

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

MAY 11, 2007

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 50 ISSUE 18

Combat Camera offers bird's eye view for Mojave Viper training



A CH46-E Sea Knight helicopter drops off a load of supplies for Combat Camera to set up their ninth observation video camera May 2.

LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Combat Camera section began setting up their ninth permanent exercise-training video camera outside the Quackenbush training area May 2.

The most recent camera is an addition to the other eight cameras previously set-up around Range 400 and other training areas in order to assist units in reviewing and assessing their training here.

The camera tripod, six bags of cement, five water jugs, six deep-charged batteries and a battery box for storage were lifted to the Cerole Observation Post by means of a CH-46E Sea Knight Helicopter operated by Marines with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 764.

Upon the lifting and landing of the gear at the post, Marines with Company B, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School assisted combat camera personnel in leveling and grounding the tripod.

The working party placed three circular rims around each of the tripod's base legs to act as a border for the rocks and cement which were mixed inside of them to keep the tripod stable.

The camera, which was later installed by a private contracting company called Electronic Specialty Personnel, will be operated by a control center approximately three miles away, said Roy Vanderleelie, director

of the Combat Camera video section.

Upon a unit's notification of their need for the camera's observations, a Marine videographer will be posted in the control center to maintain and check equipment, and record and follow training with the maneuverable joint where the camera is secured.

The purpose of planting numerous video cameras in and around training areas is to capture footage of training units, offering a more effective way to review and critique their efforts.

"We are here to support combat readiness. That is our first priority," said Mike Ortiz, supervisor for the Combat Camera television section. "That includes development and research, or training. We're here to capture overall maneuver of the training units."

Ortiz said the units who receive recorded training sessions greatly benefit from the critiques and assessments made possible by the recordings.

"The units can see the exercise and receive better after-action reviews from the exercise coordinator," said Ortiz.

Sgt. Ernest V. Hagewood, videographer, agreed.

"It is here to teach instructors how to better teach the National Iraqi Guard with interpreting, how to better perform vehicle checks and inspections and how to conduct more effective weapons training," said Hagewood about the Combined Arms Military Operational Urban

Training taking place near Camp Wilson. "We're here to help provide units with better training."

Cpl. Bryan D. Istre, a fellow videographer, said the cameras are a vital aspect to improving training.

"This way we can show everything that's going on," said Istre. "We're not limited to watching one platoon in the exercise. We're able to capture the entire event and go back and clearly see senior leadership in every aspect of the training cycle."

As the Marine Corps continues to implement better technology toward combat training, warriors can be reassured their knowledge and experience will provide them the necessary means to return home safely.



A CH46E Sea Knight helicopter picks up cement bags, jugs of water, and a camera tripod for Combat Camera May 2.

3/4 returns home from fourth deployment



Family and friends of the Marines and sailors of 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, wait for their service members to return May 4, at Victory Field.

LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines and sailors with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment returned home to a sea of joyful friends and family members at Victory Field May 3 through Sunday after a nine-month deployment in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

More than 800 Marines and sailors returned home from what was originally scheduled to be a seven-month deployment, but was extended by one month after President George W. Bush announced unit extensions to increase forces in Iraq.

The extension affected four other Marine Corps units, including 1st Battalion (reinforced), 6th Marine Regiment; 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) consisting of 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment; Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 165 (reinforced) and Combat Logistics Battalion 15.

The reason behind the deployment extensions was to increase forces in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. All units who

extended can expect to be re-deployed in approximately seven to nine months, according to a press release issued by Headquarters Marine Corps on Jan. 11.

The extended deployments seemed to only intensify family and friends' anticipation as the white buses rolled to a stop in front of Victory Field, which was scattered with banners and joyful shouting.




Irma Lozano, girlfriend of Lance Cpl. Andy Garcia of Weapons Company, said her 3-year-old son, Julian, wants to go see the "Spiderman 3" movie with Garcia when he returns.

"The whole war thing has always bothered me," said Lozano. "But it never touched me like it does now. I'm so glad he's coming home, but I still feel bad for those who are not coming home."

Cpl. Aaron M. Gordon, Company A, Headquarters Battalion, was an infantryman and training noncommissioned officer with 3/4 from 2002 to 2005, and deployed with them three times before his move to Headquarters Battalion.

See 3/4 RETURN, A4

Weekend Weather

Friday		93/62 Sunny
Saturday		92/62 Sunny
Sunday		94/63 Sunny

Inside this issue

- A4: Shaken Baby Syndrome
- A5: 3/11 tests new technology
- A6: Things to consider at the car dealership

Observations



CG's Softball League in full swing.

This Day in Marine Corps History

— 1920 —

The 16th Marine Regiment organized at Philadelphia for duty in Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Sempertoons

By Gunnery Sgt. Charles Wolf



LANCE CPL. BRYAN A. PETERSON

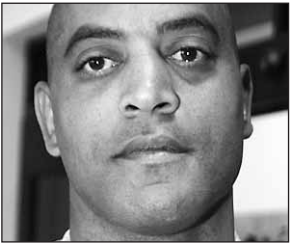
Misfire

The pistol training program will not change this October as noted last week in a story printed on page A8. The whole program has to be developed and then validated on the road before being implemented. The soonest this may change is October 2008.

Centerspeak

“What is the nicest thing you ever did for your mom on Mother’s Day?”

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



GUNNERY SGT. ERIC W. YOUNG
3RD LAR, COMPANY H.

“I left home.”



LANCE CPL. CURTIS M. MEZACK
MWSS-374

“I took her out to dinner and gave her a set of 14 K. gold earrings and a plaque that had the Marine emblem and “greatest mom in the world” on it.”



PFC JACOBUS B. BLIGNAUT
3/4, UNDETERMINED COMPANY

“I had a glass ornament made of her sister who died that year.”

What’s on your mind?

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

Call Cpl. Evan M. Eagan at 830-5472

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

Military Spouse Appreciation Day today

Since 1984, the armed forces have set aside a special day to honor the heroes at home - the men and women who support their military spouses. This year, May 11, has been designated Military Spouse Appreciation Day. The life of a military family is one of unique challenges. These challenges are currently exacerbated by the high operational tempo of the Marine Corps. In spite of the challenges, military spouses continue to demonstrate strength, devotion and grace. Military spouses inspire by their example in the many supporting roles they play, including supporting both mission and family readiness. As we celebrate military spouse appreciation day, my wife, Annette, and I express our heartfelt gratitude to all Marine Corps spouses for their support and commitment to their Marines, their families and their communities. I also encourage Marines to take the time to thank our Marine Corps spouses, in your own special way, for a job well done.

**Semper Fidelis,
James T. Conway,
general,
U.S. Marine Corps,
Commandant of the Marine Corps**



C.O.P. Corner
Community Oriented Policing



The proactive voice of crime prevention

Presented by the Provost Marshal’s Office Crime Prevention Section

Identity Theft Prevention

If you shop online, ensure you do so from established companies with secure Web sites. Beware of clone Web sites. They are purposely designed to steal financial information. If possible, place orders online, then mail in a check or money order. If you prefer shopping at malls, follow these tips to keep your information safe: Avoid carrying your Social Security card with you. Keep a copy and lock the original in a secure place. Notify the credit card issuer immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen or misused. Always sign the back of credit cards with "SEE I.D." Keep a record of all of your credit card numbers and pertinent telephone numbers in a safe place at home. Be extra careful if you carry a wallet or purse, because they are prime targets for criminals in crowded areas. Handle your mail and trash carefully. Criminals are known to rummage through trash to get personal information. For more information on identification theft and how to avoid it, go to Web site: <http://www.ftc.gov>.

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

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Hot Topics

Hospital Expansion Project Under-Way

The Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital Pharmacy expansion project is underway. This project involves enclosing the alcove area between Mental Health and the main hospital. During the project there will be a moderate amount of noise and dust in this area. Since the Galley patio area is near the construction site, noise and dust levels may be higher than normal. Please take this into consideration if you choose to eat lunch in this area. Access to and from the patio area will be limited to the Galley and ground floor entrances since the stairs in the patio area will be secured. This construction will also affect access between the main hospital and the clinics. The public corridor that leads from Mental Health to the hallway in front of the Radiology Reception Desk will be secured. Public travel between the Laboratory/Radiology/Pharmacy/ER areas and the clinics will have to be routed through the hospital's main entrance. The staff access hallway behind the clinics will not be affected. Please do not direct patient and visitors to use this hallway since it poses significant security and privacy issues. When it is expedient to good medical care, patients may be personally escorted by a hospital staff member; however, this should be done discretionally. The projected completion date for this project is approximately late July. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to either contact the Director of Public Health Services at 830-2206 or the Facilities Manager at 830-2395.

Heat Condition Flag Warning System

Summer is coming. MCAGCC Heat Condition Flag Warning System is in effect. It is a leader's responsibility to be aware of heat conditions and to take steps to prevent heat casualties. All organizations on base responsible for informing subordinate units must be aware of the current flag condition and ensure that the information is distributed as appropriate. Leaders should review Combat Center Order 6200.3D for information concerning prevention of heat casualties, first aid for casualties and the flag condition warning system. The G-3 point of contact for the warning system is Staff Sgt. McMillon who can be reached at 830-6662. The current heat index can be checked at the Naval Hospital's Web site at <http://164.167.141.93/29palms/>.

Road Closures

Del Valle Road is currently being repaved from Sixth to Tenth Street. Northbound traffic will be routed up Sixth Street to Brown Road, then down Tenth Street back to Del Valle Road. Southbound traffic will be routed up Tenth Street to Brown Road, then down Sixth Street back to Del Valle Road. Please be attentive to all traffic control signs. **See Story, pg. A9.**

scouts will be retiring five flags that evening.

New Gym Hours

Mon-Fri 5 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Sat-Sun 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Holidays 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Changes were made to week-end and holiday hours. We will be open two hours later than before.

Softball Team Wanted

Sports has an opening for one team to join the Commanding General's Intramural Softball League. If interested call sports at 830-4092.

DRMO Closed

The Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service/Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office located at Bldg. 1102-T1 will be closed May 16-29. The office will re-open May 30. The local DRMS representative will be TAD.

Leisure Items

Troop 78 Flag Retirement

Troop 78 will be performing a flag retirement ceremony May 21, at 7:30 p.m. at the Victory Field pavilion. The

LAST CHANCE TO GET TICKETS FOR STOCK CAR RACING

National Orange Show in San Bernardino, Calif., is offering free tickets to NOS Fair and Speedway for service members, family members and veterans May 26. They will also serve hotdogs, hamburgers, soda, have static displays and allow attendees to meet the drivers, just to say thank you for serving in the military. Please contact the Public Affairs Office at 830-6213 with the number of tickets needed for each command and points of contact for distribution no later than Wednesday.

TRADITIONAL SERVICE AT CHRIST CHAPEL.

The Religious Ministries Directorate is pleased to announce a traditional service on Sundays, beginning June 3 at 11:00 a.m., in the East Wing of Christ Chapel. Pastor Gerald Garrett will lead the service, which will include familiar Scriptural liturgy, songs, and lessons applied to life's situations. If you have questions, please contact the RMD at 830-6304.

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 (Bldg 1551)

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 p.m. Life Teen/Youth Group

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)

LAY-LED GOSPEL SERVICE

Christ Chapel

Sun 12:30 p.m. Worship

MID-WEEK EVENTS

MONDAY

Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel

Mon-Fri 11:45 a.m. Catholic Mass

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

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*

Christ Chapel

5:30 p.m. Catholic Choir Rehearsal

6:00 p.m. Praise & Worship Rehearsal

6:00 p.m. Pre-Service Food/Fellowship

7:00 p.m. Lay-Led Gospel Bible Study

7:00 p.m. Praise & Worship Service

1ST THURSDAY EACH MONTH

7 p.m. Knights of Columbus

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. Sunday School*

Sun 9 a.m. Worship*

Wed 7 p.m. Praise & Worship*

LAY-LED INDEPENDENT BAPTIST SERVICE

Christ Chapel

Sun 11 a.m. Worship

LEGEND

*Indicates Child Care Provided

+Appointments can be made for Confessions by calling 830-6456/6646

Resumes Fall 2006

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Shaken Baby Syndrome: 100% preventable

PERRY FORD
EDUCATION AND PREVENTION SPECIALIST

Your baby has been crying for hours. Regardless of what you try—a bottle, clean diaper, warm bath, gentle patting or walking, the baby will not stop crying. Each wail increases your frustrations as you become increasingly tired. Why won't this child stop crying? In a single moment of frustration and anger fueled by your exhaustion, you shake your baby. The shake was not a gentle movement, but was instead a sharp violent snapping of the child's head back and forth. In that moment you have potentially injured your child in a manner which can cause life-long injury or death. A normal infant cries 2 to 3 hours each day. Every year, frustrated, angry or exhausted parents and caregivers shake an estimated

1,400 children. 30% of these children will die from being shaken. This action of violently shaking a child is known as Shaken Baby Syndrome. Shaken Baby Syndrome is a type of inflicted traumatic brain injury that happens when a baby is violently shaken. A baby has weak neck muscles and a large heavy head which lacks the strength to provide support during an episode of shaking. This shaking makes the fragile brain bounce back and forth inside the skull and causes bruising, swelling and bleeding, which can lead to permanent, severe brain damage or death. Typical injuries of shaken baby syndrome are subdural hemorrhages (bleeding in the brain), retinal hemorrhages (bleeding in the retina), blindness, seizures, damage to the spinal cord and neck, paralysis, men-

tal retardation, brain damage and fractures of the ribs and bones. These injuries may not be immediately noticeable and may present themselves later in life as learning, speech or developmental delays. Shaken baby injuries usually occur in children younger than 2 years old, but may be seen in children up to the age of 5. Symptoms of Shaken Baby Syndrome include extreme irritability, lethargy, poor feeding, breathing problems, seizures, vomiting, altered consciousness and pale or bluish skin. Caring for an infant provides many different challenges and taking time to develop coping skills will dramatically increase your ability to handle those stressful moments. When you are caring for a crying child, attempting to take care if immediate needs such as feeding, burping, checking for restricting clothing or deter-

mining if the baby is too hot or cold may result in success. Once these needs are met, if the baby is still crying consider going for a walk or a drive in the car, giving the baby a warm bath, limiting distractions such as noise or light, gently rocking the baby or calling someone for assistance. If you are unable to calm the child or obtain assistance from a family member or friend place the child in a safe secure location such as a crib and take a 10 minute break in the next room. Deep breathing will help you calm yourself and enable you to safely care for the child. Shaken baby syndrome is a community problem that is 100% preventable through education and support. Parents and caregivers can find support through Family Advocacy; New Parent Support Program; the Children & Youth & Teen Program or through their family physician.

3/4 RETURN from A1

“It's really weird being on this end instead of on the end that's coming back,” said Gordon, who wrote “Welcome home, 3/4!” on the back window of his truck to show his anticipation for their return. “I'm just stoked to know that I helped train them, and that I helped bring my boys home safely today,” he said. Gordon said he is looking forward to exchanging stories and having a good time with his friends, and understands how it feels to return home after being gone for so long. “I want to be there for them if they want to talk to someone who has been there and done that,” said Gordon. Rita McKinney, a proud grandmother of several Marines, said she was welcoming six grandsons home that evening. Although only one of the Marines who came home was her biological grandson, she claimed the other five as adoptive grandsons, having known them for years and bringing them into her home on holidays. While her boys were overseas, McKinney said she sent all of them portable DVD players so they could watch their favorite movies. “These are my boys, and they deserve the best of everything as far as I'm concerned,” said McKinney. Many would agree with McKinney. The Marines and sailors of 3/4, along with all other service members who fight for America, deserve the best after having served in the War on the Radical Islamic Movement.



Lance Cpl. Andrew Cubic, Company L., hugs his wife, Kristin at the 3/4 homecoming at Victory Field May 3.



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Desert Hot Springs High School seeks JROTC instructor

The Marine Corps is seeking a recently retired, or soon-to-be retired, staff noncommissioned officer to teach Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps students at Desert Hot Springs High School in Desert Hot Springs, Calif., starting this summer. Applicants for this full-time position must enjoy working with teens and have a desire to develop the leadership potential of his or her students. Retirees looking to “take it easy” should look elsewhere. MCJROTC Instructors dedicate extensive time and effort to the mentorship of America's youth. Basic qualifications include: retired SNCO, with-

in the past three years, with at least 20 years of active duty service, a high school diploma, a minimum GT score of 100 on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, a competitive military record, and be physically qualified according to Marine Corps standards. A complete list of requirements, applications, application procedures and background information on the program can be located on the internet at <http://www.mcjrotc.org>. Interested parties should contact retired Lt. Col. Lewke, the Desert Hot Springs senior Marine instructor at 288-7088 for more details about the position.

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3/11 puts new artillery technology to test



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN
Lance Cpl. Zachary Smith, an artilleryman assigned to Battery M, establishes a line of fire for a howitzer April 30.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN
Marines from Battery M dig in an M777A2 howitzer at the Combat Center's Quackenbush training area April 30.

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marines of Mike and India Battery, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, put the new M777A2 light-weight howitzer to the test at the Combat Center's Quackenbush training area April 30 to May 4.

The new howitzer is equipped with a computer called the Digital Fire Control System, which has never been tested by an artillery battery before.

"Adding the system changes the way we've done artillery for the past 100 years," said Capt. Neal V. Fisher, the commanding officer of Battery M. "It allows us to use technology that is available, making it more interactive. Everything is essentially computerized or digital."

With the aid of technology, a number of advancements can be made in the field of artillery. This new howitzer can do a number of things that have never been accomplished before according to Fisher.

"The gun can now do the job of surveyors," he said. "It can find itself on the ground using GPS, making it ready to shoot in a matter of minutes."

"Every gun also has a computer mounted in the bottom," he added. "This allows

"Adding the system changes the way we've done artillery for the past 100 years,"

— Capt. Neal V. Fisher

the battalion to track every howitzer by means of digital communication."

In artillery, communication is essential. Without communication, fire missions cannot be coordinated properly.

"The DFCS allows the gun line and the Fire Direction Center to share digital firing data that used to be passed over the radio," said Fisher.

"It's all controlled digitally," added Capt. Stephen K. Ford, the commanding officer of Battery I. "There are no voice commands. This cuts the time to send rounds downrange by about half."

"All these changes allow the Marines to fire faster and more accurately. The gun line can also spread out farther, reducing the risk of counter attack," said Fisher. "Everyone in the artillery community has been excited about this gun for a long time. The folks higher up are anxious to see the result of this field operation."

The other new technology

being tested in the field was the new powder charge system called the Modular Artillery Charge System.

"The powder charge comes in canisters instead of bags," said Fisher. "It's much more efficient. Nothing is wasted."

"Artillery is an age-old weapons system," he added. "There's not much we can do to change it. We've just taken steps to modernize it."

Another significant aspect of the field operation is that most of the battalion was involved.

"3/11 is one of the busiest artillery battalions," Fisher stated. "We rarely get the opportunity to train as a battalion. We're always busy supporting other missions, both on base and in Iraq."

Both Battery M and Battery I were involved with the fire missions. Battery L is currently on block leave after recently returning from a deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Battery K was practicing civil military and convoy security operations alongside elements of Combat Logistics Battalion 7 at the Combat Center's Range 215 to prepare for their upcoming deployment.

Battery M and Battery I are both scheduled to deploy to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom by spring 2008.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN
Cpl. Jorge Segura, an artilleryman assigned to Battery M, calibrates an M777A2 howitzer April 30.

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PFC. ETHAN HOALDRIDGE
MARINE FORCES PACIFIC

U.S. MARINE CORPS FORCES, PACIFIC, CAMP H. M. SMITH, Hawaii — Is it worth it to rush into an auto loan to get a fancy new car, and subsequently live off of instant noodles, mac ‘n’ cheese and PB & Js for the next four or five years?

Most Marines who arrive at a new duty station immediately want to check out their new surroundings, experience the culture and see the sights, but don’t have any transportation to do it.

“When I found out my first duty station was Hawaii, I couldn’t believe it,” said Pfc. Ryan Kernan, an administration clerk, MARFORPAC training office. “I already knew a lot of the things I wanted to do before I even got here, but it was hard to get around without a car.”

Some Marines who already have vehicles will take new Marines under their wing and drive them around.

Marines can take taxis, bum rides or use public transportation, but that can become a hassle.

When Marines arrive at their new duty station and decide to get a car, they need to be aware of the many traps they can fall into when they go to a used car lot or dealership.

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Many service members shop for cars on lemon-lots aboard their bases.

“Usually what happens is someone with no credit or a low credit score gets excited when they find a dealership that says, ‘we’ll finance anybody,’” said Cpl. Robert White, a former Land Rover salesman, now MARFORPAC combat illustrator. “When they say that, it usually means the buyer will have a really high annual percentage rate and pay up to \$5,000 more for the car.”

A car salesman makes a living off commission, so the more they can charge you

over the Manufacturer’s Suggested Retail Price, the better the commission.

“If you can’t get a decent APR, then don’t buy a car. Just save your money and buy a car off the lemon lot,” said White. “Also, I recommend bringing an experienced buyer with you to the dealership when buying a car to help determine if you’re getting a good deal or not.”

Some first-time buyers become impatient and won’t wait until their credit is built and make hasty decisions like buying a car outside of their budget.

“The first problem young enlisted service members run into is their credit score,” said Carol Richards-Boyd, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society financial advisor. “We usually tell Marines to get a credit card and pay it off every month on time to establish credit.”

The credit bureaus Experian, Equifax and TrueCredit all have Web sites that allow you to check your current credit score. By law, any one is allowed to check their credit score annually for free.

Young people usually won’t have credit scores or

they will be 550 or below, until they get their first credit card and make those monthly, on-time payments, according to the NMCRS Web site.

“Once you have a high enough credit score to get a loan, it doesn’t mean you’re ready to buy a car,” said Richards-Boyd.

The better credit score a buyer has, the lower the monthly payments will be.

According to CarBuying-Tips.com, no prospective car buyers should purchase if they cannot buy a car that they can afford to pay off in 48 months. Also, they should

be able to put down 20 percent of the car loan to keep from getting “upside down,” where you owe more on the car than it is worth.

Once a Marine has saved 20 percent of his anticipated price range, they should consider what type of vehicle to buy.

Things to consider as normal criteria for a car:

- Safety (vehicles must pass state safety inspection before a driver will receive their vehicle registration)

- Reliability, low maintenance

See CAR BUYING, A7

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CAR BUYING from A6

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“Once you’ve decided what kind of vehicle to buy, you should research car insurance quotes,” said Richards-Boyd. “GEICO and Progressive Auto Insurance are two companies that usually give the lowest rates for customers.”

Some banks and insurance companies offer discounts or lower rates for military.

Along the road to buying a car, there are a few acronyms and words a Marine should learn the definitions of and how they apply when purchasing a car.

MSRP, the Manufacturer’s Suggested Retail Price, and APR, Annual Percentage Rate, are both important to understand.

The dealership will sell a vehicle for as much above the MSRP on a vehicle as they can to make maximum profit.

The APR a buyer receives on their loan affects how much they will pay for the car total after the 48- or 60-month payment schedule. The buyer will pay the bank much more money on a \$15,000 loan with an 18 percent APR, than someone who has the same loan with a 6 percent APR.

“Before walking into a dealership, I suggest making sure you have done your homework and know the invoice price and MSRP on the type of vehicle you intend on buying,” said Richards-Boyd. “Almost all car dealerships mark up the price of their vehicles. You don’t want to pay \$14,000 for an \$11,000 car.”

Kelly Blue Book is a common source to find the value of a car. By visiting their Web site at www.kbb.com, a buyer can check the recommended

price of almost any make and model of vehicle.

A good credit score will get the buyer anywhere from four to eight percent APR, which means they pay much less interest on their loan than someone with a bad credit score and an APR of 15 percent on their car loan.

A good credit score is 650 or above, but consumers should shoot for above 700, according to Equifax’s Web site.

A \$15,000 car with 15 percent APR for a 60-month finance term could make the monthly payments \$376 with \$15,825 as the total amount financed. A one percent difference would make the payments \$368 and could mean as much as \$500 difference on the total amount paid after the 60 months.

“First-time buyers should definitely visit NMCRS for financial management counseling before they go off and buy a car, because we can help them see unforeseen costs down the road that would greatly impact their life style and budgeting,” said Richards-Boyd.

Initial costs of buying a car from a dealership include paying for sales tax, title, registration, the first insurance payment, and a down payment usually.

“I would also suggest considering how much it cost for regular maintenance and upkeep for the vehicle,” said Richards-Boyd. “Gas costs around \$3 a gallon, changing the oil, buying new tires and paying insurance on top of the car loan can be overwhelming for a junior enlisted.”

Buyers can also consider how to pay the loan off sooner than scheduled to save money in the long run.

The interest is recalculated after each monthly payment, and after each payment the balance on the loan is less, there-

fore the bank will calculate the interest on a smaller balance.

“Ultimately, buying a car is a huge step for first-time buyers and will have a lasting effect on the rest of their life,” said Richards-Boyd. “If a Marine rushes into it and gets into debt over his head, they might start making payments late or not at all and the vehicle will be repossessed which goes on the credit history for a long time.”

A repossession will stay on a credit report seven to 11 years.

If a vehicle becomes repossessed the owner will still owe the difference on their remaining balance and what the dealership auctions it for.

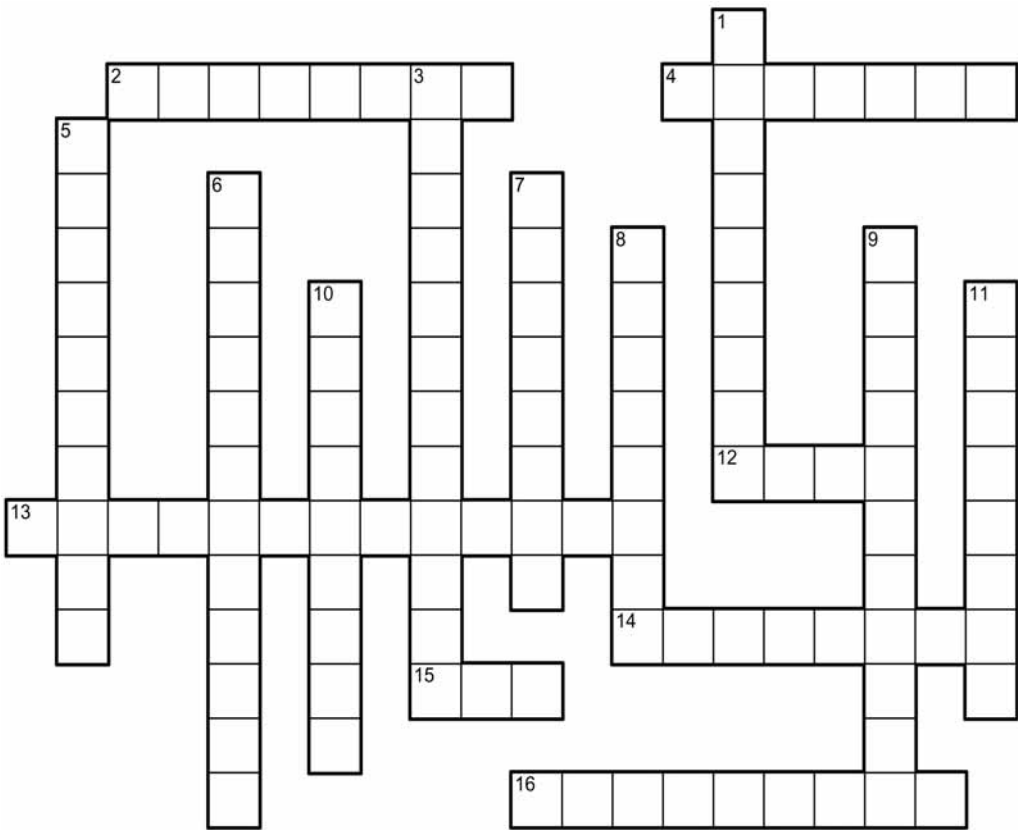
The buyer can always walk away from a pressured situation that seems like a bad deal. The consequences of signing contracts without research and understanding can be costly.

Each time someone bounces a check or there is a late payment on a loan it creates a black mark on their credit.

According to the Equifax Web site, account histories, which are supplied by creditors with whom a consumer has an account, include the date the account was opened, the credit limit or amount of the loan, the payment terms, the balance, and a history that shows whether or not they’ve paid the account on time. Closed or inactive accounts, depending on the manner in which they were paid, stay on their credit report for seven to 11 years from the date of their last activity.

“It is critical that any first-time buyer know exactly what their getting themselves into and do their homework,” said Richards-Boyd. “With all the resources the military has to offer, it would be [smart to] take advantage. Never fall in love with a car, because there’s always another deal.”

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ACROSS

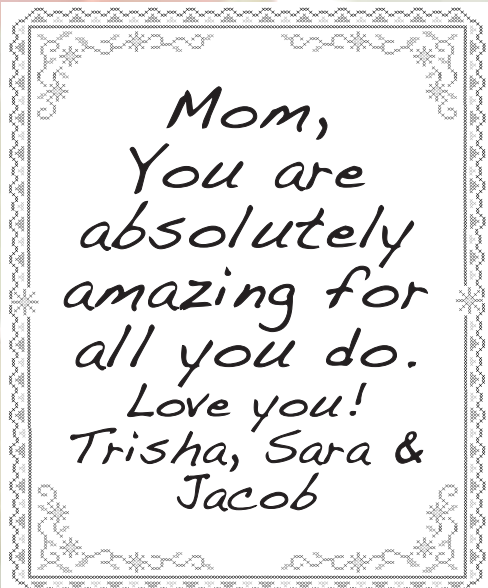
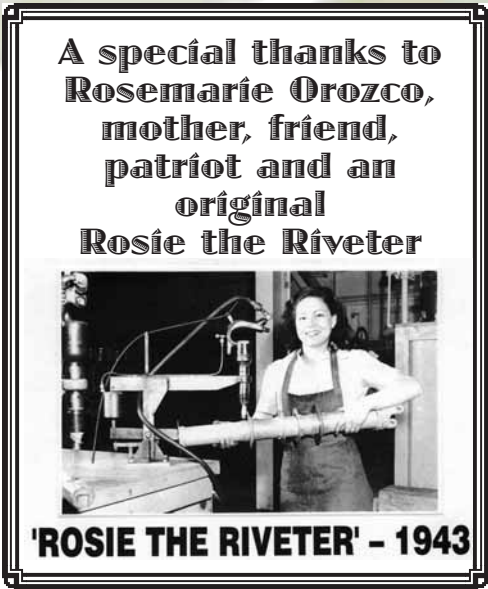
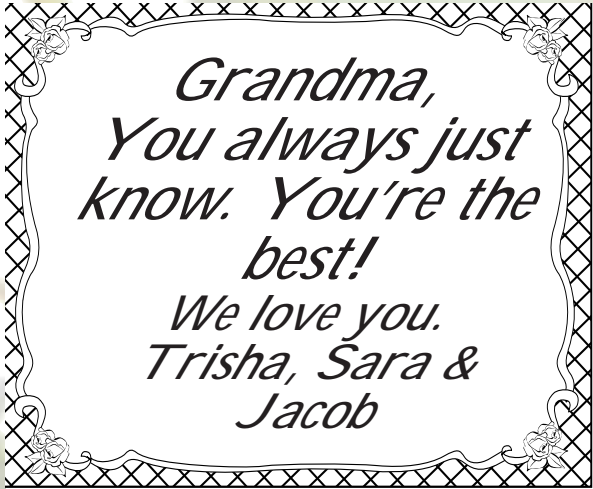
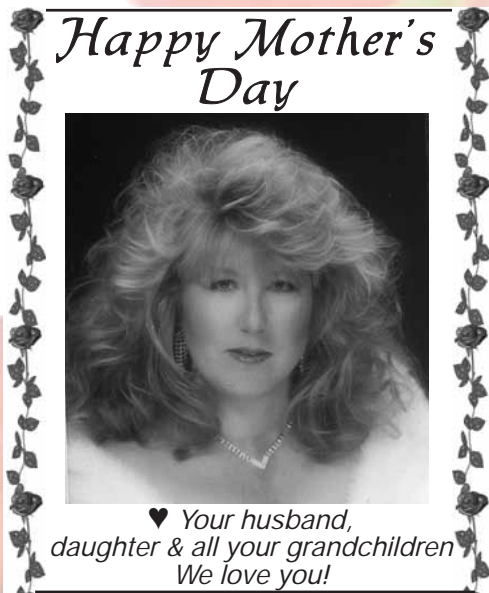
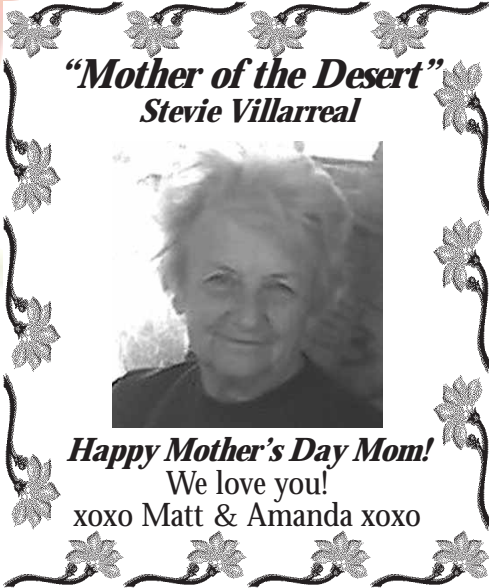
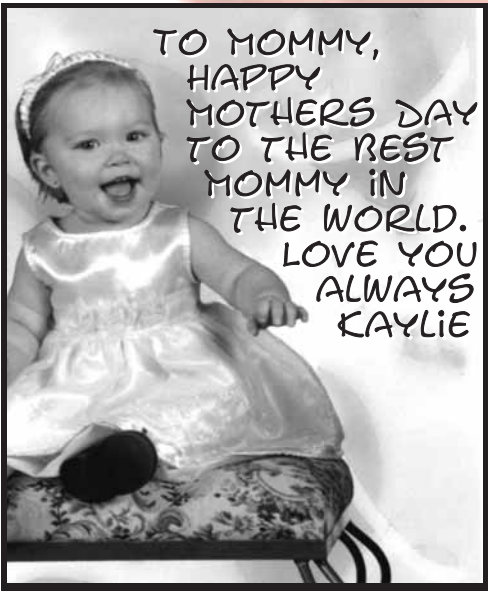
- 2. Three goals
- 4. NHL team that plays in Madison Square Garden.
- 12. The area between the two hash marks in front of the net is known as the ____.
- 13. Players with the highest amount of goals scored by the end of the season is awarded the _____ Award.
- 14. Using your hockey stick to hit the limbs of an opposing player with no intent of going for the puck.
- 15. Color of the centerline on a hockey rink.
- 16. Standing in front of a goalie to obstruct his vision.

DOWN

- 1. Ended their five-year Stanly Cup winning streak in 1960.
- 3. The player behind your defense.
- 5. Wayne Gretzky’s idol growing up.
- 6. Attacking the opposing players before they exit their zone.
- 7. Canadian hockey city that arguably started ice hockey.
- 8. Your player goes into the opposing zone before the puck.
- 9. Shooting and hitting the goal post.
- 10. The other team has taken a penalty. You have a two-minute ____.
- 11. Last NHL team to win two consecutive Stanly Cups in the 1990s (team name).

[Solutions on A9]

Happy Mother’s Day



Kilo rocks pre-deployment training



Cpl. Christopher B. Ezzell and Lance Cpl. Cody P. Burrell practice clearing rooms, staircases and multi-story buildings.

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Before any operational Marine Corps unit is deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, a significant amount of training is involved to prepare them for whatever obstacles they might face.

The Marines and sailors of Battery K, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, recently completed another phase of their pre-deployment training at the Combat Center's Range 215 April 30 to May 4.

"We went out Sunday night and secured Firm Base One out at Range 215," said 1st Lt. Matthew A. Thompson, the executive officer for Battery K. "Monday and Tuesday were spent on Range 113 practicing vehicle-mounted machine gun shoots. We fired .50 caliber machine guns, M240s and dismounted SAWs."

"CLB-7 also joined us at the firm base on Monday," he added.

Approximately 130 Marines from Combat Logistics Battalion 7 attended the week-long training scenario to provide logistical support for Kilo Battery, said Thompson. Marines and sailors from 1st Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment were also at the firm

base to provide support.

"Kilo Battery is being attached to 1/11 when we deploy," said Thompson. "This has been a good opportunity to work with them and their Base Defense Operations Center since we'll fall under them in Iraq."

Thompson said the battery transitioned to 24-hour operational status Tuesday at 11:59 p.m. at the firm base.

"Each platoon rotated through the 24-hour operations," he said. "We took turns manning guard towers, entry control points and vehicle checkpoints. We also conducted convoy security and quick reaction force operations."

"We provided security for a total of six convoys for CLB-7 when they had to resupply the rest of the battalion on their fire exercise," added Thompson.

"However, I feel the best training the Marines received was sitting in a tower looking at nothing for six hours straight," he said. Maintaining alertness for long periods with no stimulation is vital against a determined enemy."

"Firm Base One offers very realistic FOB training."

The Marines and sailors of Battery K agree that the training they received at the firm base is useful and worthwhile.

"I've been to Iraq twice

and I feel that the training starts with the very basics in what the individuals need to know," said Petty Officer 3rd Class John Newton, a corpsman assigned to 1st Platoon, Battery K. "The training will definitely prepare them for the task they're going to be assigned to do in Iraq."

"I feel that this is good training, especially for non-infantry guys," said Cpl. Thomas Love, an infantryman from the 8th and I Barracks in Washington D.C., who volunteered to deploy with Battery K. "I have complete confidence in the training and I'm excited to deploy for the first time. If my presence there can help this be over one day quicker, then I did my job."

Thompson mentioned that Battery K has been reinforced with a wide variety of Marines, mostly infantrymen and mechanics.

Battery K is continuing its pre-deployment training in the field and will also participate in additional training exercises at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. The battery will deploy to Al Taqaddum, Iraq, at the end of June to provide base and convoy security in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

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Friday, May 18 at 9 a.m.

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Del Valle Road construction enters second phase

ENSIGN MATHEW J. LEAZER
ROICC OFFICE

Many people are wondering what the status of the Del Valle Road paving project is. Currently, the entire project is on track to be completed in mid-July, six weeks earlier than originally planned.

Great ... but what's happening?

The first phase of the project between Sixth Street and Tenth Street began April 9. Asphalt roads typically have a foundation base course on the bottom and a wear course on top, which is the road surface that our vehicle wheels touch. Del Valle Road was paved over in 1985 with a special wear course consisting of rubberized asphalt, so Del Valle Road actually has the typical base course and asphalt wear course, plus the rubberized asphalt wear course on top. This special rubberized asphalt is produced using old tires and provides a superior surface that is much more durable, quieter, and cooler than regular asphalt. The original intention of this project was to grind off just the old rubberized asphalt wear course and reuse the existing base in the areas between the major intersections.

However, an unforeseen condition was identified while grinding the road surface off. Numerous deep cracks were discovered in the underlying asphalt. Further investigation indicated deep cracks in the

planned second phase between Adobe Road and Sixth Street. These cracks may affect the stability of the new road if paved over without adequate remediation, so a new approach is being taken to construction in order to properly handle this unforeseen degradation. The existing asphalt will be pulverized and used to create a new roadbed to pave over. By eliminating the subsurface cracks, the finished road base will be level and solid to prevent bumps and cracks from forming in the new road surface.

Schedule

With the new approach to the construction and the type of asphalt that will be used, the schedule has been modified from the original plan. On May 14, the first phase between Sixth and Tenth Street will be temporarily re-opened to traffic as an unpaved road composed of the base material. The second phase, which is the stretch of Del Valle Road between Bldg. 1107 and Sixth Street, will be closed for pulverization and grading beginning on May 21. The first phase will need to be closed again on June 18 for finish work. The entire stretch between Bldg. 1107 and Tenth Street will be closed from June 18 until July 20 to complete the finish grading operations and to pave the entire road at one time.

Detour Routes

Because of the impact of closing the entire stretch of Del Valle Road between

Bldg. 1107 and Tenth Street, Staff Sgt. James Daly from the Provost Marshal's Office recommended a major change from the original detour route in the traffic control plans, "We wanted to improve the traffic flow across Mainside, so there will now be two detour routes for the duration of this project. POV traffic should use Brown Road, and with changes to the stop signs, it will be more or less a straight shot across the base."

POV traffic will now be routed onto Brown Road. The number of four-way stops on Brown Road will be decreased starting May 14 to improve traffic flow across Mainside. The stop signs at the following Brown Road intersections will be removed to decrease the stop and go traffic: First, Third, Fourth, Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Streets. Please note that the four-way stops will remain at the intersections of Fifth and Sixth Streets in the vicinity of the Marine Corps Exchange.

The second detour route will primarily be for heavier vehicles, particularly the tractor trailers going to Bldg. 1102. The detour route for the second phase will be along the shoulder of Del Valle Road in front of Bldg. 1102 with a transition to Bourke Road at First Street.

What is Rubberized Asphalt?

The item central to this project, and also the major factor driving the paving

schedule, is the use of rubberized asphalt for the wear course surface. Special milling equipment for the production of rubberized asphalt was rented by the contractor for use at the local asphalt plant from July 9-20. Use of rubberized asphalt is becoming more popular, and the special rental equipment will be making rounds throughout a number of southern California cities over the next few weeks for use by different paving companies.

In 1985, this section of Del Valle Road was overlaid with rubberized asphalt through a project by the ROICC office that was managed by Clay Longson. Longson is currently the Base Civil Engineer at Facilities Maintenance Division, and he is also the FMD engineer in charge of the current Del Valle paving project. When asked about the 1985 project and the current project, Longson commented, "The road was initially repaired and overlaid with rubberized asphalt back in 1985. The use of rubberized asphalt is by far the best option because rubberized asphalt will outlast conventional asphalt. The fact that the current overlay has lasted over 20 years is a testimony to its superior performance. The rubberized asphalt is not as susceptible to oxidation, which causes brittleness and cracking, so the rubberized asphalt remains more flexible and can better handle the strains imposed by heavy vehicles. In terms of

durability and reflective crack retaroadation, the 1.5 inches of rubberized asphalt that will be used is equivalent to 3 inches of conventional asphalt. Rubberized asphalt is also much quieter than regular asphalt in reducing road noise." With the completion of this project, Del Valle Road will be in almost new condition and ready to handle traffic for many years to come.

The rubberized asphalt paving system to be installed on Del Valle Road consists of two layers of asphalt. The base layer is regular asphalt. The second layer of asphalt, which is the actual wear course on top, is the special rubberized asphalt. The rubberized asphalt consists of regular asphalt mixed with rubber crumbs from used tires, which is a

much better use for the old tires than disposal in our landfills. It is estimated that almost 2,000 recycled tires will be used on this stretch of Del Valle Road. Placement of the rubberized asphalt at one time will result in a smooth, finished surface that will be more comfortable to drive on than the current road.

Having Del Valle Road fully closed for a month will be an inconvenience. In the end, however, the finished road will be very durable and will last for another 20 years. Putting in the extra time now for rubberized asphalt will reduce the number of future road closures and associated monetary costs for additional repairs. If you have any questions on this project, please call Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Norton at 830-7402.

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This vehicle was displayed in front of the Main Exchange parking lot to show the consequences of drinking and driving. The passengers of the vehicle were a mother and her 6-year-old daughter, who were killed at the scene by a second offense drunk driver.



OBSERVATIONS

MAY 11, 2007

CG's Softball League in full swing



LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
A softball player from Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School swings for the fences during a Commanding General's Intramural Softball Game Tuesday at Felix Field.

2007 COMMANDING GENERAL'S INTRAMURAL SOFTBALL STANDINGS AND SCORES		
TEAM	WINS	LOSS
TANKS	4	0
TTECG	3	0
MEDICAL	2	0
CLB 7	2	0
BAND	2	0
MCCES	3	1
7TH MARINES	2	1
HQBN #3 (GC)	1	1
MWSS 374	1	2
PMO	1	2
HQBN #2 MAG	1	2
3/11	0	1
1/7	0	1
HQBN COMP	0	2
MOJAVE VIPER	0	2
3RD LAR	0	2
BASE PHONE	0	2
ESD	0	3



LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
A Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School player rounds first during a game against 7th Marine Regiment Tuesday at Felix Field.



LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
A pitcher for 7th Marine Regiment throws the ball down the pipe during a softball game Tuesday at Felix Field.



LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
Drew Chism waits in the ready for the ball to come his way during a softball game Tuesday at Felix Field.



PFC. MONICA C. ERICKSON
Dean Edwards steps down to tag home plate during a softball game Tuesday at Felix Field. Although he clearly tagged home, he was called out by the umpire after a late tag by the catcher.

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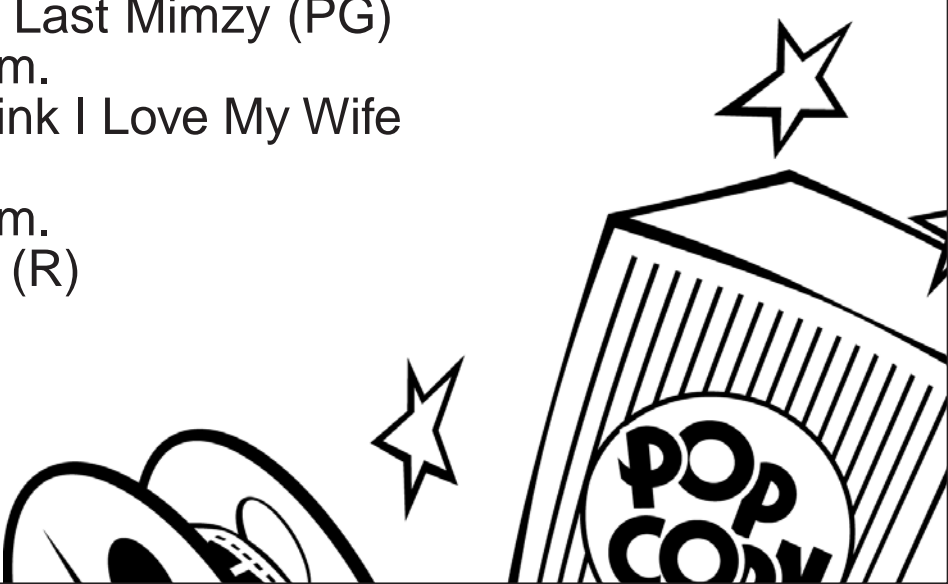
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Movies and recreation for the upcoming week at the Sunset Cinema

Today 6 p.m. I Think I Love My Wife (R) 9 p.m. Dead Silence (R)	Monday 7 p.m. Premonition (PG-13)
Saturday 2 p.m. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (PG) 6 p.m. Premonition (PG-13) 9 p.m. Reign Over Me (R)	Tuesday 7 p.m. The Hills Have Eyes 2 (R)
Sunday 2 p.m. The Last Mimzy (PG) 6 p.m. I Think I Love My Wife (R) 9 p.m. 300 (R)	Wednesday 7 p.m. Dead Silence (R)
	Thursday 7 p.m. Reign Over Me (R)



Operation Thin Mint



CPL. BRIAN REIMERS

Marines from 1st Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, go through hundreds of boxes of Girl Scout cookies donated to the battalion last year in Iraq.

NAVY PRESS RELEASE

Every year San Diego area Girl Scout troops send hundreds of thousands of boxes of Girl Scout cookies to deployed troops around the world, through a program known as Operation Thin Mint.

This year the scouts celebrate the send-off of one million boxes of cookies overseas at an event Saturday at 9:30 a.m. aboard USS Midway. This event is open to the public. Local sailors and Marines are encouraged to attend and show appreciation to the youngsters who have kept you in their thoughts during the long and frequent deployments of the Global War on Terror.

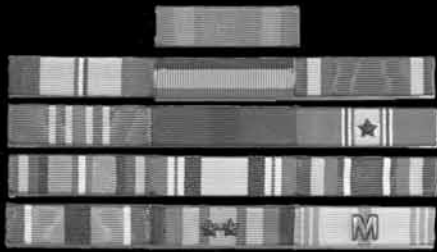
The event organizers are also looking for officers and enlisted women who were once Girl Scouts to talk to the current generation of scouts during the event.

For more details visit <http://www.girlscoutssdi.org/otm> or for more information contact Ms. Mary Doyle at mdoyle@girlscoutssdi.org or call 619-610-0710.

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Chief of Police,
Los Angeles Police Department



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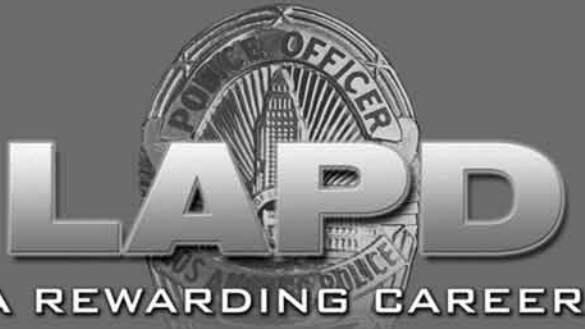
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Next test date is May 16, 2007




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CAROL VONEDA

What does it take to be #1


Nicholas Gonzales, Rodrick Schliesman, James Maddox, Jarhett Castro and Fredrick Luminoso pose for a photo after winning the team competition in the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School Fun Run May 4.



The Marine Corps Professional Reading Program

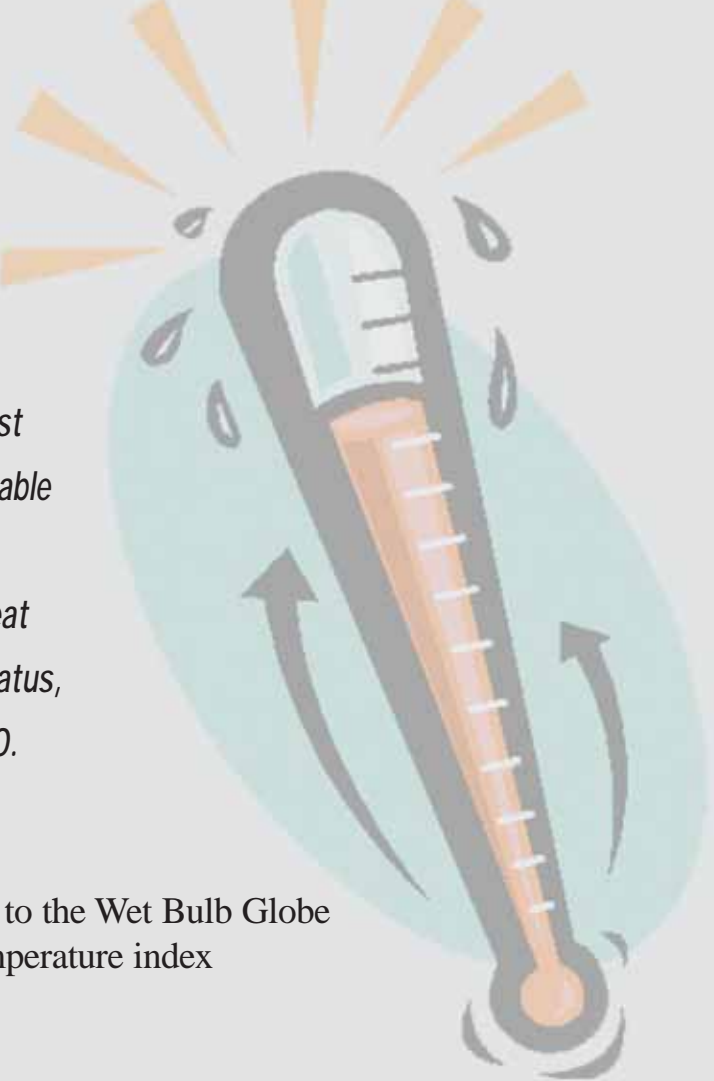


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80° – 84.9°*

Exercise can be conducted and discretion is required for all heavy exercise unless acclimatized to desert conditions.

YELLOW
85° – 87.9°*

Strenuous exercise and activity must be reduced for new, un-acclimatized personnel during the first three weeks of heat exposure. Avoid outside classes.

RED
88° – 89.9°*

Strenuous exercise must be halted or reduced for Marines and Sailors who haven't had up to 12 weeks to acclimatize.

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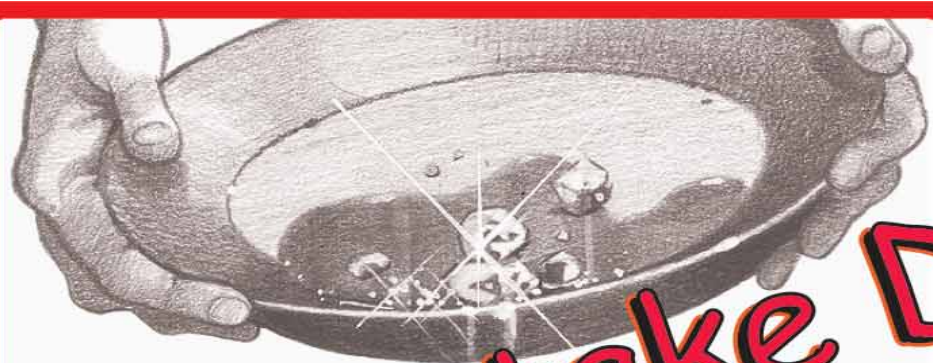


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