

Serving the MCAGCC
Community at
Twentynine Palms, Calif.

VOL. 52 NO. 41
October 27, 2006



OUTDOOR ADVENTURES, A7

OBSERVATION POST



HALLOWEEN, B1

BULK RATE
U.S. Postage
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29 Palms, CA
Permit No. 8

THIS ISSUE

A5 - Fleet Weeekk Heroes

A8 - Official Huuggers

B3 -Regional Basketball
Championship

HOT TOPICS

BASE HOUSING TRICK-OR-TREAT HOURS

Trick-or-treat hours for Halloween are from 5 - 8 p.m.. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

HALLOWEEN CANDY CHECK

The Provost Marshal's Office has volunteered to conduct a courtesy candy check for all trick-or-treaters on Halloween night at the Community Center, building 1004, from 6 to 9 p.m. PMO will inspect damaged candy and also be running a metal detector to protect your child's safety.

SINGLE MARINE PROGRAM ADOPT-A- MARINE/SAILOR

Tom Henry, retired U.S. Army colonel, and World War II veteran from the Desert Veterans Memorial Association wants to sponsor up to 74 Marines and sailors for Thanksgiving. They will send a tour bus and the pick up time will be 9 a.m. at the Zone on Fifth Street. Dress casual and in accordance with Marine Corps and Navy regulations. The bus will drop its passengers off at American Legion Post 519 in Palm Desert where Col. Henry will meet them and match them up with Desert Cities families. Any Marines or sailors interested can call Doug Dougwill at 830-4SMP.

PHILIPS ROAD REPAVING

The Philips Road repaving project between the tank trail and Camp Wilson is scheduled until Jan. 31. Vehicle traffic to and from Camp Wilson will be diverted to a dirt bypass road that runs parallel to the existing roadway. The entire project will be done in three separate phases. Please be attentive to all traffic control signs.

CHANNEL 6 OFF AIR

The Commanders Channel Six will be off the air for an undetermined time due to relocation of equipment. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

COMING NEXT ISSUE

• Explosive Ordnance

Disposal

• Civilian Transition

• Combat Comics

THIS DAY IN MARINE CORPS HISTORY

October 27,
1962

2nd Marine Division
and 2nd Marine
Aircraft Wing
deployed during the
Cuban Missile Crisis.

MCAGCC's exclusive Range 400 provides overhead live-fire realism



Marines from 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment rush down Range 400 during a live-fire exercise Oct. 13.

LANCE CPL. REGINA N. ORTIZ

LANCE CPL. REGINA N. ORTIZ

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

With more than 930 square miles of desert, the Combat Center is home to some of the Marine Corps' most realistic pre-deployment training for troops headed to Iraq.

"It's the only range in the Marine Corps where overhead fire is authorized," he explained. "We are also granted a waiver to close within 250 meters of 81mm mortar fire. Normally, it is only 400 meters. Therefore, Range 400 gives Marines a realistic

most dynamic live-fire ranges in the Marine Corps, said Capt. Andy S. Watson, assistant infantry representative, maneuver section, Tactical Training Exercise Control Group.

training experience of closing close into fires. They can't get that anywhere else in the Marine Corps."

Marines and sailors from Company E, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, during their second week of Mojave Viper, went to Range 400 Oct.

13, to take on the multi-faceted training exercise.

For each fire team, there is one Coyote from TTECG on hand to

guide the troops through the rigorous

course to their objective and control responses to unpredictable combat situations that fell into their hands.

Under the trajectory of overhead machinegun fire, fire teams are required to move and fire, react to indirect fire, conduct area reconnaissance, process and disseminate intelligence, distribute ammunition, shift and cease of fire, practice hand and

See RANGE 400, A3



COURTESY PHOTO

Firefighter Dennis Vass examines fire wreckage for still smoldering hot spots

Fire erupts near MCX

SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center Fire Department and the Provost Marshal's Office responded to a fire Monday behind the Marine Corps Exchange.

Flames mounted only 10 to 11 feet high, but the plume of black smoke was clearly visible from a distance, said Josh Sanchez, MCX security.

The fire erupted in an outside storage area near the loading dock behind the exchange.

Two military policemen, Cpl. Francis K. Handley and Lance Cpl. Jeffrey A. Rodgers, noticed the smoke rising from building 1533 at 5:33 P.M. Within two minutes, military police arrived on the scene to secure the area and notify the fire department, according to the military police report.

Upon arriving at the scene, the fire department noticed the fire was contained in the storage area and did not spread beyond the surrounding fence, stated William J. Baumann, assistant fire chief.

The fire department had the fire under control by 5:40 P.M. and completely extinguished five minutes later.

When Walter E. Edwards, MCX security manager received the call about the fire, security was already in the process of evacuating the exchange. But the fire was quickly contained, and security called off the evacuation, said Edwards.

Leaving the pavement scorched, The fire torched an assortment of MCX uniforms, towel and soap dispensers, and dust mops and brooms. It also charred a bench and melted a light and a shopping cart, he said.

The cause of the fire was not determined, stated Baumann in his report.

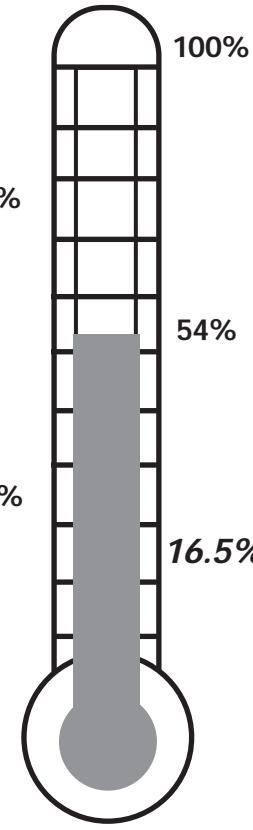


2006 Pioneer Days parade and carnival

The Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Band walks down Adobe Road Saturday during the 70th annual Pioneer Days parade. The MCAGCC Band was one of the more popular attractions of Pioneer Days, which also included a carnival, static displays from the Combat Center and live music.

See A4 for photo spread

Goal \$225,000



2006 Combined Federal Campaign week 7 results



Sempertoons

By Gunnery Sgt. Charles Wolf



Wolf

C.O.P. Corner

Community Oriented Policing

The proactive voice of crime prevention



Presented by the Provost Marshal's Office Crime Prevention Section

Molestation Prevention

What you can do to help?

- Listen to your children and pay attention if they don't want to be with someone or go somewhere with that person.
- Take the time to talk to your children. Teach them that open communication is okay, and to learn to be a good listener.
- Pay attention when someone is paying unusual attention to one or all of your children, for example, bringing them gifts for no reason.
- Teach your children that they can say no to any unwanted, uncomfortable, or confusing touch or actions by others. Explain to them that if this touching happens to tell someone immediately.
- Screen babysitters and caregivers. Most states have a registry that allows parents to check out individuals for prior offenses.
- Be involved in your children's activities. Being there with them enables you to see how other adults interact with your children.

Here are some basic safety rules for your children:

- Teach your child that if they are in a public place and get separated from the rest of the family, to go to a security office or checkout counter and tell the person that they have lost their family. Do not wander around!
- Do not get in the car of another person unless told to do so by their parents, grandparents or guardians.
- Tell them that if someone is following them on foot or in a car, to stay away from them. There is no reason for them to go near them.
- If someone is trying to take them away, teach them to yell, kick and scream that this person is not related to them.
- Teach them to never go anywhere by their self.

For more information on how to prevent molestation go to Web site <http://www.missingkids.com>.

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

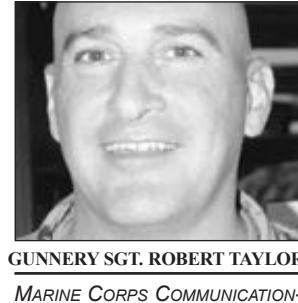
Marines, Sailors, and car drivers:
MCAGCC will reimburse ANY licensed
car company for transportation to
the Main Gate, Marine Corps Air Ground
Combat Center. Drivers, please
keep your military ID card.
Thank you for participating.

MCAGCC MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND ARRIVE ALIVE A Combat Center Car Company 367-7433 Top's Taxi 361-6748	Name _____ ID # _____ Plat. up at _____ Destination _____ Total fee _____ Driver _____ Date Time _____ Customer Signature _____
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Centerspeak

"If you could be a kid again, what would you dress up as for Halloween?"

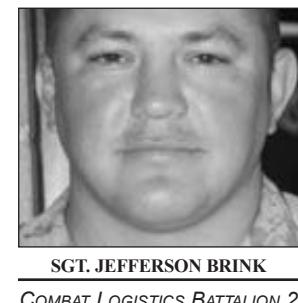
*Opinions expressed in Centerspeak
are not necessarily those of the OBSERVATION POST, the Marine Corps or Department of Defense.*



GUNNERY SGT. ROBERT TAYLOR

MARINE CORPS COMMUNICATION-ELECTRONICS SCHOOL

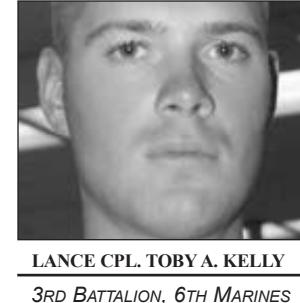
"A cowboy, because I always had fun playing cowboys and Indians as a kid."



SGT. JEFFERSON BRINK

COMBAT LOGISTICS BATTALION 2,

"Elvis, with the white suit, pork chops and sunglasses at night because he's a human immortal."



LANCE CPL. TOBY A. KELLY

3RD BATTALION, 6TH MARINES REGIMENT

"The Mask, because I love Jim Carrey."

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

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LANCE CPL. REGINA N. ORTIZ

Sgt. Alejandro Arauzarios watches over Marines during a live-fire exercise Oct. 13 at the Combat Center's Range 400.

RANGE 400, from A1

arm signals, among other obstacles throughout the exercise, said Watson.

In preparation for going to Range 400, Marines and sailors go through similar training evolutions on a smaller scale, without ammo, at Range 410A and Range 410. These two ranges are used to remediate, develop and refine platoon and squad battle drills before implementing them at Range 400, according to Field Manual 7-8 of the Range 400 Handbook, a field reference guide created to help units get the most out of this final stage of their pre-deployment training.

Part of combat training involves providing on-the-spot aid to injured troops. The companies training at Range 400 are assigned notional casualties, called "cherry pickers," to execute the company's casualty evacuation plan. The "cherry pickers" are given a card with a description of their injuries. Litter teams are then responsible for transport and care of the "cherry picker." There are Coyotes, who are corpsmen, to make sure necessary quick-response procedures are taken to save the victim.

"The entire process from the point of injury to reception at the forward BAS [Battalion Aid Station] is observed and assessed by TTECG," said Watson. "They are handed extra IFAKs [individual first aid kits] to test their knowledge on how to employ them."

Throughout the exercise, training is overseen by the Coyotes, who evaluate the effectiveness and leadership initiatives of the Marines and sailors. A written assessment is provided to the training company's commander to critique the company's maneuver through the range.

They are tested on their ability to quickly react, be decisive leaders, gather intelligence and provide aid to their brothers, while taking over a fortified position with proficient marksmanship and weapon skills, on one of the most realistic training grounds in the Marine Corps.

The training at Range 400 is another step toward an even more ready Marine Corps, preparing Marines and sailors for almost anything and everything in the two-hour evolution, with the Coyotes watching and ensuring the best of the best training to all who go through it.

Local community, MCAGCC celebrate 2006 Pioneer Days



KURT SCHAUFPNER PHOTO REPRINTED COURTESY OF THE DESERT TRAIL
A Combat Center Humvee rolls down Adobe Road during the 2006 Pioneer Days annual parade.



SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III
Rhianna Combs and her daughter, Sydonia, and Jessica Escazcegaargumedo and her son, Francisco, soar down the giant slide at Pioneer Days.



SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III
Stephanie Powers, 14, and Jaboia Powers, 15, scream their way around a carnival ride.



KURT SCHAUFPNER PHOTO REPRINTED COURTESY OF THE DESERT TRAIL
Commanding general Brig. Gen. Douglas M. Stone and his wife, Kathleen, ride in the back of a vehicle during the 2006 Pioneer Days annual parade.



SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Mario Villescas and his 4-year-old son Gabriel compete in a little family competition at the water gun booth.



KURT SCHAUFPNER PHOTO REPRINTED COURTESY OF THE DESERT TRAIL
A Combat Center color guard marches down Adobe Road during the 2006 Pioneer Days annual parade.

Marines become fleet week heroes

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

Marines are trained to react to a variety of situations. They are taught to adapt, overcome and push through things as a team. Even when a Marine is on liberty it doesn't take away the title which is embedded in their

During San Francisco's 2006 Fleet Week, 11 Marines lived up to the title. The

lived up to the title. The Marines, who were on liberty, Oct. 2, were walking by Pier 19 when they saw a woman in the water at the end of the pier.

Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, said the first thing that passed through his head was, "We need to get her out of the water as soon as possible. The longer we take, the weaker she gets."

So with quick actions and firm leadership, the 11 Marines devised a plan to pull the woman to safety.

"We had leaders take charge,

"and we worked as a team to get her out," said Lance Cpl. Richard Branch, MWSS-374, aircraft recovery specialist.

The Marines, six of whom are stationed here and five from Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, Ariz., knew that it would take all of them if they were going to be successful in pulling the lady to dry land.

"We formed sort of a human chain on a broken timber that was leading into the water," said Pfc. Nicholas Crymes, MWSS 374.

The Marines were later rewarded with a Certificate of Recognition from the San Francisco chief of police.

Marines involved to put personal safety aside to save this woman," said Staff Sgt. Joseph Hague, MWSS-371. "At any moment one of the Marines could have been pulled in and been in the same predicament as the woman."

Francisco's CBS-5 news channel, and received great compliments from the San Francisco chief of police. Chief Heather Fong personally rewarded the Marines on the news and shared her thoughts on their heroic actions.



Pictured are Warrant Officer Joseph Szewczyk, Lance Cpl. Richard Branch, Pfc. Nicholas Symes, Cpl. James Bridges Jr., Cpl. Rafael Saucedo, and Sgt. Jose Gomez who all assisted in the rescue of a woman who attempted to commit suicide during San Francisco's 2006 Fleet Week.

grateful for their service." The woman they rescued was transported by ambulance.

use in that situation, but they were able to successfully rescue the woman and hold on to her," said Fong during the was transported by ambulance for psychiatric emergency hold at San Francisco General Hospital. If it wasn't for the

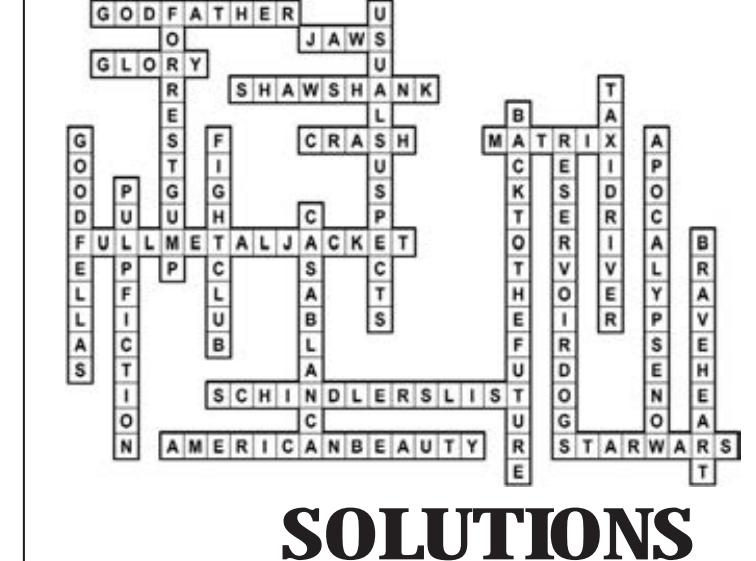
actions, the woman could have drowned in the water.

"None of us backed off," said Saucedo. "We were no

said Saucedo. "We were not worried about getting hurt at the moment. Our main priority was to rescue her."

Get ready to **'Fall Back'**

Time in the United States. Don't forget to turn your clock back one hour at 2 a.m., Sunday morning.



SOLUTIONS

2007 tax season right around the corner; are you exempt?

2007 State Tax Exemptions Filing. The States of Connecticut, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Oregon and West Virginia do not tax service members claiming legal residence in those states if they meet certain criteria specific to each state. If you meet all of the respective conditions for your state, please come to the Installation Personnel Administration Center, Customer Service Section and complete the required documentation for your state of residence. Marines claiming legal residence in the aforementioned states must complete the required forms NLT 30 December 2006 in order that appropriate MCTFS entries post prior to the state of the new tax year. Marines completing these forms not later than 30 December will be exempt from paying state tax for the entire year; however, Marines filing during the taxable year (2007) will be required to file a state income tax claim for that portion of the year (2007) that state tax was withheld. The withholding of state income tax will stop on the month after the month the form is filed (within 30 days). Retroactive adjustments cannot be made.

Conditions:

Connecticut. Do not rate a state tax exemption if they reside in single-type government barracks, quarters on a ship, or any structure that contains only bachelor-type quarters and not facilities ordinarily found in a dwelling, such as facilities for cooking and bathing. If a

Marine is a resident of Connecticut, they must file a resident return and pay state tax due unless they meet all the following conditions for the entire taxable year. CT residents rate a state tax exemption if:

(1) Marine did not maintain a permanent place of abode in Connecticut.

(2) Marine maintained a permanent place of abode outside Connecticut.

(3) Marine spent 30 days or less in Connecticut

(a) If the tax-exempt criteria is met, the following applies:

(b) Marine must complete a separate W-4 Form for federal tax and separate W-4 Form for state tax.

(4) The form for state tax must be a Connecticut State W-4 Form.

Submit Original Forms to IPAC: Customer Service.

Mail a Copy of Forms to: Department of Revenue Services, 25 Sigourney Street, Hartford, CT 06106.

Illinois. Illinois allows an exemption for active duty military pay. Allowable exemptions include:

(1) full-time duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, including basic training; full-time duty for serving in the U.S. Armed Forces Reserves or a National Guard unit, including ROTC;

(2) service in the U.S. Armed Forces Reserves in a time of national emergency;

(3) federal service in a National Guard unit during civil disturbances or national emergency;

(4) time spent in annual summer camp training as a member of the U.S. Armed

Forces Reserves or the Illinois National Guard, including ROTC; and

(5) full-time duty as a cadet or midshipman at the U.S. Army, Air Force, Naval, and Coast Guard Academies

Submit Original Forms to IPAC: Customer Service.

Mail a Copy of Forms to: Willard Ice Building 101 West Jefferson Springfield, IL 62702-5510

Minnesota. An individual on active duty in the U.S. armed forces stationed outside of Minnesota will not be considered a Minnesota resident for Minnesota income tax purposes for the period of time the individual is stationed outside of Minnesota. This change is effective for tax years beginning after December 31, 2000. With a "non-resident" tax status, the individual does not pay Minnesota income tax on his/her military pay. A DD Form 2058-1 must be completed and placed in the Marine's Service Record.

Missouri. If the military member's home of record is Missouri, his or her domicile is Missouri. In this case, the person is subject to Missouri income taxes on all income from whatever source including his or her military pay. The Missouri domiciled member can be exempted from state taxes if he/she files a sworn statement (Form MO NRI) that he/she:

(1) maintained no permanent place of abode in Missouri during the tax year;

(2) did maintain a permanent place of abode elsewhere; and

(3) did not spend more than thirty (30) days of the year in Missouri.

(4) If the above criteria are

met, then the member is considered to be a non-resident for tax status purposes. With a "non-resident" tax status the individual does not pay Missouri income tax on his or her military pay. The following applies:

(a) Marine must complete a separate W-4 Form for federal tax and separate W-4 Form for state tax.

(b) Line out the word "additional" on line #6 of the State W-4

Form and replace with the word "specific", and

(c) Enter "None" in the amount block for line #6 of the State W-4 Form.

(5) Complete a DD Form 2058-1 for the state of Missouri; place a copy in the SERVICE RECORD and have the member mail the original to the State Taxing Authority.

Submit Original Forms to IPAC: Customer Service.

Mail a Copy of Forms to: Department of Revenue, Office of Divisional Support Services, P.O. Box 3022, Jefferson City, MO 65105-3022.

Montana. Residents are not liable for state tax, however, must file State W-2 Form and attach copy of current enlistment contract for verification of active duty status.

Submit Original Forms to IPAC: Customer Service.

Mail a Copy of Forms to: Department of Revenue P.O. Box 5805 Helena, MT 59604-5805

New York/New Jersey.

Do not rate a state tax exemption if they reside in single-type government barracks. They rate a state tax exemption if:

(1) they reside in either family-type government quarters or reside on the local

economy,

(2) the member and/or dependents do not maintain a place of abode in the state during the tax year,

(3) they spend no more than 30 days in the state during the taxable year.

(4) If the tax-exempt criteria is met, the following applies:

(a) Marine must complete a separate W-4 Form for Federal tax and separate W-4 Form for state tax.

(b) Line out the word "additional" on line #6 of the State W-4

Form and replace with the word "specific", and

(c) Enter "None" in the amount block for line #6 of the State W-4 Form.

(d) Complete a DD Form 2058-1; place a copy in the Service Record and have the member mail the original to the state Taxing Authority.

Record and have the member mail the original to the state Taxing Authority.

Submit Original Forms to IPAC: Customer Service.

Mail a Copy of Forms to: New Jersey: Division of Taxation, Gross Income Tax, P.O. Box 1848, Trenton, NJ 08625.

New York: Department of Taxation and Finance, Income Tax Bureau, State Campus, Albany, NY 12227.

Oregon. Residents rate a state tax exemption if:

(1) they do not maintain a place of abode in the state during the taxable year or,

(2) they spend no more than 30 days in the state during the taxable year.

(3) If both tax-exempt criteria are met, the following applies:

(a) Marine must complete a separate W-4 Form for federal tax and separate W-4 Form for state tax.

(b) Line out the word

"additional" on line #6 of the State W-4 Form and replace with the word "specific", and

(c) Enter "None" in the amount block for line #6 of the State W-4 Form.

(4) Complete a DD Form 2058-1 for the state of Oregon; place a copy in the Service Record and have the member mail the original to the State Taxing Authority.

Submit Original Forms to IPAC: Customer Service.

Mail a Copy of Forms to: Department of Revenue, State Office Building, Salem, OR 97310.

West Virginia. A member of the Armed Forces who is domiciled outside West Virginia is considered to be a non-resident of West Virginia for income tax purposes; therefore his/her military compensation is not taxable to West Virginia even though he is stationed in West Virginia and maintains a permanent place of abode therein.

(1) Marine must complete a separate W-4 Form for Federal tax and separate W-4 Form for state tax.

(2) Line out the word "additional" on line #6 of the State W-4 Form and replace with the word "specific", and

(3) Enter "None" in the amount block for line #6 of the State W-4 Form.

(4) Complete a DD Form 2058-1; place a copy in the Service Record and have the member mail the original to the state Taxing Authority.

Submit Original Forms to IPAC: Customer Service.

Mail a Copy of Forms to: New Jersey: Division of Taxation, Gross Income Tax, P.O. Box 1848, Trenton, NJ 08625.

New York: Department of Taxation and Finance, Income Tax Bureau, State Campus, Albany, NY 12227.

Oregon. Residents rate a state tax exemption if:

(1) they do not maintain a place of abode in the state during the taxable year or,

(2) they spend no more than 30 days in the state during the taxable year.

(3) If both tax-exempt criteria are met, the following applies:

(a) Marine must complete a separate W-4 Form for federal tax and separate W-4 Form for state tax.

(b) Line out the word

"additional" on line #6 of the State W-4 Form and replace with the word "specific", and

(c) Enter "None" in the amount block for line #6 of the State W-4 Form.

(4) Complete a DD Form 2058-1; place a copy in the Service Record and have the member mail the original to the state Taxing Authority.

Submit Original Forms to IPAC: Customer Service.

Mail a Copy of Forms to: Department of Tax and Revenue Taxpayer Services Division P. O. Box 3784 Charleston, West Virginia 25337-3784

Outdoor Adventures to host openhouse

LANCE CPL. NICOLE A.
LAVINE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Outdoor Adventures activity center, located in building 1262, is scheduled to host an open house Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. to help promote its inexpensive prices for recreational rental gear.

The open house will feature a hot-dog cook-out using the facility's own rental grills, along with additional refreshments, a raffle for gear rental, and a prize-and-money giveaway.

Free Frisbees for kids, and pens and sports bags for adults will be handed out for free upon arrival.

"The open house helps us bring in more customers and lets people know we are here. Not everyone knows about us because we are hidden away at the top of a hill," said Marry Ellen Barrena, the Outdoor Adventures manager.

"All the available camping gear like lanterns, tents, canopies, and camp heaters will be displayed in the front where the hot-dogs will be getting cooked," said Barrena. "We'll also be using our chaffing dishes to keep them warm. It's our way of show-

ing everyone how easily our products operate."

An inflatable Jupiter Jump set-up will also be on display to show people, especially wives of deployed troops, how easy it is to inflate and deflate, added Barrena.

Further back from the camping gear, patrons will find an opportunity to be fitted for snowboards, skis, poles, and boots so they know their size next time they wish to rent snow gear. "That could take off a good amount of time when they come in and want to get their stuff and go," said Barrena.

The Outdoor Adventures activity center does not host an open house every year because the staff believes it would be "too much," said Barrena. Barrena, who has worked for Outdoor Adventures for almost 10 years, said constant ideas for new equipment and gear are always welcome.

"We introduced this program to show our support for the military and their families," said Barrena. "Our prices are incredibly cheap because we know a lot of our troops here can't afford the expensive gear."

The Outdoor Adventures center cuts costs whenever



Outdoor Adventures activity center offers a wide range of gear and decorations available for rental.

possible to give Marines and sailors more chances to participate in recreational activities.

"Our camping package includes a 5-person tent, two lanterns, an ice chest, a stove and a 4-piece cookware set. That whole package is only \$15," said Barrena.

The center also provides certain gear, like chaffing dishes, sports equipment, outdoor heaters, chairs and grills

to units for no charge. "It is great for functions like family days and PT [physical training]," said Barrena.

For customers who wish to rent gear for more than one night, there is no charge for

rental during weekends and holidays, said Barrena.

"We keep it as simple as possible, keep our costs down, and provide the best equipment possible," she said.

For anyone interested in

outdoor activities, sports, or social gatherings, helpful service and cheap prices for gear and equipment can be found at the Outdoor Adventures activity center. Call 830-7235 for more information.



COURTESY PHOTO

Scouts Honor

David Llanos and Connor Stotts were awarded their rank advancement badges at Troop 78's Court of Honor in the Cub Scout Hut at the Combat Center Sept. 26. Llanos earned the rank of First Class and Stotts earned the rank of Tenderfoot. In order for each Scout to earn the next rank they had to demonstrate a proficiency in the skills expected of them in their previous rank.

J.T. Saloon being considered for MCAGCC off-limits list

LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

It's taught in boot camp and re-iterated throughout your Marine Corps career, operational risk management. It's a good step to ensuring a safe and successful trip, whether it is for a vacation or an everyday outing.

The Marine Corps and other services designate certain off-base facilities as off-limits to military personnel for a variety of reasons. Mainly though it's because those places pose a risk to service members, either financially or physically.

"A place can be made off-limits if they have a history of violence and assaults on military members," said Maj. Wesley Prater, Provost Marshal. "If it's not military-friendly and the safety and security of Marines is in danger, it's generally made off-limits."

Other reasons a location may be made an off-limit area is if they have detrimental conditions such as drug abuse, liquor violations, improper discipline, illegal gambling and unfair commercial practices.

Currently, the Combat Center is working to get the Joshua Tree Saloon located at 61835, Twentynine Palms Highway, Joshua Tree, Calif., listed as an off-limit area in the southern California area because of injuries Marines have sustained through fights that have taken place there.

"We have had two Marines that have required extensive medical care after being injured in a fight, at the J.T. Saloon," said Prater. "We also had a Marine put into a coma after a fight and most recently a Marine was stabbed."

Marines and sailors can do their part in making sure friends stay safe and are not put in situations which may result in harm by planning ahead. If Marines feel that a facility is dangerous or unsafe they may also submit

for it to be made off limits.

In the United States, off limit signs are not posted. Commanders, however, do publish a list of off-limit establishments or areas, and military police often check off-limit areas, according to the Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Board Web site: <http://www.jagcnet.army.mil>

The board is in charge of inspecting and informing establishments of the possibility of being marked as an off-limit area.

Just like any Marine Corps order, violating the order by visiting the establishments marked as off limits can result in severe consequences.

"It's a published lawful order," said Prater. "It is up to the command of what punishment can be received, but it can range from a Page 11 all the way to a court martial depending on the severity of the incident."

Establishments that are going to be made off-limits are notified with a warning of unsatisfactory conditions and can answer the complaint with specifics about corrective action taken to make it an appropriate place for Marines and sailors to go.

If the business manager fails to respond in writing, the board may request personal appearance at a formal hearing to determine whether the board will recommend the establishment to be marked as off limits, according to the Web site.

Although, J.T. Saloon is not officially an off-limits area it is currently under review and Marines are highly encouraged to avoid the saloon.

"Marines need to be selective about where they go," said Prater. "Use the common sense rule. If it feels like a place you shouldn't be at, you probably shouldn't be there."

Marines and sailors are cautioned to use ORM when they go out and travel using the buddy system. Never leave a person behind and take care of your fellow brothers and sisters.

Volunteers make hugging 'official' business

LANCE CPL. NICOLE A.
LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Not every troop who comes home from a long deployment has loved ones waiting to greet them when they step off the bus. Even for troops who have family, their loved ones cannot always make the trip to see them. That is when the Official Huggers come in.

Three Official Hugger volunteers showed up to support 1st Tank Battalion's return Oct. 19 from a deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The official huggers are a troop-supporting group which started in 2003 in Miramar, Calif., for units returning from deployment to an atmosphere of families, but have no families of their own waiting for them, said Monica McBroom, an Official Hugger volunteer.

McBroom, who has been a member of the volunteer group for two years, geared up in her Official Hugger shirt, along with two other volunteers, to show her support of the returning unit. When the Marines and sailors unloaded the buses, the official huggers set out with open arms to find troops wondering around with no one to welcome them home. Even if a Marine or sailor claimed to be looking for someone, the official huggers didn't reserve their expressions of gratitude.

"We're not just here for homecomings," McBroom said. "We show up for departures, too. We want to make sure we send our troops off with a hug, or make them feel welcome when they get home."

Beverly Hibbert, wife of Staff Sgt. James Hibbert assigned to Headquarters Battalion, Company A, was another Official Hugger volunteer. Hibbert said she volunteered because she wanted to get actively involved in the welfare of the troops. "I haven't had to go through it myself," Hibbert explained about the experience of having a deployed spouse. "This is just my way of giving back to those who do have deployed family."

As the volunteers made



Monica McBroom, an Official Hugger, welcomes home a Marine from 1st Tank Battalion Oct. 19.

LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

their way through the crowd of Marines, sailors and families, they approached troops, briefly told them who they were, and hugged them for as long as they would allow.

Not all the troops took the volunteers' offer, but those who did were enthusiastic about the warm welcome home.

At a homecoming earlier this year, Larry Stratton, the head of Marine Corps Community Services Family Team-building, spoke about a certain Official Hugger volunteer who had a tremendous impact on a deploying Marine.

"There is one lady who has been the pillar of the Official

Huggers program," he said. "She's been out there through the cold and in the middle of the night. She moved me to tears once when she hugged a Marine leaving for Iraq and told him, 'This is for your momma.' I cried, she cried, the Marine cried and he said, 'Thank you, mom.' Then he

left. That special lady is Jany Wasdin."

Jany Wasdin, along with the help of Barbara Greenbush, the former Marine Corps Family Team Building coordinator, created the Official Huggers program during Operation Iraqi Freedom I.

Every volunteer has the

chance to make a difference. Although there are 14 volunteers currently on the list, there can never be too many,

said McBroom. If anyone is interested in volunteering and becoming an Official Hugger, they should contact McBroom at 830-4163 for more information.

Winners of the Hashmarks Texas Hold 'em Tournament

Here are the winners of the tournament held Oct. 14. All prizes were awarded in the form of a gift card from the post exchange.

1st place - \$300 - Staff Sgt. Brian Davis, Installation Personnel Administration Center, Headquarters Battalion.

2nd place - \$200 - Staff Staff Sgt. Masuzo Rupple, Communications Platoon, Exercise Support Division.

3rd place - \$100 - Clint Blaul, Company A, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School.

4th place - \$90 - Staff Sgt. Amos Livingston, Company L, 3/7.

5th place - \$80 - Gunnery Sgt. Mark Ramstorf, Company C, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School.

6th place - \$70 - Retired Master Gunnery Sgt. John Tong.

7th place - \$60 - Cpl. Avra Lawrence, 1st Tank Battalion.

8th place - \$50 - Cpl. Mario Rodriguez, Tactical Training Exercise Control Group, Headquarters Battalion.

Risky Ride: What you can learn from an NFL player's nasty accident

ERIC PETERS

REPRINTED COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS TIMES

It's been said that the skills necessary to safely operate a motorcycle—especially a high performance sport bike—are

comparable to those required of a fighter pilot.

The accident that seriously injured pro football player Ben Roethlisberger comes as a reminder that the risks are just as high.

Roethlisberger, the Pittsburgh Steelers' starting quarterback, was badly hurt June 12 when he collided with a car turning left in front of his motorcycle, ending up in the hospital

with a broken jaw and nose.

Within the ranks, motorcycle accidents continue to kill and injure troops at an alarming rate, despite aggressive efforts to educate riders about these dangers.

Accident totals vary from year to year, but the numbers are generally rising. More troops have died in off-duty motorcycle accidents since 2002 than have been killed in fighting in Afghanistan since October 2001. More than 390 troops have died in motorcycle accidents since 2002, compared with 319 killed in Afghanistan as of Aug. 10.

In fiscal 2005, 89 service members died in motorcycle-related accidents, Defense Department figures show—a four-year high. In the Army alone, 40 soldiers died in motorcycle accidents in 2005, nearly twice the number killed the previous year.

Military officials have said the deaths are largely the result of boredom, enough bonus pay to buy a bike and adrenaline to burn after returning from combat. And while troops must wear safety gear to ride on base, the rules off base aren't as strict.

While news accounts focused on Roethlisberger's failure to wear a helmet—Pennsylvania has no helmet law—few pointed out that he stacked the deck against himself in other ways. Here's

what you can learn from his ride gone wrong:

A HELMET'S NOT ENOUGH

Apart from not wearing a helmet, he also wasn't wearing protective leathers or proper riding boots.

Without proper riding gear, a helmet alone may ensure only that your face still looks good when you're sitting in your wheelchair—or lying in your coffin.

Multiple compound fractures (sometimes requiring amputation), cervical or spinal trauma, life threatening internal injuries and the loss of chunks of flesh and skin are often the price of not gearing up—helmet or no helmet.

Twenty states and the District of Columbia require motorcyclists to wear helmets and/or eye protection; none mandates that leathers and boots be worn when riding. On military installations, high-visibility personal protective equipment is required, as are helmets, face shields or goggles, full length pants, gloves and sturdy footwear such as boots or over the ankle shoes.

A good one- or two-piece leather suit will cost you from \$400 to more than \$1,000, depending on the brand and style. This may seem like a big expense, but compared with the cost of a few weeks spent in the hospital—or a lifetime spent with a disabling injury or

disfigurement—it's the bargain of the year.

GUNG-HO — BUT VERY GREEN

The next strike against Roethlisberger was his inexperience. He didn't have a motorcycle license and hadn't been riding for long. He apparently had never taken a basic rider safety course, such as the ones conducted by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation or those taught on military bases.

According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 92 percent of motorcyclists involved in crashes were either self-taught or trained by family or friends. More than half of the riders involved in accidents had less than five months of experience on the bike they were riding at the time of the accident, according to the Motorcycle Safety Foundation.

Most states require that new riders first acquire a learner's permit, then pass both a road test and a written test before they get full privileges. On-base requirements stipulate that a motorcycle rider also complete a rider safety course.

Finally, Roethlisberger, like many gung-ho and inexperienced riders, made a potentially career ending mistake in selecting his bike. According to news reports, the 24-year-old quarterback, who had never owned a sport bike before, chose to ride the world's fastest production motorcycle, the Suzuki Hayabusa.

This is the Ferrari Enzo of motorcycles. A machine with a higher power-to-weight ratio than virtually anything on four wheels, it is capable of running to 60 mph in less than three seconds—and from there to a top speed in excess of 175 mph.

Like other high-performance sport bikes, the 'Busa is designed for expert riders who have developed the skill set crucial to keeping such a machine safely under control. It's not a good choice for a first bike.

But because such bikes are relatively inexpensive, almost anyone can afford one, including "newbie" riders who may be getting in way over their heads. A new Hayabusa GSX1300R similar to the one Roethlisberger was riding, for example, lists for

See RISKY RIDE, A11



COURTESY PHOTO

Don't make the mistake of not wearing a helmet like Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger. A helmet is the first line of defense in motorcycle safety.

RISKY RIDE, from A10

\$11,299, about the cost of a used Toyota Corolla.

This isn't to slam top-tier sport bikes like the 'Busa or its Kawasaki, Yamaha or Honda competitors. In the hands of a skilled rider, they're no more dangerous than an F-14 fighter is with an experienced combat pilot at the stick.

But no one's ready to fly a Tomcat without first mastering a Piper Cub, and the same goes for high-strung sport bikes.

USE YOUR HEAD

In some countries — England, for example — tiered licensing requirements prohibit new riders from starting out on a machine above their skill and experience level. After about a year of learning the ropes on a smaller, less

powerful bike, the novice rider is allowed to move up to bigger, faster bikes.

We have no such laws in the U.S., but as with safety equipment, this isn't so much about the law as it is about common sense.

That means that while it may be perfectly legal for the new and inexperienced rider to buy the quickest, fastest sport bike he can afford, it's not necessarily the smart thing to do. The results can be ugly.

LEARN AND LIVE

To find out more about the Motorcycle Safety Foundation skill tests, helmet laws for every state, riding schools in your area, the Army Motorcycle Mentorship Program and more, go to www.marinecorps-times.com.

BY THE NUMBERS**4,315**

The number of fatal motorcycle accidents in 2005, an 8 percent increase over 2004.

38.93

The motorcycle fatality rate per 100 million miles traveled in 2003.

123

The automobile fatality rate per 100 million miles traveled in 2003.

44

Percentage of motorcyclists involved in crashes who are not licensed to operate a motorcycle.

92

Percentage of people involved in motorcycle crashes who are self-taught or who learned to ride from family or friends.

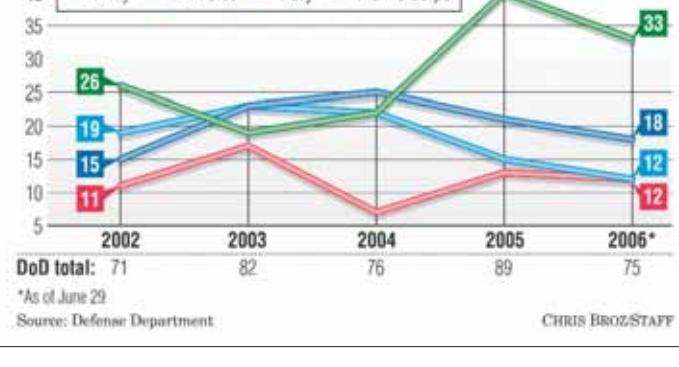
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Number of riders killed between 1998 and 2003 in Florida who had participated in the state-administered Rider Training Program or Motorcycle Safety Foundation rider school.

Sources: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute

THE ROAD'S TOLL

How the services' fatal off-duty motorcycle accidents compare from fiscal 2002 to 2006:



*As of June 29

Source: Defense Department

Marine Volunteers Needed for 2006 campaign

It is that time of year to help needy children receive a touch of Christmas joy by collecting new unwrapped toys for them.

If you are a Marine who owns the Dress Blue Bravo uniform and willing to donate your off-duty time during weekday evenings and weekends,

send the following information to Gunnery Sgt. Mario Morones via e-mail at mario.morones@usmc.mil.

1. First Name
2. Middle Initial
3. Last Name
4. Mailing Address

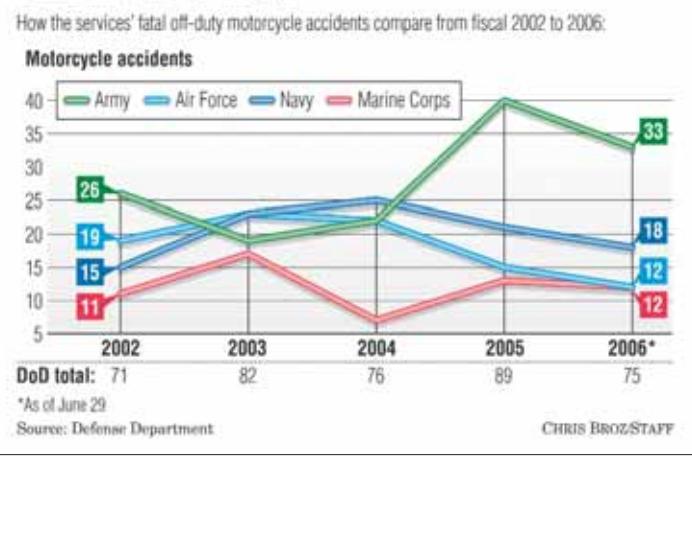
5. Unit (Battalion, Company and Section)

6. Cell Phone Number

7. Home Phone Number

8. Work Phone Number

9. SNCOIC



Serve the community as a volunteer victim advocate

LANCE CPL. REGINA N. ORTIZ

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marine Corps Community Services' Family Services Victim Advocacy Program is seeking volunteers to provide support to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse aboard the Combat Center, said Tanya Stuckey, head victim advocate.

A volunteer victim advocate is on call to immediately assist victims when a crisis occurs, to offer emotional support during investigations, help control reactions to the situation, advise victims of their rights, research options with the victim and link the victim to other resources.

"It's a great opportunity to give back to the community," said Stuckey. "Also, it's a great start for those seeking a career in the social services field."

Stuckey is scheduled to start training Nov. 2

during lunch hours, to meet the 40-hour requirement needed to certify a volunteer victim advocate.

"There is no minimum or maximum amount of volunteers we need," she said.

Volunteers are trained to deal with different agencies involved in a case, such as medical staff, law enforcement officers, the court system or the military chain of command. They also learn about cultural differences, military life, a victim's mindset and safety planning.

"We train the volunteers to help victims have a safe way out," she explained. "Whether they stay in the relationship or decide to leave, do they have a plan? We try to help them make one."

Designating a room to have arguments, where there are no weapons of opportunity or more than one exit, or simply saving money in

case of an emergency, are examples of safety planning, said Stuckey.

As a volunteer, victim advocates are continually trained and may earn college credits, according to the Volunteer Victim Advocate Program handout, available at Counseling Services, building 1438.

Volunteers can be civilians, active duty or retired service members aboard the base. They must be at least 18 years old, interviewed by a MCCS certified victim advocate and have no open domestic violence or abuse cases within the past two years, said Stuckey.

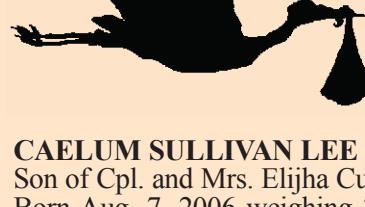
In 2005, the Marine Corps mandated a new system appointing uniformed victim advocates to each unit, and installation victim advocates, for the purposes of encouraging sexual assault victims to seek help, which may have contributed to a 40 percent reporting increase on base since 2004, said 1st Lt. Jennifer Root, base assistant sexual assault response coordinator, in an Observation Post article published in March.

Volunteer victim advocates differ from unit and installation victim advocates, but they receive enough training to help victims to a certain point in their case, making more sources available for a person in need.

Volunteers make it possible to have an advocate available at a moment's notice during some of the most critical times, such as the first hour after the incident occurred. An advocate can be at the Provost Marshal's Office or the emergency room to help the victim control initial reactions and provide support, said Stuckey.

For more information on volunteering or the Family Advocacy Program, call Tanya Stuckey or Tammy Gallegos at 830-4314, or visit Counseling Services, building 1438.

Birth announcements



CAELUM SULLIVAN LEE CURCIE
Son of Cpl. and Mrs. Elijha Curcie
Born Aug. 7, 2006 weighing 7 lbs. 2 oz. and
measuring 20 inches.



Two children, who are dressed up as a little devil and a princess, bounce around an inflatable jump house at last year's Desert Winds Golf Course Harvest Festival.



SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III
Miss Teapot Jael Mack and nurse Amanda Conder celebrate Halloween together at last year's Excursions and Blood Stripes combined Halloween Costume Party.

TRICK-OR-TREATERS BEWARE:

Helpful hints for a safe Halloween

CPL. HEIDI E. LOREDO

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Ghouls, vampires and were-wolves come out to play this Halloween, and they'll be dashing across streets, cutting across front yards and climbing on porches looking for treats.

As predictable as pumpkins in October, the fun of trick-or-treating stirs up appeals to keep Halloween night safe.

With help from the Provost Marshal's Office and the Combat Center Safety Office, a flurry of fright-night reminders and Halloween hints have been boiled down in a cauldron of snails and snake's tails to make a trick-or-treater's Top 10 List.

GO TOGETHER

Parents must accompany young children. Older children should go in groups to avoid being a tempting target for real life goblins.

CAN YOU SEE IN THERE?

Make sure your child's costume is flame retardant, meaning the material won't

burn if it comes in contact with a jack-o'-lantern candle, or will extinguish quickly after being pulled away.

Masks shouldn't obscure a child's breathing or vision, especially when crossing streets and going up and down steps. If possible use make-up instead of a mask.

Make sure costumes are short enough to prevent trips, falls and other bumps in the night. Also, shoes must fit well, even if mom's shoes make the perfect princess accessory.

BE VISIBLE

Choose bright and reflective costumes. Even if it doesn't go with their vampire look, kids should wear light-colored clothing or add strips of reflective tape to their costumes. It's not only safer, but also a base order if children are out after dark. Have them carry a flashlight — even if they don't plan on being out after dark.

STICK TO THE PATH

Have a route planned for trick-or-treating. Children should trick-or-threat in their own neighborhood, ideally at

the houses of people they know. Stay in well-lit areas and skip any houses where the lights are off.

DON'T TALK TO STRANGERS

Be very cautious of strangers. Parents should tell their children not to talk with adults they don't know and accept treats only in the doorway. Never go inside a house or a stranger's car.

BRING HOME THE LOOT

Never eat treats until a parent has inspected them. One way to keep trick-or-treaters from digging in while they're still out is to feed them a meal or snack beforehand. Throw out any candy or goodies that are homemade, aren't in their original factory wrappers, or appear to have been tampered with.

CROSS AT THE CORNERS

Always walk on sidewalks and driveways. Children should remove their masks to check carefully for traffic and low-flying broomsticks. Keep them from playing between parked cars.

JACK-O-LANTERNS

Don't play near lit jack-o'-lanterns. Lit pumpkins should be placed on a sturdy table, away from curtains and other flammables and never left unattended.

WELCOME TRICK-OR-TREATERS

Be sure to keep porch lights and other exterior lights on when handing out treats. Make sure that yards and driveways are clear of things that can cause injuries like hoses, ladders, flowerpots or anything that is difficult to see at night. Consider alternative treats such as packaged crackers, mini boxes of raisins or stickers.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Always report any suspicious activity to the local Sheriff's department at 367-9546 or PMO at 830-6800. Let children know they can ask military policemen on patrol for assistance.

Trick-or-treat hours throughout all base-housing areas are 5 to 8 p.m. Military policemen will have walking and mobile patrols throughout base housing to ensure everyone has a safe and happy Halloween.



SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III
A Combat Center resident, dressed as Marilyn Monroe, struts for the crowd at last year's SNCO Club Halloween party. This year's party will take place Saturday at 6 p.m.

Here are some more safety rules to discuss with your trick-or treaters before they venture out into the night:

SGT. DAVID E. LANG

CENTER SAFETY OFF DUTY/RECREATION MANAGER

- Establish a return time.
- Review all appropriate trick-or-treat safety precautions, including pedestrian/traffic safety rules.
- Pin a slip of paper with the child's name, address and phone number inside a pocket in case they get separated from the group.
- Walk, do not run, from house to house. Do not cross yards and lawns where unseen objects or uneven terrain can present tripping hazards.
- Walk on the left side of the road, facing traffic if there are no sidewalks.
- All pets must be on a leash when they accompany trick-or-treaters.

- Reflective vests or belts are required during low-light conditions on MCAGCC roadways. A flashlight can be carried to meet this requirement.
- Bags or sacks carried should be light-colored or trimmed with reflective tape if children are allowed out after dark.
- Carrying flashlights will help children see better and be seen more clearly.
- Wash fruit and slice into small pieces.
- When in doubt, throw the treat out.
- Costumes should be loose so warm clothes can be worn underneath.
- When buying special Halloween makeup, check for packages containing ingredients that are labeled "Made with

U.S. Approved Color Additives," "Laboratory Tested," "Meets Federal Standards for Cosmetics," or "Non-Toxic" and follow manufacturer's instruction for application.

• If masks are worn, they should have nose and mouth openings and large eye holes.

• Knives, swords and other accessories should be made from cardboard or flexible materials. Do not allow children to carry sharp objects.

For more information on Halloween safety or other off-duty or recreation activities, check out the Combat Center Safety Office's presentation online at <http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/base/safety/docs/halloween.pps>.



SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III
Combat Center residents take a hayride at the 2005 Harvest Festival at Desert Winds Golf Course.



Adam Brochin as Freddy Krueger scares up some fun at last year's Excursions and Blood Stripes combined Halloween Costume Party.



SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III
Contestants line up for the 2005 costume contest hosted at Hashmarks, the Staff Noncommissioned Officers Club.

SPORT SHORTS**WOMEN'S VARSITY****BASKETBALL****TRYOUTS**

Marine Corps Community Services Sports will hold women's varsity basketball tryouts Monday and Wednesday at the East Gym from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. For more information call Sports at 830-4092.

**OUTDOOR
ADVENTURES
OPEN HOUSE**

The day will include free food, equipment demonstrations and prize drawings. If your family loves the outdoors bring them to this wonderful event tomorrow! Call 830-7235 for details.

LEISURE**HALLOWEEN****COSTUME PARTY**

Today at 5 p.m., the Enlisted Club and the NCO Club will each have a Halloween costume party. The parties will each have free food and prizes for the best costumes. Call 830-6608 for details.

**OFFICERS SPOUSES
CLUB ROLL OUT THE
BARREL BEER AND
WINE TASTING**

The Officers Spouses Club will host "Roll Out the Barrel" beer and wine tasting at the Officers' Club Saturday from 7 to 10 p.m. Not only will there be beer and wine tasting, but there will also be a martini-mixing class and French and German food. A shuttle will also run from different locations in base housing to the club and back throughout the evening. This event is open to all officers, staff noncommissioned officers, and their spouses.

Bring a new, unwrapped toy to be donated to the Marine Corps Reserve Toys 4 Tots program and receive a free "Opportunity Ticket." What's an Opportunity Ticket? Show up and find out.

The event is \$25 per ticket and tickets are available at the Officers' Club, Hashmarks SNCO Club, and through unit representatives. All proceeds will go toward OSC scholarships and grants.

SMP HAUNTED HOUSE

The Single Marine Program will be hosting a Haunted House Monday and Tuesday from 6 to 10 p.m. in the West Gym. The cost is \$5 and you must be 13 years or older. For more information, call 830-4SMP.

MCAGCC men let West Coast Regional Championship slip away**Late comeback spurs tournament win for Pendleton ballers****CPL. EVAN M. EAGAN**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

With 10 minutes left in the 2006 West Coast Regional Basketball Championship game at the East Gym Oct. 20, the MCAGCC men held a 13-point lead over rival Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., and they looked poised to extend it even further.

A few minutes later, however, their lead was gone, and the fight that was absent from Pendleton in the first 30 minutes of the game, partly due to early foul trouble, was back.

MCAGCC entered the single elimination tournament after breezing through the pre-tournament seeding competition with a 3-0 record earlier in the week.

After destroying Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., 92-31, in the first round, and sending Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., packing after a 100-81 victory in the second round, the Combat Center men were ready to take on Pendleton.

Pendleton navigated their way through the seeding tournament, and the first and second rounds of the single elimination tournament with relative ease as well. They entered the single elimination tournament with a 3-0 record, and knocked off Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, 96-72, and 1st Marine Division, 94-87 in the first and second rounds.

The match-up was one MCAGCC coach Jerome Hawkins had been anticipating since before the tournament, even guaranteeing victory over the talented Pendleton team.

"We will run regionals," he said, in the weeks before the tournament. "We will win West Coast Regionals. Guaranteed."

This quote, however, served as motivation for Pendleton, according to coach Eric Wilson.

"I saw the paper the third day we were here and the head coach guaranteed a win," he said, referring to an article published in the Observation Post a week prior. "I told my guys to play one game at a time, and I challenged them every game, reminding them of what he said."

Pendleton was challenged by MCAGCC for most of the game, as the Combat Center pushed them around on their home court, leading by as many as nine points in the first half due in large part to hot shooting by Sam Hook. MCAGCC took a 41-34 lead into halftime.

In the second half, MCAGCC came out swinging, extending their lead to as many as 15 at one point, but late in the game MCAGCC's offense began to sputter, and Pendleton capitalized.

After erasing the deficit, MCAGCC and Pendleton traded baskets, with neither team leading by more than two points in the final four minutes of the game.

With 21 seconds remaining and Pendleton holding on

to a 79-78 lead, MCAGCC's Dempsey Tomblin went to the line with the opportunity to put them ahead, however, he missed the first free throw on a one for one situation and Pendleton grabbed the rebound. MCAGCC fouled, sending Pendleton to the line where they added one more point, and eventually, another West Coast Regional Basketball Championship title.

After the game, Wilson was pleased with his teams

come from behind victory.

"We got in foul trouble early, and that took away our aggressiveness, but I knew if we could get to the line, we could inch our way back in the game," he said. "Never did we panic. We never lost it in the game. I'm still high right now."

The game was followed by individual award presentations, where Pendleton's Willie Nathan earned most valuable player of the tournament honors.



CPL. EVAN M. EAGAN

Derek Gray goes up for two points during the championship game against Camp Pendleton.



CPL. EVAN M. EAGAN

Eric Cook goes to the hole strong against Camp Pendleton defenders in the championship game.

