance Battalion, 4th Marine Division, Marine Forces Reserve into Lake Margrethe, Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center, Michigan on Monday.



A Sikorsky SH-60 Seahawk with Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 22, departs after inserting U.S. Marines with Echo Company, 4th Reconnaissance Battalion, 4th Marine Division, Marine Forces Reserve into Lake Margrethe, Camp Grayling Joint Maneuver Training Center, Michigan on Monday.

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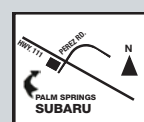


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Helmets to Hardhats opens service members eyes to future careers

STORY AND PHOTOS
 CPL. NICK DUNN

With Marines and sailors constantly conducting pre-deployment training in the harsh desert landscape aboard the Combat Center, they may not have time to research what resources are available to help them find the perfect career outside the Marine Corps.

The Helmets to Hardhats program gives transitioning service members an opportunity to find careers by introducing them to building and construction businesses throughout the United States and helping them find jobs that are right for them.

Dan Lozano, the national field coordinator for Helmets to Hardhats, said the program is similar to an online job search, but "gives a little something more than expected."

"Let's say a Marine is interested in a job posted on our site and forwards his profile to apply for the job," said Lozano, a retired gunnery sergeant and San Clemente, Calif., native. "Instead of his application getting shoved into a different computer and him having to wait until he is on his death bed for a response, his application will go to an actual human being who will take him step-by-step throughout the rest of the application process to ensure they get a response from the employer."

The program makes sure every company that posts jobs on their Web site, <http://www.helmets-to-hardhats.org/>, is legitimate. The employers pay more than minimum wage and all their employees receive similar medical and dental benefits offered in the military, Lozano said. To sign up for the program, military members need a

high school diploma or a general education diploma and an honorable discharge from the military.

The program does not just involve general construction and building companies. Postings are also accepted from various businesses specializing in roofing, plumbing, tile and brick-laying, electrical and carpentry.

"Helmets to Hardhats helps open service member's eyes to different career choices," said Jeff Fourier, the branch head of the Lifelong Learning Education Office. "Marines going through that transition from being in the military to becoming a civilian need to be familiar with the different avenues available."

Through the program, Marines can use the Montgomery GI Bill to help relieve the financial stress.

"Marines need to make sure they take the current GI Bill because the Post 9/11 GI Bill can't be used with our program," Lozano said.

When someone is trying to become certified within a certain trade, it normally takes five years to become a journeyman. During those five years as an apprentice, the GI Bill can be used.

Depending on the job, apprentices can receive up to \$900 a month until the employee gets a pay raise in six months. After the first pay raise, the amount will drop to approximately \$700 a month until the next pay raise. The disbursement will eventually even out at \$400 a month for the remainder of the five years. During this time, the apprentice will also be paid by the contractor as well.

For more information, visit their Web site at <http://www.helmets-to-hardhats.org/>.



Glenn Redmond, a backhoe operator for Reyes Construction, smooths out ground to build a new parking lot at the Combat Center, Aug. 3. The Helmets to Hardhats program is designed to help transitioning service members find careers in the construction industry.



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Adrian Navarro, a general laborer with Reyes Construction, points out areas of concern to Glenn Redmond as he operates a backhoe, Aug. 3, while working on a new parking lot at the Combat Center. The Helmets to Hardhats program is designed to help transitioning service members find careers in the construction industry.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Aug. 4

5:30 p.m. -- Baby Driver, R
 8:00 p.m. -- Spider-Man: Homecoming (3-D), PG-13
 10:40 p.m. -- The House, R

Saturday, Aug. 5

12:00 p.m. -- Despicable Me 3 (3-D), PG
 2:10 p.m. -- Spider-Man: Homecoming (3-D), PG-13
 5:00 p.m. -- Transformers: The Last Knight (3-D), PG-13
 8:00 p.m. -- Baby Driver, R
 10:20 p.m. -- The Big Sick, R

Sunday, Aug. 6

12:00 p.m. -- The House, R
 2:20 p.m. -- Spider-Man: Homecoming (3-D), PG-13
 5:10 p.m. -- Baby Driver, R
 7:40 p.m. -- The Big Sick, R

Monday, Aug. 7

6:30 p.m. -- The House, R

Tuesday, Aug. 8

6:30 p.m. -- Baby Driver, R

Wednesday, Aug. 9

2:30 p.m. -- Free Matinee: Muppets Most Wanted, PG
 6:30 p.m. -- Cars 3, G

Thursday, Aug. 10

2:30 p.m. -- Free Matinee: Penguins Of Madagascar, PG
 6:30 p.m. -- All Eyez On Me, R

Friday, Aug. 11

6:30 p.m. -- Free Showing: Marines Got Talent Show
 10:30 p.m. -- The House, R

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