

OBSERVATION Post

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MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

SEPTEMBER 21, 2007

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 50 ISSUE 38

NREA helps a durable desert survivor

COMPILED BY NREA

Desert survival is foremost in the minds of many of us at the Combat Center, and we share the Mojave Desert with one of the most enduring, natural desert characters known, the desert tortoise.

The desert tortoises' burrows, large bladder, and ability to conserve water and energy during lean times, are just a few of the many traits enabling them to survive under such harsh desert conditions.

Throughout the species' range, however, a number of human-related factors have contributed to substantial declines in tortoise populations, and to the species being categorized as 'threatened' on the endangered species list. To defend its desert tortoise populations, the Combat Center has developed several proactive initiatives. One of the greatest efforts, directed by Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs, is a head start program that is focused around a facility named Tortoise Research and Captive Rearing Site.

The acronym TRACRS was chosen for its military likeness,



Combat Center head start hatchlings, which can be quite active, or enjoy sleepy moments, within the safe confines of the TRACRS facilities. NREA research on TRACRS tortoises will help in species recovery.

and the facility's two primary functions. Captive rearing is the core of the head start program because it contributes towards recruitment of young tortoises into the tortoise population here.

Additionally, research of the captive rearing process and

successes is key to helping all agencies manage their populations, and to helping the species recover.

Gravid, or egg-bearing, female tortoises from the Combat Center's grounds are brought to TRACRS to nest within individual, fenced

enclosures that have bird netting overhead to exclude predatory birds. After the females nest, they are returned home. In the wild, it is typical that offspring receive no parental care.

At TRACRS, the nests, eggs and hatchlings are protected

until the young can grow large enough, and their shells tough enough, to resist predation by ravens and many other predators, like coyotes, kit fox and feral dogs. Our aim is to grow the young and release them in their mother's range, where she would have nested. The hatch-

ling and juvenile mortality rate is high in the wild. Head starting should be an effective tool for defending the desert tortoise populations here.

The second function of TRACRS, research, contributes

See NREA, A7

3/4 conducts small unit leadership training course

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The fire team leaders of 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, completed the Tactical Small Unit Leader Course Sept. 14 at Combat Center Training Areas Lava and West.

The Marines spent three weeks brushing up on basic infantry small unit tactics, marksmanship and weapons

training.

"This is a trial for the Marine Corps," said Staff Sgt. Paul V. Cooke, platoon sergeant, India Company, 3/4. "Battalion level training in small unit leadership is a relatively new concept."

The first week began at Training Area Lava and consisted of instructing the Marines on the different weapons systems, the use of optics and night vision goggles,

standard operating procedures, and habits of thought and action.

The next week moved into the combat arms phase. Here, the fire team leaders learned how to manipulate weapons like the M16A2, M16A4, M249 Squad Automatic Weapon and the M203 grenade launcher. They also learned how to integrate the use of grenades and

See 3/4, A7



Lance Cpl. Braulio Rodas, a fire team leader for 2nd Platoon, Lima Company, 3/4, scans the horizon of training area West during a reconnaissance patrol Sept. 14.

3rd LAR departs for 4th deployment



Marines and sailors from 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion are given their last farewell from Official Hugger Joyce Orrell Sept. 13 as they load the buses for their fourth deployment to Iraq.

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Family, friends and official huggers gathered together to watch as their beloved Marines and sailors from 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion deployed to Iraq Sept. 13 and 15.

The Wolf Pack was split into four groups to leave between the two days for their fourth deployment to Iraq.

Their mission is to conduct security operations for local cities and people in Iraq and work on public relations with Iraqi leaders.

The Marines will also help train Iraqi soldiers and police so they can maintain and take over missions while suppressing and eliminating any insurgent activities in the surrounding area, said Master Sgt. Larry Bivens, 3rd LAR's operations chief and staff noncommissioned officer in charge.

While deployed, the Marines and sailors will conduct expedient control points, vehicle checkpoints, mounted and ground patrols and standby for any Headquarters Marine Corps' missions.

"I am physically ready for this deployment but a little hesitant because my wife and baby live here," said Lance Cpl. Nicholas Pierce, with Weapons Platoon, Charlie Co.,

See DEPLOY, A7

Weekend Weather

Friday 78/55 Partly Cloudy

Saturday 77/56 Mostly Sunny

Sunday 85/60 Sunny

Inside this issue

- A3: Liberty Call
- A5: Spartans transition to HIMARS
- A7: Employee Spotlight

Observations



Animal Guys, Inc. educates local children

This Day in Marine Corps History

— Sept. 21, 1951 —
Cpl. Jack Davenport, Gulf Co. 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for throwing himself on a grenade to protect others in Korea.



Marine Corps Community Services is exploring options to open the Skeet Range aboard MCAGCC. Please return the survey below to the Customer Service counter at the Main Exchange by Oct. 4th. Your name will be entered in a drawing for a \$50 MCX gift certificate! For questions, please call 830-6296

SURVEY

Would you use the Skeet Range with all materials provided? (Weapons, clay pigeons, rounds, protective gear) Yes No

If yes, how often would you use it?
 Daily Weekly Monthly Few times a year

What days of the week?
 Mon. Tues. Wed. Thur. Fri. Sat. Sun.

What would you pay to use the facility?
 \$5-\$10 \$10-\$15 \$15-\$20

Would you prefer a Shooting Range to a Skeet Range? Yes No

What information do you enjoy reading most in the Observation Post?
 Local news Promotions National news Leisure

ENTER TO WIN A \$50 GIFT CERTIFICATE

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Rank (optional) _____ Email _____

Mailing address (optional) _____

Would you like to receive mailings from MCCS about current events? Yes No

Sempertoons

By Gunnery Sgt. Charles Wolf



C.O.P. Corner



Community Oriented Policing



The proactive voice of crime prevention

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

**Register Your Weapons. It's Easy!!!
 Combat Center Order**

According to CCO P1630.6E, chapter 4, all weapons introduced to the Combat Center must be registered with the Provost Marshal's Office and conform to all California regulations for transport. Weapons can be registered at The Vehicle Registration Office located at the front gate Building 901. Personnel do not need to bring their weapon to the front gate only the serial number. Rifles, shotguns, pistols, bows, bb/pellet guns, paintball guns, air soft guns, swords, spears, and knives with a blade of over 4 inches are all considered weapons and must be registered. Additionally, you may obtain a free gun safety lock for your firearms at Vehicle Registration at any time. Failure to register weapons may result in punitive action and/or the confiscation of the weapon.

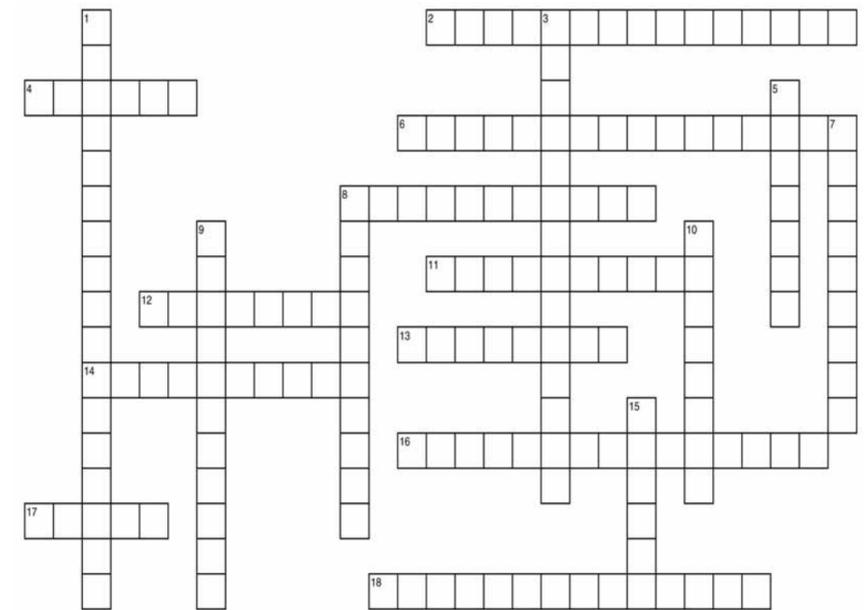
If you have any questions call the Vehicle Registration office at 830-6794.

The following services are available to on-base personnel and residents through the Crime Prevention Section:

Literature, Briefings, Education, Crime Assessments, Safety Tips, Stranger Danger Program, McGruff the Crime Dog, Officer Friendly Program, Operation Identification(Property Identification), Child Identification and Fingerprinting.

For more information about the above services, contact the PMO Crime Prevention Section at 830 4561/6094.

THE GOVENATOR'S FILMS



ACROSS

- 2. Fought over an action figure
- 4. Man can get pregnant?
- 6. Family-avenging firefighter
- 8. Mission to Mars
- 11. "I'll be back"
- 12. Shares the screen with Govenor Ventura
- 13. Co-starts with Chong's daughter
- 14. Had to survive on a futuristic game show
- 16. "Who is your daddy and what does he do?"
- 17. Has a twin brother who's noticeably smaller
- 18. A chilly villain

DOWN

- 1. A great warrior
- 3. Didn't know he was in a movie
- 5. An undercover x-agent who dishes out his own justice
- 7. Fought the Devil
- 8. Wishes the Rock luck on a long career of action films
- 9. Runs into his own clone
- 10. Plays a secret agent who keeps his secret from his family
- 15. "Erased" everyone in his way

[Solutions on A6]

Centerspeak

What band/artist would you like to see perform at the Combat Center?

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



CPL. MICHELLE BILECK
MCCES

"P"etra."



CPL. RYAN MILLER
1ST TANKS

"M"etallica"



GUNNERY SGT. RICHARD OLDHAM
HQBN

"O"utkast."

Attention writers

The OP is looking for newspaper stringers. Once you get the "scoop" on a story inform the post newspaper editor. Either the OP can send a reporter, or you can write it yourself. The submission deadline is Friday the week prior to the next publication. For more information, call (760) 830-5472.

OBSERVATION POST

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LIBERTY CALL

The Officers' Spouses' Club of Twentynine Palms Presents

Roll Out The Barrel...



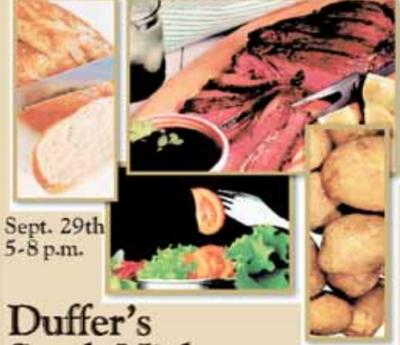
Beer and Wine Tasting
Saturday, September 29, 2007
7-11 p.m.

Combat Center Officers' Club
Ticket Price: \$25 per person
This event is open to anyone 21 and older.

Sample a variety of Beers and Fine Wines
Products will also be available for purchase
Enjoy lots of Delicious Foods
Menu will include German and French fare

Opportunity Table!
Courtesy Shuttle aboard base.

Proceeds to benefit OSC Scholarships and Grants
Hosted by the Spouses of 1/7, Medical and Dental
*Must be 21 yrs. or older to attend.
Contact 830-6610.



Sept. 29th
5-8 p.m.

Duffer's Steak Night

Bring your friends and family out for an evening of grilled edibles.

- Angus Tip Sirloin Steak • Roasted Red Potatoes • Vegetables
- Salad • Garlic Bread • Dessert • Refreshments
- Children's menu available

Adults \$12.95 • Children's Menu \$3.95
Reservations encouraged, call 830-6132
www.mccs29palms.com



CLOSED For Overseeding

Oct. 1 - 31

Driving Range, Pro Shop & Duffers Restaurant remain open for your convenience!
Desert Winds Golf Course 830-6132

mccs29palms.com



Membership Appreciation Night
@ Hashmarks

OPEN MIC! SHOW US YOUR STUFF

Fri., Sept. 28 • 6-9 p.m.

Heavy hors d'oeuvres, open mic, DJ and door prizes throughout the night! **FREE** for Staff Club members! Become a member today!

Call 830-5058 (after 4 p.m.) or 830-6610
mccs29palms.com



SMP EVENTS

September 21 - 28

You're here. You're single. You're in.

KNOTT'S SCARY FARM

OCT. 6TH
SMP Trip to KNOTT'S BERRY FARM
Depart The Zone
@ 3 p.m.
Cost: \$30
SIGN UP AT ZONE

SMP has many Volunteer Opportunities.
Please call 830-4767 for more information

O CLUB LUNCH MENU & HOURS

- Monday - Menu
- Tuesday - Pasta Bar
- Wednesday - Fajitas
- Thursday - Buffet
- Friday - Surf & Turf

Lunch menu & hours are 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Details, 830-6610
www.mccs29palms.com

Movies and recreation for the upcoming week at the Sunset Cinema

Friday Daddy Day Camp 6:00 p.m. PG	Sunday Underdog 2 p.m. PG	Tuesday No Reservation 7 p.m. PG
The Simpsons Movie 9:00 p.m. PG-13	The Invasion 6 p.m. PG-13	Wednesday War 7 p.m. R
Rush Hour 3 Midnight PG-13	War 9 p.m. R	Thursday The Invasion 7 p.m. PG-13
Saturday FREE 11 a.m. Sneak Preview PG	Monday The Simpson's Movie 7 p.m. PG-13	

Cinema 6

MOVIE TIMES 365-9633

Resident Evil: Extinction (R) Fri-Sat: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00 Mon-Thur: 2:00, 4:30, 7:00	Dragon Wars (PG-13) Fri-Sat: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00 Mon-Thur: 2:00, 4:30, 7:00	Good Luck Chuck (R) Fri-Sat: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00 Mon-Thur: 2:00, 4:30, 7:00
The Brave One (R) Fri-Sat: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00 Mon-Thur: 2:00, 4:30, 7:00	Coming Sept. 28 • The Kingdom • The Game Plan	ALL SHOWS BEFORE 6:00 PM \$6.00 • ADULTS \$10.00 • CHILDREN \$6.00 www.cinema6.com

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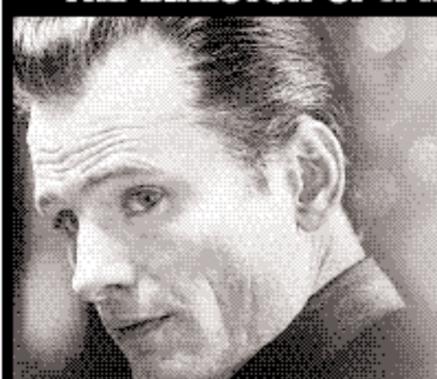
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THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED NEW THRILLER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE



Rolling Stone
"A MESMERIZING POWER-PUNCH OF A THRILLER. David Cronenberg is a visionary. Brilliant film. Brilliant director. His films pop and resonate. 'Eastern Promises' is Viggo Mortensen's tour de force. Naomi Watts is extraordinary."
- Peter Travers

EASTERN PROMISES

Every Sin Leaves A Mark.

Ebert & Roeper
"A VERY, VERY STRONG FILM. There's a lot of elements of 'The Godfather' here. The fight scene with Viggo Mortensen in the steam bath... is like nothing you've seen before. Full of tremendous performances."
- Richard Roeper, 3, Robert Whiteley, Grant Collins, Ebert & Roeper

VIGGO MORTENSEN NAOMI WATTS VINCENT CASSEL

FOCUS FEATURES presents in association with BBC FILMS A KODAK PICTURES/SERENITY POINT FILMS production in association with SCION FILMS
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DEBORAH GUYEN NINA GOLD "HINDWIND SHIRE" JESSICA CRONENBERG RONALD SANDERS "CARD" CARL SPIER
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Ground Breaking Ceremony Announced

JERRI HAGMAN

TWENTYNINE PALMS, CALIF. - Sky's The Limit, the non-profit organization building the Observatory and Nature Center adjacent to the Joshua Tree National Park, will hold its official Groundbreaking Ceremony

from 3-5pm, Sept. 30th. The public is invited to attend this historic, community celebration which will include a blessing of the land by the Twentynine Palms Band of Mission Indians, a breaking of the ground ceremony, and the dedication of its first art installation by renowned

sculptor Simi Dabah.

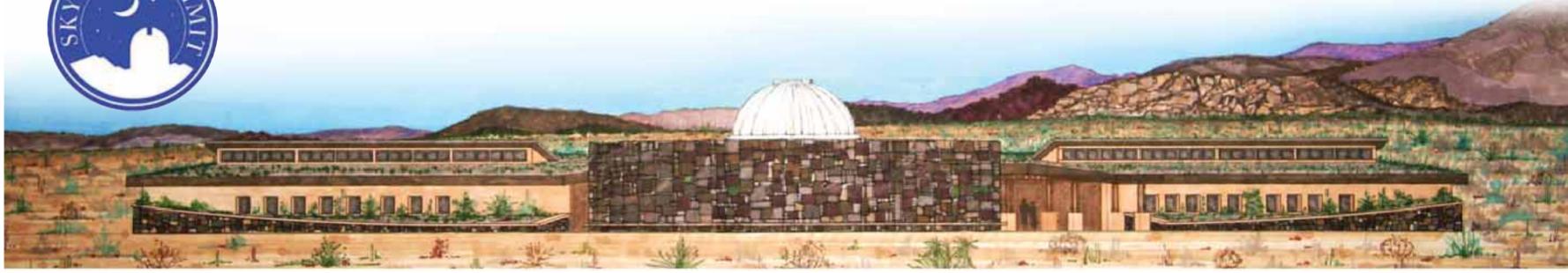
On hand to celebrate the event will be local supporters, educators, business leaders and government officials, as well as parents, students and members of the Galaxy 72 Investor Club who pledge a 72-month contribution to help fund

construction of the observatory, classrooms, outdoor amphitheater and nature trails. Participating in the groundbreaking ceremony will be local students of all ages, chosen for their interest in astronomy and the earth sciences. The participation of these students

will usher in a new era for the Morongo Basin's reputation as a premier dark-sky educational and tourism destination.

Visitors to the celebration will meet at the Joshua Tree National Park Visitor's Center on Utah Trail at National Park Drive in Twentynine Palms at

3 pm. They will be shuttled to the observatory site. To maintain public safety, there will be no parking or drop-offs at the site. For more information visit Sky's The Limit web site at www.skysthelimit29.org, or contact them at 367-7222 or by e-mail at contact@skysthelimit29.org.



HOT TOPICS

HISTORY NIGHT

Lifelong Learning Library is hosting History Night on Tuesday, Sept. 25 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Bring the whole family to the library to celebrate history! Come and enjoy activities, prizes, games, a craft and a story. For more information, call 830-6875.

MILITARY COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN SEASON KICK-OFF EVENT

The kick-off event on Sept. 25 and all meetings will be held in the St. Francis Room in the Catholic Chapel on Tuesday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to

11:00 a.m. Child care will be provided, but please contact Ms. Alice-Ann Patu prior to the kick-off event to confirm those arrangements - she may be contacted at 830-6482. This event is open to all Catholic Women and anyone interested in learning more about the Catholic faith. The 29 Palms Council of Catholic Women is dedicated to bringing women of the military community closer to the Church and Christ through prayer, fellowship, bible and book studies, ministering to the needs of the 29 Palms community, and supporting parish programs. The Military Council of Catholic Women 29 Palms is affiliated with the MCCW - USA. Since 1970, MCCW - USA has nurtured the spiritual development of

its members by helping them to cope with the challenges of their faith in concert with a military lifestyle.

A PREP WORKSHOP

PREP Workshop is scheduled for Sept. 26 to Sept. 28. PREP is a 3-day workshop teaching communication skills, ground rules for handling conflict and promoting intimacy for married or engaged couples. The program's aim is to prevent marital problems before they become too great to handle. PREP workshops are offered at the Protestant Chapel and at no cost. Problem solving, building fun and friendship into your relationship, sensual/sexual enhancement, steps in forgiveness, how to handle expectations, money matters are just a few of the topics.

The next PREP workshop is Jan. 23-25. Call 830-6464 to enroll.

PRESIDENTIAL PHOTO:

If you were photographed with the President in the spring of 2006 when he visited please contact the Public Affairs Office as there are several photos the White House has sent. They are color photos that the President addressed and signed. If you posed with him and have not picked up your photos, please come in and do so. Please call 830-3764 if you have any questions.

YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL REGISTRATION

Youth Sports is offering Youth Flag Football for ages 7 - 14. Registration is from Oct. 1 to Nov. 9. Practice starts November 14 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Victory Field. Cost is \$10 and includes jersey

and award. Age groups will be determined by number of participants. Sign-up at the Community Center, building 1004. Register from October 1 - November 9 or until program is full. For more information, call 830-8421/3380.

COMBAT CENTER LEMON LOT:

Combat Center Order 1740.1d chap 2 states all privately owned vehicles may only be displayed for sale by the owner in the parking lot adjacent to the Home Store, the "Lemon Lot". This will be coordinated through the Provost Marshal's Office Vehicle Registration section building 901. Owner's must obtain authorization by appearing in person at Vehicle Registration with the registration and proof of insurance prior to placing the vehicle for sale, vehicles will then be issued a "Lemon Lot" pass good for 30 days from date of

issuance. Placing your vehicle for sale prior to issuance of a "Lemon Lot" pass could result in your vehicle being ticketed and or towed at the owner's expense. More information on the lemon lot can be obtained by contacting Sgt. Johnson at 830-7700.

STUDENTS WANTED TO WORK AT THE COMMISSARY

Students, we want you!! Are you a good student with at least a "C" average? Are you looking for a job? Are you motivated? If so, come to the Commissary (Secretary's Office) or call Char at 830-7572 x3003 and find out how you can apply as a student hire at the Twentynine Palms Commissary.

UPDATING THE BASE PHONE BOOK

Directorates are requested to send Ms. Stevens, from the Public Affairs Office 830-5472, their changes/corrections to the base Newcomer's Guide/Phone Book for 2008 no later than Oct. 30. If any directorate did not get enough phone books this year please inform this office.

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Observation Post 9/28
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Authorization to participate

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29 Palms Art Gallery
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Artist's Reception
Sun, Sept. 30
Noon to 3 pm

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Gallery Hours
Noon to 3PM
Wed thru Sun



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HIMARS opens new chapter in Marine Corps history, phases out howitzers

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS
M. DUNN
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

On today's ever-changing battlefield, the Marine Corps must constantly adapt by introducing new tactics, gear and equipment to the fight.

One of the most recent advances in the Marine Corps' arsenal is the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System.

The HIMARS is the newest edition to the artillery community. It was developed to provide Marine Air Ground Task Force commanders with access to indirect fire support that is accurate, timely and deadly.

One rocket fired by the HIMARS has a destructive power that is equivalent to eight 155 mm rounds fired by a battery.

The biggest difference between the HIMARS and the currently used M198 howitzers is that the HIMARS fires 3-4 m rockets as opposed to 155mm artillery shells. Another major difference is the size of the crews. The HIMARS only requires a three-man crew to operate, but the M198s call for

a nine-man crew.

"Operating a HIMARS launcher is completely different from running a howitzer," said 1st Lt. Jeremy J. Colwell, Tango Battery executive officer. "There are only three Marines in the launcher and they pretty much operate independently. Those staff non-commissioned officer and noncommissioned officers in the launchers have a lot of freedom, and are making the tactical decisions as to where to place the launcher when it is waiting for a mission."

The organization of the fire direction center is also going to undergo a significant change due to the transition to the HIMARS.

"HIMARS is different from cannons in that at the battery operations center, formerly the FDC, computes data based on a grid point that we determine," said Colwell. "Realistically, the liaison element is just on the hill to ensure the rocket impacts in the right place. The forward observers do not call for fire."

By the end of its integration, the HIMARS will be

fully operational in one active duty artillery battalion and one reserve artillery battalion. The HIMARS is replacing the M198 howitzers previously used by these battalions.

Currently, only Tango Battery, 5th Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, and elements of 2nd Battalion, 14th Regiment have fully transitioned from the M198s to the HIMARS platform.

Tango Battery became the first active duty battery to field the HIMARS when they participated in the annual Regimental Desert Fire Exercise at Combat Center Training Areas Lavic Lake and Blacktop.

"The Marines are excited about the upcoming deployment," said Colwell. "The Marines have been doing an outstanding job and have been working very hard during this transition time."

Tango Battery will be the first active duty battery to field the HIMARS in an operational environment when they deploy to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom at the end of this year.



COURTESY PHOTO

The High Mobility Artillery Rocket System is the newest edition to the artillery community. It was developed to provide Marine Air Ground Task Force commanders with access to indirect firesupport that is accurate, timely and deadly. One rocket fired by the HIMARS has a destructive power that is equivalent to eight 155 mm rounds fired by a battery.

Spartans transition to HIMARS

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS
M. DUNN
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

As technology advances throughout history, old ideas and equipment retire to pave the way for the new.

The Marines and sailors of 5th Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, based out of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., are retiring their old M198 howitzers to make way for the newly-developed High Mobility Artillery Rocket System.

"In our current global conflict, it is imperative that a battery can provide accurate and timely fire," said 1st Lt. Robert M. Regedanz, fire direction officer, Sierra Battery, 5/11.

"The war on terror is fought in an urban environment where collateral damage often prevents indirect fire from being used. The transition of 5/11 to HIMARS allows maneuver elements the ability to integrate fire support assets into combined arms operations while reducing unwanted collateral damage."

Sierra, or "Spartan," Battery, fired their final rounds from the M198s today in support of the MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., based 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment's Mojave Viper pre-deployment training before putting them into retirement.

Spartan Battery expressed feelings of both excitement and dismay toward the transition to HIMARS.

"I've been in artillery for a while and I'm kind of sad to see the 198s go," said Sgt. Phillip Pryor Sr., Gun 1 section chief, Spartan Battery, 5/11. "However, I feel motivated to transition to a new weapons

system that is more deadly. HIMARS has a lot more explosive payload and can shoot much farther than the 198s"

The HIMARS has an average range of approximately 43 miles, which is significantly more than the M198s maximum range of approximately 18.75 miles. In addition, the HIMARS can fire rockets guided by the global positioning system, while the M198's rounds are guided entirely by a forward observer.

"The M198 has been good and faithful, but the HIMARS is more up-to-date, more accurate and less work," said Cpl. Jeremy White, gunner for Gun 1, Spartan Battery, 5/11.

Another question raised among the Spartans is what will happen to the crews, since the HIMARS only requires three people to operate it, as

opposed to the nine-man crews required for the M198s.

"Everyone's going to have to learn a different job," said Cpl. Kyle J. Haman, an artilleryman for Gun 2, Spartan Battery, 5/11. "Since the HIMARS has a smaller crew, the biggest question is what our new jobs will be and if we're all staying together."

Despite a few questions and concerns from the Spartans, the overall feeling about the HIMARS is a positive one.

"Battery S is highly motivated to be a part of a new era in the Marine Corps' artillery fight against all types of enemies," said Regedanz. "The HIMARS platform will provide maneuver commanders with the ability to engage short range and deep targets with

See SPARTANS, A7

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4th Recon returns



SGT. ROBERT L. FISHER

Marines and sailors from 4th Reconnaissance Battalion came through the Combat Center Wednesday night before getting back on the road to finish their journey home to San Antonio, Texas, after a seven-month deployment to Iraq. More than 120 4th Recon warriors expressed their joy at being so close to home despite their exhaustion from traveling for more than a day.

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Juanita Collier Services Pending.

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Edna Roush Memorial Services 2:30 p.m., Sunday, 9/23 at First Southern Baptist Church in Joshua Tree

Mary Longo Graveside Service, 11 a.m. Tuesday, 10/23. Joshua Tree Memorial Park

Duane Samuels Graveside Service, 1 p.m. Saturday, 10/20. Joshua Tree Memorial Park

Shirley Bohanan Services are Pending

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 Sun 8 a.m. Catholic Mass*
 Sun 9 a.m. Military Council of Catholic Women (Bldg 1551)
 Sun 9 a.m. Faith Formation/CCD (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

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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
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 5 - 7:30 p.m. Catechist Meeting (Second Tues. 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
 6 p.m. RCIA (Bldg. 1551, **Christ Chapel**)
 5:30 p.m. Catholic Choir Rehearsal
 6 p.m. Praise & Worship Rehearsal
 6 p.m. Pre-Service Food/Fellowship
 7 p.m. Lay-Led Gospel Bible Study
 7 p.m. Praise & Worship Serv.

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3/4 from A1

AT-4 disposable rocket launchers into a fire team.

In order to graduate the second week of training, each fire team had to assault and reduce a machine gun bunker. They also had to incorporate all the different weapons systems into their assault. The exercise was entirely live fire only, adding more difficulty and pressure to the situation.

In the final week of the course, the Marines were taught patrolling knowledge like individual land navigation, combat reporting, how to prepare for a combat patrol and how to properly conduct a fire team reconnaissance patrol. One such patrol was led by Lance Cpl. Jeremy Montiel, a fire team leader for 1st Platoon, Lima Company, 3/4.

As the patrol leader, Montiel was responsible for conducting the patrol brief, the patrol rehearsals, the patrol itself and the patrol debrief. Each patrol was sent out with an observer who evaluated them on their performance.

Montiel's mission was to patrol east of Forward Operating Base West to gather intelligence on enemy activity and capabilities in that area. The patrol did not make contact with the enemy, but they successfully determined the enemy's strength in the area east of the FOB.

"I really felt they performed really well," said 2nd Lt. Joe Dilling, 3rd Platoon commander, India Company, 3/4. "They really know their individual infantry skills. It was a very solid patrol. I'm very

happy with it."

Montiel felt the course could be a little more advanced, but it's also a very good refresher course for the Marines, he said.

The instructors are very optimistic about the course and feel that it is good training for the fire team leaders to pass on to their junior Marines.

"It really puts other training into perspective to go back to the basics," said Cpl. Cesar L. Mendoza, 2nd Squad Leader, 2nd Platoon, India Company, 3/4 and an instructor for TSULC. "Sometimes we forget to reiterate training. Going back to the fundamentals and being professional at them is important.

"The battalion is doing a good job at getting leaders involved and being proactive by giving the Marines adequate training," he added. "We're taking the right steps to making this next deployment successful."

The students also shared an optimistic view on the outcome of the course.

"It's good that they bring us out here to recover the basics and get everyone on the same page," said Cpl. Joshua W. Cummings, a fire team leader for 2nd Platoon, India Company, 3/4. "Everyone is getting the material down pretty well."

Now that the fire team leaders of 3/4 have fine-tuned their basic infantry skills, they can pass that knowledge down to their junior Marines. The Marines and sailors of 3/4 will continue to hone their war fighting skills in preparation for their upcoming deployment early next year.

occur mostly in May and June. In 2006, 30 females produced 166 eggs and 120 hatchlings have emerged from the nests. This past winter was the second consecutive dry winter; consequently, only 13 females laid about 60 eggs at TRACRS this spring. The eggs incubate within the nests, which the mothers usually dig within a burrow, and most hatchlings emerge from nests during August and September. To date, about 20 hatchlings have emerged from this year's eggs. Within a few years, we will release our first 'recruits' into the Combat Center population, and contribute knowledge that advances the recovery of a species that is naturally suited for desert survival.

NREA from A1

important scientific knowledge that can help all agencies manage their tortoise populations. One important question posed for the TRACRS animals is "do females transmit URTD (Upper Respiratory Tract Disease) to their offspring during the process of egg production or egg laying?" URTD can be debilitating and may contribute to major population declines. However, if females do not transmit URTD to the eggs, then mothers and offspring are valuable components for maintaining the tortoise populations.

TRACRS has operated for 15 months and has had two egg-laying seasons, which

SPARTAN from A5

deadly lethality and pinpoint accuracy."

Capt. Todd D. McCarthy, Spartan Battery commanding officer, feels his Marines will be able to quickly and easily adapt to the HIMARS.

"I've been doing this for 12 years, so I know it's tough to give up what you know so well," he said. "However, I think the Marines are excited about the new technology. HIMARS is making Marine artillery relevant on the new battlefield.

"Sierra Battery has proved its ability to deliver timely, accurate and deadly cannon fire against the enemies of our great nation," he added. "Now, we write a new page in Marine

Corps history and will prove our ability to deliver deadly rocket fire on our enemies."

Spartan Battery will begin their transition to the HIMARS in October. Tango Battery and elements of 2nd Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment have already fully adapted to the HIMARS. Romeo Battery is currently deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, but will make the change when they return from their deployment.

The Spartans will become the second active duty battery in the Marine Corps to fire the HIMARS in an operational environment when they deploy to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom next year.

DEPLOY from A1

3rd LAR. "I'm leaving them. I always come back, but this time it will take a lot longer to see them again."

The Marines of 3rd LAR deployed with a new battalion this year, meaning approximately 80 to 90 percent of the Marines are new to the Wolf Pack, explained Bivens.

Pfc. Nathan Addy, with 1st Plt., Alpha Co., said that even though this was his first deployment, he has complete confidence in his senior Marines leading him into battle.

"They have been there already," Addy said. "They have already experienced the war, they know what they are talking about."

The majority of Marines in leadership positions have been with 3rd LAR for a year or longer.

"Some of us have had over a year to work together," said Cpl. Paul Kozelek, 3rd Plt.,

Charlie Co. "We have worked together for so long, we know how everyone is going to react."

The Marines and sailors feel confident in their capabilities after completing the month-long Mojave Viper pre-deployment training.

"They put a lot of focus on small squad leadership," said Kozelek. "It gives the NCO's a chance to identify and work with their men."

He continued to say that working around Iraqis and experiencing their culture and language during Mojave Viper has helped the junior Marines immensely.

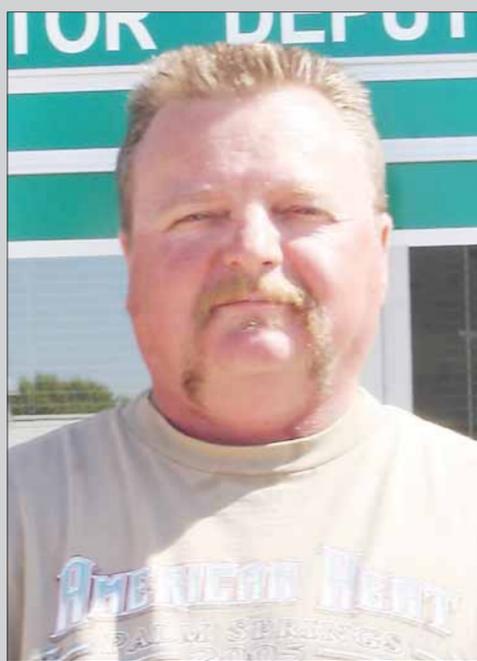
"The training we did is definitely a lot better this year," said Lance Cpl. Rayce Kaufmann, with 1st Plt., Alpha Co. "We learned a lot more through Mojave Viper this time around."

The Marines are scheduled to return to Twentynine Palms mid-spring of 2008.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
Cpl. Matthew Hardy, from 2nd Platoon, Bravo Co., kisses his wife, Brianna Hardy, goodbye before he deploys to Iraq.

Employee Spotlight



Employee: Bobby J. Piirainen

Organization: Safety Center

Billet: Traffic Safety Manager

Job Duties: Organize and maintain the motor vehicle safety program

Hometown: Lake Charles, La.

Hobbies: Riding his motorcycle, darts and home repair work

What you like most about your job: Working with Marines one-on-one about their cycles and safety

One of the most significant achievements since you've been here: Graduated from Motorcycle Safety Foundation Rider Coach Training and CP-12 Safety Courses

Have you ever served in the military: Served as an Air Force weapons loader

Time in military service: 2 years

Time Employed at MCAGCC: About 11 years

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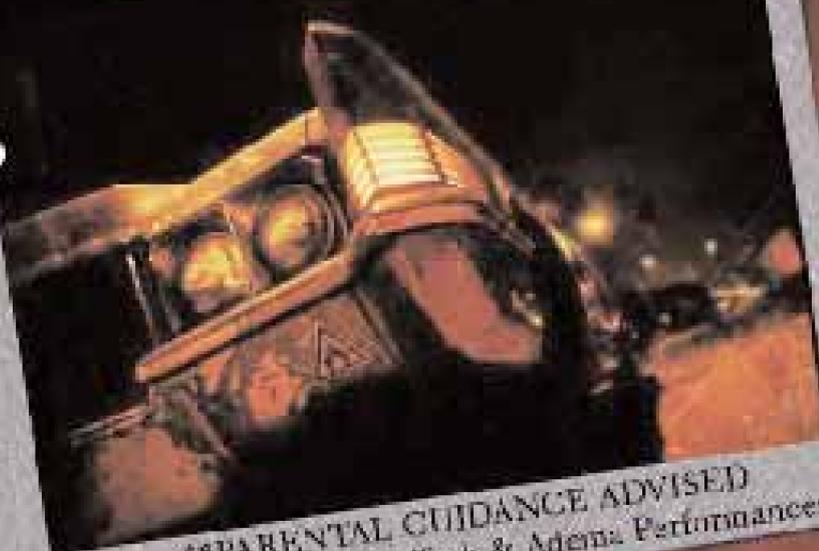
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OBSERVATIONS

SEPTEMBER 21, 2007

Children learn about exotic animals through interaction, observation

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Animals from around the world were brought to the Youth and Teen Oasis Center for the Animal Guys, Inc., exotic animal display Sept. 14th.

Children ranging from toddlers to 6th-graders gathered for the Youth and Teen Programs special presentation.

The Animal Guys Inc. provided eight animals to educate the children about wildlife.

Only children three years old or older were allowed to touch some of the animals.

The first animals presented were the 22-year-old Sulcata Tortoise and her three-year-old baby. The children were able to pet the baby tortoise while they learned about the average height, weight, and age the tortoise can grow.

Susie Garity, Animal Guys Inc. handler, prepared the next animal, a North American porcupine, as Natalie Elverman, animal handler, taught the children about the defense mechanism of the Australian lizard called the blue-tongued skink, and the extra eyelid of a fresh water alligator.

The fennec fox was a big hit among the parents viewing the display. It's lithe form and large ears wowed the crowd, especially when Garity demonstrated 'Torpedo Joe' as she flattened the fox's ears across his back to make it look as he does when he digs under ground.

"My favorite animal was the fox," said Gunnery Sgt. Christine B. Britt, company gunnery sergeant, Alpha Company, Headquarters Battalion. "It was amazing to learn what he does for survival and of course, he was cute."

Elverman also brought a milk snake around the room for the children to touch.

Some of the braver children allowed Elverman to place the snake around their neck for a moment.

The next animal was the serval wildcat. The children were able to witness the nimble capabilities of the wildcat as it jumped from the floor to the table with ease.

Garity and Elverman needed assistance from six children to hold it the last animal. As they lined the children up, they had to hold out their arms as Garity and Elverman placed an Albino Burmese python around them.

"My children talked about it all weekend," said Britt. "What was so great about this experience was the fact it breaks up their usual days at CDC."

"This was a fun event that involved the children and they learned something new," she added.

For more information about Animal Guys Inc. go to their Web site at <http://www.theanimalguys.com/> or call 626-791-0471.



Krystal Largent, Hunter Sauza, Winston Maxwell and Zayne Peshoff help Susie Garity and Natalie Elverman, animal handlers, hold an albino Burmese python Friday during the Child Development Center's exotic animal display.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
Natalie Elverman, animal handler, explains the use of the alligator's extra eyelid during the exotic animal display Friday.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
The Sulcata Tortoise was displayed during the exotic animal display Friday at the Child Development Center. The children were able to touch a baby tortoise as well.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
Susie Garity, animal handler, introduces Joe, the Fennec Fox, to the children at the Child Development Center during the exotic animal display Friday.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day today

BOB BRONSKI
MASTER GUNNERY SERGEANT, U.S.M.C.
RETIRED

Until July 18, 1979, no commemoration was held to honor America's prisoners of war or those missing in action, those returned and those still missing and unaccounted for from our nation's wars.

That year, resolutions were passed in the Congress and the national ceremony was held at the National Cathedral Washington, D.C.

The Veterans Administration published a poster with the letters POW/MIA and that format was continued until 1982, when a black and white drawing of a POW in harsh captivity was used to convey the urgency of the situation and the priority that President Ronald Reagan assigned to achieving the fullest possible accounting for Americans still missing from the Vietnam War.

For the next 10 years, the various renditions of the American Eagle, by artist and Vietnam veteran Tom Nielsen, came to symbolize America's POW/MIAs and our nation's efforts to bring them home.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day legislation was introduced yearly, until

1995 when Congress opted to discontinue considering legislation to designate special commemorative days. Since then the President has signed an annual proclamation.

The 1984 National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony was held at the White House, hosted by President Ronald Reagan. At that most impressive ceremony, the Reagan Administration balanced the focus to honor all returned POWs and renew national commitment to accounting as fully as possible for those still missing.

Subsequently, in an effort to accommodate all returned POWs and all Americans still missing and unaccounted for from all wars, it was proposed the third Friday in September, a date not associated with any particular war, and a time when weather across the country is routinely good. This commemoration is set aside to honor the commitment and the sacrifices made by this nation's prisoners of war and those who are still missing in action, as well as their families. By custom, it is often observed in Pentagon ceremonies on the third Friday in September.

Decisions on exact dates of observance rest with local plan-

ners depending on the needs of the military or civilian community. National POW/MIA Recognition Day is one of the six days specified by law 36 USC 902 on which the black POW/MIA flag shall be flown over federal facilities and cemeteries, post offices and military installations.

This year, the Pentagon ceremony for National POW/MIA Recognition Day will be held today. This ceremony will feature troops from each of the military services. The president will issue a proclamation commemorating the observances and reminding the nation of those Americans who have sacrificed so much for their country.

Observances of National POW/MIA Recognition Day are held across the country on military installations, ships at sea, state capitols, schools and veterans' facilities. Other than "Old Glory," this observance is one of six days throughout the year that Congress has mandated the flying of the National League of Families' POW/MIA flag.

When American personnel remain captive, missing, or otherwise unaccounted-for at the conclusion of hostilities, the DoD accounting community

becomes the responsible agent for determining the fate of the missing and where possible, recovering them alive or recovering and identifying the remains of the dead.

For those killed-in-action, the accounting community is charged with locating, recovering and identifying their remains. More than 88,000 Americans remain missing from World War II, the Korean War, the Cold War, and the Vietnam War.

World War II ended on "VJ Day", Sept. 2, 1945. Nearly 406,000 of the 16 million Americans who served in the war died.

At the end of the war, the USG was unable to recover, identify, and bury approximately 79,000 as known persons. They include those buried with honor as unknowns, those lost at sea, and those missing in action.

That number also includes the 1,100 sailors entombed in the USS Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor. Today, more than 78,000 Americans remain unaccounted for from WWII.

Cold War Loss: On April 15, 1969, North Korean fighter aircraft shot down a U.S. Navy EC-121 aircraft carrying a crew of 31 over the Sea of Japan.



LANCE CPL. KAITLYN M. SCARBORO
The POW/MIA flag will be flown during National POW/MIA Recognition Day today. This observance is one of six days throughout the year that Congress has mandated the flying of the National League of Families' POW/MIA flag.

U.S. Navy ships recovered two remains; 29 U.S. service members are still unaccounted for as a result of this incident.

Korean War Statistics: 8,085 total remains unaccounted for as of May 8, 2007.

The Gulf Wars Accounting History: 49 Americans were

listed as POW/MIAs during Operation DESERT STORM. DoD accounted for 48 of the 49 POW/MIAs. To date, only one American remains unaccounted for. He was lost over western Iraq and the U.S.

See POW/MIA, B3

CFC kicks off 2007 campaign

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combined Federal Campaign kicked off their 2007 campaign with a bar-beque lunch Friday at Victory Field where federal employees were invited for free food, and a chance to donate.

According to the CFC handbook, the CFC is the only authorized solicitation of federal employees in their workplaces on behalf of approved charitable organizations.

Founded in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy, the campaign was designed to ensure the federal donor can make a contribution through payroll deduction.

"Once people get used to giving, they will give for the rest of their lives," said Paula Wharton, CFC administrator. "The price of one coke a week can help someone eat a full meal, or help improve their living conditions."

The Local Federal Coordinating Committee manages each local campaign. The LFCC is run by federal employees and representatives of labor unions with federal employees as members. They monitor the CFC's conduct during the campaign.

With more than 300 CFC campaigns throughout the country and overseas, it is considered to be the world's largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign according to the CFC Web site, <http://www.opm.gov/cfc>.

Some of the local charities that can be reached through the CFC in the Coachella Valley and Twentynine Palms area are the American Red Cross, Friends of the Joshua Tree Branch Library, Arrowhead United Way, Reach Out Morongo Basin, Guide Dogs of the Desert, Gilda's Club and the Armed Services YMCA.

Although the CFC can accept checks or cash, a payroll deduction is the most preferred method of donations. More than 90 percent of funds raised last year were made through payroll deductions.

The payroll deduction option lets the donor spread the funds throughout the entire year starting in January and ending in December.

Also, donors do not have to specify which organization they want to donate to. They can choose the International General Designation Option or undesignated funds and have their contribution distributed equally among all national or international organizations.

During the CFC kick off, Lt. Col. Thomas E. Frederick, Deputy Director of G-3, presented Brig. Gen. Melvin G. Spiese, Combat Center commanding general, a check for \$300 as the first CFC donation.

The CFC will be accepting contributions from September to the end of November.

For more information about the CFC, log on to the Web site at <http://www.opm.gov/cfc/>.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
Marines and federal employees are served free hamburgers and hotdogs during the kick off of the 2007 Combined Federal Campaign Friday at Victory Field.

MCCES shuts out CLB-7, HQBN still undefeated



PFC. JARED J. BUTLER
Roberto Brown, Headquarters Battalion starting free safety and back-up running back, carries multiple defenders down the field as HQBN's ground game leads them to a 36-6 victory over 1st Tank Battalion. The Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School finished the following game with a 16-0 shut-out of Combat Logistics Battalion 7.

STANDINGS

	Wins		Losses
HQBN	3	-	0
MCCES	2	-	1
1st Tanks	1	-	2
CLB-7	0	-	3

CAREER



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Community Center Bldg. 1004 • 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Over 50 local and national employers will be in attendance at this semi-annual event, so bring copies of your resume and be ready to interview.

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Combat Center Firefighters receive praise from SBC

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

On Sept. 6, a good Samaritan made a 911 phone call to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department to report an odd smell coming from a stationary railcar at 4 a.m. around Rice, Calif., off of Route 62.

As officials investigated the odor, they discovered 15,000 gallons of anhydrous ammonia was leaking. This type of ammonia can cause corrosive burns on sweaty skin, and when breathed in, can cause swollen throat or chemical burns on the lungs.

Although the effects this gas can be painful, and even life-threatening, the situation was put under control and monitored in time that no injuries derived from the

accident.

At 8:30 a.m., the Combat Center Firefighters were informed of the leaking railcar and were put on standby for the situation.

By 1:30 p.m., the Combat Center Firefighters received word that they were needed as backup. Prepared to go, they sent the four-man hazardous material unit to the site.

The four men sent as the HAZMAT unit were Fire Capt. Ray Pierce, Fire Lt. Grove Crank, and firefighters Al Razo and Steve Frank.

"We practice this enough that it runs just like clockwork," said Crank.

The HAZMAT team was in charge of medical monitoring. They also remained as back up in case something went wrong.

Twelve to 13 men from the railroad contractor team showed up, but county officials remained in control of

the scene.

After evaluation, and conferring with the railroad contractors, it was said that half of the ammonia was already unloaded, and the remaining material was on standby to be picked up within the next couple of days.

The county personnel then determined if the product was over-pressurized, or the release valve was damaged or tampered with.

After hours of evaluation, the ammonia was deemed safe enough to unload from the railcar into pressurized trucks to be transferred to a different location.

By 2 a.m., Sept. 7, the HAZMAT unit from the Combat Center was relieved and sent home.

"This is just something that we do," said Crank. "Its just part of our job, and we like to go out and do our job."

Through an e-mail sent to the Combat Center, Paul Summers, the San Bernardino County Fire Department

division chief, praised the firefighters.

"Excellent fire force, exceptional service every time, all

the time," wrote Summers in the e-mail. "Very professional, the Marine Corps must be proud."



Combat Center firefighters Al Razo and Steve Frank are standing by in their hazard material suits Sept. 6 after being called out to Rice, Calif., to help the local firefighters in an anhydrous ammonia leak from a stopped railcar.

POW/MIA from B1

government continues a robust and aggressive effort to learn his fate. The process of identification follows a logical path through the following steps: (1) Locating remains; (2) Recovering remains; (3) Identifying remains; (4) Reviewing the identification process.

The Department of Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office, with other DoD agencies, develops information on known loss incidents to locate remains and determine logical excavation sites. Loss incident information is derived from wartime operational reports, military historians, eyewitness accounts, records from worldwide archival research and current intelligence reports. This information often provides investigative leads toward a loss site in a specific area. Possible excavation is then considered against factors such as site accessibility, security, safety hazards and approval of host nations as required.

These sites may be in politically sensitive areas, underwater, or in remote locations strewn with dangerous explo-

sives and mines, thus requiring careful consideration prior to sending in personnel. This whole process requires tremendous analytical persistence--over years--and often several site surveys are needed to pinpoint a recommended excavation site.

What to do if you have information for DPMO: If you have a dog tag or any other kind of information that may concern a missing American that has not returned from a war in which our Nation has engaged, DPMO would appreciate you forwarding that information to the following mailing address:

OASD/ISA (DPMO)
Attn: Charles Henley
2400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-2400

Family members of Korean War MIAs and POWs can help in the identification process by providing a DNA sample from the maternal side of the family. For information, contact the Marine Corps, (800) 847-1597; Navy, (800) 443-9298; Air Force, (800) 531-5501; Army, (800) 892-2490, or log on to <http://www.jpac.pacom.mil>.

For further details and information contact the U.S. government's Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office's Web site from which excerpts have been taken for this article.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremonies are being held throughout the nation today. Locally, the annual Recognition Day ceremony will be held tomorrow at the Cactus Bar, from noon until after the ceremony honoring those Missing in Action or Prisoners of War.

For further information, please contact the sponsors: Jim Hadfield at 760-367-4153 or Dot Cesari at 760-362-1351

The Missing Man and Honors Ceremony will commence at approximately 4:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. The Missing Man and Honors ceremony consists of a table reserved to honor our missing loved ones. Tables are permanently established in all Veterans organizations year round.

"The Missing Man & Honors Ceremony"

The table is round-- to show our everlasting con-

cern. The cloth is white -- symbolizing the purity of their motives when answering the call to duty; the single red rose reminds us of the lives of these men...and their loved ones and friends who keep the faith, while seeking answers; the red ribbon symbolizes our continued determination to account for them; a slice of lemon reminds us of the bitter fate of those captured and missing in a foreign land; a pinch of salt symbolizes the tears of our missing and their families who long for answers after decades of uncertainty; the Bible represents the strength gained through faith in our country, founded as one nation under

God, to sustain those lost from our midst; the glass is inverted -- to symbolize their inability to share this evening's toast; the chairs empty -- they are miss-

ing.....(a silent moment); let us now raise our water glasses in a toast to honor America's POW/MIA's and to the success of our efforts to account for them.

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