

OBSERVATION POST

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

MARCH 9, 2007

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 50 ISSUE 9

8th & I performs for MCAGCC

CPL. REGINA N. ORTIZ
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Battle Color Detachment from Marine Barracks 8th and I, Washington, D.C., featuring the Commandant's Own Drum and Bugle Corps and the Silent Drill Platoon, performed at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Tuesday.

The detachment travels to almost every Marine Corps installation in the U.S. and other continents, performing more than 400 ceremonies every year, said the announcer during the ceremony.

The ceremony features the official Marine Corps' battle colors, which are 54 streamers, representing more than 400 awards and campaigns the Marine Corps has earned and achieved.

The ceremony began with a few selections from the Drum and Bugle Corps, awing spectators with a combination of choreographed drill movements, traditional marching music and contemporary musical selections.

The bright red jackets and snow-white pants the musicians donned, stood out against the sandy mountains of the desert. Each of their left shoulders bore a scarlet and gold breast cord that was originally awarded them by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt for their presidential support during World War II.

After their performance, they stepped aside to allow the Silent Drill Platoon to step forward for a 10-minute drill display.

The 24 Marines fixed bayo-



Marines from the Silent Drill Platoon perform for Combat Center Marines, sailors and civilians Tuesday at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

CPL. REGINA N. ORTIZ

nets on their 10 and one-half pound M-1 Garand rifles and executed a unique rifle inspection after showcasing rifle handling and drill movements.

Forming a single line, the leading Marine began each movement, as the Marines followed one count behind the

Marine in front of them, executing ripple drill movements, without a single verbal command.

A series of individual performances followed when the platoon's rifle inspector proceeded to inspect some of his Marines. After inspecting a

Marine's rifle, the rifle inspector returned the rifle to the Marine in a unique manner. He threw the rifle behind himself and over his shoulder, only to be caught one-handed by the Marine in formation.

The Silent Drill Platoon made its first performance in

the Sunset Parades of 1948 and received a positive response. It then became a regular tradition for the parades at Marine Barracks 8th and I.

Each Marine within the drill platoon is individually selected from the Schools of Infantry at Camp Pendleton, Calif., and

Camp Lejeune, N.C., by interviews conducted by Marine Barracks personnel, said Sgt. Jeff Copp, platoon sergeant and drill master of the Silent Drill Platoon, after the performance.

See 8TH & I, A7



CPL. REGINA N. ORTIZ

Sgt. Maj. Jimmy D. Mashburn, outgoing regimental sergeant major, salutes 7th Marine Regiment's commanding officer, Col. William Crowe, as he is relieved from his post.

Magnificent 7th receives new top enlisted Marine

CPL. REGINA N. ORTIZ
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marines and sailors of 7th Marine Regiment welcomed aboard a new sergeant major Tuesday, Sgt. Maj. Dave C. Howell, and bid farewell to Sgt. Maj. Jimmy D. Mashburn, the regiment's sergeant major for the past two years.

Howell's last duty was with the 25th Marine Regiment, a reserve unit based out of several Northeast states, as the Inspector-Instructor sergeant major.

Howell joined the Marine Corps out of St. Louis, Mo., in 1979, right out of high school. He enlisted to be a machinegunner and was assigned to 1st Reconnaissance Battalion as a basic scout for his first tour of duty. During his first enlistment, Howell served in billets such as team leader and platoon sergeant. After reenlist-

ing, he was assigned to recruiting duty out of Chicago. Howell went on to serve in many billets at various Marine Corps installations, including staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge at the Amphibious Reconnaissance School, platoon commander for the Deep Reconnaissance Platoon, instructor at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center, took part in the Royal Marine Exchange Program, was the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment sergeant major and an advisor to the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division, Iraqi Security Forces.

He has received training from some of the military's top infantry and recon schools such as the Army Airborne School, Navy Dive School, Amphibious Reconnaissance School, Army Ranger School, Special Forces Military Free Fall Course, Special

See 7TH MARINES, A11

Weekend Weather

Friday 79/46
Mostly Sunny

Saturday 81/49
Sunny

Sunday 85/56
Sunny

Inside this issue

- A6: MWSS-374 re-lays airfield
- A6: Operation: Cookie Drop
- A11: Great American Voices return to MCAGCC

Observations



Women moving history forward

This Day in Marine Corps History

— 1847 —

Expeditionary Marines landed and seized Veracruz, Mexico, during the Mexican War.

HOT TOPICS

VEHICLE REGISTRATION BUILDING WILL BE CLOSED

The Vehicle Registration Office, Bldg. 900, will be closed today. Normal hours will resume Monday at 6 a.m.

MARINE SECURITY GUARD SCREENING TEAM VISIT

The MSG screening team is coming to the Combat Center March 29. The team will be screening all interested Marines for the demanding duty with the State Department. The screening will be at the Protestant Chapel from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. All Marines to be screened will report in the Service C uniform and have their Commanding Officers Screening Check-list (Phase 1), Financial worksheet, medical and dental records. For more information, contact the base career retention specialist Gunnery Sgt. Whitaker at 830-6171 or see your unit CRS.

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY MEAL

In recognition of Saint Patrick's Day, both mess halls will have an Irish-American lunch meal March 14. Standard meal rates apply. The meal will consist of:

Vegetable soup
New England boiled dinner
Savory Roast Lamb
Butter egg noodles
Corn whole kernel
Mustard Sauce
Apple Pie
Cherry Pie
Peach Pie

The point of contact is Gunnery Sgt. Martin and he can be reached at 830-8821.

TAX CENTER OPEN

Tax Center hours Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Appointments are recommended. To schedule, call 830-4829.

Please bring in the following documents at the time of your appointment:

- All W-2's for yourself and spouse.
- Bank interest or dividend statements.
- Social security cards for everyone on return.
- Proof of your bank account, either MyPay bank printout or blank check, for direct deposit.
- Original power of attorney, if applicable.
- Prior year tax return.

The Tax Center can only prepare returns for active-duty, reserve, retired and dependants of service members.

No rental property or self-employment returns are prepared at the Tax Center. Itemized deductions begin Feb. 15. Please make arrangements for child care.

ROAD CLOSURES

The Bourke Road and Eighth Street intersection will remain closed. This area will be repaved in the near future to correct a drainage problem.

- Del Valle Road will be

repaved from Adobe Road to Tenth Street. Stoplights will be installed on Del Valle at the Third and Fifth Street intersections as part of this project. The repaving work will be phased in order to minimize disruptions to traffic flow on Del Valle, but detours onto Mainside will be required. The construction period will be from approximately March 1 to Sept. 1. Please be attentive to all traffic control signs.

CONSTRUCTION AT HOSPITAL EFFECTS PARKING LOT ACCESS

Entering and exiting the hospital patient parking lot will be reduced to one lane due to the

construction of new sidewalk and repair of the existing sidewalk to the clinics. A flagman will be on site to direct the flow of traffic to minimize inconvenience. Construction will last approximately three to four weeks. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. Beginning Thursday, entering and exiting the hospital patient parking lot will be reduced to one lane at times, due to the construction of a new sidewalk, from Sturgis Road to the clinics. A flagman will be on site to direct the flow of traffic, to minimize inconvenience. Construction will last approximately three weeks. We apol-

ogize for any inconvenience, these projects may cause.

LEISURE ITEMS

SMP PHARAOH'S KINGDOM MINIATURE GOLFING AND AMUSEMENT PARK TRIP

The Single Marine Program will be taking a day trip to Pharaoh's Kingdom Miniature Golfing and Amusement Park Saturday. The cost is \$35 and includes entrance and transportation. Participants will depart the

Zone at 9 a.m. For more information, call 830-4767.

USO PRESENTS LT. DAN BAND PERFORMANCE

The USO will present a free performance by The Lt. Dan Band on Sunday at the Sunset Cinema. The concert performance is from 4 to 7 p.m. Doors open at 3:30 p.m. This is a family show and all ages are welcome. For more information, call 830-5086.

BOSSES NIGHT AT EXCURSIONS ENLISTED CLUB

Bosses Night at Excursions Enlisted club will be held

Wednesday from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

LINCOLN MILITARY HOUSING CURRENTLY HIRING LIFEGUARDS

Lincoln Military Housing is currently hiring lifeguards for the housing area pools. The candidates must be CPR and First Aid certified. All qualified applicants should apply at the Lincoln Military Housing Office between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. The pay range will be between \$9 - \$11/hour depending on experience. Applications will be accepted until all positions are filled. For more information, please call Lincoln Military Housing at 368-4500.

Chaplain's Corner: Living legacies

NAVY LT. MICHAEL A. TAYLOR

PROTESTANT CHAPLAIN

Periodically I am reminded of my mortality. In these moments, I take the time to do two things. First, I reconcile my life with my God and Savior. Second, I ponder how my response to life's events will impact my legacy. Humbly, I must admit, I am not always pleased with the answer.

Each of us will leave a legacy for others to inherit. The memories we create, especially with those closest to us, will likely last a lifetime. Our friends and family will

ponder our words and conduct. They will evaluate our efforts and seek to understand our motives. Undeniably we will impart to them the inheritance of our individual life virtues. In this process, we find ourselves to be living legacies. The question then is, "What legacy have I lived?"

For the person who chooses to ponder such a poignant question, I imagine you will be faced with at least one thing you will want to change in the way you live. Some may even feel the need for a major life-change. Whatever the case may be, I encourage each reader to take the time to

refine your living legacy. Since this practice is not the sort of thing we hear about on TV or discuss with our friends in our free time, I offer some pointers to get you started.

First, choose a standard by which you will measure yourself. This standard may be someone you look up to, an organization you admire, or some other structure affording you guidelines to live by. For me, Jesus is my standard and the Bible is my measuring stick.

Second, you need to consider the end result of the standard you have chosen; where will it take you, and who will you become if you

live up to its guidelines? If you don't like the answers to these two questions, then it is time to choose a new standard.

Third, accurately evaluate your life against the standard you have chosen. It is critical at this point to take into consideration your thoughts and motives for they produce your life's behavior. This may be a difficult discipline to foster since our society tempts us to live for the crisis of each moment and ignore the consequences of our actions. However, with a little practice you will get the hang of it. If you need some help, grab a Chaplain or trusted mentor who will be willing to assist you ... we all need a little help sometimes. I personally have two trustworthy friends whom I periodically ask to evaluate my life testimony and pray for me. Without their help, I would definitely be hindered in my quest for maturity.

Fourth, assess the strengths and weaknesses of your legacy against the standard you have chosen. In the areas you are succeeding, take a moment to let it sink in. It's not too often we come face to face with a noteworthy compliment and we all need to know that we are not the perpetual pimple on the face of humanity. In the areas you identify failure, create a personal moral training program to discipline yourself and increase your integrity. Again, if you need help with this, find that Chaplain or mentor whom you trust and ask them for some assistance. Accountability is one of the greatest, yet most overlooked, tools we have to refine our living legacy.

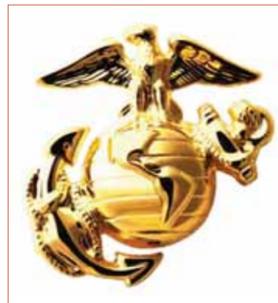
Finally, make the choice to mature in life. Obtaining knowledge may be winning half the battle, but the battle isn't won till knowledge is applied and a transformation is secured.

We all will leave a legacy for others to ponder. Our ability to create an honorable legacy is structured by the amount of time we have here on earth, the standard by which we choose to live, and the effort we put into refining our ambitions. I can think of no greater strength a person can exhibit than the resolve to live a commendable legacy. May you find the grace of God guiding your decisions and impacting your efforts.

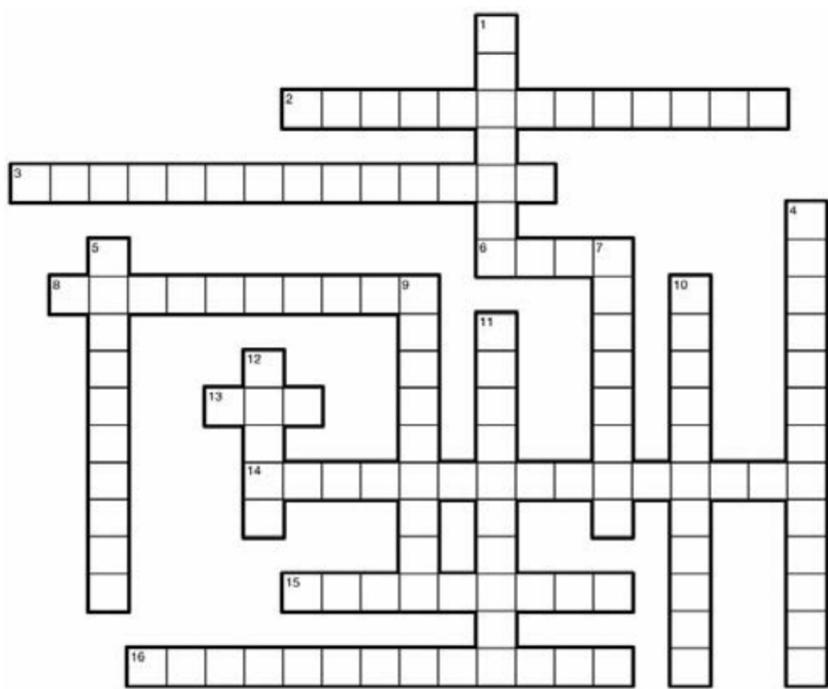


GUNNERY SGT. CHRIS W. COX

Navy Lt. Michael A. Taylor, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Protestant Chaplain.



WOMEN'S RIGHTS



ACROSS

2. 28th President of the United States and advocate for the passing of the Women's Suffrage Amendment. (2 wds.)
3. Singer demanding R-E-S-P-E-C-T, became first woman to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987. (2 wds.)
6. One of the first Olympic sports women were permitted to compete in the 1900 Olympic Games.
8. Founded in 1912 by Juliette Gordon Low. This organization is now millions strong and well known for their cookies.
13. Largest women's rights group in the U.S. (abbrev.)
14. Cofounder of National Women's Suffrage Association, also active in abolitionist movement. (2 wds.)
15. "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement." (2 wds.)
16. First President of the United States to be voted into office with women voting in the election of 1920. (2 wds.)

DOWN

1. First territory in U.S. to grant women the right to vote.
4. American reformer and leader of the Woman-Suffrage movement, honored on U.S. coin. (3 wds.)
5. Number of the Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (1920) granting all women the right to vote.
7. A social theory and political movement primarily informed and motivated by the experience of women.
9. Influential woman who as a teenager with baby on her back, led Lewis and Clark to Pacific.
10. Woman activists lobbying for the right to vote.
11. First country to introduce universal suffrage in 1893. (2 wds.)
12. "____ for women!" - Suffrage chant.

[Solutions on A11]

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

ROMAN CATHOLIC SERVICES

Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel
 Sun 7:30 a.m. Rosary
 Sun 8 a.m. Catholic Mass*
 Sun 9 a.m. Faith Formation/CCD (Bldg1551)
 Sun 9 a.m. Military Council of Catholic Women (Bldg. 1551)
 Sun 9:15 a.m. Confessions+
 Sun 10 a.m. Rosary
 Sun 10:30 a.m. Catholic Mass
 Sun 10:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word
 Sun 4 p.m. Choir Practice
 Sun 4:30 p.m. Rosary
 Sun 5 p.m. Catholic Mass
 Sun 6 p.m. Cyrus Young Adult Group
 18-35 years of age married or single
 (3rd Sunday of the month)
 Fri 12:15 – 4:30 p.m. Exposition/Adoration
 Most Blessed Sacrament (1st Friday Each Month)

Ash Wednesday and Holy Days of Obligation Masses

11:45 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel
 11:30 a.m. Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital
Village Center
 Sun 9 a.m. Military Council of Catholic Women*
 Sun 9 a.m. Faith Formation/CCD

NON-DENOMINATIONAL CHRISTIAN SERVICE

Christ Chapel
 Sun 8 a.m. Worship*
 Tue 7 p.m. Praise and Worship*

TRADITIONAL SERVICE

Christ Chapel
 Sun 9:30 a.m. Worship

INDEPENDENT BAPTIST SERVICE

Christ Chapel
 Sun 11 p.m. Worship

LAY-LED GOSPEL SERVICE

Christ Chapel
 Sun 12:30 p.m. Worship

LAY-LED APOSTOLIC SERVICE

Christ Chapel
 Sun 3 p.m. Worship
Christ Chapel
 2 p.m. Study of Book of Acts

MID-WEEK EVENTS

MONDAY

Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel
 Mon-Fri 11:45 a.m. Catholic Mass

Ocotillo Housing

7 p.m. Officer's Christian Fellowship
 Call Lt. Cmdr. Faunce 830-6654 for location

TUESDAY

Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel
 5 – 7:30 p.m. Catechist Meeting
 (Second Tuesday of the month)
 4 – 5:30 p.m. Children's RCIA
 6 p.m. Baptism Class 1st Tuesday each month
Christ Chapel
 9 a.m. Christian Women Fellowship*
C&E Mess Hall Bldg. 1660
 11:30 a.m. Bible Study
 Chaplain Flint 830-6187
Base Housing
 6 p.m. All Hands Bible Study
 Chaplain Taylor 830-7413 for location

WEDNESDAY

Village Center
 11:30 a.m. Prayer Meeting in the Prayer Room
 Chaplain Flint 830-6187
 6 p.m. Right of Christian Initiation for Adults*

Immaculate Heart of Mary

6 -7 p.m. Life Teen/Youth Group#
Christ Chapel
 5 p.m. IHM Choir Rehearsal
 5 p.m. Protestant Choir Rehearsal
 5:30 p.m. Catholic Choir Rehearsal
 7 p.m. Lay-Led Gospel Bible Study

THURSDAY

Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel
 7 p.m. Knights of Columbus
 1st Thursday of the Month

Christ Chapel

7 p.m. Lay-Led Apostolic Bible Study

Legend

*Indicates Child Care Provided
 +Appointments can be made for Confessions by calling 830-6456/6646
 # Resumes Fall 2006

MWSS-374 re-lays airfield matting

LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 is working to improve the landing conditions for aircraft that train at the Combat Center. They began pulling up the old matting on the Strategic Expeditionary Landing Facility and the unmanned aerial vehicle runway Jan. 10, and are expected to have both jobs finished by April 10.

"There are currently seven Marines from heavy equipment bulldozing, flattening the ground, and around 30 Marines from different companies who are picking up the old matting," said Sgt. Angel Huerta, lot foreman for heavy equipment. "We have been at it for 34 working days, usually staying here until it's dark."

The project, which requires a lot of long hard hours, consists of several different aspects. First, MWSS-374 must remove the old matting. All matting on the Expeditionary Airfield is required to be replaced every five years to ensure that the epoxy nonskid paint on the surface is reliable when aircrafts land. Then, the Marines have to ensure the ground transitions smoothly.

"A portion of what we do is pouring in a six percent mix of Portland Cement with the soil to stabilize it," said Staff Sgt.



LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER

Sgt. Angel Huerta and Cpl. Hector Gomez discuss how to make the ground transition smoothly at the Expeditionary Airfield Monday.

Jason Giles, heavy equipment section leader. "We have a 20 man working party who pours it, and then we come along and mix it. It's over 600,000 square feet of ground work and around 2,975 bags of cement."

From there, the Marines must begin the task of laying the AM-2 matting. The matting is a piece-by-piece process

assembled in a brickwork pattern to form runways, taxiways, parking and other areas required for aircraft operations and maintenance, according to the Web site, <http://www.cassholdings.com/services/am2.htm>, the official site for the government contractor that makes the AM-2 matting used to re-lay the airfield.

"Relaying the unmanned aerial vehicle runway will also allow VMU-1 [Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1] to move closer to MWSS-374 facilities," said Staff Sgt. James A. Cassidy, quality assurance. "Also, it will serve as a parking area for helos and is suitable for aircraft used in any CAX [combined armed exercises] or joint operations."

The matting is made to sustain the rigors imposed on the EAF by today's high-power aircraft and heavy-transport aircraft. It is replaced every five years whether it meets the criteria set forth or not, according to the Web site.

"It's a lot of long, hard hours, but it's fun because we get to operate," said Pfc. Hugo Gordillo, heavy equipment operator. "The worst part of the day is when we're not operating."

Many Marines who work at the airfield know that maintaining a fully operational airfield is crucial to their unit.

"The Expeditionary Airfield is MWSS-374's backbone," said Cassidy. "Without an airfield, MWSS-374 wouldn't exist out here."



LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER

Cpl. David Bedolla, heavy equipment operator flattens the ground at the Expeditionary Airfield Monday, so MWSS-374 can relay the airfield's matting.

Cpl. Hector Gomez, heavy equipment operator agrees on the importance of the airfield.

"Laying down the foundation for the matting is vital to provide service to the Marines

who operate the aircraft."

MWSS-374 Marines continue to work hard, ensuring the Combat Center is able to provide air support to units training here.

Treats made with a little love

LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Everyone can recognize the colorful boxes of tasty Girl Scout cookies. Now, these already-famous treats have become more popular thanks to the father of two girl scouts.

Kevin Peacock, father of Junior Scout Troop Ashley R. Peacock and Cadet Scout Alyssa Q. Peacock, came up with a plan that would benefit the name of Girls Scouts, and the morale of service members overseas.

A cookie donation program called Operation Cookie Drop has been in practice since 2001.

All boxes designated for donation to troops are put in baskets, and later transferred to Marine Corps Community Services and organized with the rest of the Desert Mail Call items.

Although the Girl Scout organization cannot directly donate cookies, Girl Scout troops may buy boxes to donate, or get donations from customers who buy boxes.

The idea Peacock came up with was to make a small area on each box of cookies where someone could write a personalized message to troops overseas.

He said the combination of familiar Girl Scout cookies and a heart-felt message from those at home would help inspire and carry troops through their deployment.

"We want the troops to know that this is not just a bulk shipment of health and comfort stuff," said Peacock. "These are donations made by citizens with heart-felt thanks and well-wishing."

A troop is what they call a collection of girls with the same Girl Scout troop number.

Yari Dominguez, trooper leader for 242 Brownie Troop and wife of Sgt. Israel Dominguez with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, had the same idea.



Ashley R. Peacock jr., Girl Scout, Michaela Lawrence, Brownie Girl Scout, Alyssa Peacock, cadet Girl Scout and Veronica Lawrence jr., Girl Scout, pose for a photo at their cookie selling booth in the Marine Corps Exchange March 2.

She said the 15 girls in her troop gave her the idea.

"They said it would be nice for them to know that there are kids who really miss their mommies and daddies," said Dominguez. "And even if it's from someone they don't know, it's nice to know someone is thinking of you."

Kevin said he hopes his idea will be wide-spread by next Girl Scout cookie season, which is March of next year.

"I'm really hoping the enthusiasm I've seen will spread to other troops and troop leaders," he said.

Although all local troops in areas like Coachella Valley have their own collec-

tion points for donations, some are far away enough to be brought into more populated areas by delivery trucks.

"The mailing messages are locally unique," said Peacock. "As far as I know, no one else is doing this."

"When my girls are out in front of the PX or barber shop or something, they explain to customers that this is

an opportunity to show that they care about the guys over seas. I also hope everyone will see the value in sending not just cookies, but words of encouragement."

For those who men and women serving overseas who love receiving mail and treats from home, this is sure to be a popular hit.

8TH & I from A1

The Marines typically are assigned two years of duty with the platoon, but in some cases three years. Once their tour is over, the Marines are assigned to the next deploying infantry unit, he explained.

The platoon perfects their drill sequence and skills during four months of rigorous training, which overlaps into their eight-month non-stop tour, said Copp.

After performing here the detachment performed twice more in the region, and then headed back to Washington D.C., to prepare for the Summer evening parade season.

No matter if a spectator has seen the Battle Color Ceremony before, every time is like the first time, according to Barbara Greenbush, a case worker for the Combat

Center's Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.

"I try to see them at every opportunity I get," she said. "I love watching them march and spin their rifles!

"It displays how Marines can take almost any skill and perfect it," Greenbush continued. "It's another good thing about the Marine Corps, and their uniforms are snazzy."

Fellow Marines also appreciate the performance and visit

from the elite detachment, such as Sgt. Regan A. Young, a band member of the Combat Center Band.

"I really liked the music selection this year," he said. "They played the James Bond theme. That was really different. It was performed very well."

For more information on the detachment and their future performances, log on to their Web site at <http://www.mbw.usmc.mil>.



The Silent Drill Platoon secures their bayonets in their sheaths after a performance part of the Battle Color Ceremony.



The Commandant's Own Drum and Bugle Corps perform during the Battle Color Ceremony at Gray's Field Tuesday.

Military OneSource offers free online tax filing

WASHINGTON — The Defense Department's Military OneSource family support program is once again offering free, online tax preparation and filing for service members and their families, officials said. The service began Jan. 15. It's available to active duty service members, National Guardsmen and reservists and their families.

This is the second year of the program. Last year, more than 327,000 tax claims were filed using a similar program, said Jane Burke, principal director in the Office of the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy.

Burke added that service members can put their tax refunds to good use as a deposit in a savings or retirement account or to pay off debts.

"How to use the refund may be the first financial decision of the year" for service members in improving their financial readiness, Burke noted. DoD is launching a campaign called "Military Saves" to encourage service members to save money and eliminate or reduce their personal debt.

Filers who use Military OneSource's online system can expect to receive their refund within 10 days, Burke said. And Military OneSource

tax consultants, she said, are trained to answer questions on preparing and filing taxes and provide other financial management information.

Additionally, through the Military OneSource Web site at www.militaryonesource.com, service members and their families can get guidance and answers to questions, Burke said.

The Military OneSource service augments the long-standing voluntary income tax assistance program offered through legal centers at most military installations, Burke said. Volunteers at the centers provide free tax

preparation and filing services, she said.

The service available through Military OneSource's Web site "is a new option where people can do their taxes online for free," said Army Maj. John Johnson, executive director, Armed Forces Tax Council. Tax-filing assistance also is available through the Internal Revenue Service's electronic filing program.

Military OneSource's online tax preparation and filing was very popular with service members and their families last year, Burke said.

"It is just one more way we can help improve the quality of life for our troops and their families," she said.



LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Black History

Rhys Green, an actor from the Black Ensemble Theater at King-Chavez Theater Institute in San Diego, visited the protestant chapel aboard the Combat Center Saturday in honor of Black History Month.

Green acted out a monolog and biography in first-person called "the Life and Times of Fredrick Douglas."

In the monolog, Green shared the details and accomplishments of a man who journeyed from an oppressive life as a slave to an educated and articulate public speaker who outwardly protested slavery in a world tarnished with prejudice.

Town hall meetings for Vista Del Sol residents

Town hall meetings will be held for all Vista Del Sol residents on the following times and dates. Attendance at one of the meeting is required to be eligible to be issued portable air conditioners. All town hall meeting will be conducted at the Protestant Chapel. It is important to have this information disseminated as installation instructions and demonstrations will be given.

Monday	6 to 8 p.m.
Wednesday	1 to 2 p.m.
Mar. 19	6 to 8 p.m.

Combat Center gears up for Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Fund drive

OP ONLINE

www.op29online.com



LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

2nd Lt. Danny Pratter, coordinator for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Fund Drive, speaks to attendees of a breakfast held March 1 at the Combat Center's Officers' Club to kick off this year's fund raiser.

LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Navy Marine Corps Relief Society representatives gathered at the Officer's Club March 1, for a breakfast to kick-off the annual society fund drive.

"The primary objective of this fund raiser is to raise awareness of what the society has available to the Marines and sailors on base," said 2nd Lt. Danny B. Pratter, NMCRS coordinator for the base.

In addition to assisting service members and their families, the NMCRS launches its fund drive in order to obtain funds which are vital to maintain the society.

In a brief given to unit representatives at the breakfast, the mission of the NMCRS was defined as: to provide, in partnership with the Navy and Marine Corps, financial, educational and other assistance to members of the Naval services of the United States, and their eligible family members and survivors when in need, and to receive and manage funds to administer these programs, according to the slide show given during the brief.

When the society was established in 1904, only about \$9,000 was donated to give it a foundation to work from. Beginning with only 19 volunteers, there are now more than 3,400 volunteers and about 200 paid employees in the NMCRS.

In 2006, the NMCRS provided more than \$1.2 million to 778 clients through the combat casualty assistance program, one which is designed to work with family members and service members to identify certain needs, mostly in the forms of grants. A grant is defined as funding for a non-profit organization for a specific purpose, according to the Web site <http://www.investorwords.com>. Unlike a loan, a grant does not need to be paid back to the organization from which it came.

During the brief, the following information was shared:

The society also provided \$1.37 million to 1,693 clients victimized by lending industry predators who sought out young personnel and charged outrageous interest rates.

The NMCRS handled 799 cases in Twentynine Palms, as well as \$433,879 interest-free loans and \$72,367 grants made to service members and their families.

Besides financial assistance, the society handled more than 9,776 individual counseling and referral cases, and 34,000 visits to patients in hospitals from nurses.

"The goal this year is to get

100 percent contact with all military service members," said Pratter. Meaning, he wanted 100 percent of military personnel aboard the base to be informed about the society and what options it makes available to them, he explained.

2nd Lt. Thomas J. Beck, assistant coordinator, agreed.

"We're trying to get com-

mand presence and make the commands more aware and interactive with what we're trying to do here," said Beck.

In previous years, society representatives would visit units and speak with the service members directly. Pratter said he felt having unit representatives will work more effectively.

"The unit rep's are the back-

bone of this entire fund drive," said Pratter. "They're the ones who can get the Marines and sailors really involved in this."

To donate, contact your unit's NMCRS representative. Donations may be made in the form of allotments, checks or cash. For more information, call Pratter at 830-5340, or Beck at 830-6765.



LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER

Getting down n' dirty

Marines from 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment prepare a terrain model at Camp Wilson in preparation for their upcoming Deliberate Assault Course Monday.

Alaskan brothers reunite in Anbar

LANCE CPL. RANDALL
LITTLE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq — A definition of a career for many is often thought to be that nine-to-fiver which allows a person to spend the rest of their time with their families and friends.

For Marines serving in Al Anbar Province in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, their career is one that not only demands the Corps values of honor, courage and commitment; it can sometimes require the Marines to spend many months in a combat zone away from their loved ones.

Lance Cpls. Robbie P. Courtney, 20, and his older brother Michel B. Courtney, 22, from Chugiak, Alaska, found themselves fortunate enough to encounter each other here March 3.

"I knew my brother Robbie was with (Regimental Combat Team 6) and I knew RCT-6 was replacing RCT-5," Michel explained. "I wasn't sure but I figured at some point I would see him around

the base before I left."

It would be nice to be able to see each other again but the brothers weren't sure how difficult it would be to track the other half down and didn't want to get their hopes up.

On pure dumb luck, Robbie bumped into his older brother's friends one afternoon. They told him they would let his older brother know they saw him and would give Michel his room number.

"Someone came knocking on my door one night," Robbie said. "I opened the door and there he was. It was really nice to see him again. It had been over a year since we'd last seen each other."

Meeting with a family member in Iraq is not something they expected. The Courtneys having been apart for such a long time they found this a good opportunity to make up for lost time.

"I've been away from home for close to three years now, so I've missed out on the stuff going on back home," Michel said. "Robbie told me how mom and dad said they were praying for me and he let me

know I'm now an uncle. He caught me up on a lot."

After spending a few hours getting back up to speed, the Courtneys made a phone call home to the rest of their family.

"I called back home and my mom picked up the phone," Robbie explained. "She asked me if I'd seen my brother. I said, 'Yeah, here he is,' and handed him the phone. She was surprised that we had found each other so quickly, and she was excited for us to be together."

The Courtneys knew speaking to their parents together made their parents very happy.

After talking to their parents, the pair decided to get together to watch a movie and relax. Since Robbie wasn't sure how long he was going to be able to relax with his brother, he wanted to make the most of the time they had to spend together.

"Michel leaves to go back home pretty quick," Robbie said. "Our jobs have us working different hours and it's hard to say when we will be able to hang out again."

Once Michel's unit, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, goes back to the States, he will be placed back in reserve status. It will be some time before Robbie returns home.

Robbie's year-long deployment allows him a small break midway through to go home on leave. That is still four to five months down the road, but once he goes home his older brother will take a turn in catching him up on past events.

The Courtneys were always the closest out of the numerous brothers in the family, they said, and when Robbie goes home they will be able to spend a lot more time together fishing and camping until Robbie is called back to Iraq to finish his deployment and continue his role in the ongoing fight.

'Great American Voices' to return to MCAGCC

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The National Endowment for the Arts will hold a free, public opera show at the Sunset Cinema Thursday at 7 p.m.

The purpose of the show is to support education in music and the liberal arts, and to bring art projects to military installations, said Charles R. Dougwillo, the fitness director for Marine Corps Community Services at the Combat Center.

This is not the first time the NEA has visited the Combat Center. Last February, five professional performers and one pianist starred in a show that featured 13 ballads and melodies from opera and Broadway classics. Some of the songs included selections from George Bizet's "Carmen," Leonard Bernstein's "West Side Story" and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's "Don Giovanni."

This year, two more performers have been added to the cast. Daniel Faltus, an acclaimed pianist and maestro, leads the troupe. Faltus has performed in and conducted many musicals and plays in a number of music halls worldwide. He has also acted in many performances, including the Tony Award-winning play "Master Class." Faltus can even be seen guest-starring in several television shows such as "Monk," "Alias" and "Firefly." He also plays the character Chives on the show "Even Stevens."

Not only is the NEA scheduled to perform at the Combat Center, but they also plan to reach out to the local schools. Twenty-nine



SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER III

Christina Navarro, James Martin Schaefer and Chad Berlinghieri, all opera singers with Opera Pacific, perform "Marriage of Figaro" for the students at Condor Elementary last March.

Palms High School is scheduled to host a show Thursday at 10:15 a.m.

During their last visit, several members of the troupe worked with pre-selected students who wish to pursue a career in the music industry. Those students performed on stage in front of their peers.

"We were the first base to work

with a high school," said Dougwillo.

Everyone thought the performance was excellent and the NEA hopes to do more this year, he added.

Approximately 140 fifth- and sixth-grade students from Condor Elementary School are expected to attend the performance at the high school.

"If we could reach children at an early age in liberal arts, it can become a lifetime skill," said Dougwillo.

The performers intend to work with the students at the high school again this year.

The 'Great American Voices' tour also visits other military installations. Last year, the tour visited

39 bases throughout the U.S., including the Combat Center.

The doors to the Sunset Cinema will open at 6:30 p.m. and the show will begin at 7 p.m. The event is free and open to military personnel and their families.

For more information or a tour schedule, log onto <http://www.greatamericanvoices.org>

7TH MARINES from A1

Weapons Course, Summer and Winter Mountain Leader courses and Naval Gunfire School.

Mashburn will go on to become the Training and Education Command sergeant major at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., as his next duty assignment.

Mashburn joined the Marine Corps out of Sikeston, Mo., also in 1979. He attended the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School to train in the electronics field following his basic training. Mashburn

held many billets to include drill instructor, senior drill instructor and company gunnery sergeant at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, and assignments as a company first sergeant, inspector-instructor sergeant major with 4th Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, based out of Bessemer, Ala., and director of the Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Quantico, Va.

As the Regimental Combat Team 7 sergeant major, Mashburn deployed with the unit to Iraq from January 2006 until January 2007.

The regimental commander, Col. William B. Crowe,

was in charge of the unit during the lengthy deployment, working alongside Mashburn, he said during his speech to the crowd.

"I'll always remember his loyalty to his Marines, keen wit and sense of humor," said Crowe. "He was my battle buddy and best friend during this deployment. It was a privilege to work with him."

The sergeant major wasn't the only Mashburn to leave a mark on the unit. His wife, Tina, was also a giving member of the community, explained Crowe. Tina was part of the Combat Center's Official Huggers, opening her arms to all the troops going to and returning from deployments.

"Thank you, Tina, for your support and dedication to this institution," said Crowe.

Mashburn spoke to the crowd about his first experience with the Magnificent 7th, as 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment first sergeant.

"The first thing I noticed about 7th Marines is the higher standards within the unit," he said.

He continued to speak about his overall experience as the regimental sergeant major and the Marines he led.

"It's amazing what these Marines will do," he explained. "I'm in awe of what they do. They are true warriors, the tip of the spear, and my hat's off to all of these Marines."

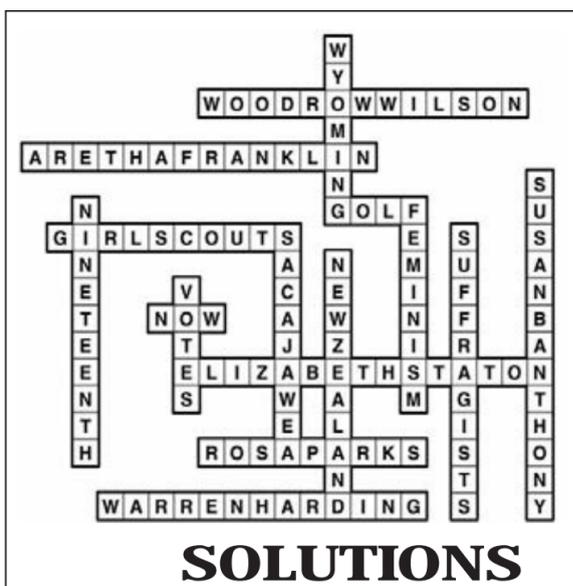
Mashburn was well-known

for his sense of humor and light take on things.

"I've always believed that we see too many tragic things in life to dwell on them," he said. "We've got to stay focused on the positive things."

Howell looks forward to taking on the regiment, he said.

"I appreciate the trust in me shown by the Marine Corps," he said. "It's an honor and special privilege to lead these Marines."



SOLUTIONS

Space camp scholarships available for Marine's kids

MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, Va. —

Applications are being accepted for the 2007 Bernard Curtis Brown II Memorial NASA Space Camp Scholarship.

Children of active duty service members, in grades 6 through 9, can apply for the scholarship which was created by the Military Child Education Coalition in memory of Bernard Curtis Brown II, the 11 year old son of Chief Petty Officer and Mrs. Bernard Curtis Brown, killed on Sept. 11, 2001, when the hijacked airliner was crashed into the Pentagon.

Located in Huntsville, Ala., Space Camp offers a unique, hands-on approach to learning outside the classroom. Activities include simulated Space Shuttle missions, training simulators, rocket building and launches, scientific experiments, and lectures on the past, present, and future of space exploration.

The scholarship covers tuition, meals, lodging, program materials, and transportation, for a five-day program. To apply, students must submit a scholarship application, along with a hand written essay stating why they should be selected, and two letters of recommendation from someone other than a relative. Those applying should ensure that their essays include details of patriotism, community service, future goals and "after camp" intentions.

The 2007 Bernard Curtis Brown II Memorial NASA Space Camp Scholarship application can be found by visiting the Military Child Education Website at <http://www.militarychild.org/Scholarship.asp>

The deadline for submission of applications, hand written essays, and letters of recommendation is April 2. Completed applications should be sent to:

Military Child Education Coalition

108 East FM 2410, Suite D
Harker Heights, TX 76548

For more information contact Kathleen Facon, Section Head, Children, Youth and Teen Programs (MRZ-3) at 703-784-9553 or kathleen.facon@usmc.mil.



LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Come on take a Freeride

Leslie Rosson, Civilian Ridesharing Coordinator, and Ron Johnson, Team Captain for the Exercise Support Division Vanpool, kicked off the Ridesharing Program Feb. 27. The program uses vans from Enterprise Rent-A-Car. Each van pool participant is entitled to receive \$110 monthly for their participation in the program. Some employees commute from as far away as Wildomar and Crestline, Calif. For those interested in participating in the program contact Leslie Rosson at 830-7602. Active duty service members are encouraged to participate as well.

Stay Marine



ANNUAL Base Golf Championships

Friday, March 16th

9 a.m.

Tee Time

Cost - \$35.

Includes Greens Fee, Cart, Range Balls,

Steak Lunch & prizes. Format - Individual Play

Call 830-6422 to sign up.



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OBSERVATIONS

MARCH 9, 2007

Generations of **Women** moving history → forward

GUNNERY SGT. HERRICK A. ROSS
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ADVISOR

The American Dream is an important component of American history. It has provided the substance for many Americans' individual dreams. The belief in each person's worth, in their ability to succeed according to the formula of hard work plus virtuous behavior plus self-reliance, has motivated many generations of Americans. Belief in work and its importance, belief in material success, and belief in equal opportunity for everyone have all provided the underpinnings for our society. But often the nature of dreams is to be illusory. In our history this has been the case for any number of groups for which the concept of "equal opportunity" has literally been a dream — a vision, desire, or aspiration — rather than a reality. Given our acquaintance with human ignorance, fear, and prejudice, the denial of equal opportunity to readily identified minorities is easy to comprehend (if not to excuse). However, when a group representing fully half (and quite possibly a majority) of our population — our mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters — is denied opportunity, it is indeed curious, especially when that disadvantaged majority is made up of people we profess to love. A look at history gives us an idea of how such a state of affairs could exist and what actions, activities, and circumstances combined to bring about change — in other words, to "free our dreams."

In the early 1800s the common law doctrine of *femme covert* was prevalent in the States. Under this law wives were chattels of their husbands and had no direct legal control over their own earnings, children, or property. Some state laws prohibited women from going into business without their husband's consent, and some dictated that a husband could decide where the family would live. Other state laws stated that adultery on the part of the husband was not sufficient grounds for divorce, but it was if committed by the wife. The rise of women's consciousness regarding their oppression was strongly influenced by their participation

See **WOMEN'S HISTORY, B2**



PUBLIC DOMAIN

Amelia Earhart was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean



PUBLIC DOMAIN

Susan B. Anthony played a pivotal role in the 19th century women's right movement



COURTESY PHOTO

Nancy Pelosi is the first female Speaker of the House.

WOMEN'S HISTORY from B1

with the abolitionist movement. Future leaders of the women's rights movement such as Elizabeth Stanton and Lucy Stone came to see their situation as analogous to that of the Black slave. The establishment of female anti-slavery societies of the mid-1800s brought many women together for the first time. Besides the social benefit of the societies, they provided women the opportunity to develop leadership, organizational, and political skills. Women active in the anti-slavery cause became aware of their own group, as a class, as subject to discrimination.

Because of the struggle, suffering, and campaigning of women since the beginning of America, there exists a tremendous legacy of legal rights. These women endured and were victorious, so that all women, African-American, Asian-American, Euro-American, Hispanic, and Native American women, can live and enjoy freedom today. They may not have reached the elusive goal of total legal equality, but the legacy of rights they have provided women today is far removed from what was known by women in colonial days.

Women, though diverse in ethnicity, share a commonality

in the legacy of women's rights. The women of the late 20th century have been given a gift for their families, in politics, in economics, in education, and in the military. Many of the women who were instrumental in leaving this legacy are familiar to us; one name is that of Susan B. Anthony. Just as women recognize Susan B. Anthony for her leadership and achievements, they must recognize that there were women who made individual contributions to the legacy that were never written about in any book or any article. The contributions of these women were not captured on a piece of paper or recorded on any film, but these women have had a significant impact on the gift of legal rights. Patricia Ireland in her book, "What Women Want," talked of her grandmother, who had done the "unheard of thing" in her day of publicly exercising throughout her first two pregnancies when she should have been confined, and learned to drive a car and continued to drive after the police warned her husband how dangerous it was for her to drive. Dangerous not because of her lack of driving skills, but because male drivers were not accustomed to seeing women on the road and were likely to crash.

Traditionally women have always taken a part in the pro-

tection of their nations. They have served as cooks, camp followers, nurses, and in combat. Some women have served as warriors all around the world. Queen Boadicea of the Iceni Tribe of Britain led her people in revolt against the Roman Empire in A.D. 61. In the War with the Germans, she said, "We British are used to women commanders in war! I am descended from mighty men! But I am not fighting for my kingdom and wealth now. I am fighting as an ordinary person for my last freedom, my bruised body, and my outraged daughters. . . you will win this battle, or perish. That is what I, a woman, plan to do!--let the men live in slavery if they will."

The Germans perished during that battle. Helen Rogan, the author of *Mixed Company* says, "Yes, women can be warlike and brave, cruel and cunning." Evidence of these skills and abilities in women in the medieval period is abundant. We acknowledge and celebrate women like Eleanor of Aquitaine; Jane of Flanders; Agnes, Countess of Dunbar; Philippa of Hainault; Mary of Hungary; Joan Hackette; Queen Margaret of Denmark; Catherine the Great; and Isabella of Spain. All of them led armies in war and commanded men. In the 19th century King Gezo of Dahomey,



COURTESY OF DOD

Condoleezza Rice, who currently serves as Secretary of State, holds one of the highest positions in the federal government.

West Africa, had three regiments, each with 1,000 women soldiers who were required to fight to the death. Military history reveals that Joan of Arc planned strategy and fought with the French Army in the Hundred Years War, and Molly Pitcher served during the American Revolution, first as a nurse and water carrier and later as a field artilleryman—firing her husband's cannon when he was wounded. Another woman who disguised herself as a man and served in the 4th Massachusetts Regiment as

Robert Shirliffe was Deborah Sampson. She completed a three-year enlistment during which she fought in several battles and completed many scouting missions. On one such mission, she was wounded and had to take care of her own wound to prevent discovery. According to John Roth, editor of the *Encyclopedia of Social Issues*, 127 documented cases of women disguised as men exist for the American Civil War. There are estimates of close to 400 women who disguised themselves as men dur-

ing that war.

Women joined and continue to join the military for many reasons: to fulfill a patriotic duty, to learn a profession, to obtain help with college tuition, and to travel. Women have served in all branches of the military service, and many have risen to general officer rank. They continue to prove that when given the opportunity, they can and will excel. Living the legacy of women's rights is a continuing challenge, but one that must be met to continue the legacy for future generations of women.

2007 Intramural Basketball Standings

As of Wednesday

MCCES A	6-0
3/7	9-1
TTECG	5-2
Tanks	4-2
MWSS-374	4-3
Hospital	3-3
MCCES B	3-4
I&L	3-4
CZY-38 Urban	1-5
3rd LAR	1-7
Magazine	0-8

Derrick Tremble from Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School Team A soars above the competition during a game in the Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League.



CAROL VONNEIDA

Semper Fit seeks applications for Armed Forces Cycling Team

MARADMIN 119/079

Applications are now being accepted for the 2007 U.S. Armed Forces Cycling Team. The application deadline is Tuesday.

U.S. Armed Forces Cycling Team members will be licensed and represent the team in local, regional, national and international events throughout the 2007 season.

Male candidates must hold a USA Cycling Category One license. Female candidates must hold a USAC Category Two license. Cyclists must possess and maintain a USAC International Racing license and meet all eligibility requirements of USAC, the Union Cycliste Internationale and Conseil International Du Sport Militaire.

Selection will be by resume and will consider

potential of top performances in elite category races, history of strong teamwork, and history of performance at the national and international level.

Priority will be given to recent performance that shows a trend of continued improvement. The ability to lead or support the team leader in the U.S. Elite National Championships is the main focus for the 2007 season and will be given the highest consideration.

Team members are expected to compete in a regular schedule of local, regional and national races.

The projected 2007 Armed Forces cycling schedule is:

April 26-30 - Vuelta de Bisbee Stage Race, Bisbee, Ariz.;

May 1-8 - Tour of the Gila Stage Race, Silver City, N.M.;

July 9-16 - U.S. Elite National Time Trial and Road Race Championships, Champion, Penn.;

Marines interested must submit Marine Corps sports application and armed forces cycling application to HQMC Semper Fit no later than Tuesday.

Applications can be found at <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/sports> or the local Semper Fit athletics office.

Resumes must contain command endorsement stating the Marine will be made available to attend all events if selected. Marines stationed at a command with a local Marine Corps Community Services Semper Fit must submit their applications through the Semper Fit athletic director.

If you are interested in submitting a resume package, contact Skip Best at 830-4092.

2007 All-Marine Volleyball Team

The All-Marine men's and women's volleyball team trials will be held April 15 to May 5 at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C.

The Armed Forces Volleyball Championship will be held May 6-13 at United States Military Academy West Point, N.Y.

Marines interested must submit sports applications to Headquarters Marine Corps Semper Fit no later than Thursday. Applications must include past volleyball experience and tournaments in the last two years.

Applications can be found at www.usmc-mccs.org/sports or the local Semper Fit Athletics Office.

Resumes must contain command endorsement stating the Marine will be made available to attend all events if selected. Marines stationed at a command with a local Marine Corps Community Services Semper Fit must submit their applications through the Semper Fit athletic director.

If you are interested in submitting a resume package, contact Skip Best at 830-4092.

Headquarters Marine Corps seeks chess players

MARADMIN 120/007

The inter-service chess tournament will be held June 11-15 at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif. The All-Marine team will be comprised of six team members and will be selected from resumes submitted.

The NATO Military Chess Tournament will be held in Antalya, Turkey, in September. The U.S. team will consist of six players. Marines interested in being

selected must submit resumes no later than April 16.

Resumes must include the United States Chess Federation membership card, identification number, state of registration, UCSF rating, date of rating, and record of significant chess activity during the past two years (provide date, place, event, and standing).

Resume packages must contain command endorsement stating the Marine will be made available to attend all

events if selected and should be sent through the local Marine Corps Community Services Semper Fit athletic director for coordination.

Resume forms are available on the MCCA Web site at <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/chess/index.cfm> be picked up from your local installation Semper Fit athletic director.

If you are interested in submitting a resume package, contact Skip Best at 830-4092.

