

Serving the MCAGCC  
Community at  
Twentynine Palms, Calif.

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July 14, 2006



# OBSERVATION POST



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## THIS ISSUE

A7 -1/7 Marines

A8 -Single Marine Program

B3 - Soccer Fever

## HOT TOPICS

### FIRE INFORMATION HOTLINE

For information on the Sawtooth Complex fire, road closures, evacuation routes and orders, call 1-909-881-6949/50/51

### COMBAT CENTER MOTORCYCLE SAFETY EXPO

The Safety Office and the Provost Marshal's Office would like to extend an invitation to all Riders and Non-Riders to attend a Motorcycle Safety Expo to be held July 19 in conjunction with national "Ride to Work Day." Our goal is to present a broad view of the motorcycling community and the many safe and responsible ways to enjoy riding. We will have motorcycle displays set up by local Track Day Schools, adventure riding schools, local motorcycle shops, California Highway Patrol, and representatives from the San Bernardino Sheriff's department. There will be contests of control and skill and also a bike show so polish up your rides and your skills. Prizes have been donated by Alpinestars, Helmhouse, and New Enough MC Leathers. The event will be from 3 - 7 p.m. in the large lot in front of PMO. Just look for all the motorcycles, you won't be able to miss us.

### PALM SPRINGS AERIAL TRAM JULY MILITARY

**APPRECIATION DAYS**  
All military personnel receive free Tram admission with military ID. Their guests (limit 6) receive 25 percent off regular admission. For more information call (888) 515-TRAM. Offer valid July 1-31.

### CREDO MARINE CORPS WEST RETREATS

CREDO Marine Corps West will be hosting a personal Growth Retreat, July 28-30, at the Luther Glen Conference Center in Cherry Valley, Calif., and a Marriage Enrichment Retreat, Aug. 11-13 at Highland Hot Springs Resort located in Beaumont, Calif. For more information on Highland Hot Springs, visit: <http://www.highland-springsresort.com>. There are 30 slots available for the PGR and only 20 slots available for the MER. Registration will be on a first come first served basis. For more information call 830-4489.

## COMING NEXT ISSUE

- Sawtooth Fire
- VMU-1
- Softball Championship

## THIS DAY IN MARINE CORPS HISTORY

July 14, 1945

U. S. began the first surface fleet bombardment of Japan.

# MAGTFTC activates unit colors



Brig. Gen. Douglas M. Stone, MAGTFTC Commanding General, and Sgt. Maj. William Johnson, MAGTFTC Sergeant Major, uncased the colors at a Colors Designation ceremony at Range 215, July 9.

### LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marine Corps Air Ground Task Force Training Command unit colors were activated at a Colors designation ceremony at Range 215 Sunday.

Brig. Gen. Douglas M. Stone, MAGTFTC commanding general, assisted by Sgt. Maj. William Johnson, MAGTFTC sergeant major, uncased the national and organizational colors.

"Brig. Gen. Stone uncasing the flags is important because he is the commanding general of MAGTFTC, which is the training, tactical side,"

said Johnson. "Then on the other hand he is also in charge of MCAGCC, which is the base side and support units."

The guest speaker for the ceremony was Maj. Gen. Keith J. Stalder, Commanding General, Training and Education Command. He talked with Marines involved with Mojave Viper and the Combat Center Color Guard.

"I appreciate all that you are doing and that is my essential message, to thank each and every one of you," said Stalder. "I want to tell you what a huge difference you are making in the Marine Corps and the whole war. So, my thanks to all you great Marines."

"MAGTFTC falls under TECOM, and Maj. Gen. Stalder is responsible for all training organizations throughout the Marine Corps that fall under TECOM from the School of Infantry, to the depots and Mojave Viper," said Johnson. "Basically to have the commanding general here was very important."

During the ceremony, Sgt. Donald F. Lutz Jr. and Cpl. Brandi R. Landrum, Tactical Training and Exercise Control Group, received the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal. Sgt. Lutz received the gold star in lieu of second award.

"Recognizing Marines within

TTECG showed that sergeant's and below have a tremendous impact," said Johnson. "To see them recognized for all their hard efforts and long hours was significant."

Master Gunnery Sgt. Karl W. Nugent, TTECG, read off the lineage of the MAGTFTC from 1952 to 2005.

The colors were activated August 20, 1952 at Camp Detachment, Marine Corps Training Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif. The following February the colors were re-designated as

See MAGTFTC, A5

# Headquarters Battalion welcomes new CO

### LANCE CPL. REGINA N. ORTIZ

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines and Sailors of Headquarters Battalion welcomed their new commanding officer at a change-of-command ceremony at the Combat Center Parade Field July 7.

Maj. David M. Blankenship, a Baltimore native, relinquished command to Lt. Col. Michael S. Bodkin, a Bucks County, Pa., native, at the end of the ceremony.

Blankenship enlisted in the United States Navy in 1989 and was selected to attend the United States Naval Academy Preparatory School in Newport, R.I. He went on to graduate from the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., and received his commission, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in General Science in May 1994.

Blankenship's assignments include serving as the adjutant, legal officer, personnel officer and platoon commander for 1st Tank Battalion; adjutant and assistant headquarters commandant for the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit; and adjutant for the 7th Marine Regiment prior to his assignment at Headquarters Battalion.

He has participated in four deployments, including two in support of Operation

Iraqi Freedom.

Blankenship is scheduled to report to the Naval War College, in Newport, R.I., where he will continue his education.

Before being assigned to Headquarters Battalion as the commanding officer, Bodkin completed studies at the Naval War College.

Bodkin earned his commission after graduating from Penn State University in 1989. After completing The Basic School and the Infantry Officer's Course, he served as a platoon commander with 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division. During his time with 2/4, Bodkin deployed in support of Operations Sharp Edge and Desert Storm.

Bodkin has served with Marine Forces Unitas, participated in two deployments to South America and West Africa; was a company commander and division staff secretary with 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion; served as an advisor to the 3rd Mechanized Infantry Battalion; the battalion executive officer of 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion; and has deployed twice in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Bodkin, who has been awarded two Bronze Star Medals, has also completed



Maj. David M. Blankenship (right), former Headquarters Battalion commanding officer, and Lt. Col. Michael S. Bodkin, Headquarters Battalion commanding officer, wait for colors to be brought to them by the battalion sergeant major.

training at the U.S. Army's Armored Officer Advanced Course, Calvary Leader's Course and Marine Corps Command and Staff College.

Bodkin is looking forward to leading the Marines and

Sailors of Headquarters Battalion, he said.

"It's going to be a challenge," Bodkin said. "I've always been a part of infantry and reconnaissance units. I'm looking forward

to the diversity within Headquarters Battalion."

"I love to be around Marines," he continued. "I like to be personable and approachable to any of the Marines I am leading."



# Birth announcements Sempertoons

By Gunnery Sgt. Charles Wolf



**XANDER KENT SNAVELY**  
Son of Cpl. and Mrs. Zachary Snavely  
Born May 23, 2006, weighing 7 lbs. 15 oz. and measuring 21.9 inches.

**JADEN RANDALL TERRELL**  
Son of Cpl. and Mrs. Jared Terrell  
Born May 27, 2006, weighing 8 lbs. 11 oz. and measuring 22 inches.

**NADIA YARISEL APARICIO**  
Daughter of Pfc. Christina Mena and Kevin Aparicio  
Born May 30, 2006, weighing 7 lbs. 9 oz. and measuring 20.9 inches.

**JADYN ASHLEY FENENOZ**  
Daughter of Sgt. and Mrs. Joseph Feneno  
Born May 31, 2006, weighing 7 lbs. 7 oz. and measuring 21 inches.

**HAILE MARIE WITT**  
Daughter of Sgt. and Mrs. John Eugene Witt  
Born June 2, 2006, weighing 9 lbs. 6.5 oz. and measuring 21.5 inches.

**ALLY RAEGAN DUCHARME**  
Daughter of Lance Cpl. and Mrs. Robert Ducharme  
Born June 2, 2006, weighing 7 lbs. 9 oz. and measuring 20 inches.

**LOGAN ORTIZ**  
Son of Sgt. and Mrs. Miguel Ortiz  
Born June 7, 2006, weighing 6 lbs. and measuring 18.9 inches.

**ANDREA JO-ANNE DUKE**  
Daughter of HM3 and Mrs. Domingo Duke  
Born June 7, 2006, weighing 8 lbs. 13 oz. and measuring 21 inches.

**THOMAS ANDREW SUTHERS**  
Son of Staff Sgt. and Mrs. Andrew Suthers  
Born June 7, 2006, weighing 7 lbs. 2 oz. and measuring 20.1 inches.

**ISACC BAIRD**  
Son of Lance Cpl. and Mrs. Bryan Baird  
Born June 9, 2006, weighing 8 lbs. 12 oz. and measuring 21.5 inches.

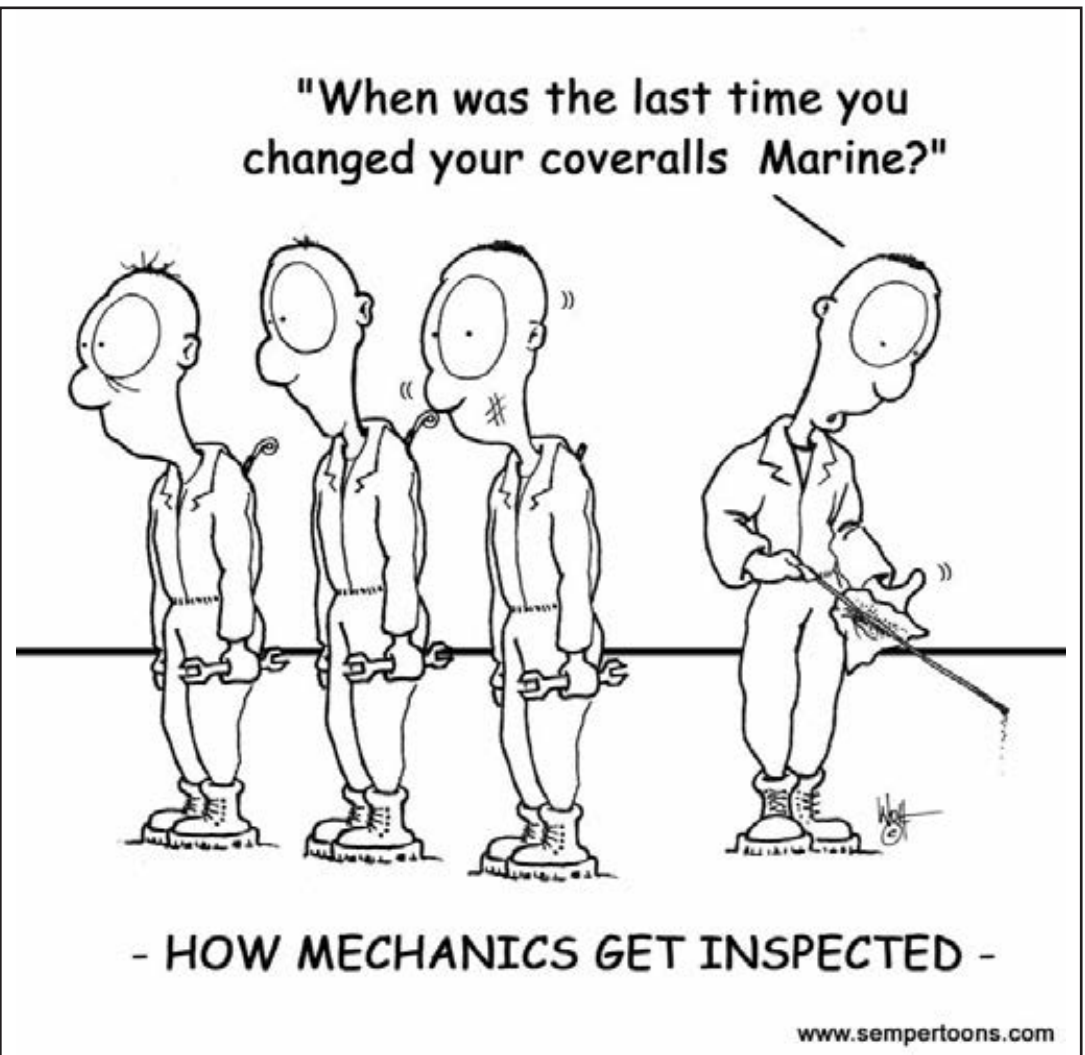
**KYRA MERCI DURHAM**  
Daughter of Capt. Patryck and Capt. Tanya Durham  
Born June 10, 2006, weighing 6 lbs. 8 oz. and measuring 19.5 inches.

**BRENN ELISE ELAM**  
Daughter of Staff Sgt. and Mrs. Thurl Elam  
Born June 16, 2006, weighing 8 lbs. 4 oz. and measuring 20.6 inches.

**JOANNA KAY VIVIER**  
Daughter of Lance Cpl. and Mrs. John Vivier  
Born June 16, 2006, weighing 7 lbs. 5 oz. and measuring 20.6 inches.

**CHAZ AKI ANDERSON**  
Son of Sgt. and Mrs. Charles A. Anderson  
Born June 17, 2006, weighing 9 lbs. 1 oz. and measuring 21.6 inches.

**NATALIE PATRICIA RICH**  
Daughter of Lance Cpl. and Mrs. Nathan Rich  
Born June 17, 2006, weighing 9 lbs. and measuring 20.9 inches.



www.sempertoons.com

## C.O.P. Corner

**Community Oriented Policing**  
The proactive voice of crime prevention

Presented by the Provost Marshal's Office Crime Prevention Section

*Does someone close to you have a Drug or Alcohol Problem?*

Have you noticed behavior changes? Are they moody, short-tempered, hostile or "spaced out?" Are they suddenly failing courses, late for work, problems with work performance, and/or hanging out with people you don't trust? Stop and think about it. They may have an alcohol or drug problem.

Here are some signs of alcohol or drug abuse:

- Increased interest in alcohol or other drugs, such as talking about them or talking about buying them
- Spends majority of free time going to bars or clubs
- Owning drug paraphernalia, such as pipes, hypodermic needles, or rolling papers
- Having large amounts of cash on their person
- Drastic change in weight
- Slurred or incoherent speech
- Withdrawal from others, frequent lying, depression, or paranoia

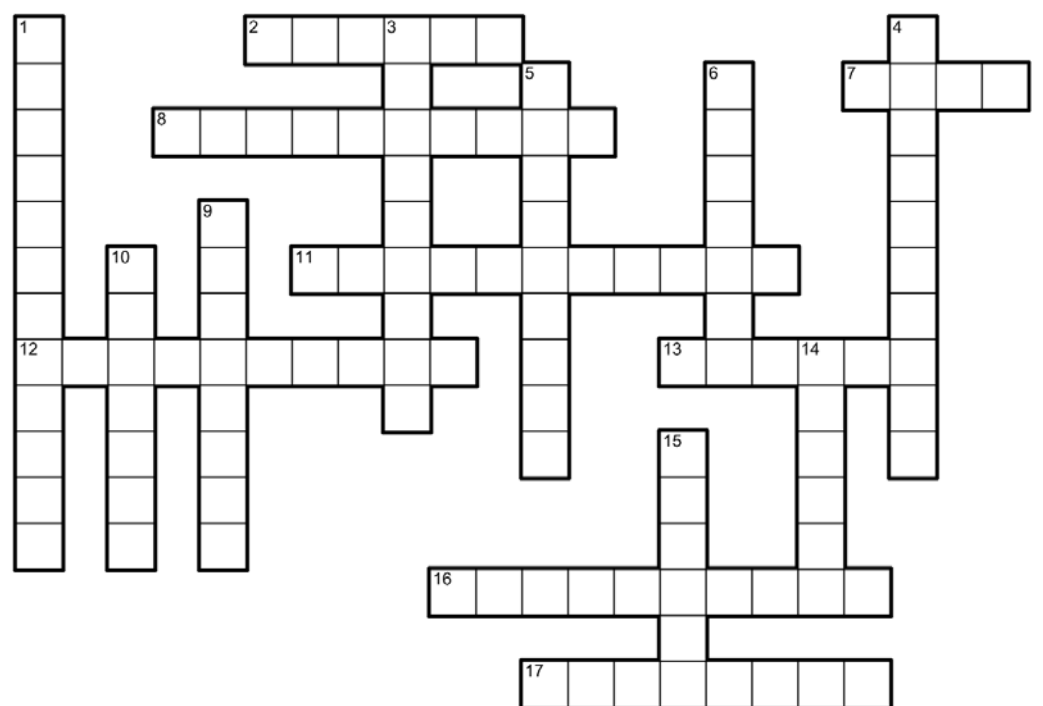
If you observe any of these signs, they may have an alcohol or drug problem. You need to compare these behavior signs to behaviors in the past. It's better to say something and be wrong than to say nothing and have them get into serious trouble.

For more information regarding alcohol or drug abuse contact David Roman, the Drug Demand Reduction Coordinator for the base at 830-6986.

The following services are available to on-base personnel and residents through Crime Prevention: literature, briefs, education, crime assessments, safety tips, the Stranger Danger program, McGruff the Crime Dog, the Officer Friendly program, the Property Marking program, and the Child Identification and Fingerprinting program. For more information call Crime Prevention, 830-6094/5457.

**Presented by the Provost Marshal's Office Crime Prevention Section**

## JULY HISTORICAL EVENTS



### ACROSS

- The first \_\_\_\_\_ bomb was detonated in New Mexico July 16, 1945.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bunny made his cartoon debut July 27, 1940.
- The Battle of \_\_\_\_\_, Pennsylvania, began July 1, 1863.
- William H. Bonnie, also known as "\_\_\_\_\_" was shot by Sheriff Pat Garrett July 14, 1881 and died the next day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ opened in Anaheim, Calif., July 17, 1955.
- The United States annexed \_\_\_\_\_ July 7, 1898.
- The Declaration of Independence was read aloud to General George \_\_\_\_\_'s troops in New York July 9, 1776.
- Amelia \_\_\_\_\_ and her airplane were lost in the Pacific Ocean July 2, 1937.

### DOWN

- The Declaration of \_\_\_\_\_ was approved July 4, 1977.
- World War II fall of \_\_\_\_\_ occurred July 28, 1943.
- \_\_\_\_\_ voted to remain a United States commonwealth, July 23, 1967.
- Astronaut Neil \_\_\_\_\_ was the first man to set foot on the moon July 20, 1969.
- Spain ceded \_\_\_\_\_ to the United States July 17, 1821.
- The first All-Star \_\_\_\_\_ game was played in Chicago, July 6, 1933.
- Louis \_\_\_\_\_ successfully tested an anti-rabies vaccine on a boy bitten by an infected dog July 6, 1885.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11 orbited the moon July 19, 1969.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ Revolution began July 14, 1789.

[Solutions on A9]

**MC-CES**  
MARINE CORPS ENTERPRISE

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**MC-CES**  
ARRIVE ALIVE

Business Solutions and call centers. MC-CES will reimburse any licensed cab company for transportation to the Main Gate, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. Drivers please legally record information from your fare's Military ID card. Thank you for participating.

*Make a difference. WE ALL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.*

## Centerspeak

If you could have any pet in the world, what would it be and why?

Opinions expressed in Centerspeak are not necessarily those of the OBSERVATION POST, the Marine Corps or Department of Defense.



LANCE CPL. MATT CRAIG  
LIMA BATTERY, 3/12



CPL. CHARLIE MANNING  
MWSS-371



PFC. SHEA CALABRESE  
B. Co., MCCES



SGT. MICHEAL RIEDE  
SJA, HQBN

"A hog, cause I like hogs."

"A blue tick coon hound dog, because they are great hunting dogs and are very loyal."

"A lion, because how many people can say 'hey my lion is in the backyard.'"

"A rat, because they are very smart and you can teach them to do tricks."

## What's on your mind?

Centerspeak welcomes questions or submissions from service members, Department of Defense civilians and family members.

Address submissions to:  
Commanding General  
Public Affairs Office  
(Attn. Press Chief)  
MCAGCC  
Box 788200  
Twentynine Palms, CA 92278-8200

Or E-mail to:  
evan.eagan@usmc.mil

## OBSERVATION POST

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Combat Correspondent

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1st Lt. Christy L. Kercheval  
Gunnery Sgt. Chris W. Cox  
Patrick H. Brink  
Sgt. Robert L. Fisher III  
Cpl. Evan M. Eagan  
Cpl. Heidi E. Loredo  
Cpl. Brian A. Tuthill  
Lance Cpl. Michael S. Cifuentes  
Lance Cpl. Regina N. Ortiz  
Lance Cpl. Katelyn A. Knauer

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CPL. GRAHAM A. PAULSGROVE

3rd LAR Marines spent two months on the move in and around Fallujah — a city of approximately 200,000.

## 3rd LAR Marines reflect on recent combat operations

**CPL. GRAHAM A. PAULSGROVE**

1ST MARINE DIVISION

CAMP KOREAN VILLAGE, Iraq -- After more than a month of living out of armored vehicles and combating insurgents daily near Fallujah, nearly 100 U.S. Marines recently returned to this region in western Al Anbar province to continue security and stability operations.

After months of life "on the road" throughout Fallujah, Marines from the Twentynine Palms, Calif.-based D Company, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, have returned to western Iraq to help their parent battalion maintain security and stability.

"This is a lot quieter area than what we came from — every day we were guaranteed something would happen," said Pfc. Nathan D. Wagner, a 22-year-old team leader with Company D.

Nearly two weeks back at their base in this wide, rural desert region of Al Anbar, the Marines spent days on the move in and around Fallujah, a city of approximately 200,000, which was the site of major combat operations between coalition forces and insurgents in November 2004.

For 60-plus days, the Marines spent their time in and out of their eight wheeled light armored vehicles maintaining security, rooting out insurgents, looking for improvised explosive devices and con-

ducting humanitarian missions in Kharma, a town on Fallujah's outskirts, and in Habbaniyah, a large town lying between Fallujah and Ramadi.

Both cities are still hotbeds of insurgent activity.

### Life on the road

After two weeks of working alongside Iraqi soldiers in Al Qaim, a city near the Iraqi-Syrian border, the Marines were sent to Kharma, where they kept a heavily-trafficked section of road between Fallujah and Baghdad clear of insurgent activity. They also assisted ground Marines — infantrymen — with operations in Fallujah's neighboring town of Habbaniyah.

After their operations in the Sunni Triangle were completed, they went to Haditha to help provide security for a raid which resulted in the capture of a high ranking terrorist in the insurgency.

"I honestly think we're making Iraq a better place," said Wagner. "We're getting rid of insurgents a few at a time but it's a long and hard road, and there will always be bad guys. But we are making it harder for them to operate."

D Company roamed the cities and countryside in Light armored vehicles — armored troop carriers which Marines say are ideal for any terrain. Sturdy and safe, the vehicles also pack a punch in combat — each has three mounted machine guns. Plus, the vehicles are capable of traveling 70-plus miles per hour and traverse nearly any

type of terrain.

For weeks at a time, the company lived out of their vehicles, sleeping inside or next to them, seldom returning to a base for a hot meal or shower, according to Cpl. Joseph Sherwood, a team leader in the company.

"We never had a place to come home to since we were always on the move, so the vehicles were our homes," said Sherwood, a native Orlando, Fla.

"We were 'nomadic warriors,'" said Cpl. Mike J. Murray, an optics technician with the company. "We went all over the place, and we had food, water, fuel and ammo, so we were good."

### Under fire, body armor pays dividends

Though the company did not suffer any deaths during its time near Fallujah, three Marines were injured during a rocket attack in Kharma.

On three different occasions, three other Marines would have been injured from sniper fire, but all walked away with slight bruising from the impact of 7.62 mm rounds into their protective body armor. All three attributed their body armor to saving their lives.

The Marines say the threat of sniper fire and IED attacks was constant.

While being the lead man on a patrol through Habbaniyah looking for IEDs, 21-year-old Pfc. Jason Hanson, from Forks, Wash., was knocked off his feet after he was shot

in the chest by an insurgent during a small skirmish.

"I saw [Hanson] on the ground, ran up to him and rolled him over," said Seaman Chad T. Kenyon, one of the company's Navy corpsmen and a 20-year-old from Tucson, Ariz. "I saw that the round had gone through the front of his flak, so I opened up his flak and saw no bleeding. Then he looked up at me and said, 'I'm fine, Doc.'"

The body armor, while heavy and cumbersome, did its job — save the life of its wearer.

"I'm happy to carry the extra weight," said Hanson, grinning slightly.

Hanson's brush with death was not uncommon for the hardened warriors of D Company — Sgt. Joshua S. Adams, a 21-year-old vehicle commander from Bowling Green, Mo., was hit while his platoon cordoned off an area with an IED in it.

"We were blocking off a road and one car pulled up from a side street, and the guy in the back of vehicle started moving around to face us, and as I was telling Sgt. Adams,

he got hit," said Lance Cpl. Kyle V. Lyons, 25, the gunner on Adam's vehicle from Houston. "He dropped down and then said he was fine."

"My gunner took over while I assessed my wounds and pulled some shrapnel out of my arm, then we chased down the car," said Adams. "The round went into my SAPI but when it hit, the round shattered and some of it went into my wrist."

"SAPIs" are the thick, ballistic plates placed inside U.S. troops' body armor for protection from shrapnel and small-arms fire.

The vehicle was chased down and the two men were eventually detained. As for

the rounds which struck Adams, they could have proven fatal if he had not worn his body armor, according to Petty Officer 3rd Class Jose Mata Jr., 26, the company's senior corpsman from Hialeah, Fla.

"The round would have hit him in the liver, causing massive internal damage — it could have been bad," said Mata Jr. "The SAPI plates did their job."

### The long drive home

With less than three months left in Iraq before they return to their home station in southern California, the company will continue to operate

See 3RD LAR, A5





## MAGTFTC, A1

Marine Corps Training Center.

In 1957, it was re-designated as Marine Corps Base, Twentynine Palms, Calif., because it had reached base status. It was re-designated in October 1978 as Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Training Center after the expeditionary airfield was completed.

In February 1979, the base was again re-designated Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, which is still currently active. From 1990 to 2004, MCAGCC participated in support of numerous operations and deployments.

In 2000, it was re-designated as Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. It was approved last year on Nov. 28, by Gen. M.W. Hagee, commandant of the Marine Corps.

The addition of MAGTFTC was not just a change in name but an additional mission for MCAGCC. The additional mission was to provide support and training for all deploying units.

"The units that TTECG trains that are going to war are the best trained units the Marine Corps has ever sent out there," said Stalder. "It gets better and better everyday because of the training here."

## 3RD LAR, A3

within its own battle space in western Al Anbar province — a large expanse of desert dotted with small towns, and hundreds of miles away from Fallujah.

"It's good to know that we are on the tail end of a very eventful deployment," said Sherwood, now a two-

time veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He deployed with another Twentynine Palms-based unit, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, during the initial push to Baghdad in 2003.

While the Marines are glad to be back patrolling desert towns and villages here, some say they miss the excitement and day-to-day

action they experienced in the Fallujah region — IEDs, insurgents and all.

Daily patrols and combat operations through Habbiniyah was an "infantryman's dream," said Wagner, who added he'd rather be in the thick of the action in Al Anbar's more urban areas than in what he calls a "quiet

desert with a few towns."

"We were in a lot more active areas than what we have out here," said Wagner, a native of Fruitland, Idaho. "This is mainly a quiet desert with a few towns while before we were inside the cities for weeks at a time."

The time spent "in the field" didn't bother the Marines — the hot meals and showers were missed, but worse things can always happen, said Murray.

"Being out there for weeks at a time wasn't bad because really strong camaraderie and brotherhood is built," said Murray. "And a few guys got really good at making coffee in the field."

### Wild, wild west

Now, the Marines are back to patrolling western Anbar's vast regions, where they're not encountering the same day-to-day violence they did in eastern Al Anbar province. Still, the insurgent activity is ever present in this region, just in a different form, the Marines say.

In the Fallujah region, insurgents would often attack

U.S. and Iraqi military forces directly. Here, they like to hide, said Sherwood.

"I am glad we are [in western Iraq] — the threat is ever present here, but the terrorists out here are much less confrontational," said Sherwood. "[The mission here] provides us with a bigger challenge — out here they are much more likely to avoid us, so we have to be ever more diligent in our operations of taking them down."

The battalion is responsible for one of the largest areas in Iraq, so having an extra company of mechanized infantry Marines actively operating the area puts more Marines in more places, making it more difficult for insurgents to operate.

"While our battalion has been doing a good job without us, we're here to close the gap," said Murray, 22, from Winchester, Va. "With so much wide open space, it's hard to monitor all the insurgent activity."

Murray, on his second deployment to Iraq with the battalion, spent the majority of this tour working alongside the infantrymen of Company

D, patrolling through the cities, versus his usual job of repairing and assessing optics on the company's light armored vehicles.

"During my last deployment I stayed on this base for the vast majority of the time — this time I have gotten to see firsthand the Iraqis experience democracy and the freedoms that many take for granted in the United States," said Murray.

After the company's return to their forward operating base here late last month, the company took a weeklong break from before hitting the streets on patrol again. Time was allocated to perform maintenance on vehicles and weapons, straighten out administrative and pay issues, and decompress before hitting Iraq's roads again.

"It's good to have a break, as opposed to being on the move all the time," said Wagner.

"We also have gotten a chance to watch the World Cup just about every night," added Murray. "So life is good."



Maj. Gen. Keith J. Stalder, Commanding General, Training and Education Command, speaks to Marines at the Colors Designation ceremony at Range 215, July 9.

LANCE CPL. KATLEYN A. KNAUER



CPL. GRAHAM A. PAULSGROVE

Cpl. Joseph E. Sherwood, a 29-year-old Marine team leader from Orlando, Fla., checks out a hole on the side of the road for any signs of improvised explosive devices in Kharma, Iraq.



# Wisconsin native keeps 3rd LAR Marines, Iraqi soldiers combat ready

CPL. GRAHAM A. PAULSGROVE  
1ST MARINE DIVISION

CAMP KOREAN VIL-LAGE, Iraq -- The man responsible for roughly 1,000 Marines' ammo isn't a Marine sitting behind a desk, wielding his power and influence from his air conditioned office — it's a 21-year-old Marine running around in the dry heat of western Iraq.

Meet Cpl. David M. Jeske — a gruff Marine from Auburndale, Wis., and the senior ammunition technician for 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion — the U.S. Marine unit assigned to this region of Iraq's western Al Anbar province.

The battalion is charged with maintaining security and stability in their area of operations — a region in Al Anbar province of mostly desert littered with small towns, stretching from the Jordanian border about 120 miles east towards the Euphrates River.

Without Jeske, the battalion's ammunition chief, the Marines and their partnered Iraqi forces operating in the area would not have the ammunition they need to combat insurgents and provide security to the region.

It's Jeske's job, which is normally filled by two Marines of higher rank, to maintain and issue ammunition to coalition and Iraqi military forces operating throughout the battalion's

area of operations.

The ammo chief is responsible for keeping track of all munitions issued to U.S. troops — ranging from bullets of various calibers to rockets, according to Staff Sgt. Jason S. Cinkosky, the battalion's embark chief and one of Jeske's superiors.

"Filling a billet above his pay grade and [with] one man less, proves his invaluable capabilities to completing the mission, from giving one Marine two to three rounds to resupplying a whole platoon. He never fails," said Cinkosky, of Colorado Springs, Colo.

To complete the missions, military forces operating in the battalion's area must have logistical support, or as the Marines call it, the "three 'Bs,' — beans, bullets and band aids."

Jeske provides the bullets. "[His job is] vital to our mission here in Iraq — without bullets, we're useless and can't do our job," said Staff Sgt. Corey A. Price, the battalion's logistics chief and another of Jeske's superiors. "He usually works at least 12 hours every day of the week and it's not unusual for him to work 20 hours."

In addition to his ammo-related duties, Jeske also provides logistical support for other Coalition convoys that roll in and out of the camp. He coordinates and tracks the munitions to ensure they get to the right people at the right base.



Cpl. David M. Jeske, a 21-year-old Marine from Auburndale, Wis., is responsible for keeping roughly 1,000 Marines, as well as Iraqi soldiers, well supplied with ammunition.

"Convoys come in at all times of the day, and I help with the loading and off-loading of the equipment and supplies," said Jeske. "I stay pretty busy."

Despite his time-consuming job, the 6-foot-3-inch Marine makes time to go to the gym a few times a week and is one of the battalion's Catholic lay readers.

"I spend half the time outside and the other half in an office," said Jeske, the second youngest of five siblings. "And I know [my job] plays a big role in the Marines' training and operations."

From August 2004 to March 2005, Jeske deployed to Iraq for his first time with the battalion, where he was meritoriously promoted to lance corporal and awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for his hard work supplying ammo to units operating in the area. During major combat operations in Fallujah in November 2004, Jeske ensured the battalion had the ammo needed to operate during four-plus weeks of combat.

"If he worked half as hard [the last deployment] as he

does this time around, he definitely deserves that award," said Cinkosky, 27. "Despite his obsession with NASCAR and Jeff Gordon, he is great to have around."

Despite the occasional ribbing from his "higher-ups," Jeske's hard work is noticed. "We give him a hard time every now and then, but he's a good guy and the epitome of a hard worker. He does everything and asks for nothing in return," said Price, a 29-year-old from Moorehead, Minn. "I'd take him over anyone else out here."

Only two-and-a-half years into his stint in the Marine Corps, Jeske is still undecided on his future in the military, but he is keeping his options open.

"I like my job, and the Marine Corps has a lot of good options, but I haven't made my mind up on what to do next," he said.

Jeske, who graduated Auburndale High School in 2003, says he plans on spending time with his friends, family, and girlfriend of two years when he returns to the states, and he will invest the money he saved during his tour.



# 1/7 Marines thwart insurgents' attempt to destroy new Iraqi school

CPL. ANTONIO ROSAS  
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 7

KARABILAH, Iraq -- Thanks to the work of Marines and Iraqi Security Forces, 800 elementary-aged girls will now have a school to attend this fall.

Marines from 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, unveiled a brand-new grade school in this city of about 30,000 on the Iraq-Syria border in western Al Anbar province July 7.

About one week before its opening, insurgents planted an improvised explosive device inside the school which would have leveled a good portion of the building, destroying nearly three months of work by Marines and locals, said Gunnery Sgt. Joseph S. Mallicoat, team leader for the civil affairs team here.

"The bomb had the potential of taking down both wings of the building and the school would have been unable to open by September," said Capt. Rick Bernier, commanding officer of Company C — the Marines responsible for providing security alongside Iraqis in this city.

The Marines discovered the bomb and immediately secured the building leaving Iraqi Security Forces to provide 24-hour security to prevent further attacks.

Local tribal leaders and sheikhs attended the school's grand opening and expressed thanks to the Marines of 3rd Civil Affairs Group who spearheaded the reconstruc-

tion project and obtained the necessary manpower to complete the building.

Civil Affairs teams oversee funding for a variety of reconstruction projects in the region which bolster Iraqis' quality of life while improving the economy, said Lt. Col. Larry L. White, the civil military operations center director for the Al Qa'im region.

The team spent nearly two years finding a contractor to complete the project and locals had lost hope of seeing their school constructed since it was destroyed in 2003 during heavy fighting between Marines and insurgents, according to Mallicoat, 33, from Vancouver, Wash.

"I want to thank the Coalition Forces on behalf of all of the people of Karabilah for finishing the school very fast and for supporting the construction of a fine place," said Mohammed Ahmed Selah, mayor of Karabilah, where the school is located.

The mayor and the Marines agree that the school's neighborhood is relatively safe although there is still the threat of IED's — the insurgents preferred method of attack, according to Bernier, a Fallbrook, Calif., native.

"The bomb was a last ditch effort by insurgents to destroy the progress we've made in this area," said Bernier.

Since arriving here four months ago, the Marines have seen a decrease in enemy activity after conducting daily security patrols in 110 degree-plus temperatures alongside Iraqi soldiers. The Marines have also introduced the city

to their new police force and have begun conducting security operations alongside policemen.

The Marines say local Iraqi Security Forces have made significant progress in the past few months by providing security for their people and conducting several independent operations to hunt down insurgents. Just three months ago, Iraqi soldiers partnered with the Marines here were learning the basics of security maneuvers and weapons handling.

Today, the Marines conduct security foot patrols with the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police on a daily basis. Now, the Marines say they are seeing less insurgent activity since they arrived four months ago, thanks to the combined efforts and increase of presence of Iraqi Security Forces.

"We are capturing more of the bad guys with a higher level of expertise in IED-making and that leaves a lot of insurgents with minimal experience in making the bombs," said Bernier. "One guy blew himself up last week trying to plant an IED."

Tribal sheikhs expressed pride in the region's new police forces during a visit by Al Anbar province's governor to Husaybah last week. The governor, Maamoon Sami Rasheed al-Awani, echoed their sentiments.

"The security in this region has changed for the better," said Awani in Arabic during the July 3 meeting. "Without the work the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police are doing here,

we would not be able to move forward with construction projects."

The city of Karabilah opened their first police station last month after a three-year hiatus of policemen.

The Marines feel the area will remain safe from insurgents as more Iraqis are coming forward to join local police forces.

Of the 400 Iraqi males who showed up during a police recruiting drive last week in Al Qa'im, more than 100 were accepted for police boot camp — the largest turnout yet in the area.

The Marines' priority in

this region is helping local police become more involved with their communities, thus bolstering locals' confidence in their own police force, said Bernier.

The sooner the Iraqi people can count on their police to address crime in their city, the sooner Coalition Forces can begin going home, according to officials with the Police Transition Team here, a group of service members responsible for mentoring and advising the Iraqi Police to become an independent organization.

"The policemen here do their job much the same

way police officers back in the states do their job," said Arthur L. Dehlinger, a retired American police officer with the Police Transition Team. "The people here are going to trust their own police force over the Americans naturally."

The transition team's goal is to have fully functioning police departments throughout the country in order for Iraqi Security Forces to take over security operations such as in places like the Diyala province, Iraq. Iraqi Security Forces there have already begun working independently.

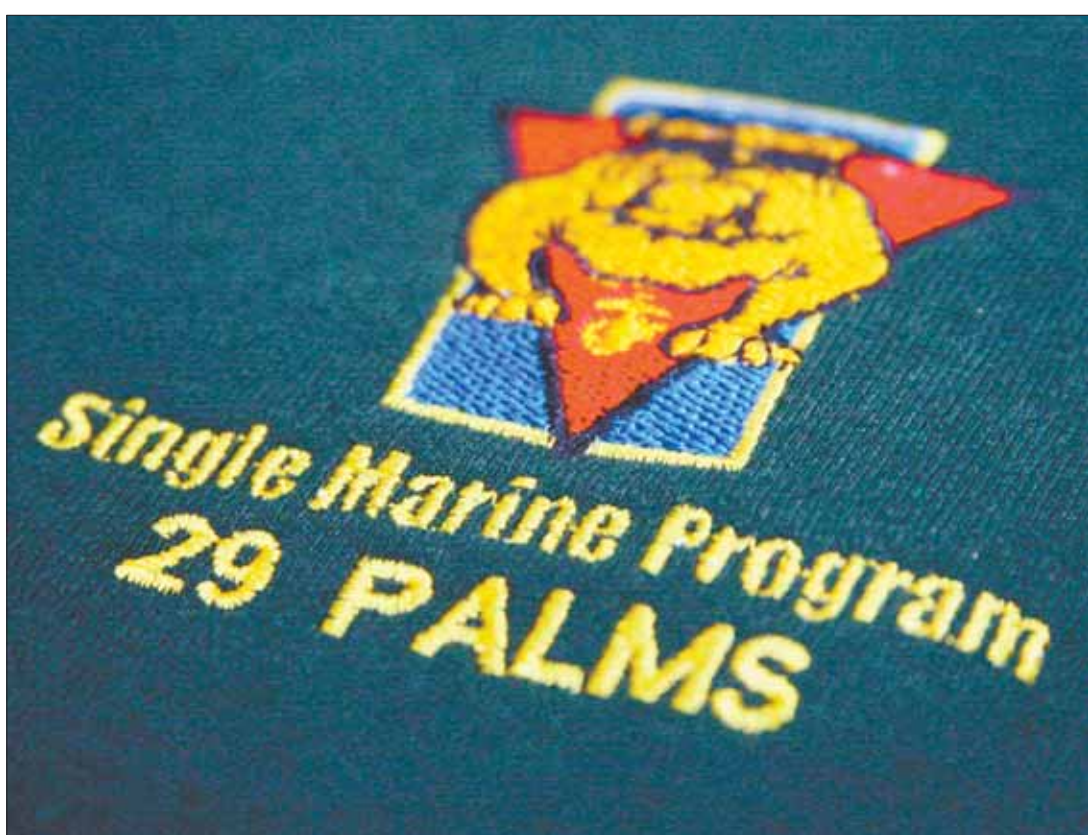


CPL. ANTONIO ROSAS

Marines from 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, stand post during the grand opening of a brand-new grade school in Karabilah, a city of about 30,000 on the Iraq-Syria border in western Al Anbar province, Iraq.



# Single Marine Program a hit on base



LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER

The Single Marine Program is available to all single, active duty personnel assigned to the base. The program deals with community involvement, life skills, health and wellness, recreation and career progression.

**LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER**  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The weekends here and the choice of what to do seems limited. You could sit at the barracks, go out and spend lots of money or you could participate in the Single Marine Program taking trips and helping with community service events.

"The Single Marine Program is available to any active duty personnel assigned to this base," said Heather Fiske, SMP Coordinator. "To include any Soldiers and Airmen assigned here."

The Single Marine Program is available Corps-wide. Every Marine Corps base has the program, said Fiske.

The five main areas the program deals with are community involvement, life skills, health and wellness, recreation and career progression.

"The program is a chance for the service members stationed here to get out and enjoy themselves," said Fiske. "My goal is

to get our Marines off base and having a good time with recreation or out helping the community while having a good time."

We try to have some kind of trip planned for every Saturday, said Fiske.

The program also offers a pool tournament at The Zone every second and fourth Friday of the month and a free pizza and bowling night on the first Wednesday of each month. They also offer trips such as the upcoming Pirates Dinner Adventure July 22.

"It's a good program," said Lance Cpl. Patrick Faulkner, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines. "The trips they take are a good way for Marines just getting here to make friends."

"If Marines want to make suggestions for trips they are welcome to come to council meetings or contact me," said Fiske.

"The program is a good way to stay out of trouble and get off base for cheap," said Pvt. Ash Miles, Marine Corps

Communication-Electronics School student. "A pool tournament every Tuesday gives me something to do."

Marines enjoy the program and those who get involved often stay involved with the program for the duration of their tour here.

"It's something to look forward to after a long days work," said Lance Cpl. Trevor Owenby, MCCES student. "It's a great way to have fun."

Along with the recreational part of the program, SMP helps out with Desert Mail Call a program that sends letters to service members from our base that are deployed, said Fiske.

The Single Marine Program is in place to give service members a chance to get out, have fun and save money. It is here to benefit service members and improve their quality of life.

Contact SMP at 830-4SMP or stop by The Zone for more information.

# MWSS-374 corporal's course instills discipline, confidence

**SGT. ENRIQUE S. DIAZ**  
1ST MARINE LOGISTICS GROUP

CAMP TAQADDUM, Iraq -- Young Marine leaders received a boost of confidence here while learning some tools of the trade to help them guide their subordinates.

The Marine Wing Support Squadron 374-hosted corporal's course taught 21 junior non-commissioned officers a variety of subjects to lay the foundation to take on greater responsibility in the future.

"Somebody young and strong will come along and take our place when we are gone," said Master Sgt. Michael W. Joiner, course director. "I'm trying to give them everything in my toolbox so they can pick up where I leave off."

Military academics, physical fitness, close-order drill and ceremonial sword handling were all part of the curriculum that built camaraderie and boosted self confidence whenever individuals were under the spotlight during the 12-day course, said Joiner.

"There are massive amounts of drill time because they get the most confidence when they have to perform in front of their peers,"

said Joiner, a 36-year-old native of Temple, Ga.

Self confidence is necessary for Marines because they have to lead and correct their own which, sometimes, is not an easy thing to do, said Sgt. John E. Witt, a class advisor for the course and 21-year-old from Hemet, Calif.

The corporals not only learned together, but did practically everything as a team while they attended the class.

"They're living together during the 12 days they are here. They sleep in a squad bay together, they eat together, and go to class together," said Sgt. Valdemar Cambunga, a class advisor.

"They're taught to be a team ... they build a strong bond as NCOs and that's the way it should be," said Cambunga, a 26-year-old native of Salinas, Calif.

Some of the Marines were profoundly influenced by the course, they said.

"When I came to this course I was teetering on the line whether I should get out [of the Marine Corps] or not," said Cpl. Trevor J. Tucker, 21, from Twin Falls, Idaho. "By the third training day I decided that what I am is a

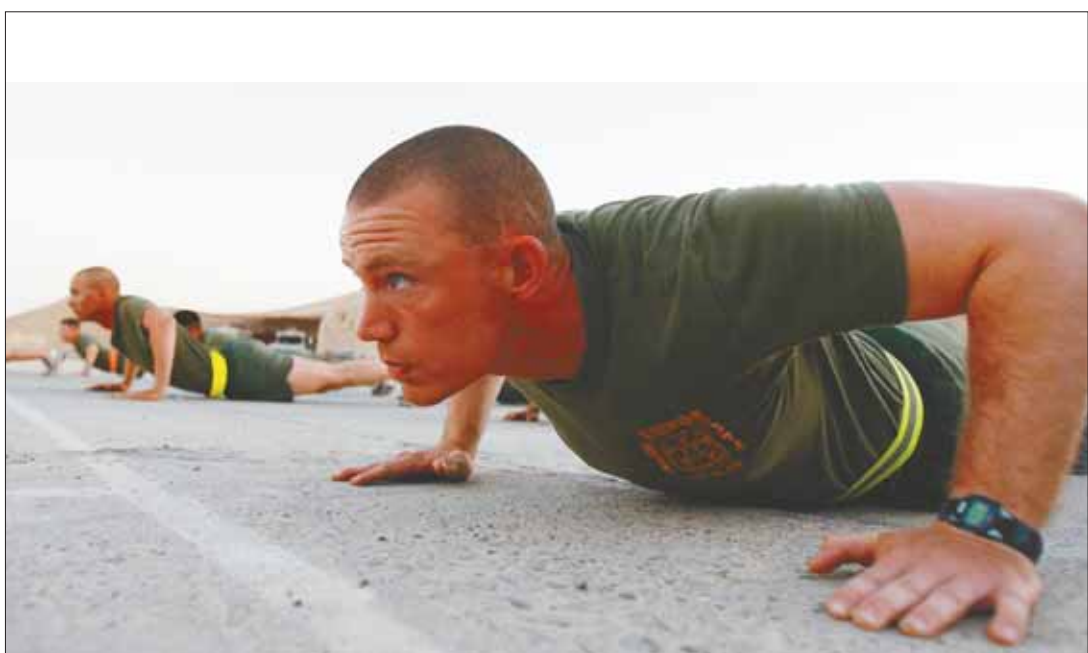
Marine and I'm not going to be anything else."

Tucker was the recipient of the Gung Ho Award; he was voted as the Marine that most exemplified teamwork and motivation by his fellow classmates, which he said "meant more than if the instructors had chosen me."

Although the class removed the corporals from their units in the midst of a high operational tempo, many senior leaders still requested school

seats for their Marines because they understood the importance and payoff of having their newest leaders ready for future missions, said Joiner.

The corporals course is the first step in the leadership training many of these Marines will receive if they make a career in the Corps. But even if they get out to venture in their own direction, they will have the lessons they have learned here to help them along the way.



SGT. ENRIQUE S. DIAZ

Cpl. James W. Williams, a 22-year-old Abilene, Texas, native, performs Marine Corps push ups alongside his fellow junior noncommissioned officers.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 ID # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pick up at \_\_\_\_\_  
 Destination \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total fee \_\_\_\_\_  
 Driver \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date/Time \_\_\_\_\_  
 Customer \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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**Thank you for participating.**



# Saving today for tomorrow

CPL. EVAN M. EAGAN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines and Sailors who have deployed know how fast their money can add up while overseas. Earning extra pay on deployment is a perk many enjoy, however, what to do with that money after returning home is a problem for those who are less experienced with handling money.

Many Marines and Sailors are returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan with more money than they've ever had at one time. Due to lack of knowledge and poor fiscal discipline, bad investments are made.

"Most service members avoid doing the one thing that can make a positive impact on not only their current, but their future financial success: budgeting," said Jany Wasdin, the Combat Center Personal Financial Management Counselor. "When I say the budget word, most of them look at me like I have grown a horn out of my head."

Ray Caldwell from the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society says entitlements service members earn while deployed can give them the illusion that they can afford a more expensive lifestyle.

"You have to stay within your means," he said. "Don't count on living on entitlements. Don't create debt on a surplus. Marines who know they are going to have a surplus of money need to have a plan in place before they deploy," said Caldwell. "The military has some excellent programs to help them."

One program offered is the Financial Management Program, which implements and monitors comprehensive personal financial management education, training and counseling programs, said Wasdin.

"These programs emphasize personal financial responsibility and accountability through the basic principles and practices of sound money management, specialized counseling, consumer education and information and referral. This program is a

starting point for service members and their families to acquire financial management skills and consumer knowledge."

Wasdin recommends to any returning Marine or Sailor that has accrued a substantial savings, to put the money to work for them.

"One of the positive steps that every Marine and Sailor should be currently doing is participating in the Thrift Savings Plan," she said. "It is an excellent opportunity for them to get started in the investment world."

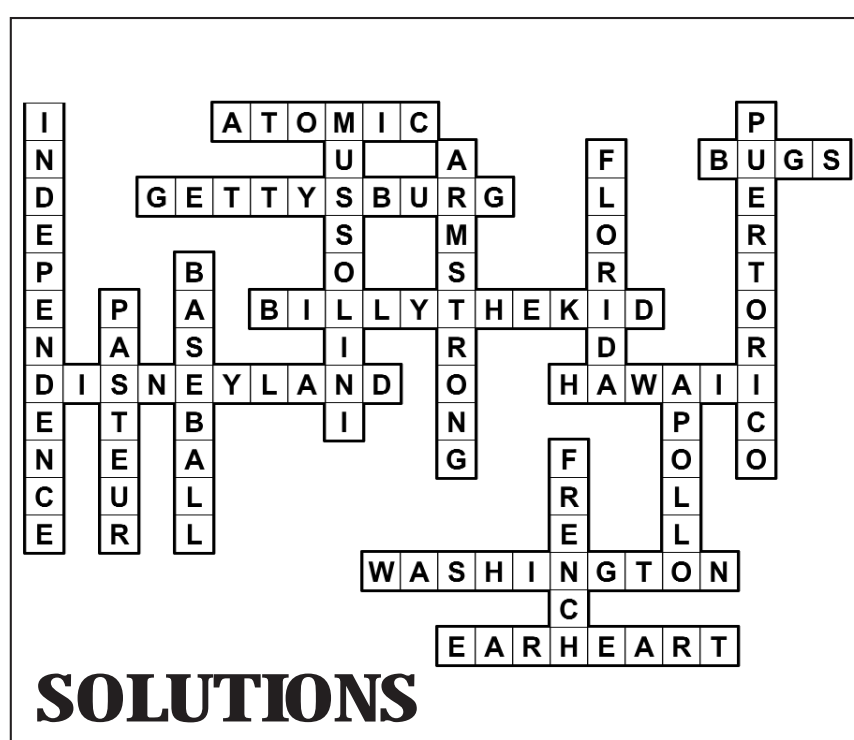
The Thrift Savings Plan is a retirement benefit offered to service members and is similar to a 401(k) offered by many private sector employees. The purpose of the TSP is to offer the service member the opportunity to participate in a long-term savings and investment plan.

Advantages of saving through TSP include: before-tax contributions and tax-deferred investment earnings; automatic payroll withdrawal; choice of investment options, including lifecycle funds and a variety of withdrawal options.

"Saving today, for tomorrow, is not only smart, but it is a necessity," said Wasdin. "Right now, if a person were to retire they are looking at Social Security to cover approximately 23 percent of their basic living expenses — rent, food, and utilities. If they have spent 20 years in the military they will have the military pension that will cover approximately another 20 percent. This leaves approximately 57 percent of your basic living expenses uncovered. Young people need to understand that their spending habits now directly impact their retirement. Instant gratification vice long-term satisfaction seems to be the trend among young service members today."

Before you let your money burn a hole in your pocket, learn how to set yourself up for success later on.

For more information on financial management contact Jany Wasdin at 830-7342.





# Al Anbar Governor visits regional sheikhs, promises new projects



CPL. ANTONIO ROSAS

Governor Maamoon Sami Rasheed al-Awani met with local tribal sheikhs and city government leaders at a U.S. military outpost in Husaybah, Iraq, July 3.

## CPL. ANTONIO ROSAS REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 7

HUSAYBAH, Iraq -- Restoration of an electric power grid and construction of a hospital for residents of this city of about 50,000 are top priorities for the government of Iraq's Al Anbar province, the province's governor recently stated.

Governor Maamoon Sami Rasheed al-Awani met with local tribal sheikhs and city government leaders at an outpost in the city, where Marines from the California-based 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, provide security and train Iraqi Security Forces in this.

Awani, a former civil engineer who now governs arguably the most dangerous

of Iraq's 18 provinces, flew in by helicopter and was provided top security by Iraqi Security Forces and Marines during his visit. Awani has been the target of about 30 assassination attempts since he became governor June 1, 2005.

"The security in this region has changed for the better," said Awani through an interpreter. "Without the work the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police are doing here, we would not be able to move forward with construction projects."

The governor's visit to this region near the Iraqi-Syrian border came just days after more than 300 local Iraqis lined up at one of the Marines' outposts in hopes of becoming policemen in one of Iraq's newest police districts in the

city of Karabilah.

The enlistment drive marked the largest turnout of police recruits in recent months. A total of 108 Iraqis were accepted for enlistment.

Lt. Col. Nicholas F. Marano, the Marines' battalion commander here, escorted the governor to a regular monthly meeting with tribal sheikhs.

"The visit helped increase the credibility of the provincial government by demonstrating to the people here that the governor is concerned about the problems and issues in the Al Qa'im region," said Marano. "It also gave the leaders of this region an opportunity to present those issues and problems to the governor."

Tribal sheikhs expressed gratitude over the increased security of Iraqi police officers who began conducting security patrols alongside Marines and Iraqi Army soldiers last month. The sheikhs were mainly concerned with restoration to damaged structures left behind from the heavy fighting between Marines and insurgents during the past several years.

Two major operations by the Marines against insurgents last year left numerous houses in a pile of rubble. Residents have slowly begun the cleanup process.

Awani, who maintains his government offices in Rama-

di — a city about 70 miles west of Baghdad — is in charge of the largest province in Iraq, a region that extends from just west of Baghdad to the northwestern border of the country near Syria.

During the meeting, sheikhs expressed concerns of an apparent lack of fuel for locals' use in their homes.

The mayor of Husaybah, a city of 50,000 along the border, said many families in his city are still without liquid propane — a necessity for cooking and heating.

Awani promised the sheikhs that a solution was probable in the next several weeks. He said he needs government officials to conduct a study to find out the specific fuel capacity for the area to accommodate a fueling station and a liquid propane station.

Infiltration of insurgents into Iraqi Security Forces is also a concern of the twenty-plus tribal sheikhs who attended the meeting.

Last month, a policeman in Husaybah detonated a bomb-laden vest, killing four other policemen and wounding five others.

Awani acknowledged that insurgents are finding new ways to slow progress of Iraqi Security Forces, but also recognized the hard work the Iraqi Army and Police have completed thus far.

"I offer my condolences to innocents who died here but I admire the brave people who join the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police because those people left behind their fears and other issues to join these organizations," said Awani.

Although the sheikhs feel the security situation in the area is stable, several of them expressed concern over a lack of money available for Al Anbar province.

"The governor has only made promises about fixing things but we need to see for ourselves," said the mayor of Karabilah, a city of about 30,000.

Other sheikhs sympathized with the mayor of Karabilah, echoing his sentiments by stating they need to see the provincial government come through with funding for a renovated hospital before believing the governor's promises.

Nonetheless, the sheikhs expressed pride that their families could now be safe under the improved security and that their cities were ready to move forward with reconstruction efforts.

"The governor left Al Qa'im with a firm understanding that the security situation here is good, thanks to a partnership between Marines, the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi Police," said Marano.



# Adobe Flats to undergo renovations

**SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III**  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Residents of Adobe Flats experienced inconveniences when Hunt Construction Company moved in to renovate several housing units at the beginning of Rainbow Canyon. But the waiting may be worth it as Lincoln Military Housing plans to start moving people into their newly renovated homes in August.

Although they do not have a set date to begin the moves, they expect to begin early-to mid-August, according to Agatha Formella, assistant district manager at Lincoln Military Housing.

"The first 60 families have already been notified they will move in August," said Formella. "We will give them a more specific day once we know, which will be soon."

They want to ensure any problems are taken care of and

the transition goes as smoothly as possible, she said.

They plan to move two families a day into the newly renovated housing units and give the old units to the construction company. The construction company will then renovate those units in 42 days so another family can move into them.

Each unit will have new air ducts for smoother air conditioning, new appliances including a fridge and freezer unit with ice dispensers and a microwave oven and new stove. It will also have new tile flooring and carpeting, new marble countertops and automatic garage doors.

They are also painting the exterior of the houses and landscaping to make Adobe Flats more appealing on the outside as well as the inside, said Formella.

The construction company closed the entrance to

Rainbow Canyon so the heavy machinery could maneuver more easily and finish the renovations faster, but they also provided a detour road around the back of Adobe Flats to lessen the inconvenience to residents.

"It can seem like a nuisance at times, but it's beneficial so the renovations will get done more quickly," she said.

The housing office has coordinated with units on the base so military spouses will be able to come home when the moving begins, said Formella. Those Marines and Sailors who are in the field should also be allowed to return to mainside and come home.

While a lot of families have mixed thoughts on the inconvenience of the construction and the move, they all seem happy to move into a newly renovated home.

"I think it's a good thing," said Cpl. Brian Tessier, Mike

Battery, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment. "It's about time they updated stuff."

The only complaint he has is moving only three months before he receives Permanent-Change-of-Station orders.

"I'm moving, setting up and moving again, but you have to do what you have to do," he said.

Kelly Colon, wife of Sgt. Steven Colon, Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, has a 3-year-old son who misses

the park near their home. It was taken when the construction company set up. But both of them anticipate being in a new home when Sgt. Colon returns from Iraq. Kelly said the worst part is still ahead.

"Having to move while he's deployed, that's the tough part," she said. "It sucks, but that's what we have to do. I wish they had done the moving before my husband left. It would have been nice having him around to help."

The housing office hopes to finish all the renovations and moves in 40 months. With a quick turnover schedule and support for the families, they may meet their goal for a smooth transition into better homes in a more attractive Adobe Flats.

"I think change is always a good thing, especially around here," said Formella. "The construction guys do a good job so it will be nice to come home to a better house."





# Severe weather kills every year

DAN STEBER

NAVAL SAFETY CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Hurricanes, as Katrina and others have shown, kill and injure many people, damage houses and equipment, and wreak havoc whenever they hit. Tornados also pack an explosive punch. But have you ever wondered how many people are killed or injured in severe lighting storms? Are you one to take showers, chat on the telephone, stand near windows, or stay on the golf course while lighting cracks in the area? Lightning storms alone kill about 80 people each year in the United States and injure an additional 400. Some of these deaths included Sailors and Marines, and the threat of dangerous weather is a big concern during the Critical Days of Summer.

Ken Testorff, editor of Sea & Shore magazine at the Naval Safety Center, related in a 2002 issue of Ashore magazine an incident with a Sailor who was fishing when a bolt of lightning flashed about 50 yards away. A witness said, "Then I saw a shipmate yelling, jumping and holding his leg." That story went on to describe the misadventure of a Sailor who waited too long to reel in his fishing line and head for cover in a thunderstorm.

The Sailor had been fishing from a pier when it started raining and noticed some lightning strikes nearby, but the fish were biting, so he continued, ignoring the building threat. The witness ran over to see if his shipmate was OK and to help him to his ship. A physical exam revealed no entry or exit burns, and an EKG check was within normal limits. However, an ambulance took the victim to a nearby hospital for observation and another EKG check. The

results again were normal, so doctors released him.

I'm a golfer and learned a long time ago that it's best to get back to the clubhouse before the weather gets close. I wasn't always so smart and tempted fate when I was a younger Sailor. A storm moved in over the Patuxent River, heading directly at the golf course. My playing partners didn't flinch, even with my constant reminders about the weather. We had carts and easily could have returned to the clubhouse. But the group huddled under, of all places, a group of trees. I fell to the ground, lifted my spikes off the ground, and "got as small" as I could get. The storm passed, but I learned a valuable lesson. I told my shipmates that I never would take that risk again...and I haven't.

But golf isn't the only area of concern. The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has charted the risk of being hit. Open fields (parks, playgrounds) accounted for 868 deaths (27 percent). People under trees accounted for 14 percent percent. Water-related mishaps were 8 percent, and the aforementioned golf courses were 5 percent.

The best way to avoid being stuck out in the weather is to be prepared. Watch the weather reports on TV or in the paper, check the sky, and plan your events so weather doesn't become a factor. If caught in a storm, find shelter, avoid tall, isolated trees or other tall objects, in an open field get as low as possible (get in the lowest point possible) and put your hands on your knees and head between them (don't lie flat on the ground), avoid taking showers or talking on the telephone, and stay away from windows. These are just a few simple tips.

## Facts & Resources

A number of very good web sites are available that include a wide variety of information. NOAA at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/brochures/ttl.pdf> has a very good guide on storms.

Their web site also offers a few other statistics on lightning:

- One lightning casualty occurred for every 86,000 flashes in the United States.
- One death occurred for every 345,000 flashes.
- One injury occurred for every 114,000 flashes.
- Average number of thunderstorms occurring worldwide at any given moment — 2,000.
- Average number of lightning strikes worldwide every second -- 100.
- Average number of lightning strikes worldwide per day -- 8.6 million.
- Average number of lightning strikes in the U.S. per year -- 20 million.
- Volts in a lightning flash - between 100 Million and 1 billion.
- Amps in a lightning flash - between 10,000 and 200,000.
- The average lightning flash would light a 100-watt light bulb for 3 months.

### Resources or other links:

- National Lightning safety institute "It can't happen to me" Library: [http://www.lightningsafety.com/nlsi\\_lls/incidents.html](http://www.lightningsafety.com/nlsi_lls/incidents.html)
- FEMA: <http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/thunderstorms.shtm>



COURTESY PHOTO



## SPORT SHORTS

## FREE SUMMER MOVIES

The Community Center will be hosting their free summer movies matinees every Friday through August 18. Admission and popcorn are free and all movies begin at noon. Food and covered drinks are allowed. ALL MOVIES ARE G or PG RATED. The list of movies is as follows: July 14: The Polar Express July 14: Daddy Day Care July 21: Shrek 2 July 28: Cheaper by the Dozen Aug. 4: Shark Tale Aug. 11: Chronicles of Narnia Aug. 18: The Incredibles

## POKER TOURNAMENT

Hashmarks SNCO Club will hold a Texas Hold 'Em Poker Tournament on Saturday. There is a \$25 buy-in to play. Gift certificates and prizes will be given to the top eight players. The tournament is open to all NCO's, SNCO's and Officers. Reservations are requested and space is limited. Please call 830-6610 or 830-5080 after 4 p.m. to reserve your spot.

## MOMMY AND BABY AEROBICS

MCCS Aerobics has added a new Mommy and Baby Aerobics Class every Monday and Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. in the Community Center. Come and enjoy fitness for you and fun for your baby. For more information please call 830-4131.

## PILATES CLASS

MCCS Aerobics has added a Pilates Class every Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. and every Thursday at 9 a.m. in the Community Center. Build core strength and flexibility with this exciting pilates class. For more information please call 830-4131.

## LEISURE

## ARMED FORCES APPRECIATION DAY

The Inland Empire 66ers Baseball Club of San Bernardino, the Seattle Mariners minor league team, invites all military personnel and their families to military appreciation day, July 15, at 6:30p.m. at Arrowhead Credit Union Park located at 280 South East St., San Bernardino, Calif., 92401. Free for active, reserve and retired military members and \$4.00 for guests and families.

## MONGOLIAN BBQ

The Officers' Club will present a Mongolian BBQ today from 5 - 7 p.m. and a brunch on Sunday from 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Reservations are requested for both meals. For more information, or to make a reservation, please call 830-6610.

## FREE BOWLING

Sandy Hill Lanes Bowling Center is offering free lunch time bowling every Monday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Shoe rental is additional.

## Did You Know?

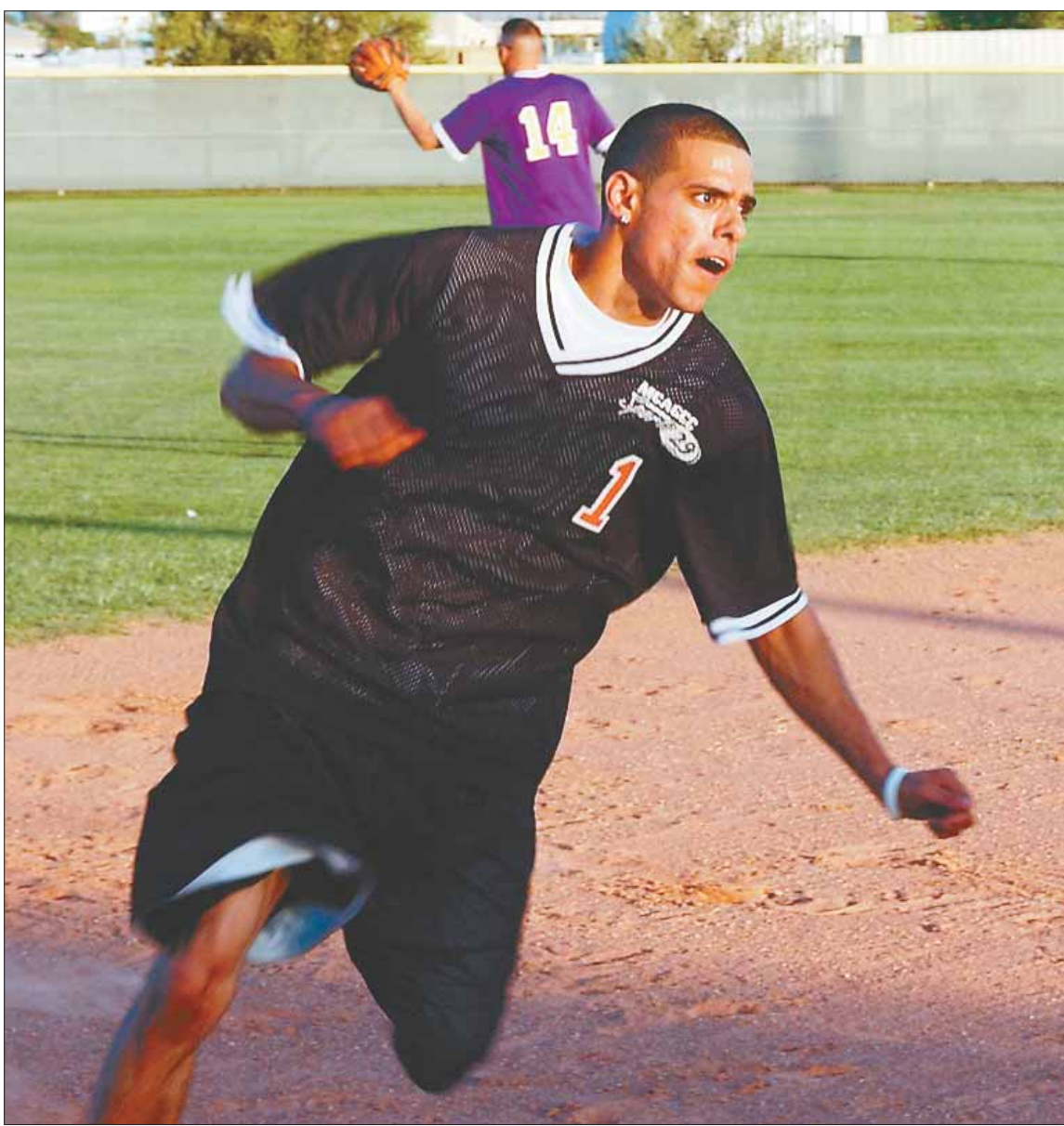
Reno, Nev.,

is farther

west than

Los Angeles.

# MCCES hands defeat to 3/11 in final regular season game



SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT  
Chuck Jones, Headquarters Battalion Team 2, rounds third base and dashes toward home plate in their last season softball game against Headquarters Battalion Team 1 July 6.



SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT  
Jason Daniel, Headquarters Battalion Team 2, swings at the ball in their softball game against Headquarters Battalion Team 1 July 6.



LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT  
A member of the red team pitches the ball at the first All-Star game hosted by the softball league.



LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT  
A member of the blue team takes a swing during the All-Star game Monday. The blue team took the win by two runs.

## SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School softball team defeated 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, 11-6 in their final game of the regular season in the Commanding General's Intramural Softball League July 6.

With multiple errors throughout the game, 3/11 had a rocky start allowing the first batter of the game to get a single on an infield error. But they stayed focused and only allowed MCCES to pick up one run in the first inning.

3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, loaded the bases in the bottom of the first with several walks and Bryan Sexstone, 3/11 coach, walked across home plate for one run before finishing the inning.

In the top of the second inning, Patrick Miller, MCCES coach, chanced a dash to second base on an error but came up short for their first out. They didn't have any further progress for the rest of the inning.

Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School bobbled a ball in the outfield giving up a triple to a 3/11 batter. Eric Razo, 3/11, cracked the ball deep into right field where it was caught, for a sacrifice fly that picked up one run. MCCES quickly finished the second inning with a double play on first and second base.

John Rails, MCCES, sent a ball into deep center field to pick up one run in the bottom of the second. Cesar Vela, MCCES pitcher, followed up to bring in another run.

Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School stepped up their

defense in the bottom of the third as second baseman Christopher Pazos, snatched the ball mid-air for one out, and Lester Alvarez, MCCES, stopped a hard grounder and threw to first base for the last out.

In the fourth inning, 3/11 retaliated with their own tough defense, not allowing MCCES to pick up any runs. Duane E. Smotherman picked up a ground ball and threw to first base for the first and third outs of the inning.

When 3/11 came to bat, they kept their drive as they picked up two runs to take the lead, 4-3.

As MCCES came to bat in the fifth inning, they crushed the 3/11 defense and brought in seven runs before 3/11 managed to stop them.

Calling for just a few points to catch up, 3/11 stormed the field, intent on picking up a few runs, but only managed to bring in one.

Down by 5 runs, 3/11 wanted the win but couldn't pull it off in the last two innings.

Both teams only picked up one run each for the rest of the game to finish with MCCES claiming victory, 11-6.

"We played the best team in the league," said Sexstone. "If it hadn't been for that one inning with all the errors, it would have been a different game."

As the Commanding General's Intramural Softball League regular season came to a close, both teams turned their attention to the playoffs which began July 11.

"We know it's going to be tough, but we'll pull through," said Vela. "We're a team."

## CG's Intramural Softball League hosts All-Star game

## LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The blue team defeated the red team 20-18 in the Commanding General's Intramural Softball League's All-Star game at Felix Field Monday.

This was the first All-Star game hosted by the softball league. Players for each All-Star team were selected from the various teams who played through out the season. The players were nominated by umpires and coaches and selected by a panel of officials. Before the game started, players competed in three skill competitions. The hitting competition had players hit against one of the All-Star teams and the player with the most hits won. Jeremy W. Lirette, red team, hit 4 out of 5 winning the competition. The throwing competition, which was based on accuracy, was won by John F. Parks, blue team. The base running competition was a timed event to see who could round the bases the fastest. It was won by Jonathan C. McDonald, red team.

"Being the first ever intramural All-Star game at Twentynine Palms, it was a real honor to be a part of it and the win was even better," said Parks. "There were a lot of competitive players out there and we expected it to be a good game. It was well planned and the Sports Office did a really good job in putting on the whole thing."

On winning the running competition, "I'm just glad I didn't pull something, I'm no spring chicken you know," said McDonald.

Hitting the only homeruns for the game was Rynne Brandt, blue team, who set the bar high hitting a grand slam in the top of the first and a two-run homerun in the second inning.

"The game was an experience, especially to represent my team," said Brandt. "It was great to play with all these high caliber people."

The game started off strong. In the first inning the blue team had seven runs and the red team zero.

In the second inning, the red team kicked it up a notch with eight runs going into the third, trailing by one run.

After the third inning, the red team could not catch up to the blue team who remained in the lead the remainder of the game. The blue team ended up winning by a two point margin.

"This was a fun experience," said Patrick Miller, blue team coach. "It was nice to have all the best players together on one field playing together."

"The All-Star game was an opportunity for talented players across the board to get together and just have a great team," said Thann Sak, blue team. "It's not about winning but just the opportunity to develop good friendships and play with people we normally wouldn't play with. It's a great opportunity for Marines to get together."



LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT  
Members of the red and blue team congratulate each other after the game.