

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

JUNE 15, 2007 SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957 VOL. 50 ISSUE 23

3/11 welcomes new commander

LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Lt. Col. Mark M. Tull relinquished command of 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, to Lt. Col. James C. Lewis in a change of command ceremony today at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

Tull, who served as the battalion commanding officer since Aug. 22, 2006, has been selected to attend the Commandant Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF) as a student at Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington D.C.

Tull graduated from Glassboro State College of New Jersey with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps in December, 1986.

Lewis attended the University of Nebraska Lincoln in 1991, where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. He also earned a Masters of Science in Defense Systems Analysis and Management from the Naval Postgraduate School and a Masters of Military Studies from Marine Corps Command and Staff College. Lewis completed training at The Basic School in January, 1992.

"It's a top-level school part of the National Defense University along with the National War College," said Tull. "The National War College focuses on studying areas of the world. The Industrial College of the Armed Forces focuses on studying economic resources such as oil, minerals, or any things that are defense related."

Lewis' last assignment was as a fire officer in the Plans, Procedures and Operations Department at Headquarters Marine Corps, and served as the artillery occupational field specialist.

Sgt. Maj. Robert L. Caldwell, battalion sergeant major, said Tull always put his Marines and sailors first.

"He was concerned about the welfare of his Marines and their families," said Caldwell. "He had a vision during these turbulent times, and made sure all his Marines were properly trained for combat and knew how to conduct a mission, regardless of the missions they received. The Marines were always first."

Tull, a native of Westmont, N.J., accredits the battalion's successful training on the tenacious work and dedication of his Marines and sailors.



Lt. Col. Mark M. Tull, out-going commander for 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, shakes the hand of Lt. Col. James C. Lewis, the on-coming commanding officer, outside their headquarters building Thursday.

"Our Marines and sailors do so much more in today's Corps than we asked of them prior to September 11th," said Tull. "The operational tempo here is as high as there is in the Marine Corps. Our Batteries spend countless days in the field supporting Mojave Viper. That tempo forces us to be our best."

Tull said India Battery, which returned from their deployment with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit in January, is currently undergoing pre-deployment training for their next tour to Iraq as a firing Battery in support of

Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"They will be the first Battery in the Marine Corps to employ the M-777-A2 Lightweight Howitzer in battle," said Tull.

Mike Battery returned from Okinawa, Japan, Feb. 7 after serving in the Unit Deployment Program and plans on replacing India Battery in Iraq next year.

A number of the Battalion's headquarters and firing Battery Marines are deployed with Military Transition Teams and Counter Battery Radar Detachments as artillery liaison

officers, watch officers, among other artillerymen billets, said Tull.

Tull said his Marines are employed in a wide variety of billets in order to support the ongoing war on terror.

Lewis, a native of Lincoln, Neb., said he has been impressed so far with the Battalion's execution of training and is excited about taking command.

"This is a great battalion to come to," said Lewis. "This is a great opportunity. What I have seen since I have come here is really spectacular."

Memorial service honors memory of fallen artilleryman



PFC. JARED J. BUTLER

Marines of Battery L, 3/12 of 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, stand at attention during Taps at the Catholic Chapel here for Lance Cpl. Luis A. Alfaro's memorial service June 7.

PFC. JARED J. BUTLER

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

U.S. Marines and sailors with Battery L, 3/12 of 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, gathered to pay homage to a fallen artilleryman, Lance Cpl. Luis A. Alfaro, at the Catholic Chapel here June 7.

The 21-year-old Lima, Peru, native died in a motor vehicle accident May 25.

"He had the confidence and enthusiasm of a youth," said U.S. Navy Lt. Gregory A. Cates, the battalion chaplain.

Alfaro, an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran, had a positive outlook on life that made a lasting impression on his family and friends, said his Marines.

"Lance Corporal Alfaro was the kind of man I would

like to be friends with," said Capt. Darryl G. Hammond, the commander of Battery L.

Hammond was unable to have a friendship with Alfaro because of rank, but was aware of his good nature and the positive effect he had on those around him, he said.

"He was lighthearted, but he would always stay professional," said 1st Lt. Sean M. Koffel, Alfaro's platoon commander during his last deployment to Iraq. "He was a good friend to the Marines who surrounded him."

Koffel noticed how Alfaro kept the morale of his fellow Marines high through hard times with good leadership skills, during their last deployment to the northwestern region of Iraq's Al Anbar Province.

"He was the kind of Marine who never complained about duty, no matter how difficult it was," said Koffel. "It was hard to have him lose his life like this, especially after coming back alive from Iraq."

Luis "Lil' Peru" Alfaro, a nickname given to him by fellow Marines and other friends, had been with Battery L for nine months before his life was cut short.

The motivation and attitude of Alfaro was an inspiration to the Marines who were lucky enough to work with him, he added.

The Marines of Battery L say they take Alfaro's example as a Marine in the best possible manner, and he will never be forgotten by those who knew him.

Weekend Weather

Friday  104/70
Sunny

Saturday  100/69
Sunny

Sunday  99/68
Sunny

Inside this issue

• A4: 3rd LAR train for deployment

• A5: Wolfpack corpsmen aid lives

• A6: Marines throw down in MCMAP

Observations



Intramural soccer gets competitive as season continues

This Day in Marine Corps History

— 1944 —

The 2nd and 4th Marine Divisions made their amphibious assault against Japanese forces on Saipan.

Cop Corner

Community

Oriented Policing

The proactive voice of crime prevention

Presented by the Provost Marshal's Office Crime Prevention Section

Identity Theft

In what many are calling America's fastest growing type of robbery, crooks are working without the usual tools. Forget sawed-off shotguns and ski masks, your social security number will do the trick, or that blank pre-approved credit application you tossed out with the coffee grounds. A simple conversation on your phone could allow someone you may never meet to rob you of the one thing you may have thought was safe: your identity.

Here are some tips to help prevent your identity from being stolen.

- 1) Report lost or stolen credit cards immediately.
 - 2) Don't carry your Social Security card or birth certificate - leave them in a secure location.
 - 3) If you applied for a credit card and didn't receive it when expected, call the financial institution.
 - 4) Sign new credit cards immediately before someone else does.
 - 5) Match your credit card receipts against your monthly bills and check your monthly financial statements for accuracy.
 - 6) Memorize your Social Security number and passwords. Don't use your date of birth as your password and don't record passwords on papers you carry with you.
 - 7) Watch for your monthly financial statements and bills. If you don't get them when expected, contact the sender.
 - 8) Beware of mail or telephone solicitations that offer prizes or awards, especially if the donor asks you for personal information or financial account numbers.
- When identity theft occurs report it to the following.

- Social Security Administration 1-800-269-0271
- Trans Union 1-800-680-7289
- Equifax 1-800-272-9281 or 1-800-525-6285
- Experian 1-800-397-9742
- PMO 830-6800 or CID 830-6820
- PMO Physical Security Office 830 4561
- Financial counselor, Jany Wasdin 830-7342

Preparing for the worst puts your mind at ease so you don't suffer in the long run. For more information about identity theft you can check out the Web site <http://www.identitytheft.org/>.

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

Presented by the Provost Marshal's Office Crime Prevention Section

Marines, Sailors, and cab drivers:
MCOS will reimburse ANY licensed cab company for transportation to the Main Gate, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. Drivers: please legibly record information from your fare's military I.D. card.
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Centerspeak

“What is your favorite getaway place?”

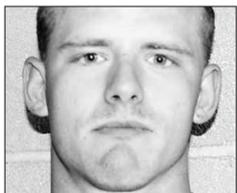
Opinions expressed in Centerspeak

are not necessarily those of the OBSERVATION POST, the Marine Corps or Department of Defense.



SGT. MATTHEW RIDENHOUR
1/8 BRAVO Co

“The gym because I like the way it makes me feel.”



CPL. BRANDON BROWNLEE
1/8 BRAVO Co

“Cattarack Falls, Indiana, because it is secluded. It is a calm place just to relax.”



SGT. MATTHEW RIDENHOUR
MP Co.

“Czech Republic, Prague, because the architecture is really beautiful. There are really friendly people, and the intricate history of the city.”

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

Sempertoons

By Gunnery Sgt. Charles Wolf



www.sempertoons.com

Third Party Citations

Effective immediately, staff noncommissioned officers and officers wishing to write a third party citation can access the form on the Combat Center's homepage at <https://www.29palms.usmc.mil>.

After downloading and filling out the form, the third party must bring the form to the Provost Marshal's Office at Bldg. 1408 for filing. The form will be reviewed by the traffic court clerks and any questions regarding the incident will be clarified. The services officer or chief will have the final say regarding any third party citation.

Once the alleged offender is identified, they will be issued a traffic citation by the Provost Marshal's Office. The complainant will be notified of the assigned traffic court date and will be required to appear and provide testimony. Personal information of the alleged violation will not be provided to the complainant. Individuals should not violate any traffic regulations in order to obtain the information

required to fill out a third party citation, nor should they confront the violator. Collection of the required information and reporting the incident via the Third Party Citation form is the most expedient means of handling the incident. In the near future, the reporting party will be able to send the form to the traffic court clerks via e-mail from the homepage.

Third party citations will normally be written only at the request of SNCOs and officers, however, the PMO services officer or chief may authorize third party citations at the request of civilian employees, dependent spouses and sergeants and below on a case by case basis.

Third Party Citations will only be written for significant violations such as:

- a. Speeding;
- b. Reckless Driving;
- c. Failure to wear protective clothing or safety equipment while on a motorcycle, or;
- d. Failure to wear a seatbelt.

Military Spouse Scam Alert

DEVORAH GOLDBURG
 AMERICAN RED CROSS NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

WASHINGTON -- The American Red Cross has learned about a new scam targeting military families. This scam takes the form of false information to military families as described below:

The caller (young-sounding, American accent) calls a military spouse and identifies herself as a representative from the Red Cross. The caller states that the spouse's husband (not identified by name) was hurt while on duty in Iraq and was med-evacuated to a hospital in Germany. The caller stated they couldn't start treatment until paperwork was accomplished, and that in

order to start the paperwork they needed the spouse to verify her husband's social security number and date of birth. In this case, the spouse was quick to catch on and she did not provide any information to the caller.

The American Red Cross representatives typically do not contact military members/dependents directly and almost always go through a commander or first sergeant channels. Military family members are urged not to give out any personal information over the phone if contacted by unknown/unverified individuals, to include confirmation that your spouse is deployed.

It is a federal crime, punishable by up to 5 years in prison, for a person to falsely or fraud-

ulently pretend to be a member of, or an agent for, the

American National Red Cross for the purpose of soliciting, collecting, or receiving money or material.

In addition, American Red Cross representatives will contact military members/dependents directly only in response to an emergency message initiated by your family. The Red Cross does not report any type of casualty information to family members. The Department of Defense will contact families directly if their military member has been injured. Should any military family member receive such a call, they are urged to report it to their local Family Readiness Group or Military Personnel Flight.

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HOT TOPICS

STOP SIGNS CHANGED AT BOURKE AND BROWN

The number of stop signs on Brown Road has been decreased to improve traffic flow across Mainside during the Del Valle Road repaving project. The stop signs at the First, Third, Fourth, Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Street intersections of Brown Road have been removed to decrease stop and go traffic. The four-way stop signs will remain at the intersections of Fifth and Sixth Streets in the vicinity of the Marine Corps Exchange. Stop signs have been added at the intersections of Bourke and First, Third, and Fifth Streets to stop East and West traffic and allow thru traffic in the North and South direction. Please be attentive to all traffic control signs.

AVOID UNNECESSARY HEALTH CARE COSTS

Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital beneficiaries are required to call 830-2752 during normal working hours or 830-2190 after hours to request authorization for treatment at an out of the area hospital or urgent care center. Failure to follow this procedure could cause the patient to be financially responsible for the point of service costs.

NEW HOURS FOR OCOTILLO GATE

The Ocotillo Gate is open from 5 a.m. until 8 p.m. during the Del Valle Road repaving project.

TRAFFIC CITATIONS FOR CELL PHONE USE

Effective July 1 traffic citations issued on base for cell phone use without a hands-free device while operating a vehicle will require a mandatory appearance in the

Combat Center traffic court. First offense violators will receive a 30-day on-base driving suspension and a second offense will earn a 90-day suspension. If you think you'll be using your cell phone while driving on base, be prepared with a blue-tooth, an earbud or a speakerphone hands free device.

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Third party citations will only be written for significant violations such as:

- Speeding
- Reckless Driving
- Failure to wear protective clothing or safety equipment while on a motorcycle, or
- Failure to wear a seatbelt.

RECRUITING SCREENING TEAM VISIT

The Headquarters Marine Corps Recruiting screening team is coming to the Combat Center July 20. The team will be screening all pre-designated Marines for this demanding special duty assignment. The screening will be at the Protestant Chapel from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. All Marines pre-selected per commandant of the Marine Corps will report in the Service "C" uniform for the informational briefing at 8 a.m. and subsequent screening sessions. Marines not pre-selected for screening but interested in assignment to Recruiting Duty should see their unit Career Retention Specialist for screening prior to the visit. All Marines to be screened should have a completed Commanding Officer's Recruiting Duty Screening Check-list and Financial Worksheet. For more information, contact the Combat Center career retention specialist, Gunnery Sgt. McAllister at 830-6171 or see your unit CRS.

LEISURE ITEMS

SMP AT THE COMMISSARY NIGHT

All single Marines are invited into the Single Marine Program to join us at the commissary Tuesday to take a look at the benefits we have to offer. We will have food, games and prizes. Transportation will be provided to and from the Zone. Be at the Zone at 7 p.m. See you there! For more info call: Andrea Largent 830-7572 X3009

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. 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)

Holy Days of Obligation Masses
12:30 p.m. Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel

VILLAGE CENTER

Sun 9 a.m. Military Council of Catholic Women*

NON-DENOMINATIONAL CHRISTIAN SERVICE

Christ Chapel

Sun 8 a.m. Sunday School*
Sun 9 a.m. Worship*
Wed 7 p.m. Praise & Worship*

PROTESTANT LITURGICAL SERVICE

Christ Chapel

Sun 11 a.m. Worship

LAY-LED INDEPENDENT BAPTIST SERVICE

Christ Chapel

Sun 11 a.m. Worship

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)
6 p.m. Baptism Class 1st Tuesday each Month

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 contact Chaplain Flint 830-6187

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

DEPLOYMENT SUPPORT GROUP FOR WOMEN

Christ Chapel

9 a.m. June 19, July 17, & August 21

LEGEND

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



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Cpl. Christopher P. Chambers, Combat Operations Center operations clerk, updates the situation map with new unit locations during a training exercise June 1-11 aboard the Combat Center's training area.

Light Armored Recon practices their shoot, move and communicate

PFC. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Static crackled over the radio, giving way to a voice barely audible through the interference. 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Marines crowded the combat operations center tent as the request for mortars and air support was processed during a pre-deployment training exercise at the northwestern edge of the Combat Center's training area June 1-11.

"The COC controls all operations of the battalion," said Master Sgt. Donald T. Downey, the COC operations chief. "We control all the fires; all the air support."

The training scenario was set up to represent a city in Iraq. 3rd LAR Marines were given a mission to move north from their current location to suppress enemy fire and support a notional counterpart battalion.

The COC coordinated all artillery, mortars and air support during the training oper-

ations. They tracked the units by using strings attached to colored thumbtacks. When a platoon moved, the thumbtack would move on a map to their new position.

The air officer, Capt. Ryan B. Colvert, works with many people inside the COC. When air support is used during a mission the air officer works beside the fire support coordinator to make sure the pilots know where it is safe to fly.

The COC must communicate with each other to keep everyone safe. According to Capt. Hunter Rawlings, operations officer, the Marines in the COC work from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. with very little breaks throughout the day, taking in all information to allow the commander to anticipate what will happen next.

"If the plan doesn't go as expected, they make an alternate plan on the fly," said Lt. Col. Jim Parrington, battalion commander for 3rd LAR. "The key component to an effective COC is the Marines

in the COC. Everybody must work extremely hard for everything to run smoothly."

This particular COC used this field time to train new Marines on radio protocols. "The new Marines need constant supervision to ensure they understand and, more importantly, communicate incoming and outgoing message traffic correctly," said Cpl. Christopher P. Chambers.

A lot of the radio transmissions are abbreviated and in code. The new Marines need training to fully understand what is being broadcasted.

3rd LAR will be spending more time in the field in the coming months preparing for their next Iraq deployment, or anywhere else the Corps may send them. Their next stop in the pre-deployment training cycle is exercise Mojave Viper.

"The Marines need to know their job," said Parrington. "I got the Marines I need - good Marines."

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Wolfpack bites into combat readiness

LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The engines revved to a roar as a company of LAVs set out to engage enemy targets.

This was the first training scenario during a pre-deployment package executed by 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion June 1-11.

Training in the Twentynine Palms' summertime heat and sandstorms, 3rd LAR conducted this training aboard the Combat Center's northwestern region of the training area.

The training was based on a scenario in which 3rd LAR was in a foreign city and was flanked by notional friendly battalions to the east and west.

In the training scenario, the Marines from one of the other battalions had met heavy resistance. The call for assistance and support reached 3rd LAR.

The purpose of the exercise was to provide support to a local Marine unit and cut off all avenues of approach to their position.

"The training we are conducting essentially has two different phases," said Lt. Col. Jim Parrington, 3rd LAR commanding officer. "The first is operations similar to ones we have experienced in Iraq."

"The second phase is the combined arms phase," he continued. "What we're doing is sending companies out with enemy scenarios, and they have to conduct attacks. During this phase air, artillery, mortars, main guns, LAV 25's are integrated with dismounted scouts."

During the training each company was given a scenario and a mission to carry out. Each company had the choice to conduct it differently and the plan of attack was at the company commander's discretion. It was up to the company to execute their fire support plan and accomplish the mission.



Marines of 3rd LAR travel down range to provide suppressive fire and destroy the enemy target during a predeployment training package June 8. LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER

With several different factors being integrated, the Marines of 3rd LAR were tasked with specific duties to make sure things ran smoothly. "I was the Comanche Company White Platoon Sergeant," said Staff Sgt. William Jackson. "My job was to coordinate all fire maneuvers for an infantry platoon. Our suppressive fire went really well along with our ability to coordinate with air and artillery support."

Cpl. Michael Gripp, an LAV commander for Blackfoot Company was tasked with a similar job.

Gripp said his job was to task his Marines to provide suppressive fire for the company's assault element. Him and

his Marines also provided cover for the extraction of their company.

"Things went well and we got the chance to shoot off some rounds," said Gripp.

During Apache Company's training a Navy F18E Super Hornet was used for air support and during Comanche Company's training two F18C Marine Hornets were used.

"For training we had the air support dropping laser guided training rounds," said Capt. Ryan Colvert, battalion air officer.

The training that the battalion conducted aboard the training area, not only was preparation for their deployment to Iraq but also a chance for the battalion to prepare themselves for

Mojave Viper, a month-long pre-deployment exercise scheduled to take place.

"This is our final battalion exercise before we go to Mojave Viper," said Parrington. "It is a chance for us to exercise certain selected tasks that we knew we needed to work on before Mojave Viper."

As the different companies finished up their portion of

the exercise, they had debriefs about what went well and what needed improvement. Many of the Wolfpack Marines said the training they received during this exercise made them more secure in their fellow Marines.

"This training has really helped prepare us for Iraq," said Lance Cpl. Jeremy Shurtleff.



LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER

During 3rd LAR's predeployment training package, the different companies all took part in a combined arms exercise, which included the use of air, artillery and mortar support.

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Marines sharpen hand-to-hand combat skills



LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Pfc. Ryan M. Kuglar, Company L, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment takes down Lance Cpl. Clifford G. Marsh, provost Marshal's Office, during a day-long martial arts training course at Vicotry Field Tuesday.



LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Instructor Lt. j.g. David M. Viyra demonstrates ground fighting techniques to Marines with Lance Cpl. Anthony Orr, Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, at Victory Field Tuesday.

LANCE CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

For the many characteristics Marines are well-known for, their undefeatable warrior mentality, fighting spirit and physical tenacity are ones they take much pride in.

It was no surprise to see a

crowd of Marines volunteer to spend a day in the desert sun to hone their combat fighting skills.

Marines from Headquarters Battalion and 3rd battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, participated in an all-day introduction course for the Pure Force Martial Arts System at Victory Field Tuesday.

Instructors of the Pure Force Martial Arts program applied traditional martial arts with tactical applications to teach Marines a different system of self defense.

Craig Carter, the master instructor for the training, is a volunteer at the Staff Judge Advocate's Office for the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program and director of the PFMA program. He has instructed martial arts for 20 years and said he was happy to teach Marines different fighting techniques that might aid in bringing them home from battle.

"What we care about

most is making sure these guys come home in one piece," said Carter. "That is why we are stepping it up like this. If every one of these Marines can leave here today with at least one technique that stuck with them, we have been successful."

Carter said although they work mostly with military, he and his instructors work with other groups as well.

"We also work with law enforcement and even do private seminars in other clinics," said Carter.

Lance Cpl. Johnny Bullock with the Provost Marshal's Office said he enjoyed the

PFMA style more than traditional MCMAP because the instructors were not like Marine MCMAP instructors.

"I think it's better that all ranks are put aside and the instructors are more open," said Bullock. "It makes it much more fun than MCMAP."

Cpl. Stephen E. Bergman, also with PMO, said he thought the extra training was very practical and useful in his line of work.

"This training is giving us more effective tools we could use on the job," said Bergman. "This style of fighting is more open to personal style so it's easier to get into."

Marines learned numerous techniques to include body

mechanics, closing and extending distance, effective control of a subject, joint manipulation, traditional throws and take-downs, as well as knife techniques and combative pistol handling.

Carter said he wants the program's presence to be known by command leaders aboard the Combat Center so their junior Marines may have an opportunity to receive additional training that may count as sustainment time toward their current belt level.

If any Marines are interested in gathering additional fighting skills and training, contact Carter at 221-1272 or Master Instructor David Modzak at (619) 518-4610.

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PFC. JARED J. BUTLER

Brandon Saunders, the lead technician for Johnson Controls here, explains to visitors from the community how the Combat Center's solar panels work to provide energy.

Sky's the Limit: Big plans for community's future

PFC. JARED J. BUTLER
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

An observatory and nature center, scheduled to be built next to Joshua Tree National Park in Yucca Valley, Calif., by volunteers from the Sky's the Limit organization, are expected to open to the public in six years.

The purpose of the project is to provide learning opportunities regarding environmental education for residents and visitors of the Morongo Basin.

The observatory and nature center will provide experiences in which participants can learn about the plant life, wild life and night sky of the desert.

The Sky's the Limit Observatory and Nature Center will be open for people of all ages who are willing

to learn about the Earth's natural wonders.

The organization also supports public and private educational institutions in their ability to provide a hands-on learning environment for schools ranging from elementary to college.

"Our organization is unique in that it offers the interested members of our community the opportunity to volunteer their labor to help bring our project into being," said Peter Bertain, Sky's the Limit Yucca Valley committee member.

Volunteers from the local community are heavily encouraged to support the non profit organization's plan to build a public learning center.

The Sky's the Limit committee's original plan to build an observatory expanded

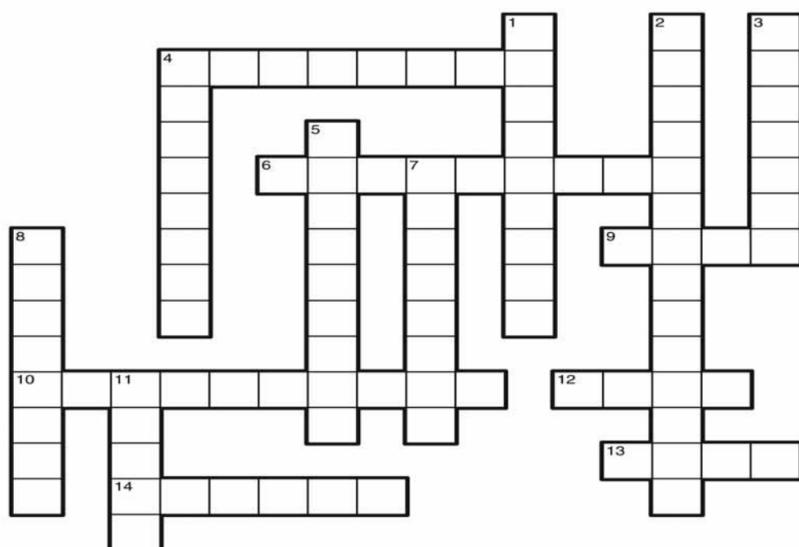
when the possibilities to provide a greater learning environment were discovered.

"The vision expanded beyond the observatory to include such things as nature trails, a plan to preserve the plants and rocks, amateur telescope pads, an Orrery Sun Circle, an amphitheater and classrooms," said Jerri Hagman, Sky's the Limit committee chairman.

The Sky's the Limit committee, organized in 2004, along with a paid professional director and administrative core will run the observatory and learning center once it is complete.

If you would like to learn more or get involved with Sky's the Limit, call 760-367-7222 or visit their Web site at www.skysthelimit29.org.

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- 4. The object of the game is to capture the enemy's flag by moving pieces of the game that represent soldiers in an army.
- 6. A game played with four dice, where players compete to move four pawns to the outer nest.
- 9. A crime fiction game set in a mansion. The players represent different characters staying in the mansion who are trying to solve the murder of the mansion's owner.
- 10. A word guessing board game where players in teams, draw a picture, and their partner has to guess what is being drawn.
- 12. A strategic game where players control armies and try to conquer all the territories from other players.
- 13. Players role-play their life by moving their pieces around the board by a spin of a dial.
- 14. The object of this game is to move all four pieces from their starting location to their ending location by the draw of a card.

DOWN

- 1. Players travel as mice around the board by a die where the players either receive a piece of cheese, or part of a contraction.
- 2. A game that tests player's general knowledge or popular culture questions.
- 3. Players compete to move four of their pieces around the board at the roll of a die.
- 4. Players form words for points.
- 5. Players move their piece by picking cards with matching colors.
- 5. Players move their pieces across the board by diagonal moves, jumping over, and capturing their opponent's pieces.
- 8. Players acquire wealth through economic activity including buying and trading of properties.
- 11. Two players move pieces across a board trying to capture the other player's king.

[Solutions on A12]

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Marines offload, train in Chilean desert



SGT. JUSTIN PARK

Sgt. Luis Madrigal, a rifleman with Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force, instructs a Chilean Marine on the M2 .50-caliber heavy machine gun as Cpl. Kyle Case watches during a training exercise June 9 in Cifuncho, Chile.

MAJ. DAN HUVANE
MARINE FORCES RESERVE

CIFUNCHO, Chile — Almost three weeks into their deployment, the Marines of Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force 24 are still discovering

just how surprising, yet familiar, Chile's landscape and climate can be. Comprised of elements of 24th Marine Regiment and attached augments from the Reserve Component, SPMAGTF 24 concluded training exercises this week

with Detachment Miller of Chile's Infanteria de Marina, or Marine Corps, in the rugged desert of the country's northern region. Unlike the previous week's training — spent on bases in the more populous region of central Chile — the live-fire exercises

conducted here closely resembled training in the Corps' own desert ranges in Twentynine Palms, Calif., except here the Pacific Ocean is just a few miles away.

One crucial training evolution was the amphibious offload at Cifuncho, as Marines and their vehicles, packed with gear needed for the entire training cycle, landed on the beach by Landing Craft Unit from the decks of the USS Pearl Harbor (LSD-52). Once each serial was assembled and accounted for, it was led into the red mountains in order to set up the regiment's Combat Operations Center and begin training in a tactical environment.

"From our standpoint, it went very well," said Gunnery Sgt. Aaron R. Vasquez of Belton, Mo., Logistics Chief for SPMAGTF 24. "Especially considering most of these guys have never been on a ship before. The time dispersion of the serials hampered the overall setup, but then the Marines stepped up and accomplished the mission."

The grunts of SPMAGTF 24 took advantage of Cifuncho's vast expanses with live-fire exercises, conducting squad and platoon attacks in the barren desert. Comprised of Marines from F Company of 2nd Battalion,

24th Marines, and Security Detachment, Headquarters Company, 24th Marine Regiment, the ground combat element made the most of their training time as a cohesive unit.

"I thought it was one of the best squad rush live-fire trainings I ever took part in, especially considering how we were put together" said Lance Cpl. Marcus A. Ruiz of Milwaukee, Wis., a rifleman with F Co., 2/24.

"We got a lot of leadership experience out of it," said Lance Cpl. Cal Servi of Racine, Wis., also of 2/24. "Any time you're five feet away from your buddy and your life is in his hands, it's good to know things go as well as they did here, and that the communication is there."

The Marines incorporated Chilean Marines into the training, instructing and supervising their counterparts on crew-served weapons, the .50-caliber M2 machine gun and the Mk-19 grenade launcher. This allowed some trigger-pullers who don't usually work closely with infantry assault tactics on a hot range to gain such experience.

"It's good to train with a line company, and getting the chance to work heavy guns in with a squad attack is neat" said Lance Cpl. Chris

Davenport of Topeka, Kan., a tow gunner by specialty with HQ Co., 24th Marines. "Being on heavy guns, knowing you're operating something that can destroy a lot, it's a neat feeling knowing (the infantrymen) trust you enough when their lives are in your hands."

In addition to fire and movement, the Marines and sailors fostered a stronger bond with Chile's Corps through professional exchanges. Navy Capt. Matthew Gratton, 24th Marine Regiment Surgeon, spoke at the Chilean field hospital about his experiences directing a trauma unit in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Gratton is the EMS Medical Director for Kansas City, Mo., and currently also Interim Chairman of the Emergency Department at Truman Medical Center there. Col. Michael Fogel, Staff Judge Advocate for 24th Marines, attended Gratton's lecture and was impressed.

"The Chileans were very interested in it," said Fogel, a Staff Attorney at the Jackson County Family Court. "Capt. Gratton went through a lot of the new procedures that he used in Iraq when dealing with casualties, and others that are brand new since he returned. He was able to apply a lot of his civilian trauma experience to deal with the variety of casualties experienced over there. The Chileans had a keen interest in that, with their ongoing peacekeeping obligations in Haiti."

It is the first time that the 24th Marine Regiment has deployed as a regimental headquarters outside the United States since Operation Desert Storm in 1991, and their performance on this exercise will play a large role in determining the unit's operational readiness for future missions. The Marines are operating as the landing force for Partnership of the Americas 2007, an annual exercise conducted in South America in support of regional security and cooperation among nations of the Western Hemisphere.

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DeCA meets goals, reduces on-the-job accident rate

LYNDA VALENTINE
THE DEFENSE COMMISSARY AGENCY

FORT LEE, Va. – The Defense Commissary Agency has reduced its on-the-job accident rate and met all goals set by a presidential initiative to reduce preventable accidents in the workplace.

The president's Safety, Health and Return to Employment initiative, termed SHARE, was launched in 2004 to improve safety and health in federal workplaces and reduce financial costs to taxpayers. It focused on reducing workplace injuries and illnesses, to lower the number of days Americans lose from work. In addition, the program improved the process for documenting injury compensation claims.

Using an array of strategies that rely on command leadership and support and encourage employee participation, safety awareness, training, hazard identification, and continuous evaluations, DeCA was able to reduce its total accident rate from 4.98 percent in 2003 to 3.67 percent in 2006. This also resulted in a decrease in the agency's lost-time accident rate from 2.76 percent to 2.41 percent. Lost-time accidents are those that result in employees losing time at work or being put on job restrictions or receiving transfers due to their injuries.

Employee participation included quarterly store-level safety councils, department-level safety meetings and the

introduction of the "safety-buddy" system, says Mike Corley, DeCA's national safety program manager.

"Awareness initiatives included the IMSAFE campaign (Integrated Monthly Safety Action/Focus Elements), which we published and distributed to all facilities monthly," he added.

DeCA met SHARE objectives by educating managers on the importance of reporting injury compensation claims faster and providing guidance and support on ways to return injured employees back to gainful employment, notes Karen Wells, personnel management specialist in DeCA's human resources directorate.

"Providing a safe environment for our workforce preserves and protects our greatest asset – our people," says DeCA Director and Chief Executive Officer Patrick Nixon.

"Managers, supervisors, and every employee must be actively engaged in this initiative," Nixon adds. "I ask that each of you commit to finding ways to improve the safety of our workplace so that we can continue the momentum of the first three years. By maintaining a healthy, ready workforce, we increase our ability to provide the commissary benefit to our customers."

The success of SHARE throughout the federal government resulted in the president signing a three-year extension of the initiative through 2009.



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LANCE CPL. KATELYN A. KNAUER
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

They stand among Marines, equipped with the knowledge to save lives.

Out of a battalion of over 1,000 Marines, 40 Navy corpsmen stand ready to provide medical support.

The corpsmen of 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion supported the Marines they work alongside as they conducted a battalion-level training exercise at the Northwestern edge of the Combat Center's training area June 1-11 in preparation for their upcoming deployment.

To support Marines in their mission, the corpsmen all came with specific jobs and tasks to ensure operations ran safely for the Marines during their training evolution.

The corpsmen at hand for the battalion exercise included an independent duty corpsmen, a preventative medicine technician, a preventative medicine representative, a senior line representative, a senior medical department representative, a head supply corpsmen and a

fully equipped staff.

The battalion's independent duty corpsmen, Petty Officer 1st Class George Velasquez, is tasked with many responsibilities to include running sick call and prescribing medication to sick or wounded Marines.

"I also deal with the different aspects surrounding medevac," said Velasquez.

Included in his duties, Velasquez is also tasked with making the decision on whether or not someone is stable enough to go by air or ground when the medical emergency requires treatment at the Naval Hospital on mainside of the base.

Petty Officer 2nd Class T.J. Esnaola, a corpsmen preparing for his third deployment, is the acting preventative medicine technician. Tasked with several different things, Esnaola works with the preventative medicine representative.

"My job includes surveying the training area and doing an environmental and health assessment," said Esnaola. "I also have HN [seaman] Chris Mort who is my representative. He helps survey, and then I brief the



Seaman Josue Torres practices checking the blood pressure on a fellow corpsman, Seaman Javier Flores, Saturday in the northwestern edge of the Combat Center's training area.

commanding officer and executive officer."

The senior medical department representative, Petty Officer 1st Class Jason Amos, is in charge of leading the entire medical group and the senior line representative.

Seaman Josue Torres represents

Marines for 3rd LAR's Blackfoot Company.

"I'm in charge of 119 Marines and sailors," said Torres. "I'm also the right hand man to the commanding officer and executive officer for medical. I'm basically serving as the medical liaison

between the medical officer, staff and company."

Along with providing the Marines with medical support, it was also a chance for the unit to conduct a little training of their own, and learn the ropes of working with each other.

"On top of supporting 3rd LAR, we also did practical application, triage and mass casualty drills," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Nicolas Ruiz. "This was the first time for the corpsmen to really work together in an environment like this."

Many of the corpsmen saw the training and time in the field as a way to both bond with fellow corpsmen and increase their knowledge on the job.

"The training we received went well," said Esnaola. "We learned what we could have done better and found our kinks. We also got the chance to get to know each other better both personality-wise and work-wise - a chance to know how the people we work with are as a person and as corpsmen."

3rd LAR's corpsmen will now go on to support the battalion during Mojave Viper, a month-long pre-deployment training evolution and will continue to train saving and caring for lives.

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Photo by: Lance Cpl. Aaron P. Mankin



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Words regarding respect from Chaplain Taylor

LT. MICHAEL A. TAYLOR
PROTESTANT CHAPEL

Respect is a virtue we count on from others. Might I even say we need it from others to affirm our contributions in history and to know we are appreciated? When respect is absent, many have been tempted to cope by harboring bitterness. Some have even sought to avenge their pride by exacting an undefined price on the offender. One of the darkest results of such a choice is the heart of the avenger becomes hardened, blocking out logic, and nullifying compassion. Revenge, if it becomes an option, may even lead us to act disrespectfully toward others who are undeserving of our anger. We then embody the very thing we hate resulting in the embarrassment of hypocrisy and the loss of personal integrity.

In our military influenced lives, we have respect written into our oaths, traditions, and professional conduct. By default, we are held to a higher standard of respect than most in our society. However, there is more to applying respect than robotic obedience. Genuine respect comes from a virtu-

ous heart. A sense of honor compels the individual to treat others with dignity regardless of circumstances. In writing this, I do not intend to communicate a lack of accountability or discipline. Respect does not have to be void of correction in order to be respectful. True respect will express the morals we know to be right and influence others to excel in the same.

How can we be sure we are setting ourselves, and others, up for success when it comes to practicing respect? I offer two suggestions. First, we need have a high standard of respect to learn from. To refrain from making this choice leaves a person vulnerable to the deception of emotions, or even worse, the influence of destructive sources. To ensure I have an unalterable standard by which to measure myself, I have chosen to learn respect from God. Believing the Christian Bible to be His purest form of communication regarding life and godliness, I filter my thoughts, motives, and actions through these Scriptures alone. By doing so, I am held accountable to a standard much purer than

my own opinion or the sway of public persuasion.

My second suggestion is to work hard at refining self-respect. The standard you have chosen to morally educate yourself should not only give you a good evaluation of your conduct; it should also "up the ante" as well, challenging you with something to strive for. In addition, an inner drive must be nurtured to excel in what you learn. Remember, knowledge is powerless unless it is applied. To ensure your self-respect is

maturing profitably, integrity and accountability must act as a failsafe against conceit. Developing a balanced, more mature self-respect will produce humility, not arrogance.

For the person who develops the intestinal fortitude to urge maturity upon self, an increase in self-respect can be anticipated. As a result, the disciplined individual discovers how to expect more from self than from others. Obvious changes will be observed by others, and ironically a high-

er degree of respect will likely be offered in return.

Far too many of us waste precious moments in life fuming over the lack of respect we receive from others. In doing so, an erosion of self respect takes place and bitterness tempts plans for revenge. Since respect is a much needed commodity in our modern society, I suggest we each start with self and strive to outdo others in showing honor. For those who share my testimony of Christ, I leave you with this command from Romans

12:9-11(NASB) "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord ..." For everyone else, I encourage you to excel in areas where many choose to quit. Don't allow the persuasion of unprincipled men to influence your life. Refine the motives of your heart and apply yourselves to the conduct fitting of a virtuous life.

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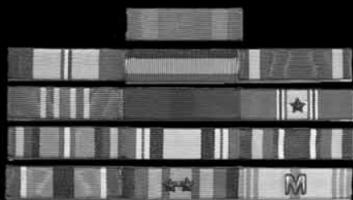


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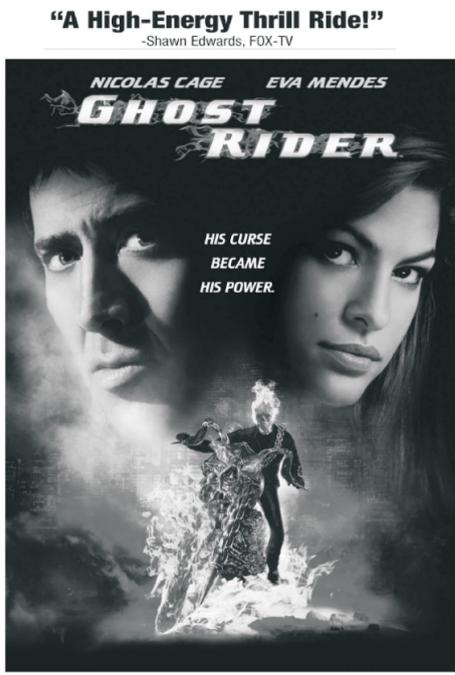
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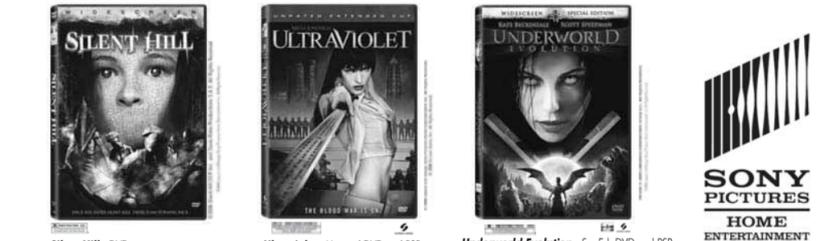
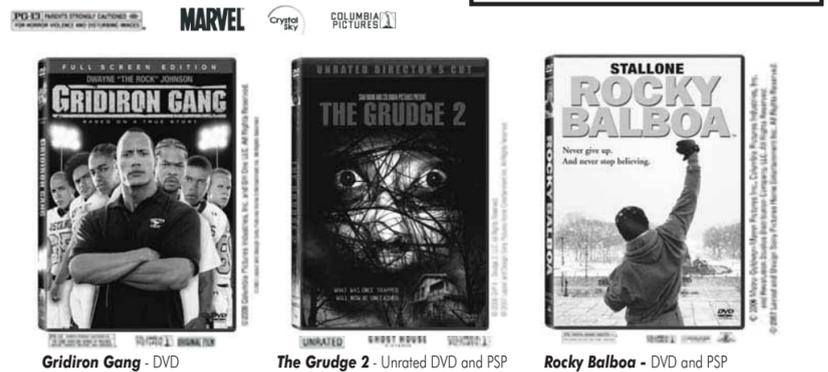
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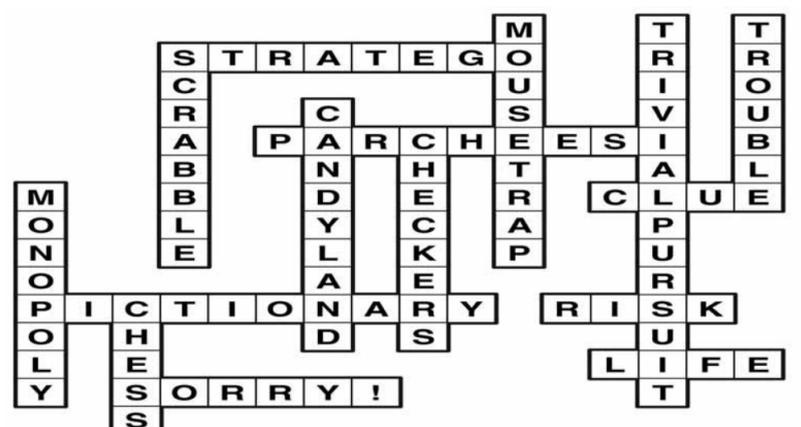
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OBSERVATIONS

JUNE 15, 2007

3/11 soccer team defeats MWSS-374, 3-0

PFC. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

After 80 strenuous minutes of continuous fighting on the field, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment defeated Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 in a soccer game Wednesday at Felix Field.

The game kicked off at 5:30 p.m. and from the sound of the first whistle, neither team gave an inch.

MWSS-374 began by pushing forward with an aggressive offense, but 3/11 took control of the ball when MWSS-374 player, Rice Michael, received a yellow card for yelling at the referee.

Forward Erik Keim from 3/11 passed two defensemen with quick foot skills, but was unable to score. The ball was turned over to MWSS-374 player Bruce Novasky, but the referee ended his breakaway with a postponed call for tripping another player.

With 20 seconds left on the clock for the first half, Keim made it past MWSS-374 defensemen and shot the ball bringing the first half to an end with 3/11 in the lead, 1-0.

The beginning of the second half kicked off with re-energized players for both teams on the field.

The concentration of the game sky-rocketed as MWSS-374 player, James Sredl, stole the ball and took off down the field, almost scoring against 3/11 goal keeper, Jordan Leet, 3/11 defensemen, Thomas Medbery, kept control of his defense, however, stopping MWSS-374 from scoring.

3/11 forward, Aliaksandr



Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 player, Rice Michael, dives in for a slide tackle as teammate Keith Thomas and 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment player, Aliaksandr Petushok, look on as the ball rolls past his defensemen Wednesday at Felix Field.

Petushok, stole the ball from MWSS-374's defense and blasted it into the net for 3/11's second goal of the game.

After the following kick-off, MWSS-374 player, Ayala Horacio, worked the ball up and down the right side of the field using graceful foot skills to keep possession of the ball. Teammate James Cowan, received a pass from

Horacio, but was still not able to divide 3/11's defense.

Cowan constantly bombarded 3/11's defense, but Medbery and Leete kept their cool and worked together to move the ball.

Medbery passed it to Felipe Saldana, who proceeded to carry the ball up the field. His rush ended when Horacio shut him down, stealing the ball.

Petushok snatched grabbed the ball from Horacio and carried it down the field. With a quick fake around a defenseman, Petushok rocketed the ball past the goalie and scored his second and final point of the game.

The game ended with 3/11 dominating the rest of the second half. 3/11 triumphed over MWSS-374 with an ending score of 3-0.

2007 Intramural Soccer Standings as of 6/14/2007

Unit	Wins	Losses
NHTP	3	0
3/11	3	1
MCCES	2	1
TTECG	0	2
MWSS-374	0	4

Marines Win Warriors from Across the Sea Challenge

BRYAN DRIVER

PERSONAL AND FAMILY READINESS DIVISION

HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS QUANTICO, Va. - The All-Marine Half Marathon team blazed past the British Royal Navy/Marine team to retake the Warriors from Across the Sea Cup. The five-man and three-woman team scored the top three men's times and the top woman's time compiling a combined time of 5:12:04 beating the British team by more than four minutes at the Plymouth Half Marathon held in Plymouth, England, May 27.

Leading the charge for Team Marines was Lance Cpl. Thomas Kunish of III Marine Logistics Group out of Okinawa, Japan, with a time of 1:12:22. Staff Sgt. Jeremy Brown of Marine Air Control Group-38, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., rounded out the top six list in second place with a time of 1:14:11, followed by four British Royal Navy/Marines, completing the men's scoring portion of the race. Marine Corps Running Team veteran, Maj. Jeff Blackwell of 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Corps Air Station

Cherry Point, N.C., crossed the finish line at 1:17:40.

With only a slim 03:13 lead after the men's competition, it was up to the women runners of Royal Navy/Marine and All Marine Team to determine who would take home the Challenge Cup. As the tension mounted, Capt. Jennifer Ledford of Marine Forces Pacific, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., fighting an injured Achilles tendon, crossed the finish line 56 seconds ahead of the first Royal Navy/Marine woman, securing the Marines' victory.

Each year, the Marine Corps and the British Royal Navy/Marines take part in the friendly competition at the Plymouth Half Marathon and the Marine Corps Marathon. Since 1995, the Marine Corps has defeated their British counterparts in the Warriors Challenge five of nine times and have won four competitions in a row. In 2006, at the Marine Corps Marathon, the All-Marine Women Runners defeated their counterparts, as the British Royal Navy/Marine Men claimed victory. In April, the Marine Corps Boxing Team faced the



The All-Marine Half Marathon team are all smiles after defeating the British Royal Navy/Marine team in a half marathon race to retake the Warriors from Across the Sea Cup in Plymouth, England, May 27.

British Army Air 13 Assault Regiment at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., in a competition that ended in a four-four tie.

The Challenge Cup will be

up for grabs again at the Marine Corps Marathon in October. Teams for the U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Force will also be at the race looking to capture the 2007

Armed Forces Marathon Championship. For more information regarding the Plymouth Half Marathon, visit www.plymouthhalf-marathon.co.uk. For additional

information about the Marine Corps Running Program or the All-Marine Sports Program, contact Steven Dinote at 703-784-9542 or steven.dinote@usmc.mil.

Movies and recreation for the upcoming week at the Sunset Cinema

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6 p.m.
In the Land of Women (PG-13)
9 p.m.
Perfect Stranger (R)

Saturday
2 p.m.
Disturbia (PG-13)
6 p.m.
Vacancy (R)
9 p.m.
Fracture (R)

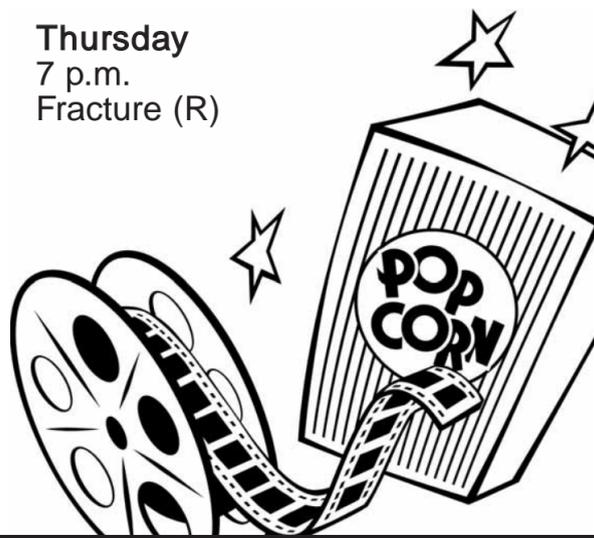
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Tuesday
7 p.m.
Disturbia (R)

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7 p.m.
Fracture (R)



NFL, eKnowledge tackle college entrance exams

BRYAN DRIVER
PERSONAL AND FAMILY READINESS DIVISION

WASHINGTON — The Montgomery G.I. bill pays servicemembers' and their dependents' tuition at institutes of higher learning, but it doesn't help them gain admission to school.

To give college-bound members of military families a leg-up, eKnowledge Corporation, which supplies interactive test-preparation products for college entrance exams, teamed with a group of NFL players and donated \$6.9 million worth of multimedia SAT/ACT preparation materials to servicemembers and their families in 2006. In 2007, the partnership will boost its commitment to \$10 million.

"I learned that (some) kids who served on active duty and combat zones were taking the SAT and ACT exams and they weren't scoring very well," Charlie Beall, CEO of eKnowledge and a former Marine infantry officer, said in an interview.

"The principal reason is because they were trying to take these college entrance exams without thorough preparation," he said.

SAT and ACT exam

scores often weigh heavily in college admission judgments and can tip the scales toward an applicant's acceptance or rejection. To prepare for the critical exam, prospective students have several options, Beall said.

"You can pay \$30 and try to study from a 3-inch thick manual, which is an extremely difficult thing to do, or you can enroll in a classroom test-preparation program for about \$1,000," he said.

A third option is to take DVD and CD-based premium test preparation courses like eKnowledge's, which costs \$300, or other similar products with price tags that reach upwards of \$600. "Virtually none of these military kids were using premium test preparation products because they couldn't afford them," Beall said.

"The vast majority of our military servicemembers serve several years, then transition back into civilian life," he said. "We demonstrate our value for the sacrifice they make for our country by supporting them in that transition."

Servicemembers interested in receiving free eKnowledge products can complete an online request form at www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil by following the link to "Donation: VSG/NFL Players." Requests can also be made by calling eKnowledge at 951-256-4076 or via e-mail at support@eknowledge.com.

When seven NFL players — Mark Anderson, Chicago Bears; Jon Bradley, Tampa Bay Buccaneers; Scott Young, Philadelphia Eagles; Garrick Jones, Atlanta Falcons; Corey Williams, Green Bay Packers; Jason Radar, Miami Dolphins; and Ahmaad Galloway, San Diego Chargers — heard about eKnowledge's plan to donate study materials, they jumped at the chance to support servicemembers and their families. The players were unavailable for comment because of team commitments during the NFL draft season.

After donating 48,000 test preparation CDs & DVDs, eKnowledge and the NFL received about 20,000 notes from satisfied test-takers, thanking the partnership for its contribution. One thank you note was sent from a servicemember stationed in Africa.

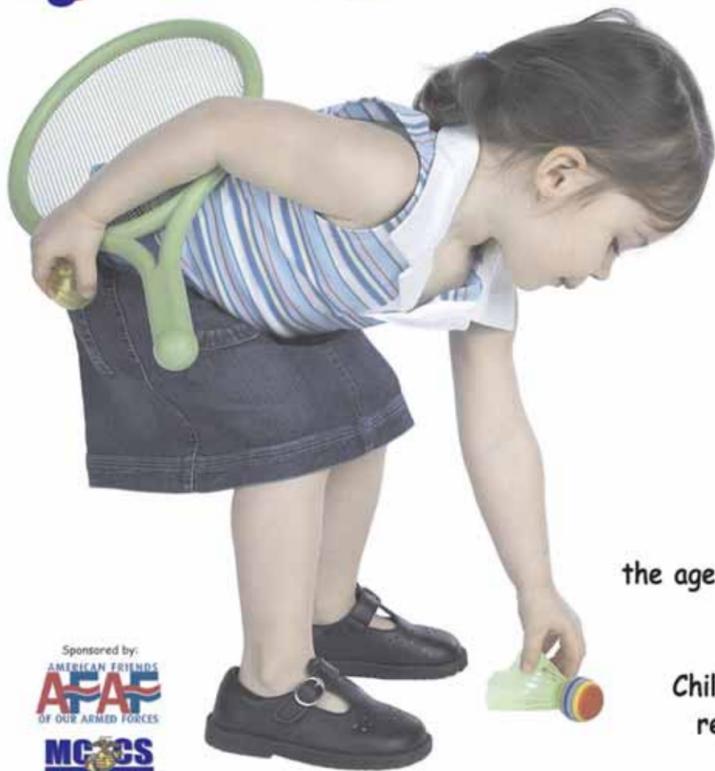
"As a military parent residing in Kenya, I truly appreciate the opportunity to obtain these products for my daughter who attends the international school here," Air Force Maj. Douglas McClain wrote. "This program will guarantee that she has current material to prepare for the SAT and ACT. Thanks from an Air Force major who is trying to serve his country and also take care of his family."

Beall said servicemembers and their dependents can receive test prep materials no matter "where they are on the globe" — from Baghdad's International Zone to a ship floating in the Pacific Ocean.

"One of the wonderful things about our products is that because they're multimedia (and) Web-based, we can send a DVD to a military servicemember anywhere in the world," he said. "It allows the person to study at their own pace on their own time."

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PFC. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Roll the dice!

Marine spouse, Hallie Meyer, watches as fellow Bunko player, Phyllis Field, rolls the dice with ease at the Officer's Club Tuesday. Bunko is played with three dice, and four players put into two teams. The object of the game is to roll the same number as the round being played. If all three dice roll the same number on the same round, Bunko is called and the players switch tables.

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