

OBSERVATION Post

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MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

FEBRUARY 20, 2008

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 51 ISSUE 8



4 Marines take new Combat Fitness Test



6 Rough terrain training to prepare for Afghanistan



7 Palm Springs Tram safety tips



10 MWSS-374 helicopter recovery training

This Day in Marine Corps History

-February 20, 1962-

Marine Lt. Col. John H. Glenn orbited earth in an American space capsule.

MILITARY SAVES WEEK

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Defense has designated Feb. 25 through March 3 as Military Saves Week to encourage service members and their families to adopt good spending and saving habits.

Marine Corps Community Services is supporting the operation by asking Marines, sailors and family members aboard the Combat Center to join the campaign as part of Operation Financial Fitness.

"MCCS Personal Financial Management Program is delighted to support Operation Financial Fitness and the Military Saves campaign," said Jany Wasdin, the Personal Financial Management Program coordinator. "We see an incredible need for improved saving habits in today's world. This is a model program for changing lives by creating economic opportunity."

The organizations that are supporting this campaign are continuous program that helps promote wealth building techniques to military members and their families. The program gives tips to set savings goals, open savings accounts, increase debt payments and participate in financial education programs.

According to the Military Saves Web site, the program can be used by individuals, or can be used by different organizations or leaders to inform their employees about Military Saves and its advantages.

"This year we will build on previous efforts and will include special emphasis for our military children and youth," said Dr. David Chu, the Under Secretary of Defense. "We appreciate the enthusiasm of the leadership at the installations who volunteered to support this special effort to reach

See MONEY, A8



Free financial education forums at Combat Center

FINRA INVESTOR EDUCATION FOUNDATION
NEWS RELEASE

The FINRA Investor Education Foundation will host a free financial education forum for Combat Center Marines, sailors and family members tomorrow at the base theater from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The foundation will host 11 free financial education forums for military servicemembers and their spouses this week at nine military installations throughout Southern California.

The forums, which coincide with Military Saves Week, will address the distinct financial challenges of military personnel and highlight free tools and resources

available to help them learn to make prudent financial decisions for themselves and their families.

"From deployments to permanent change of station moves, servicemembers and their families are faced with a unique set of challenges when working to keep their financial houses in order," said John M. Gannon, executive director of the FINRA Investor Education Foundation. "Our forums seek to arm them with the critical information and education they need to better inform their financial decisions and help them manage their money with confidence."

The FINRA Foundation—the largest foundation in the country devoted to investor education—launched the Military Financial

Education Program in 2006 and is a partner in the U.S. Department of Defense Financial Readiness Campaign. Since then, the Foundation has conducted educational seminars at more than 35 military installations around the world and at sea, reaching more than 8,000 servicemembers and their families and launched a comprehensive online Web site, SaveAndInvest.org, designed to help servicemembers and their spouses become better informed about their financial choices.

At the events, attendees will learn about debt and credit management, best practices for saving for a child's college tuition and smart strategies for retirement planning. In addition, the forums

will focus on the importance of preparing financially for upcoming deployments. Seminars include: Smart Credit Management; Avoid the Predatory Loan Trap; Mutual Funds, 529 Plans and More; and Smart Saving for Retirement.

The events are taking place during Military Saves Week, which is a social marketing campaign by the Consumer Federation of America (CFA) to encourage servicemembers and their families to build wealth. The FINRA Foundation is a proud supporter of CFA in this effort.

Each forum is open to active duty servicemembers, reservists,

See FINRA, A11



C.O.P. Corner Community Oriented Policing

The proactive voice of crime prevention • Presented by the Provost Marshal's Office, Crime Prevention Section
Information current as of Feb. 11.



Larcenies aboard MCAGCC

Larcenies have always been a big problem across the U.S. There has been an increasing problem of thefts aboard the base and especially in the barracks, which is an issue we have to strongly look at and find a way to address.

Out of the eight larcenies, almost all of them could have been prevented or been easier to solve if the person would have secured the items properly, kept receipts of merchandise or marked or engraved their property for identification purposes. Also ensure that you write down and keep a record of all serial numbers and other identifiers of merchandise and keep that list in a secure location. Most pawn shops will not take property that has engraving markings on them.

Unit	Larcenies
7th Mar	1
1/7	1
2/7	0
3/7	0
3/4	4
3/11	0
3rd LAR	0
1st Tank Bn	0
3rd AABN	0
MWSS-374	0
CLB-7	2
VMU-1	0
MCCES	0
HQBN	0
NAV HOSP	0
23rd Dental	0
Staff Housing	0
Other	0
Grand Total	8

DUI / DWI Update

Here are the stats on how many DUIs/DWIs we have had aboard MCAGCC and off the installation:

Unit	Totals	On Base/Off Base	Ranks
7th Mar	0	0/0	
1/7	0	0/0	
2/7	1	0/1	1LCpl
3/7	2	1/1	2Cpl
3/4	1	0/0	1Cpl
3/11	2	0/2	2Cpl
3rd LAR	1	1/0	1Pvt
1st Tank	2	2/0	1LCpl/1Cpl
3rd AABN	2	0/0	
MWSS-374	2	2/0	1 Pfc/1LCpl
CLB-7	0	0/0	
VMU-1	0	0/0	
MCCES	4	4/0	2Pfc/1LCpl/1GySgt
HQBN	4	2/2	2LCpl/2Cpl
Nav Hosp	0	0/0	
23rd Dental	0	0/0	
Other Mil	0	0/0	
Mil Dep	0	0/0	
DOD Civ	0	0/0	
Other	1	1/0	1Sp4
Grand Total	22		

The total number of Marine-related DUIs so far this year are 22, through Feb 11.

All of them have lost or will lose their driving privileges for a minimum of one year.

For more information on DUI/DWI and convictions go to:

- http://criminal-law.freeadvice.com/drunken_driving/california-dui.htm
- <http://www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/hdbk/pgs73drinkcostchart.htm>

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 or 830-6094.



ACROSS

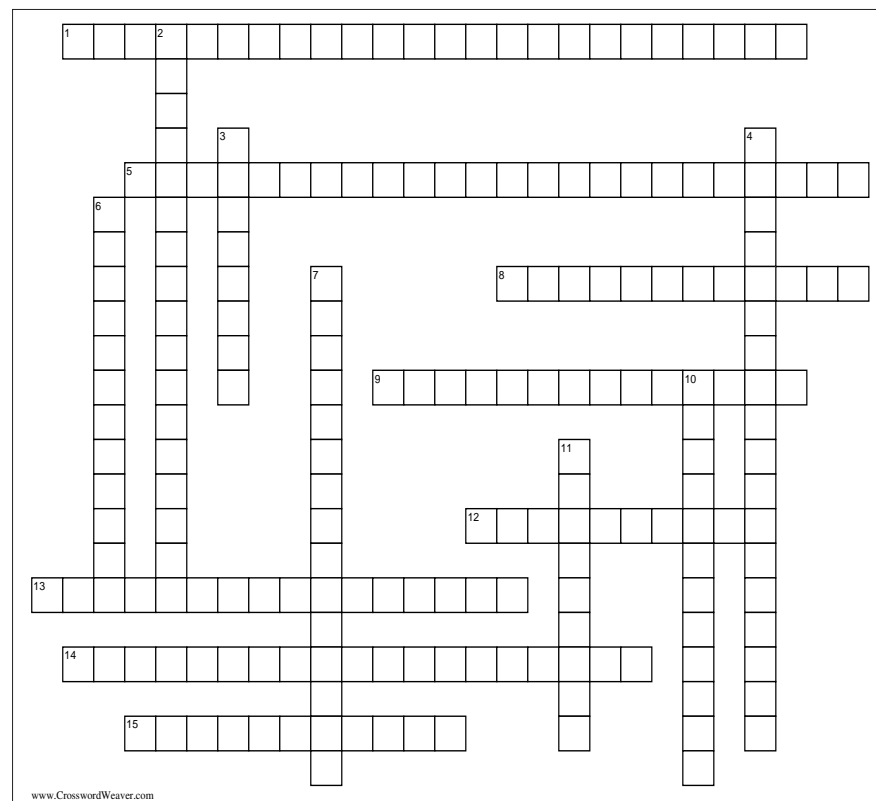
- Phone your friends while they Google the answer: Perfect combo!
- Where kids would await instructions from a giant, talking stone wall
- The "auditions" are the best parts to watch
- Pray you get a letter so you can see Vanna White
- It's a "relative" competition
- Playing tic-tac-toe with celebrities
- Teaching athletes and movie stars how to dance
- Where the girls fight over the guy

DOWN

- Jimmy Kimmel's first job as a host
- Originator of the song that implies someone is taking too long
- The one event where the athletes aren't questioned about their use of steroids
- Don't pick the wrong briefcase
- Bob Barker finally retired...
- MTV's original reality show
- Unknown dates with bad commentary

[Solutions on A6]

REALITY TV & GAME SHOWS



Centerspeak

What are you going to do with your Economic Stimulus Payment?

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



SEAMAN MICHAEL DENSON
NAVAL HOSPITAL TWENTYNINE PALMS

"Put it toward new uniforms."



CPL TREVOR SCELSON
3RD BATTALION, 4TH MARINE REGIMENT

"I'll probably just have a little extra fun with it, like get a tattoo or something."

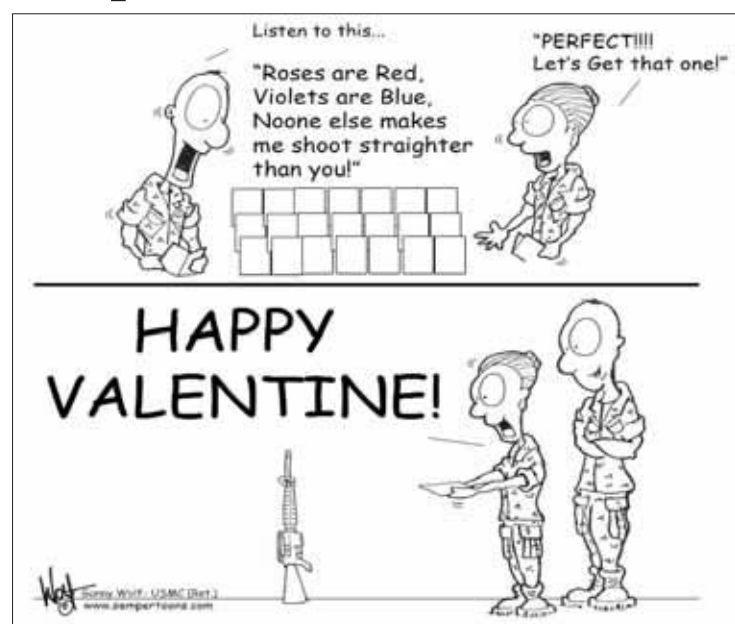


STAFF SGT. DIANE DURDEN
HEADQUARTERS BATTALION, S-3

"Running Shoes, Triathlon gear, and donate some to cancer research."

Sempertoons

By Gunnery Sgt. Charles Wolf



OBSERVATION POST

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	<p>TONIGHT Dinner and Eclipse Time: 4-9 p.m. Where: California Overland Adventures 1233 Palm Canyon Drive Borrego Springs For more info (866) 639-7567</p>	<p>FRIDAY Smooth Jazz with Mikole and Carrie Landsgaard Time: 6 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino 46-200 Harrison St., Coachella. For more info (866) 3SPOT29</p>	<p>FRIDAY Boxing: Enrique Ornelas vs. Nestor Rocha, middleweight bout Time: 4:30 p.m. Where: Morongo Casino Resort & Spa 49500 Seminole Dr., Cabazon For more info (951) 755-5391</p>	<p>FRIDAY REO Speedwagon Time: 8 p.m. Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino 84245 Indio Spring Pkwy Indio For more info (760) 342-5000 or (800) 827-2946</p>
<p>FRIDAY - SUNDAY McCormick's 44th Exotic Car Show and Auction Days & Times: Fri., 4-9 p.m., Sat., 8 a.m.-7:30 p.m. & Sun., 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Where: Spa Resort Casino 244 N. Indian Canyon Dr. Palm Springs For more info (760) 320-3290</p>	<p>SATURDAY Jose Feliciano Time: 8 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino 46-200 Harrison St Coachella For more info (800) 585-3737</p>	<p>SATURDAY Foreigner Time: 8 p.m. Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino 1-10 and Golf Center Pkwy Indio For more info (760) 342-5000 or (800) 827-2946</p>	<p>SATURDAY Led Zepagain, tribute band to Led Zeppelin FREE concert Time: 2-4 p.m. Where: La Quinta Community Center 77865 Avenida Montezuma La Quinta For more info (760) 564-9921</p>	<p>SUNDAY Sunday Jazz Café with the Mojave Hotshots Time: 12-2 p.m. Where: Water Canyon Coffee Co. 55844 29 Palms Hwy Yucca Valley For more info (760) 365-7771</p>

MARDI GRAS

The Officers' Spouses Club will hold its annual Mardi Gras benefit auction at the Combat Center Officers Club at 6 p.m. Saturday.

Proceeds from this event will benefit many local philanthropic causes and scholarships. Last year the club awarded more than \$20,000 to 26 area organizations including the Morongo Basin Chapter of the American Red Cross, Boys and Girls Clubs of the Hi-Desert, Hospice of Morongo Basin and Twentynine Palms food pantry. Another \$14,000 in scholarships were also awarded to area children and spouses of service members.

Attendees must be 21 or older, dress is business informal and heavy hors d'oeuvres will be served. For more information or tickets, call Michelle Darby at 805-7915.

Movies for the upcoming week at the Sunset Cinema

<p>WEDNESDAY Juno - 7 p.m. - PG-13</p> <p>THURSDAY Alien vs Predator: Requiem - 7 p.m. - R</p> <p>FRIDAY P.S. I Love You - 6 p.m. - PG-13 The Bucket List - 9 p.m. - PG-13 Sweeny Todd - Midnight - R</p>	<p>SATURDAY Disney's Teacher's Pet - 11 a.m. - PG The Water Horse: Legend of the Dragon - 2 p.m. - PG Juno - 6 p.m. - PG-13 One Missed Call - 9 p.m. - PG-13 Alien vs Predator: Requiem - Midnight - R</p>	<p>SUNDAY The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything - 2 p.m. - G The Great Debaters - 6 p.m. - PG-13 First Sunday - 9 p.m. - PG-13</p> <p>MONDAY P.S. I Love You - 7 p.m. - PG-13</p> <p>TUESDAY Walk Hard - 7 p.m. - R</p>
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MCAGCC Marines take new Combat Fitness Test for trial run

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marine Corps prides itself on the physical fitness standards held throughout the ranks, but is the bi-annual Physical Fitness Test enough to prove a Marine's capabilities?

According to White Letter 05-07, written by Gen. James T. Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps, the PFT is no longer enough to test a Marine's physical capacity for all physical skills a Marine may need to succeed on the battlefield.

After White Letter 05-07 was published by Conway, the Marine Corps Training and Education Command at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., began the development of the Combat Fitness Test, which will more closely replicate the physical demands of combat than a PFT.

"Tasks that make up the CFT

will have linkage to Marine common combat skills," said Col. Brian McGuire, Combat Fitness Test Development officer-in-charge, TECOM. "Additionally, CFT events will have a low degree of technicality such that it will be more of a fitness test than it is of acquired skill.

"Though the PFT is a good general test of overall fitness, the CFT will provide commanders an assessment of a Marine's overall combat conditioning," he added. "Practicing for the test is practicing for combat."

The CFT begins with an 880-yard run, known as movement to contact, an ammunition lift test and a maneuver-under-fire event. During the ammunition lift, the Marines will lift a 30-pound ammunition can from shoulder-height to overhead, fully extending their arms each time. They must complete as many repetitions of this exercise as they can within two minutes.

The final portion of the CFT, maneuver under fire, requires Marines to travel 300 yards by sprinting, completing a modified low crawl, and weave through a series of cones designed to simulate barbed wire and other obstacles.

Once they reach the end of the cones, the Marines must evacuate a mock casualty by executing a buddy-drag halfway through the obstacles. Then they must fireman carry the casualty back to the ammunition cans.

After the Marines carry the casualty back to the ammunition cans, they must carry the ammunition cans back through the cones to the casualty zone, where they must throw a hand grenade.

If the grenade hits the designated target area, five seconds is deducted from the Marine's time. If they miss, five seconds are added to their overall time. Then they must pick up the ammunition cans and run back to the starting point.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN
Cpl. Carl W. Brown, senior radio operator, Headquarters Platoon, Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, carries Cpl. Jose Zavala, tactical advisor, 1st Platoon, Lima Company, 3/7, during the Combat Fitness Test at the Combat Center's Del Valle Field Feb. 7.

McGuire said scoring for the CFT will be similar to the PFT. However, since the test is still in development, the specifics of the scoring have not been finalized. Scored options as well as pass or fail options will be presented to the commandant for decision.

Testing for the CFT will be conducted in seven military installations worldwide. The Combat Center was the third stop on this route. The Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School and 7th Marine Regiment participated in the testing when it came to the Combat Center Feb. 5-8.

Sgt. Maj. Dave C. Howell, 7th Marine Regiment sergeant major, took part in the test.

"The CFT is long overdue because many aspects of combat conditioning are ignored, and Marines rely on field training alone to prepare for arduous activities," said Howell. "The CFT should act as a conduit that assists and guides Marines in their daily conditioning routine."

Howell went on to say the CFT is a challenging and rewarding test that complements the PFT because it evaluates Marines in areas that the PFT misses.

The CFT will not replace the PFT. Instead, it will be run in conjunction with the PFT. It will also count toward promotion and retention for lance corporals, corporals and sergeants. McGuire said the CFT and PFT will also not be run on the same day.

Overall, the Combat Center Marines who participated in the CFT seemed to approve of its ability to physically challenge Marines.

"When you first see it set up, it looks easy, like anyone can do it, but once you get started, it's actually really exhausting," said Lance Cpl. Raphael Fritschrauder, rifleman, 4th Platoon, Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment. "It

See TRAINING, A5

HOT TOPICS

BASKETBALL AND SOFTBALL TRYOUTS

Varsity men/women basketball tryouts are ongoing. Varsity men's softball tryouts are from 6 to 8 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays until further notice. Contact Skip Best at 830-4092 for more information.

MMEA MONITORS VISIT

Headquarters Marine Corps Enlisted Assignments is coming to the Combat Center Monday and Tuesday. Monitors will screen and counsel Marines on assignment opportunities at the Officer's Club (Mesa Room) from 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. each day. Don't miss this opportunity to begin the next chapter of your career and see where your next assignment will be. FY08 first-term Marines will have priority. For more information, contact the Combat Center career retention specialist, Gunnery Sgt. Daniel L. Mintz at 830-6171 or see your unit Career Retention Specialist.

MARINE CORPS SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

The Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation is accepting applications for academic college scholarships to the children of Marines and Navy Corpsmen serving with Marines. The Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation reminds communities across the country that the deadline for student applications for this year is March 3. Applicants are urged to visit www.mcsf.org for more information and requirements or call 1-800-292-7777.

MARINE SECURITY GUARD SCREENING TEAM

The MSG screening team is coming to the Combat Center on March 10. The team will screen Marines for assignment opportunities in building 1707 Classroom C from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. All interested Marines are encouraged to see their unit Career Planner for eligibility requirements. For more information, contact the Combat Center career planner, Gunnery Sgt. Daniel L. Mintz at 830-6171.

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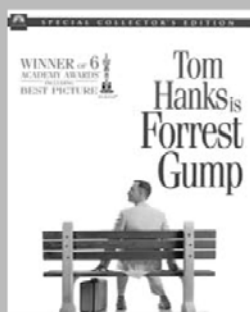


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PREP provides tools for strong relationships, marriages

PFC. R. LOGAN KYLE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program's Fighting for your Marriage workshop kicks off Feb. 28 at the Combat Center's Protestant Chapel from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

PREP is not group therapy; it is an educational and practical application opportunity to help couples learn what makes marriages and relationships work.

Engaged and married couples are given the opportunity to spend two days learning to properly communicate, handle conflict and promote intimacy, said Lt. Terry Moran, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School chaplain.

The program was founded by doctors Howard J. Markman, Scott Stanley and Susan L. Blumberg, authors of "Fighting for your Marriage," that was written after more than 20 years of research.

The class previously lasted

three days, but three days was too much time away from work and training, said Moran.

"Now the classes are condensed to only two days; Thursday and Friday," said Moran. "We're hoping the different commands [aboard the Combat Center] will allow their Marines to attend classes now that they're shorter. The communication skills learned in the classes can easily be used in the work environment as well."

Another subject covered in the class is friendship.

"We encourage couples to plan to have fun to keep their friendship alive and well," said Moran. "We encourage couples to have fun like they did before they were married and settled down with a job and children."

Other topics like sensuality and sexuality, personality, money matters, and forgiveness are also covered in the class.

After a series of studies, researchers found that couples who took the class had lower

breakup rates, were more likely to maintain satisfaction up to a few years after the program, and were more likely to show lower levels of negative interaction and higher levels of positive interaction up to

five years later.

The PREP workshop will be held four more times this year after the February class.

The next classes will be offered May 22 and 23, July 24

and 25, Sept. 25 and 26, and Oct. 30 and 31. A PREP class based on Biblical principles will be offered April 24 and 25.

For more information and registration, call 830-6464.

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TRAINING, from A4

really tests your physical agility better than a PFT does."

Other Marines said the CFT is as intense, challenging and more applicable in a combat environment than a PFT. Many also said the CFT was a fun, enjoyable workout.

McGuire reported that efforts put toward setting up the testing by MCCES and 7th Marine Regiment, along with overall motivation, was exceptional.

"The Marines who participated in CFT testing, from the leaders of the units, to the monitors and to the participants themselves did an outstanding job," he said.

McGuire also said input received from the participants will enable CFT refinements as the data collection phase proceeds.

"The CFT is not yet finalized, so even though times and reps (repetitions) on proposed events are important in this phase, just as important is the feedback we get from Marines who have taken the test," he said.

The next stop on the CFT testing route is Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Calif. Visits to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. and Okinawa, Japan, will follow. TECOM will continue to develop and perfect the CFT before it is implemented Marine Corps-wide later this year.

HOSPICE VOLUNTEER TRAINING

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Avoiding liberty disasters at Mt. San Jacinto State Park

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Planning to hike the trails or lounge around the campgrounds of Mount San Jacinto State Park this weekend?

While this may sound like a fun way to spend a day or two, there are a number of precautions one must follow to avoid turning a relaxing walk in the woods into a recreational disaster.

"A large problem with folks, especially from the Twentynine Palms area, is they don't know what they're getting into," said Kjer Sahl, California State Parks ranger, Long Valley Ranger Station, Mount San Jacinto State Park. "My concern is that they may not be familiar with the mountain. They may not have the proper gear or aren't used to the terrain up here."

The Long Valley Ranger Station, which is located in the Long Valley picnic area of the park, provides a checklist of the "ten essentials" free of charge to all park patrons. The items are; a map and compass, extra food and water, sun protection, a fire starter, matches in a waterproof container, extra clothing and rain protection, a pocket knife, a first aid kit, a flashlight with extra batteries and bulbs, and a whistle.

It is also advised to carry personal identification and emergency medical information on one's person at all times while in the park.

"In case something happens, you want to have all the equipment you need to keep yourself alive," said Sahl. "You should always be prepared for the worst-case scenario."

Sahl also said there are other ways patrons should prepare themselves before they embark

on their outdoor excursions.

"Being prepared isn't just about having all the proper gear, it's about being knowledgeable about the terrain, weather and trail conditions," she said. "Although it's a small mountain, it's very easy to get lost here. It's a very different topography with a lot of ravines."

In order to prepare, people can call the Long Valley and Idyllwild, Calif., ranger stations for information regarding the weather and trail conditions at 327-0222 or (951) 659-2606 respectively.

The Long Valley Ranger Station also provides topographical and hiking maps for only \$1. The topographical map shows the varying terrain of the park as well as the locations of the trails and campgrounds. The hiking map more clearly outlines the trails and campgrounds for park patrons.

In addition to the maps and the "ten essentials," wilderness safety tips are highly stressed to ensure a fun-filled hiking excursion does not become a rescue mission. Prior planning, which includes checking the weather conditions, is extremely important. It is also advised to notify a friend or family member of your trip so they can contact the authorities if you do not return as planned.

While in the park, it is important to stay on the trails, only hike during daylight hours and do not hike alone. If you get lost, or



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

A Palm Springs Aerial Tramway car approaches the Mountain Station at Mount San Jacinto State Park.

believe you are lost, it is imperative you stay in one place. It is much easier to find a stationary person. Make yourself as visible as possible by moving to a clear area and wearing the brightest clothing possible. Finally, blow your whistle. Three whistle blasts is the signal indicating distress.

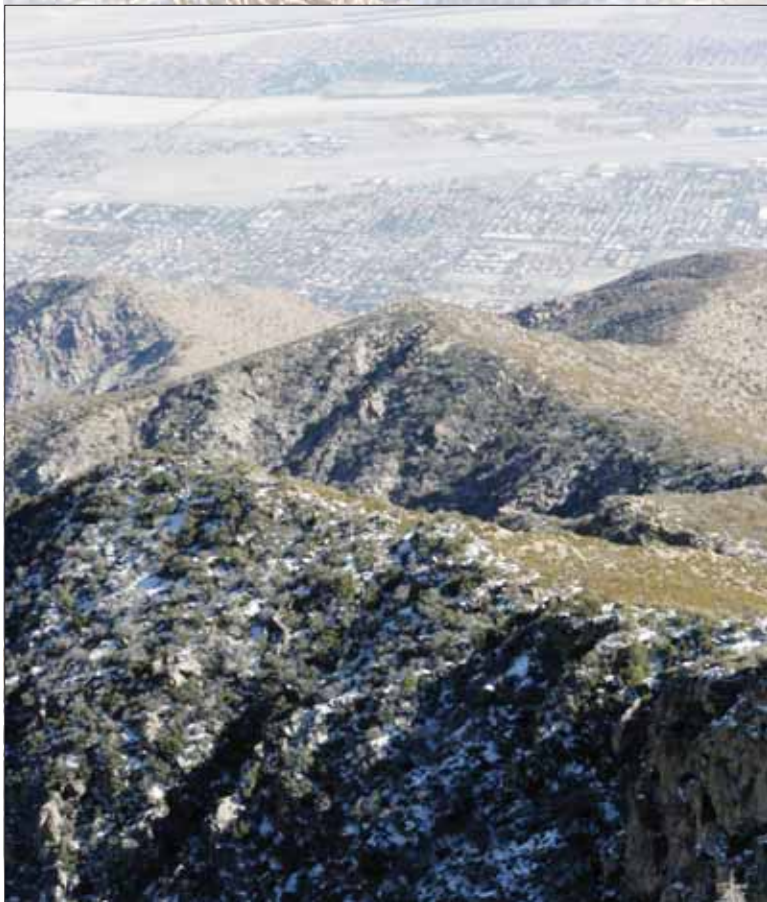
Another thing to remember if you plan to explore the trails and campgrounds is to obtain the proper permits. Wilderness and camping permits can be obtained at the Long Valley Ranger Station.

If you just want to spend a relaxing day in the Long Valley picnic area, there is another way to reach your destination. The Palm Springs Aerial Tramway Station, which is located in Chino

Canyon near Palm Springs, Calif., is available to park patrons. Information and ticket prices for the tram can be found at <http://www.pstramway.com/tickets-gifts.asp>.

The tram takes you to the Mountain Station at 8,516 feet, which is only a short walk from Long Valley. The Mountain Station also features a restaurant, gift shop, snack bar and a state park visitor center.

If you plan to spend a day or a weekend in Mount San Jacinto State Park, it is important to follow the safety tips and pack the "ten essentials." Keeping safety in mind may prevent your recreational visit from becoming a survival nightmare.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

This is a panoramic view of Palm Springs, Calif., from the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway as it ascends to Mount San Jacinto State Park Mountain Station.

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MONEY, from A1

our youth in our military families."

Joining the Military Saves Campaign is the Financial Reporting Advisors Education Foundation, which offers a free

credit management tool, to active duty military personnel and their spouses to help them handle their credit wisely.

"Feb. 21, FINRA will be returning to the installation to do another financial forum," said Wasdin. "It is in connection with

the campaign."

Mary Schapiro, FINRA chief executive officer and chairman, stated in a press release that the program is designed to help military members and their families take control of their finances and future investments and savings.

According to their Web site, FINRA representatives have

conducted seminars to educate military members and their families at more than 33 military installations, instructing more than 8,000 service members and their family.

The Military Saves Campaign and the FINRA Investor Education Foundation may have an entire week dedicated

to educating military personnel and their families about how to save money and get out of debt, but both organizations work throughout the year to help service members save money while they pay off debts, purchase a car or house.

For more information about Military Saves visit their Web site at www.militarysaves.com. For more information about FINRA, visit their Web site at www.finrafoundation.org

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Sergeant's Course messes up dance floor after mess night



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Sgt. Thadeus Mariano, aircraft maintenance support equipment mechanic trainee, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 in San Diego, Calif., and graduate of the Marine Corps Staff Noncommissioned Officer's Course Class 2-08, cuts a rug at the Officer's Club after the class's mess night Feb. 12. The class of 67 sergeants Marine Corps-wide graduated from the SNCO Academy Feb. 15.

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Road closures and construction



PHASE I

Work Description - Install new box culvert under Del Valle near the vehicle storage lot.

Scheduled Dates - Tuesday to Mar. 6

Detour Description - The detour for this area will be to follow Smoketree Avenue to an improved access road through old Marine Palms housing to Mineral Street and then to Del Valle Road. Del Valle will be open up to the work area but closed to through traffic.

Key

Detour —

Road Closure —

MWSS-374 conducts helicopter recovery, other pre-deployment training

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 conducted "Rhino Charge," a training exercise designed to prepare the Marines and sailors for their upcoming deployment from Feb. 4 through 8.

The training included non-lethal weapons instruction training, a mock helicopter crash off of the airfield and an evening tactical convoy through an Iraqi village at the Combat Center's Range 225, transporting the wrecked helicopter.

The training focused on the

helicopter crash and the efficiency of the Marines and sailors securing and removing the helicopter from the hostile environment and returning it to their forward operating base dubbed "Seagle."

Under simulated enemy fire, the Marines and sailors of the Tactical Recovery of Aircraft Personnel and the Medical Team were able to move swiftly, securing the site and evacuating the wounded within hours of the crash.

"It is important to train for TRAP missions," said Gunnery Sgt. Mark Dumdie, staff non-commissioned officer-in-charge of Crash, Fire and Rescue. "We

have to make sure we bring the right amount of security, personnel and equipment."

Sgt. Glenn Begg, military police for MWSS-374 and assistant convoy chief for the helicopter security team agreed with Dumdie.

"This is something we will be doing on a normal routine," said Begg. "Training like this covers all the bases. Being out here puts you in an element you will witness in Iraq."

After evacuating roll players simulating wounded aircraft personnel, the Mishap Board Investigation Team entered the area to determine the cause of the

crash and if the helicopter was worth saving.

"After we looked at the crash site, we determined the helo (helicopter) was salvageable," said Dumdie. "We had to pick up the bird and place it on a flat bed and bring it back to Seagle."

The Marines and sailors loaded and unloaded the helicopter onto the flat bed a couple of times to practice different techniques to load a crashed helicopter in a tactical environment.

"If we were actually taking fire from enemies I would want to recover the aircraft the fastest way possible," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Matthew Wiczorek, Expeditionary Airfield services officer.

Wiczorek continued to say that the Marines and sailors are going through the training to

learn different ways to recover a helicopter, and to teach others their techniques and give others an opportunity to learn from their fellow Marines own experiences.

After running through multiple ways to load the damaged helicopter onto the flat bed, the Marines and sailors convoyed the helicopter through a simulated enemy infested Iraqi village before returning to the FOB.

The long week MWSS-374 endured has taught them multiple techniques on retrieving a helicopter from tactical environments and tested the medical and TRAP teams on evacuating wounded helicopter personnel in a timely manner while preparing MWSS-374 for their upcoming deployment in March.


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LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Gunnery Sgt. Mark Dumdie, staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge of Crash, Fire and Rescue, links the chains attached to the helicopter to the crane that will help lift the helicopter onto the flat bed to be transported during a mock helicopter crash Feb. 7.

Combat Center Trader Ads

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The deadline for submitting Trader ads is noon Wednesday, the week prior to publication.

Trader Ad Forms are available at the Public Affairs Office and may be filled out during normal working hours at Bldg. 1417.

Ads may also be submitted through e-mail, but will only be accepted from those with an @usmc.mil address. If you are active duty, retired military or a family member and do not have an @usmc.mil address you can go to the PAO page of the base

Web site at: <http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/dirs/pao/> and complete a request to publish an ad.

The limitations for ads are: there is a 15-word limit, limit of two ads per household and the Trader may be used only

for noncommercial classified ads containing items of personal property offered by and for individuals authorized to use this service. Such ads must represent incidental exchanged not of sustained business nature.

Ads for housing rentals will not be considered for the Combat Center Trader.

To have a "House For Sale" ad run in the Observation Post, applicants must provide Permanent Change of Station orders and have the ad

approved by Base Housing. This ensures the Combat Center Trader is not used for commercial real estate endeavors.

Ads are run on a first-come, first-serve, space available basis. If you have questions please call 830-3762.

FINRA, from A1

National Guard members, military retirees, Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security civilian employees and their spouses.

FINRA Foundation research shows that military personnel could benefit from additional education. A 2005 survey found that only 29 percent of military personnel who currently invest received a passing grade on a quiz about basic financial knowledge. However, 58 percent of survey respondents said that it was very important to them that they become more knowledgeable about saving and investing.

The FINRA Foundation's financial education forums are one aspect of the multifaceted program to help members of the military and their families take control of their finances. In partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, the National Military Family Association and other organizations, the Foundation is committed to providing financial education to military families.

The FINRA Investor Education Foundation supports innovative research and educational projects that give underserved Americans the knowledge, skills and tools necessary for financial success throughout life. To date, the FINRA Foundation has approved \$14.6 million in grants and an additional \$14 million in direct investor education programming. For details about grant programs and other FINRA Foundation initiatives, visit www.finrafoundation.org

Financial forums in California are scheduled at the following installations:

MCAGCC 29 Palms, Feb. 21, 10 a.m.

Camp Pendleton, MCB, Feb. 22, 8 a.m.

Camp Pendleton, SOI, Feb. 25, 8 a.m.

MCRD San Diego, Feb. 26, 8:30 a.m.

View the events Web site at <http://www.SaveAndInvest.org> for more information.

Employee Spotlight



Employee: Andres Fuentes

Organization: G-3

Billet: Deputy Director Range Management and Control Division

Job Duties: Responsible for the safety confliction of both ground and aviation training events.

Hometown: Philadelphia, Pa.

Hobbies: Dirt biking and camping

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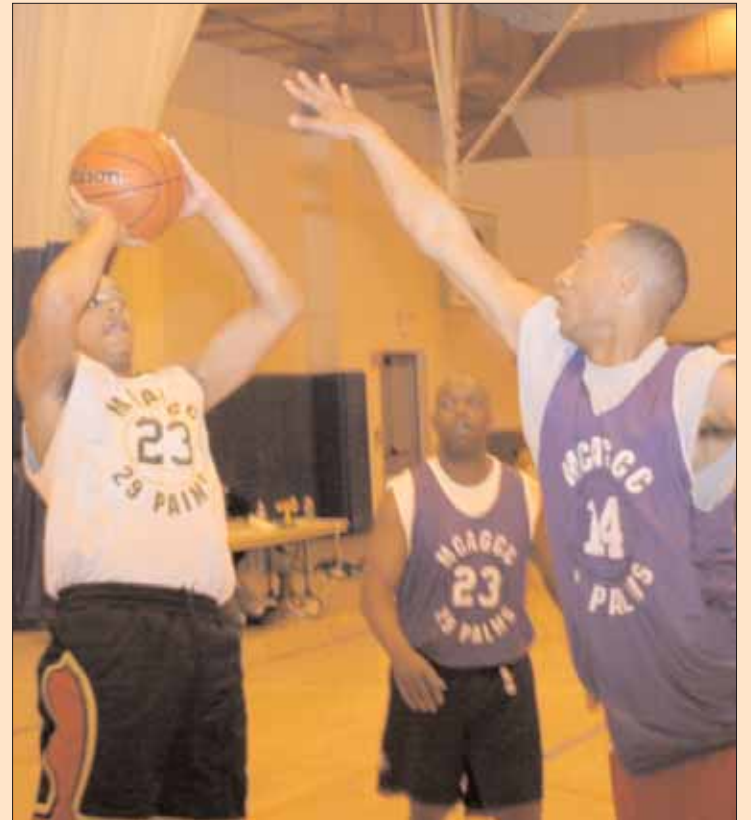
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CPI107

Intramural Basketball Standings: Week 5



Ranked	Team	Wins	Losses	%
1	MCCES SNCO	5	0	1000
1	Ole School Plus	5	0	1000
3	CLB-7	4	1	800
4	IPAC	2	1	667
5	CMA	3	2	600
5	MCCES A	3	2	600
7	TTECG	2	2	500
8	MCCES B	2	3	400
9	MWSS-374	1	3	250
9	NHTP	1	3	250
9	Tanks	1	3	250
12	Dental	1	5	167
13	3/7	0	5	0000
Totals		30	30	

Last Week's Scores

Date	Team 1	Score	Team 2	Score
Feb. 11	MCCES A	43	CLB-7	54
	Dental	33	CMA	37
	Tanks	47	MWSS-374	53
Feb. 12	3/7	55	Ole School Plus	58
	MCCES B	46	TTECG	68
Feb. 13	CLB-7	59	MWSS-374	44
	CMA	41	MCCES A	44
	MCCES SNCO	68	NHTP	63
	Dental	64	Ole School Plus	69

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