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MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

APRIL 16, 2008

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 51 ISSUE 16



5 Viruses threaten Combat Center Canines



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8-9 Basketball wraps up playoffs



10 A toast to camaraderie and esprit de corps

This Day in Marine Corps History

-April 15, 1962-

First Marine unit, HMM-362, arrives in Mekong Delta of South Vietnam during Operation Shufly.



EARTH DAY TURNS 38

PFC. ZACHARY J. NOLA

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

April 22 will mark the 38th anniversary of Earth Day, the result of then U.S. Senator to Wisconsin Gaylord Nelson's 1970 proposal to force the issue of environmental awareness into the national spotlight.

At the time the environment was not considered to be a high priority issue and Americans accepted a gradual diminishment in the quality of the natural environment. When millions of Americans took to the streets April 22, 1970, and demanded adequate protection for the environment, the Nixon administration was quick to act.

The result was federal legislation recognizing Earth Day, now officially celebrated every April 22, as well as the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Clean Air Act.

Since Earth Day's conception, 37 years ago, environmental issues have been given substantially more recognition by post-Nixon administrations and Americans have seen bans of cancer-causing pesticides, ever increasing air quality standards, cleanup projects of lakes and rivers, as well as bans on ocean dumping sewage sludge and industrial waste.

"Each Earth Day event has a theme and our local Earth Day event in Yucca Valley is going to promote recycling, composting and land reuse," said James Lessard, the director of Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs office, "The global Earth Day event for 2008 will focus on climate changes and global warming."

The mission of NREA is to support the Combat Center in meeting its' legal and regulatory environmental requirements and to ensure that training missions can effectively continue on MCAGCC lands.

This Earth Day the

See EARTH, A11

PHOTOS BY PFC. ZACHARY J. NOLA
PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LESLIE SHAW

David Nomura, work leader at the base recycling center, sorts through recycled materials.

3rd LAR returns from Iraq deployment

PFC. ZACHARY J. NOLA

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Last week families and friends showed their determination to welcome home the Marines and sailors from the 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion by braving exhaustingly long hours of chilly temperatures and gusty winds at Victory Field.

3rd LAR, also known as "Wolfpack," has been deployed to Iraq since mid-September 2007 and was sent to conduct security

operations for local cities and work on public relations with Iraqi leaders. In addition to providing security and working on public relations, 3rd LAR helped train Iraqi soldiers and police.

However, only a few of the conservations that have taken place on Victory Field during the last few nights have been about the mission. Instead most conversations were about the weight lifted off the backs of proud friends

See 3RD LAR, A7



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Sgt. Justin R. Genovese, convoy commander with Headquarters and Services Company, 3rd LAR, and his wife, Kara, exchange smiles as their daughters, Tatum and Bianca enjoy some of the candy their father brought home for them.

Safety Corner

Everything you ever needed to know to have a motorcycle on base

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

As the temperature rises, the streets of the Combat Center and surrounding community have become flooded with motorcycles.

Marines, sailors, dependents, and civilian employees wishing to own and ride a motorcycle aboard the base must go through multiple steps to ensure they are riding legally and safely.

Bob Piirainen, Traffic Safety Program Manager and motorcycle rider coach, is the first person Marines should see before purchasing or bringing a motorcycle aboard the base to enroll into either the beginners or experienced riders' course.

The beginners and experienced riders courses are authorized Motorcycle Safety Foundation courses every Marine must complete if they wish to ride a motorcycle on base.

The beginners' course includes five hours of classroom instruction and more than 17 hours of actual riding.

The course offers a handful of small motorcycles to practice on that are easy to handle and get used to and do not require a permit from the base or state of California.

"This course helps a lot of people who come into my office and want to ride but don't know what they are doing," said Piirainen. "They can use one of the practice bike. That way when they suddenly realize that motorcycle riding isn't for them, they didn't waste all their money on a new bike."

After completing the course, Marines are able to take their certificate to the Department of Motor Vehicles in order to skip the written portion of the test administered by the DMV.

The experienced riders' course is for Marines who own motorcycles and have had practice riding it. This course holds more classes with more riders than the beginners course.

After completing either course, the participant will receive their MSF card which will allow them to register the motorcycle on base, assist getting an endorsement from the DMV to ride a motorcycle legally in California, and can also lower insurance rates by, 10 to 15 percent.

All riders must complete the MSF

course by order of the Marine Corps base, said Piirainen.

To become registered to ride aboard the Combat Center, Marines must present PMO with an endorsement or permit from the DMV, their MSF card, and a letter from their command giving the green light.

Motorcycle personal protective equipment is mandatory for everybody operating or riding as a passenger on any military installation and every military member riding on a motorcycle off any military installation.

Everyone must have a protective helmet that fastens under the chin which meets the standards of Snell Memorial Foundation, the American National Standards Institute, or the Department of Transportation.

Motorcycle riders must wear impact or shatter resistant goggles or a full-face shield attached to the helmet. A brightly colored long sleeved shirt during the day, or a reflective garment at night.

A reflective vest is authorized to be worn by Marines in uniform, but should be removed as soon as the military member gets off the motorcycle.

Riders must wear hard-soled shoes with heels, long pants and full-fingered gloves or mittens as well.

Many units aboard the base offer motorcycle clubs or rider groups to help bring camaraderie and safety among riders.

One of the largest groups aboard the base is the Motorcycle Safety Awareness Program run by Sgt. Jody Bridges, Headquarters Battalion S-3 assistant operations chief.

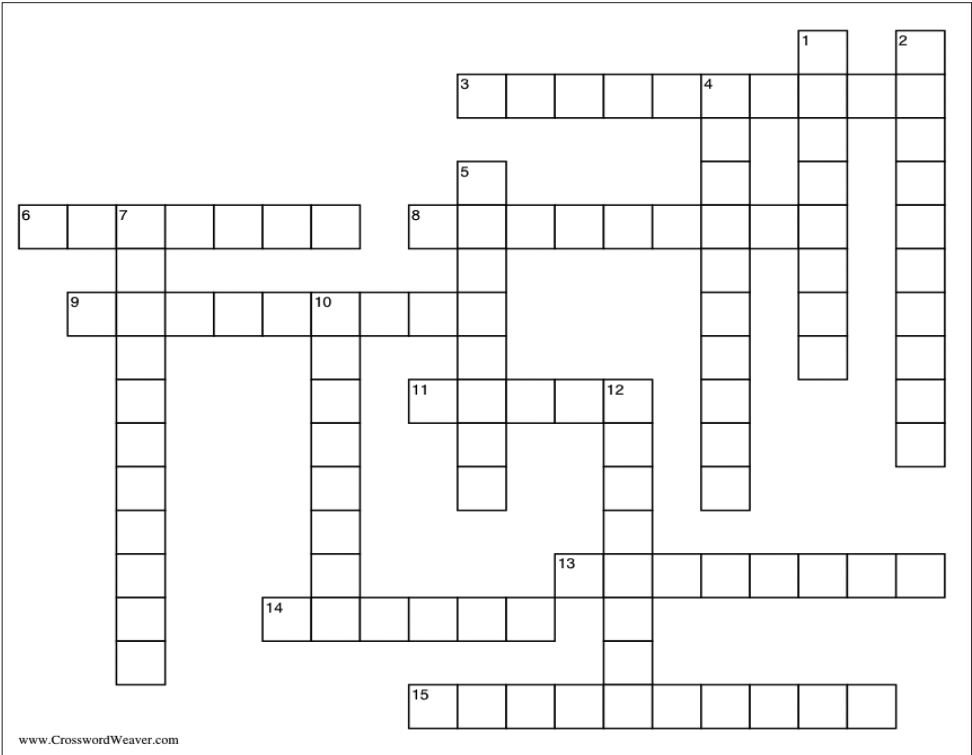
"MSAP is great because it gives riders a network of friends and events for them to participate in," said Bridges. "It gives them something to do and someone to ride with."

The program offers safety classes and MSF trained coaches, which gives the group the ability to train and teach without safety instructors.

MSAP has also brought famous stunt riders such as Jason Britton and Eric "E-Dub" Whitcomb to ride through Joshua Tree National Park.

For more information about motorcycle riding, contact Piirainen at 830-6154. For more information about MSAP, contact Bridges at 830-3000.

SUPER VILLIANS



ACROSS

3. Wolverine's nemesis from the same lab
6. The X-Men's main enemy
8. Has eight limbs
9. The villian who fights with his mind, not superpowers
11. Gets his powers from a black suit from space
13. Sent by the devil to kill a stray warrior
14. Enemy of the Fantastic Four
15. His line in the X-Men movie is famous from a Youtube video

DOWN

1. The one who killed Superman
2. Played by Jim Carrey in one of the Batman films
4. Danny DeVito's film introduction to the comic book scene
5. The governor's only role as a super villian
7. Spiderman's original foe
10. Batman's greatest enemy
12. She could change her form to look like any person

[Solutions on A6]

Centerspeak

What is the worst part about Monday?

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



PFC. CHRISTOPHER LOZANO
DRIVER, WEAPONS COMPANY, 3/7

“Going back to work.”



LANCE CPL. CESAR ALVARADO MIRANDA
ADMIN. CLERK, ALPHA COMPANY, HQBN

“Thinking about all the stuff I have to do that week.”



CPL. ARTURO BENITEZ
CREW CHIEF, DELTA COMPANY, 3RD AAV

“That my weekend is over.”



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Taking advantage of the straight road, Eric "E-Dub" Whitcomb, motorcycle stunt rider, takes the lead during the Motorcycle Safety Awareness Program ride through Joshua Tree National Park Jan. 26.

OBSERVATION POST

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 <p>FRI., 4/18 & SAT., 4/19 Jefferson Starship FREE concert Time: 7:30 p.m.-10:30 p.m. Where: The Rock Yard at Fantasy Springs Casino 84245 Indio Springs Pkwy Indio For more info 342-5000</p> 	<p>WED., 4/16 Open Mic Karaoke Night Time: 7 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino 46-200 Harrison Street Coachella For more info call (800)585-3737</p> 	<p>WED., 4/16 Brian Goodlander on piano Time: 7 p.m. Where: 29 Palms Inn 73950 Inn Ave Twentynine Palms For more info call 367-3505</p> 	<p>THURS., 4/17 Hike Cactus Spring Trail Time: 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Where: Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mtns. National Monument 51500 Hwy 74 Palm Desert For more info call 862-9984</p> 	<p>FRI., 4/18 & SAT., 4/19 Photographing Joshua Tree Up Close and Personal Class Time: Fri., 7-9 p.m. and Sat., 9:45 a.m.-6 p.m. Where: Copper Mountain College 6162 Rotary Way Joshua Tree For more info call 367-5535</p> 
<p>FRI., 4/18 & SAT., 4/19 Jefferson Starship FREE concert Time: 7:30 p.m.-10:30 p.m. Where: The Rock Yard at Fantasy Springs Casino 84245 Indio Springs Pkwy Indio For more info 342-5000</p> 	<p>SAT., 4/19 Earth Day Restoration Activities Time: 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Where: Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mtns. Natl. Monument 51500 Hwy 74, Palm Desert For more info call 862-9984</p> 	<p>SUN., 4/20 10th Annual Opera in the Park Time: 12:30-4:30 p.m. Where: Sunrise Park 401 S. Sunrise Palm Springs For more info call 325-6107</p> 	<p>MON., 4/21 80's All-Stars Time: 8:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m. Where: Spa Resort Casino's Cascade Lounge 401 E. Amado Rd. Palm Springs For more info call (888)999-1995</p> 	<p>TUES., 4/22 Chris Walters on guitar Time: 7 p.m. Where: 29 Palms Inn 73950 Inn Ave Twentynine Palms For more info call 367-3505</p> 

Family camping adventures at Joshua Tree National Park: It's Not Just for Climbers

COMPILED BY THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE


Looking for a quick weekend getaway, but don't want to take out a loan for soaring gas prices? Located only minutes away are many campgrounds at Joshua Tree National Park, where one can escape civilization, and experience soul-refreshing silence. April and May are wonderful months for camping at the park, where temperatures at three and four-thousand feet are in the high 70s to low 80s. JTNP offers many things to many people. For photobugs, the park offers flora, fauna and geometric compositions to keep you busy for weeks. Those interested in star gazing will find themselves transported back in time, to a time before the urban streetlights crowded out the vast Milky Way. For hikers, the park has a hundred or more trails ranging from

short, quarter-mile nature trails to multi-mile trails over rigorous terrain. The trails at Hidden Valley, only 25 minutes from base, offer a natural museum of lush and diverse cactus and desert plants. Birds and many mammals are attracted to this natural water basin, the steep walls of which protect the plants from the drying

See CAMPING, A12



Yuccas are amongst the Spring flowers continuing to bloom at Indian Cove campground.



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Marine still trooping after severe wounding

PFC. R. LOGAN KYLE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines know that after being severely wounded in combat it is going to be difficult to be able to stay in the Corps if they are not combat capable.

Gunnery Sgt. Berle Sigman, fielding officer, Marine Corps Systems Command, Quantico, Va., defied that common conviction. The 32-year-old Marine from Stafford, Va., still walks and trains fellow leathernecks today, even after having suffered a severed leg

during combat operations in Iraq.

In September 2004, Sigman, then platoon sergeant with 5th Platoon, Company W, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, was deployed to Ramadi, Iraq, where his platoon was acting as a Quick Response Force.

Roughly one month into the deployment, Sigman and his platoon were providing security for an Explosives Ordnance Disposal team while they disposed of improvised explosive devices they found on one of Ramadi's urban streets.

What happened during that routine mission changed his life forever.

"I was walking around the front of the vehicle some of my Marines and our corpsman were in," said Sigman. "I turned around and about 200 meters down the road an insurgent popped out from around a corner with a Rocket Propelled Grenade and fired it at the vehicle."

The RPG barely missed the vehicle, but directly hit Sigman's right leg.

"As soon as I was hit I started

looking for my rifle to send rounds back down range," continued Sigman. "That's when the corpsman pulled me toward the vehicle and slapped a tunicate on me."

Sigman was then medically evacuated and taken to Camp Taqaddum, Iraq, where his leg was amputated just above the knee.

Five days later he was flown to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md.

Sigman spent roughly a month and a half going through more surgeries to remove shrapnel from his leg.

While in Bethesda, Gen. Michael Hagee, 33rd Commandant of the Marine Corps, visited Sigman and other Marines frequently.

"He asked me if there was anything he could do for me," said Sigman. "I told him that I'd like to stay in the Marine Corps."

After spending time in Bethesda, Sigman was transferred to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where he underwent physical therapy and prosthetic work.

He spent about five months in Walter Reed, learning how to walk again and eventually volunteered to work on the Quadrennial Defense Review, a report designed to help shape the process of change to provide the United States with strong, sound and

See TROOPING, A16



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION AND CUTLINE BY: BILL JOHNSON MILES

Gunnery Sgt. Jack Sigman ties the boot laces on his prosthetic leg at his desk at Marine Corps Systems Command. Sigman lost his leg while serving in Iraq but was allowed to reenlist in October 2007.

Spacious new, improved housing for E-1 to E-4

LANCE CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

More than 280 new and improved housing units being built by Lincoln Military Housing for Combat Center noncommissioned officers and junior enlisted service members could be available as early as spring 2010.

The units are slated to begin being built in the first months of 2009, where the current Marine Palms staff noncommissioned officers housing is currently located.

"These new family housing units will benefit Marines across the board and may certainly impact Marines considering reenlistment," explained Ray Zapata, base housing officer. "The number one question is

'What do we have to offer new families?' and these units will provide an answer."

The buildings will be duplexes equipped with at least three bedrooms, a two-car garage and a driveway making each home more than 1,700 square feet in gross size, something unprecedented aboard the Combat Center and most other military bases.

"Pretty much all the homes in military housing now are cramped," said Zapata, a Rockford, Ill., native. "These new houses are going to have actual laundry rooms, walk-in closets and even ice makers."

The homes will also be equipped with environment friendly and energy efficient home appliances such as refrigerators, stoves, microwaves and

dish washers. They will also provide tankless water heaters the size of a suitcase that hangs on a wall and heats water on demand.

"These new water heaters will be very effective," added Zapata. "The normal 40-gallon water heaters not only waste fuel, they also don't provide enough hot water for families the majority of the time."

With the new water heaters, families will be able to do their laundry, wash dishes, and take showers simultaneously without having to worry about the water getting cold, he continued.

The housing office is taking a new approach to building the average military house, said Charles McDowell, regional property manager, Lincoln Military Housing.

The homes are not the only thing that are being upgraded and improved.

The new neighborhood will be equipped with a small park, jogging trails, an extensive youth sports complex, including little league soccer and baseball fields, and a dog park.

"We're learning as we go," said McDowell, a Hereford, Texas, native. "We take everything residents like and dislike about housing and try to meet their wants and needs."

McDowell also said these new additions to housing will bring about a greater sense of family and bring neighbors closer together.

For more information you can the base housing office at 368-4500.

HOT TOPICS

NAVAL HOSPITAL RIDGE RUN

The annual Ridge Run sponsored by Naval Hospital MWR will be held Friday. The race course will be the same as last year at Range 100. The start and finish line will be behind the Naval Hospital. Race 1 will consist of a 5K run through the trails above the hospital. Race 2 will be a strenuous 8K run. The race will begin at 7 a.m. Race day registration will begin at 6 a.m. The cost is \$5 for squad runners (5 or more per squad). All runners will receive a commemorative engraved dog tag. For more information please contact Dan Barber at 830-2362.

CLINICS CLOSED FOR RIDGE RUN

Due to the Ridge Run event, the clinics at the hospital will open for appointments starting at 9 a.m. The Emergency Medicine Dept. at the hospital is always open for emergencies. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

KIDS PFT: PLAY AND FUN TIME

Are you a Marine or sailor that can kick a soccer ball, play chase (tag), or throw a football with children of those forward deployed? If so, we need you on Sunday at 2 p.m. at the East Gym Basketball Court. For more information please e-mail kidsptpalms@live.com.

ASYMCA SPAGHETTI DINNER AND SILENT AUCTION

There will be an Armed Services YMCA Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction May 16 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Combat Center's Community Center, Cottonwood Rd. Dinner ticket prices are \$6 for adults and \$4 for children 4 to 12 years old. Children under 3 years old are free. If you would like to donate to the Silent Auction, buy a ticket for dinner, or have questions, please call 830-7481 or visit building 193 on base. All proceeds will benefit the ASYMCA Kid's Care Club. KCC is a program to help children learn the importance of helping in the community.

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Preventing viruses from infecting Combat Center dogs

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Buying a new puppy can bring excitement and happiness throughout a household. Owners sometimes want to show off how cute their new puppy is and set up play dates with other dogs.

According to Army Capt. Cyndie Facciolla, Combat Center's veterinarian, new puppies that have not had their full vaccinations and are introduced to other dogs and even certain environments are highly susceptible to the Canine Parvovirus and Distemper Virus.

Many dogs have already died aboard the Combat Center due to these two deadly viruses.

The Canine Parvovirus, or Parvo, runs rampant in many crowded animal shelters, pet stores and parks where people bring their dogs.

"When dogs are infected with Parvo, they often don't show clinical signs for five to 10 days after infection," said Facciolla. "This means infected dogs can shed the virus and infect other dogs before they appear sick."

Dogs can become infected by Parvo by simply ingesting a microscopic amount of fecal matter. Parvo is resistant to the effects of heat, detergents, alcohol and most disinfectants. Given the right conditions Parvo can live up to a few years in soil. Many dogs contract the virus after visiting dog parks, a breeding ground for the Parvo virus, due to the amount of dogs, young or old, that visit the park.

"Direct contact between dogs is not required to spread the virus," said Facciolla. "Some dogs will shed the virus for many months after they have recovered from the disease."

The symptoms of the Parvo virus is vomiting, diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain, lethargy and depression.

There is a 30 percent mortality rate for dogs that contract the virus. Although vaccination will not cure a dog who has contracted the virus, vaccination will drop the risk factor of contracting the disease to nearly zero percent.

The other disease being found among many dogs around the Combat Center is the Distemper virus.

Distemper can also infect other animals such as ferrets, skunks, raccoons and foxes.

"It is a contagious, incurable, often fatal, multi-systemic viral disease that affects the respiratory, gastrointestinal and central nervous systems," said Facciolla. "The symptoms are exactly like rabies, they have neurological signs along with twitching and salivating."

Distemper is not able to live in the environment, but can be spread through dog-to-dog contact, and a few feet airborne through coughing or sneezing.

Like Parvo, distemper is most common in puppies, but the mortality rate is well over 50 percent.

Although humans can't catch these viruses, humans can carry the virus on their clothes or shoes

which can infect their dogs

The best way to prevent both Parvo and distemper is vaccinations, but before a puppy can have all their vaccination, owners are encouraged to isolate their puppy until fully vaccinated.

If an owner must take a puppy outside of their house or yard, they are encouraged to carry their puppy and wash their hands before and after handling him.

To disinfect dirty or potentially contaminated areas, use one part bleach, 30 part water solution to wash decks and cement flooring before an unvaccinated dog has access to the area.

For more information regarding the veterinary clinic or the Parvo and Distemper viruses, please contact Facciolla at 830-6896.

Although the veterinary clinic's main mission is to ensure the Military Working Dogs are healthy and ready for duty, the clinic opens it's office when it can to provide assistance to family pets.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
Army Capt. Cyndie Facciolla, Combat Center's veterinarian, inspects the ears of Ringo, a retired military working dog, to ensure he is healthy at the Combat Center's veterinarian clinic April 11. The clinic's primary focus is to ensure military working dogs are healthy and ready for duty. The clinic opens to treat and care for family pets when their schedule permits.



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ASYMCA back on feet, in new buildings

LANCE CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

In August 2007, a severe rain storm damaged the previous Armed Services YMCA building rendering it unsafe for occupancy. The Combat Center's ASYMCA moved into Buildings 192 and 193 with the help of several Combat Center Marines April 4. "The Marines accomplished the move in one week so that the ASYMCA was available to those

we serve without any major interruption," said Anita Neu-Fultz, executive director, ASYMCA. "We are proud to have all of our programs in one location, she continued. "We do so much here at the ASYMCA," said Sony Avalos, business manager, ASYMCA. "Having all of our operations located in the same place gives us an opportunity to interact with the other volunteers." The Combat Center's ASYM-

CA has been in operation as a satellite of Camp Pendleton since 1992 and became an independent branch in 2002. The ASYMCA's mission is to serve military service members and their families while mainly focusing on junior enlisted service members. The ASYMCA offers several services to Marines, sailors and their families aboard the Combat Center including the See BUILDINGS, A13



PFC. R. LOGAN KYLE
Monique Tijerina, teacher, Armed Services YMCA, instructs her students April 9. The ASYMCA recently reopened in the Combat Center's Building 192 after a rain storm damaged their previous building in August 2007. The ASYMCA offers several different programs that support Marines, sailors and their families aboard the Combat Center.

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MAG-46 stretches its wings during helo assault exercise

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marine Aircraft Group 46 used multiple training areas aboard the Combat Center as their training grounds for a live-fire, simulated helicopter assault exercise April 5.

MAG-46 is made up of Marines and sailors from Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 775 from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 764 and

Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 769 from Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

The exercise provided Marines an opportunity to familiarize themselves with moving infantry units into hostile territory while engaging simulated threats from the ground using various types of transport and escort helicopters.

The AH1W Cobra attack helicopters and UH1N Huey's were escort aircraft while the CH-46 Sea Knight's replicated picking up and dropping off ground troops while under mock fire.

The CH-53E Super Stallion used their advanced fire power to engage simulated threats from the ground to give ground units a helping hand.

"It's an opportunity for our squad to practice," said Lt. Col. Steve Godinho, executive officer of HMLA-775. "We get to practice planning the mission, and then the exciting part of executing the plan."

Godinho, a Pittsfield, Mass., native, continued to say how the training integrates all the assets inside MAG-46, which makes the groups successful during the con-

stant missions and deployments.

"We need to do this type of training," said Col. Gregory Ryan, MAG-46 commander. "This is exactly the type of missions we would be conducting while deployed."

MAG-46 will be used to insert and remove infantry troops while providing air support, along with delivering gear, ammunition and other needed items to fighting service members while deployed.

Due to their close proximity to the Combat Center, MAG-46 is also used to support Mojave Viper, a month-long pre-deploy-

ment training exercise.

Their usual exercises gives forward air controllers going through Mojave Viper a chance to practice working with real aircraft carrying live ordnances to prepare them for the real thing when deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan.

The helicopter assault training gives Marines and sailors of MAG-46 and other infantry units going through their pre-deployment training a chance to work with real aircraft to better prepare themselves for their deployment.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

A Marine sticks his head out the window of a CH-46 Sea Knight from Marine Aircraft Group 46 as it lands to pick up mock troops during a simulated ground attack the Combat Center's training areas April 5. The Sea Knights conduct similar missions while deployed. Due to their close proximity to the Combat Center, MAG-46 is also used to support Mojave Viper, a month-long pre-deployment training exercise.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Two CH-46 Sea Knight helicopters from Marine Aircraft Group 46 fly low before landing during a simulated helicopter assault training exercise aboard the Combat Center's training areas April 5. The Sea Knights were transporting mock troops into hostile situations, similar to the missions they would have to complete while deployed.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Sgt. Lisle Farnum embraces his wife Carol as she holds their son Oliver. This was the first time Farnum and Oliver met face to face.

3RD LAR, from A1

and loving parents.

"The families are ready for them to come home," said Staff Sgt. Jason A. Williams, the family readiness officer for 3rd LAR.

Friends and family battled high winds and cool night temperatures all week, but neither seemed to dampen the spirits of those attending the Wolf Pack's return.

"I'm elated. I am glad to have him home, and I am very proud of all of them," said Mary Stamets, mother of Lance Cpl. Sam Stamets.

While waiting for buses to arrive, girlfriends worked on welcome home posters while parents shared a sigh of relief that 3rd

LAR was home.

"Watching the T.V. and all the action in Iraq, and knowing that he was there was scary because we never knew exactly where he was at any time," said Greg Sloan, father of Cpl. Matthew Sloan.

"It wasn't so bad until last month because that was when the anxiety hit," said Pat Clay, mother of Lance Cpl. James Clay. "You just can't pick up the phone and call when you want to and that is just the worst."

Each time the motorcades arrived and each time the bus doors opened, Victory Field exploded into a scene of pure excitement. Mothers and wives cried, girlfriends screamed, fathers snapped photos, and sons

and daughters laughed with smiles stretched from cheek to cheek.

On the evening of April 9, as cameras flashed and couples hugged, Sgt. Leslie Sheridan, Charlie Company, stood with his wife, Destiny, and stared down at the small bundle in his arms. Onlookers couldn't help but point and smile, as they passed Sheridan, who was meeting his son for the first time.

For Lynne Boles, Wednesday night did not mark the first time she met her son Lance Cpl. Daniel Reese. However, the smile on her face was reminiscent of Sgt. Sheridan's.

"He's gone from my little boy to my man," said. Boles.

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Intramural basketball league ends with Commanding General's Trophy returning to MCCES

PFC. ZACHARY J. NOLA
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

On the night of April 7 when the men's basketball teams from Memphis University and the University of Kansas were wrapping up their play-off run to the NCAA Basketball Championship, eight Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center

intramural basketball teams were just beginning their playoff runs and looking to claim the Commanding General's cup.

On the evening of April 10 at the Combat Center's East Gym, the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School staff noncommissioned officer's team accomplished that goal, claiming the

Commanding General's Trophy with a convincing 74-58 win over the team from the Installation Personnel Administration Center.

The MCCES SNCO team, who were the number two seed, ended the regular season with a record of 11-1 and went into the playoffs feeling confident. "We wanted to bring the

trophy back to MCCES," said forward Armeilius Haynes. "From the beginning of the season I think it was penciled in that we were going to win."

That confidence was at its pinnacle during the championship game but was present throughout the playoffs. Fans and spectators were treated to a four-

day display of the level of individual skill aboard the Combat Center.

The MCCES SNCO's passing game was quick and accurate, their transitions

were swift, and their team spirit and unity was unmatched. The team was a prime example of how mastering and applying the basic fundamentals will put

points on the board and win games.

One major factor in MCCES SNCO's title run was the accuracy of the team's shooting. The shooting skills of players like forward Jerome McCray

and guard Michael Gray enabled the team to constantly build unsurpassable leads that applied heavy pressure on opponents and forced those opponents to rush shots and constantly fight the clock.

The MCCES SNCO's opened the playoffs with a comfortable 69-57 win over Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, who were the number seven seed.

In the second round the team took on the number three seed IPAC and was forced into triple overtime before overcoming their opponents 78-77.

In the third round the team took on the number one seed, Ole School Plus, a team that finished the regular season undefeated that many believed would claim the championship.

However, OSP suffered a defensive breakdown and the MCCES SNCO's team seized the opportunity. In the

game that many fans considered the unofficial title game, the MCCES SNCO's intensity and level of play was too much for OSP and the game ended in favor of the MCCES SNCO's.

"They were the better team. They hustled and they hurt us on both ends," said forward Exton Hurt, an OSP forward, and logistics trainer at Mojave Viper support division.

In the title game of Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League the MCCES SNCO's faced IPAC, the team that had previously forced them into triple overtime and that was looking to settle the score.

However, by 7:30 p.m.

on Thursday, when the title game tipped off, the MCCES SNCO's transition to the league's number one team was complete. Their precise shooting, tight defensive game, quick passing and high level of enthusiasm made winning the

General's trophy look easy. For the MCCES SNCO's it was the perfect ending to a season that almost ended with a perfect record.

For more information about Combat Center sports, contact Skip Best at 830-4092.



Spencer Rutledge, head of the logistics division and Ole School Plus point guard drives to the basket during Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League playoffs Thursday.



Dominique Davis, small forward for the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School A Team, grabs a rebound during intramural basketball playoff action Thursday.



Spencer Rutledge, head of the logistics division and Ole School Plus point guard, puts two points on the board during OSP's 82-76 victory over Tactical Training and Exercise Control Group Thursday.



Emmanuelle Williams, a point guard for Combat Logistics Battalion 7, battles Antoine Kilgore of Tactical Training and Exercise Control Group for a loose ball during TTECG's 83-78 overtime win Thursday.



Nico Matthews, a forward on the Installation Personnel Administration Center's intramural basketball team, rejects a shot during last week's 74-58 championship loss to the MCCES SNCO's Thursday.

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PMO holds true to 'once a Marine, always a Marine'

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Provost Marshal's Office held an annual mess night at the Officer's Club April 4 to celebrate camaraderie and esprit de corps within its ranks.

The night was made special not only by the brotherhood shared by the base's military police, but also by the guests of honor who were invited to dine with them.

Former Cpl. Allen Striffler, a radio operator and World War II veteran, once assigned to 1st Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, and former Cpl. Joe Lisi, a radio operator and retired New York City Police Department captain from Manhattan's 17th Precinct, were invited to dine with PMO by Maj. Pietro P. Scarselli, PMO commanding officer.

Before the mess night ceremonies commenced, the Marines of PMO had the opportunity to meet the guests of honor and swap stories of their Marine Corps experiences.

Striffler, a veteran of campaigns in the Marianas Islands, Saipan, Tinian and Iwo Jima, and Lisi, a Marine and police officer turned actor, both addressed the mess, citing how they were proud to be Marines and honored to be

sitting with the PMO Marines that evening.

"The words 'semper fidelis' mean something very special to me," said Striffler. "We are the best, and you know that. It's because we live by those words. Let me say from my heart - I am proud to be your brother.

"You're looking at a very proud Marine," he added. "However, this Marine standing before you also represents the thousands of Marines who did not come home with me."

Striffler enlisted in the Marine Corps to serve his country during a time of war. As a veteran of four major World War II campaigns, some of his decorations include a Bronze Star medal, a Purple Heart medal, the Asiatic Pacific Campaign medal and a Presidential Unit Citation.

Although Lisi was never in combat, he still served honorably in the Marine Corps and went on to become a successful NYPD officer, he said. He retired from the police force in 1992 at the rank of captain, after having achieved numerous awards for his service. He said he credits all his success to his time spent in the Marine Corps.

"Becoming a Marine was the defining experience of my life," he said. "Any success I had as a New York City cop, an actor, even a father, I owe to the values and principles I learned when I was an



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Marines with the Provost Marshal's Office and the guests of honor at PMO's mess night raise their glasses in a toast to Marines and sailors from past and present conflicts during the mess night at the Officer's Club April 4.

18-year-old recruit training at Parris Island [S.C.]."

As an actor, Lisi has played many roles, two of which have been on popular television programs. For five seasons, he played Lt. Swersky on the TV series "Third Watch." He is also well-known for his character Dick Barone on the HBO series "The Sopranos."

After the speeches made by

Striffler and Lisi, each were presented a plaque from Scarselli, not only to honor them as guests of the mess night, but as friends and fellow Marines.

"Not only is it an absolute honor to be in their presence, but to see the passion and love for the Corps burning so strong in them brings a whole new meaning to 'once a Marine, always a Marine,'" said Scarselli.

Striffler and Lisi both currently serve on an advisory board for Marine Corps Recruiting Station New York and the Marine Corps Public Affairs Office in New York City.

PMO will continue to safeguard the Combat Center by maintaining a diligent watch over the base's borders and by enforcing the laws and standards of the Marine Corps.

They can't speak, so I will: Stop killing the animals

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

In an attempt to speak for those who cannot, I would like to say people are slowly sucking the life out of every living thing on planet Earth. Trash can be found along almost every major road, and according to an article written by Elizabeth Landau, Associated Producer for CNN, black carbon, a principle component of soot, could have as much as 60 percent of the global warming effect as carbon dioxide. So every time someone drives a car, truck or bus with a diesel engine, they are emitting black carbon into the atmosphere.

Now the medication we take

daily is seeping into our drinking water. Not to point out the obvious, but every living thing needs clean water.

We often swallow pills without thinking of the consequences. When we go to the bathroom, our bodies get rid of the remaining medication, which is filtered and returned to lakes, ponds and even the ocean.

In an article written by the Associated Press, the United States Environmental Protection Agency states there are no sewage treatment systems specifically engineered to remove pharmaceuticals.

"People think that if they take a medication, their body absorbs it and it disappears, but of course that's not the case," said EPA sci-

entist Christian Daughton in the AP article.

Even though we treat the waste water to reduce and eliminate contaminants, that process does not remove all of the excess medicines.

I understand many people have real problems requiring medication, but I also know a few hypochondriacs who are constantly popping pills because they think something may happen to them.

People also dump their old medication down the toilet to clear up clutter in their house.

These medications are affecting many animal species that live in or drink from these water sources.

"It's inescapable," said Sudeep Chandra, an assistant professor at University of Nevada, Reno, who studies inland waters and aquatic life during an interview with CNN. "There's enough global information now to confirm



COURTESY PHOTO

A sewage pump dumps waste and bile onto our planet. This waste is laced with medications that affect the lives and lifestyle of any animal or plant living and drinking from the water source.

these contaminants are affecting organisms and wildlife."

According to the CNN Web site, the drugs in the water are being blamed for severe reproductive problems in fish.

Already endangered fish, such as the razorback sucker and fat-

head minnow, are barely producing enough sperm or eggs to reproduce, or fish are being born with both male and female sex organs.

An entire bird species has almost disappeared in Pakistan after they fed off dead cows treated with anti-inflammatory drugs.

This problem is slowly spreading. At least one pharmaceutical has been detected in the water supply of 24 major metropolitan areas, according to the CNN Web site. California was home to seven contaminated cities, where Washington, D.C., and Northern New Jersey water sources were each found to be laced with at least six different types of drugs. Twelve states between the East and West Coast were also contaminated by pharmaceuticals in drinking water.

People don't worry about this because they believe the medication

See ANIMALS, A12

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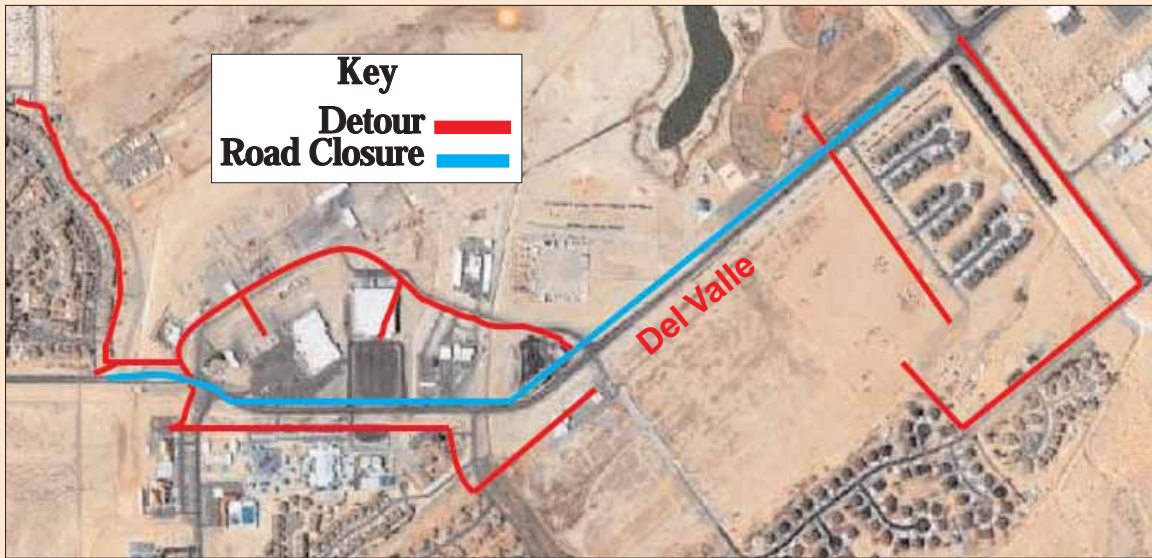
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EARTH, from A1

NREA's mission is to educate. "Our mission is to demonstrate awareness, by conducting Earth Day clean up around our buildings, and recycling efforts available to our residents," said Lessard. "Our staff will teach and demonstrate to our local communities the positive programs we have in place at MCAGCC."

Those programs include the Tortoise Research and Captive Rearing Site and Archeology and Paleontology Curation Center.

In addition to supporting Earth Day efforts at MCAGCC, NREA will also be supporting the 2008 Earth Day event in Yucca Valley.

For more information about the upcoming Yucca Valley event visit <http://www.hidesertnature-museum.org/earthday.html>.

The Combat Center's Lifelong Learning Library is also recognizing Earth Day by hosting an informational workshop for children and their families April 22 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in Building 1528.

Attending the informational program will be three speakers from local organizations.

Valerie Ward, the director of community relations for Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services, will be speaking about the importance of recycling.

A representative from the non-profit organization Leave No Trace will provide attendees with a short environmental awareness program centered on camping.

The last of the three speakers will be Cindy Runhouy, a representative from Joshua Tree National Park, who will also be giving a short informational speech.

Once the speakers have concluded there will be a short video, a question and answer time, as well as general activities, such as Earth Day related word searches and coloring pads, for the kids.

For more information please contact Nicole Austin the Lifelong Learning Library's program coordinator at 830-6875.

For those looking to make a long term impact on the environment, the solution is simple. Recycle, carpool and use recycled products whenever possible.

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CAMPING, from A3

winds, creating a desert Eden. The trail includes interpretative signs identifying different plants and is popular with drive-by tourists who don't have time for more intensive sightseeing.

The park is a mecca for sport climbers from around the world, who dot and dangle precariously

from towering cliffs and boulders all over the park. This activity, however, should not be attempted without proper training and adequate equipment.

Spring brings out the birds and the birders. The visitor centers at the park all have birding lists, as well as a variety of books for purchase to help identify them.

Campers will find the night-

time temperatures at this time of year to be as close to perfect as possible, with lows in the 50s and 60s that allow sleeping out under the stars. Desert camping offers a respite from the bugs and nightlife that often plague moister climates in the north and eastern part of the country.

There are nine campgrounds in the park, ranging in price from \$15 to \$20 a night. Closest to the base is Indian Cove campground, the turnoff just west of Lear Road on U.S. Highway 62. Reservations are possible at the two campgrounds which have toilets and water—Black Rock and Indian Cove campgrounds; call (877) 444-6777 for more information, or visit <http://www.nps.gov/jotr/planyourvisit/camping.htm>.

The Combat Center offers those without camping gear the opportunity to take advantage of the proximity of one of the most striking national parks. Outdoor Adventures, in building 1262 offers a wide variety of camping gear for Marines, civilians and families. From tents to coolers, backpacks to portable stoves, nominal pricing allows anyone to get off base and experience the wonder of desert camping.

Outdoor Adventures is open Monday through Wednesday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays.

For more information, contact Outdoor Adventures at 830-7235 or visit <http://www.mccs29palms.com/OdAdv.htm>.

ANIMALS, from A10

they are 'taking' by drinking water is such a small amount it has absolutely no effect on them.

Adult humans range in their weight, but usually average between 125 to 180 pounds.

Notice the big difference? Well, the animals being affected by this, fish, bird's, even plankton, do not weight even half that much. So these trace amounts we consume are having a greater impact on smaller animals. It is like dumping a bottle of anti-depressants down a bird's throat, or feeding fish birth control pills daily.

Tests have been performed to determine if drugs in the drinking water are affecting humans. Although the tests have shown results, pharmaceutical industries are stating humans cannot be affected.

In an AP article, studies have shown that consuming small amounts of medication throughout a long period of time has affected human embryonic kidney cells, human blood cells and human breast cancer cells. The cancer cells spread more rapidly; the kidney cells grew too slowly to maintain healthy organs and the blood cells showed biological activity associated with inflammation.

How are we supposed to stand by and watch as animals are dying because something we, as humans, did? We as a species messed up, now we have to find a way to fix it before we tip the balance and another type of animal is extinct because of what we have done.

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Church of Christ Sunday Bible Study 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am 1:30 pm Ladies' Bible Classes 11am Wed. Wed. Bible Study 5pm 7021 Airway, Yucca Valley • 365-9215	Unity Church of Morongo Basin Join us for Worship & Celebration *New Location* Desert Dome 5420 Border Ave., J.T. Church Service - 10:30 AM Childrens Church - 10:40 AM 760-366-4840		DESERT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH <i>Call for free van ride</i> Sunday 10:00 A.M. - Worship Children's Bible School - Rides Available <i>Visitors Welcome</i> Sunday Concert Series • Call for info 29 Palms • 5688 Sunrise Drive • 361-0086	St. Martin-in-The-Fields EPISCOPAL CHURCH Sunday School 11:30 am • Holy Eucharist 11:30 am Sunday Bible Study After Service We're Here for Everyone Phone (760) 367-7133 72348 Larrea Road (2 blocks up from KFC), 29 Palms www.stmartinchurch29.org
St. Joseph of Arimathea Episcopal Church Just the Best place to get Married Father Ian Hanley Sunday School, Holy Eucharist 9:00 A.M. Onaga at Church St., Y.V. 365-7133	Yucca Valley Church of Religious Science Healing Lives & Building Dreams Reverend Ron Scott Sunday Celebration & Junior Church 10 AM 7434 Bannock Trail, Yucca Valley 365-2205 yvcis.org		United Methodist Church of Twentynine Palms 6250 Mesquite Springs Road Phone: 367-7338 Sunday School: 8:30 a.m. - Worship: 9:30 a.m. (Child Care Provided) Pastor Beth Glass <i>"open hearts, open minds, open doors"</i>	FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 365-4014 SUNDAY Bible School.....9:30am Worship.....10:45am WEDNESDAY Bible Study.....7pm
Yucca Valley 57273 Onaga Tr., 365-3671 The United Methodist Church Sunday Classes for All Ages - 9:30 AM Worship 10:30 AM (Child Care Available) Bible Study: Mon., 10:30 AM; Wed., 7:00 PM	Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) WORSHIP SERVICE 9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 AM WE PREACH CHRIST RISEN 59077 Yucca Trail, Yucca Valley CHURCH: 365-2548 Preschool & Daycare: 369-9590	Desert Hills Presbyterian Church 56750 Mountain View Trail Yucca Valley • 365-6331 Worship Service 10:00 A.M. Child Care, Bible Studies, Youth, Choir A Friendly and Loving Congregation!	JESUS HOUSE OF PRAYER Calvary Chapel Fellowship Pastor Joey & Carol Joseph 6415 Outpost Road Joshua Tree Sunday Services 9am, 10:30am & 6:00pm call (760)366-7420 • Office (760) 366-7422 Website: JHOPCC.ORG	First Southern Baptist Church Sun. Worship 10:45am • 6:00pm Sun. Bible Study 9:30am 1 st. Wed. Potluck 6:00pm Wed. Bible Study 7:00pm 6088 Sunset Road JT (760) 366-9211
READY FOR A CHANGE? CHECK OUT ONE EIGHTY Same Jesus, Same Message, Different Attitude Worship with a coffee house atmosphere Sundays 10:30 a.m. Located directly across from the JT Station on Hwy. 62 and Center St. in the heart of Joshua Tree 366-8429 / One80[at]hotmail.com	OASIS COMMUNITY CHURCH 6631 Utah Trail, 29 Palms Service Times Sunday 9:00 am, 11:00 am Nursery provided at 9:00am & 11:00am 367-7812 www.oasiscommunitychurch.com	Yucca Valley Church of the Nazarene 9:45 am Morning Worship 8:30 am Sunday School (All ages) 6:00 pm Evening Service 56248 Buena Vista, 365-7819 www.yvnazarene.com	Calvary Christian Fellowship Tye Bridges - Pastor Services Times: Sun 9:30am • Wed 7:00pm 3133 Balsa, Yucca Mesa Community Center Ph: 760.364.1990 E-mail: tbridges@verizon.net	Assembly of God Church Pastor Frank Ferrandini Sunday School 9:30 am Sunday Worship Service 10:30 am Wednesday dinner at 6:00 pm Wed. Service 7:00 pm 73331 Sullivan Road, 29 Palms • 367-9973
First Baptist Church of 29 Palms Pastor Raymond Butcher Sunday Services Sunday School 9:15am Morning Worship 10:30am Evening Service 6:00pm Wednesday Services Prayer/Bible study 6:30pm Young Married Couples Ministry 6:30pm **Childcare available** www.fbc29.org 6414 Split Rock Ave., 29 Palms, CA • 760 367-7561				

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Marine delivers the goods

CPL. ERIK VILLAGRAN
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 5

HIT, Iraq – Lance Cpl. Kevin M. Natt knows a large chunk of his battalion's morale rests on his shoulders, and he says he doesn't mind at all.

Natt, 22, a mail clerk from Mangham, La., is responsible for ensuring that Marines and sailors with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, receive their mail as soon as possible.

"I'm responsible for getting mail from postal in al-Asad, Iraq, to our battalion and detachments," Natt said. "I also keep the mail secure. I make sure nothing is lost or stolen."

Its work that sounds easier said than done. With multiple loads of mail delivered during the week, Natt must work at a feverish pace to keep Marines happy.

"I get about four tons of mail a week," Natt said. "Some Marines pitch in on a daily basis with getting the mail into the mail room."

Marines from multiple companies have made time to assist Natt in his task. They have taken time out of their off-time to ensure all mail is ready to be delivered as soon as possible. Their willingness to lend a hand has helped Natt deliver the mail without any delays.

"Their help is appreciated," Natt said. "Marines know it's not a one-man job. They figure he's getting mail for everyone, so why not help him if they can."

Natt was trained to do the job when he arrived to Iraq. His ability to learn the billet so quickly hasn't gone unnoticed.

"For one man handling a battalion's mail, he's done an amazing job," said Cpl. Michael B.

Perryman, 22, administrative clerk from Boston. "For him to learn it now and take care of everything is amazing."

Natt is reminded everyday how much mail means to Marines. He is asked about 30 times a day about mail.

"Mail is important because it's a morale booster," Perryman said. "Packages have things inside that are little surprises. Marines like those little pick-me ups; it's motivating."

Watching Marines become elated about receiving mail makes the hard labor worth it to Natt. He says he thrives on being depended on and won't fail his fellow Marines.

"Seeing how happy Marines get when they get mail from family and friends is the best part of it," Natt said. "I like being the light of their hard working days in Iraq."



Lance Cpl. Kevin M. Natt, 22, a mail clerk from Mangham, La., picks up packages aboard Camp Hit, Iraq, April 5. Natt is in charge of getting Marines and sailors with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, their mail. Although the job can be strenuous at times, Natt said making Marines happy makes it worth it. He has to sort and deliver around four tons of mail a week.

BUILDINGS, from A6

Thrift Store.

The Thrift store provides low cost electronics, clothing, books and house ware. Active duty service members can also receive free donated uniform items by showing their military identification at the counter.

The ASYMCA also provides several children's developmental and after-school programs on base like Tiny Tots, Kinder-Time, Kinder-Ready and Operation Hero.

"Before we moved into these two buildings the children had to go to the Ocotillo and [Marine Corps Community Services] Community Centers," said Anita Neu-Fultz,. "It's great to finally have everything we do located in the same vicinity."

The newly refurbished building is equipped with two children's classrooms full of bright colors and educational toys.

"I think the ASYMCA is a great way for parents to be involved with their children's education," said Michaela Jaquith, wife of Cpl. Joshua Jaquith, electronics calibrator, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School.

The ASYMCA also offers the Family Assistance program that is designed to assist military personnel and their families in an emergency. As part of the Program, families receive gift certificates from the base exchange, commissary, local grocery stores, as well as phone cards.

Families in need may also receive free items from the Thrift Store.

Financial support to the ASYMCA comes solely from grants, donations from businesses, fraternal organizations and individuals, and fund raising events.

The next events on the ASYMCA's schedule are the Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction May 7, and the Soap Box Derby June 7. Box car kits are currently available at the ASYMCA. Volunteers are needed for both events.

The ASYMCA is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For more information about the ASYMCA or to become a volunteer visit <http://www.twenty-ninepalmsasymca.org> or call 830-7481.



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CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

2008 CWF WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Christian Women's Fellowship invites you to attend our 2008 conference April 18-19, "Becoming a Woman of Excellence." Conference will be held Friday 6-8 p.m. and Saturday 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. at Christ Chapel, building 1541. Special speaker will be Joan Mathisrud of Heartfelt Ministries. Call 830-6464 to register or for more info.

CHRISTIAN PREP

Christian Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program is based on widely accepted Christian truth and sound research, focusing on biblical principles and strategies for helping couples have strong, joyful, lasting marriages. If you are an engaged or married couple and would like to know more about Christian PREP or sign up for the April seminar, please call 830-6464.

PASSOVER SEDER

Temple Sinai in Palm Desert will be hosting a Passover Seder for a limited number of Marines on April 20. Doors will open at 4:15 p.m. and the Seder begins at 5:30 p.m. Temple Sinai is covering the meal and transportation. Please call 568-9699 for more information.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

May 1 there will be a Prayer Luncheon in the Mesa Room at the Officers' Club from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. This year the theme is: "Prayer! America's Strength and Shield: 'The Lord is my strength and shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped.' Psalm 28:7." Come hear inspiring music, testimonies, and be inspired to pray. Each participant at each table will be given time for personal and/or corporate prayer. Family members are welcome to this all-hands event.

Roman Catholic Services

Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel

Sun 7:30 a.m. Rosary
Sun 8 a.m. Catholic Mass*
Sun 9 a.m. Military Council of Catholic Women (Bldg 1551)
Sun 9 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 Grp.
Sun 4:30 p.m. Rosary
Sun 5 p.m. Catholic Mass
Sun 6 p.m. Cyrus Young Adult Group age 18-35, 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

Non-denominational Christian Service Christ Chapel

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

Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.

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

Midweek Events

Monday Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel

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

Tuesday Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel

5-7:30 p.m. Catechist Meeting (2nd Tues. of the month)
6 p.m. Baptism Class 1st Tuesday each Month

Wednesday Village Center

11:30 a.m. Prayer Meeting in the Prayer Room contact Chaplain Flint 830-6187
6 p.m. RCIA, building 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 Service.

1st Thursday each month

7 p.m. Knights of Columbus

Legend

*Indicates Child Care Provided
+Appointments can be made for Confessions, call 830-6456 or 830-6646



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Summit Leadership Academy gets Combat Center insight to careers

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

High school students dressed in blue and black uniforms rolled up to the front gate of the Combat Center in three yellow buses, chattering loudly and pointing to static displays and Marines as they proceeded on base. Students from the Summit Leadership Academy High Desert visited the Combat Center April 9 to learn military-based details about one of three prospective career paths they chose: fire fighting, law enforcement and military. Each group of students took a

bus to their respective locations, where subject matter experts briefed them on gear, weapons and duties required of everyone in that field. The fire fighting group visited the fire station, where they had the opportunity to put out a controlled fire with a fire hose. They were also briefed on equipment on the fire truck, fire fighting hazardous materials and other gear. The law enforcement group visited the Provost Marshal's Office, where they saw static displays of weapons, gear and equipment. The Special Reactions Team spoke to the students about land navigation, stay-

ing in shape, and how to get into the SRT. The military group of students visited the Virtual Combat Convoy Trainer. The VCCT is a simulated humvee in a trailer, surrounded by a 360 degree laser-sensitive screen. The students used M-16A2 service rifles, .50-caliber machine guns and M240 machine guns modified to connect to the compressed air canisters and computers of the simulator. After each group finished their section briefings, they met at Phelps Hall, where they ate lunch. After eating, the students gathered outside, where the story of Lance Cpl. Chance Phelps, the 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, Marine which the chow hall is named after, was revealed to them. The students then made their way to Felix Field, where PMO gave them a brief and demonstration of how K-9 military working dogs are trained. The students cheered loudly as a Cpl. Carlos Santiago, a Marine with the military working dog team, put the hard sleeve armor on his right arm took off running with one of the dogs chasing close behind him. As the dog lept up and bit Santiago's armored arm, the students erupted

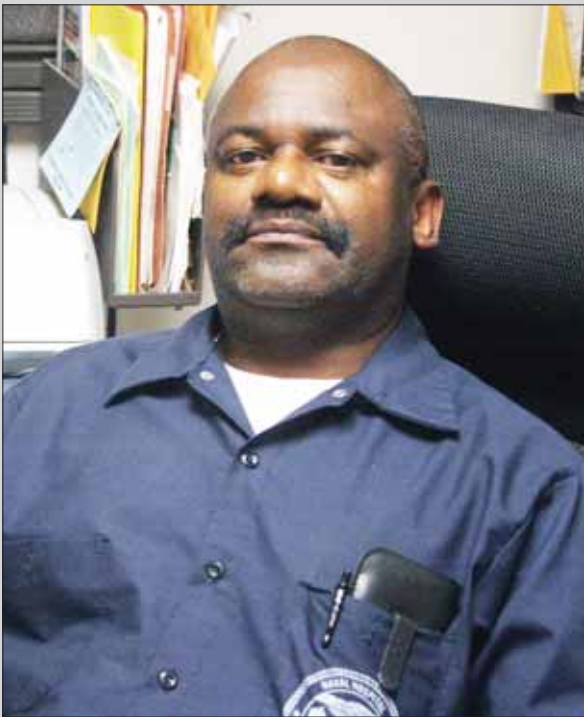


14-year-old Justin Siegfried, a student from Hesperia Summit Leadership Academy High Desert, uses a fire extinguisher to battle a propane made fire at the Combat Center's Fire Department during their visit to the Base April 9.

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

See SUMMIT, A16

Employee Spotlight



Employee: Andrew Bonner
Organization: Housekeeping and Operation Management Department
Job title: Supervisor
Job Duties: Supervise a crew of 14 and ensure that the hospital, veterinary clinic and AMCC is sanitized and properly cleaned.
Hometown: Chicago.
Hobbies: Fishing.
What I like most about my job: It's stress free and the people are easy to work with here.
Significant achievements since aboard MCAGCC: Getting people to work together.
Any military services: 21 years in the Marine Corps.
Time employed at MCAGCC: Since 1997.

Monthly

CARE PACKAGE DAY

Here's a little-something to hold you over until we're together again...

Thur., April 17 12 - 5 p.m.

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CORE BRANDS
CORPS VALUE

MCX is offering a \$10 coupon towards your next purchase at the Main Exchange when you mail a care package on Care Package Day. See store for details.

In addition, enjoy 25% off pre-packaged care packages ready to be mailed to your loved one deployed on UDP to Okinawa, or participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

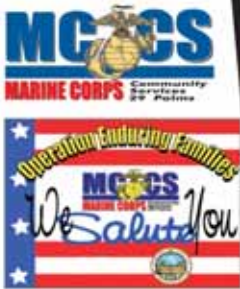
The Exchange will continue to provide FREE of charge packing items, such as boxes, tape and labels.

MCX Mall

A FREE Polaroid picture of your family will be taken upon request to send in your care package.



CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq
Cpl. German E. Jarquin, 21, postal clerk, Combat Logistics Brigade 8, 2nd Force Service Support Group (Forward) and Miami, Fla., native unloads a container of mail and sorts packages. Photo by: Lance Cpl. Aaron P. Mankin



For details, call 830-6163. mccs29palms.com

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.

NEW BRAKE ROTORS, FRONT. Brembo part# 25358. Lexus ES300 92-01. Toyota: Avalon 95-04; Camry V6 92-01; Camry 4-cyl 00-06; Sienna 98-03; Solara 99-03. \$35ea/\$60 both. Call (760) 362-8033 or E-mail jsch99@gmail.com 3/12/08

STEPS FROM '07 F350 SUPER CAB 4X4: Factory chrome steps that drop down 6". Removed when new. Fit F250/350 from 1999-2008 and include brackets and bolts. \$250 for everything. (760)799-3045 3/12/08

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

FIVE 275/70R18 TIRES from 2007 F350 4x4. 12,400 miles, great shape, plug in the tread of one. Set of 5 for \$250 OBO. Call (760)799-3045. 3/12/08

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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 SALE: 2005 KEYSTONE SPRINGDALE, Travel Trailer. Sleeps 6, 1 Slide, many extras, (601) 329-9896 Located at MCAGCC Twilight Dunes RV Park, # 29. \$18,400. 3/5/08

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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.

MISC. FIVE KITTENS READY FOR A NICE FRIENDLY HOME 7 weeks old, 1 light orange, 1 dark orange, 1 light brown, 1 mostly grey with a little white, 1 mostly white with a little grey. Anyone interested please call 805-8674. 4/9/08

FREE TO GOOD HOME 2 Yr. old neutered AKC yellow Lab Male references requested. Affectionate and housebroken. 880-1773 evenings. 4-2-08

PATIO FURNITURE. 6 chairs w/table and 2 chairs w/side table. \$100 takes All. (760) 285-1603 3-26-08

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

18 X 33 ABOVE GROUND SWIMMING POOL w/ liner/ladder. Free for the taking. Call (760) 285-1603 3/26/08

2 GOLDEN RETRIEVERS. Free to good home: 3 yrs old each. Registered, neutered. Never been apart, love kids! Call (760) 285-1603 3/26/08

FREE 50 GALLON FISH TANK WITH TWO FISH. My office space is shrinking, and the wife won't have it in the house. Call (760) 401-3752. 3/26/08

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.

Birth announcements



VAUN TYLER KNUDSEN
Son of Cpl. Timothy Knudsen and wife, Kirsten.
Born March 17, weighing 9 lbs and measuring 20.5 inches.

JACKSON PAYNE GORDON
Son of Capt. Gregory Gordon and wife, Tara.
Born on March 18, weighing 7 lbs, 11.7 oz and measuring 19.6 inches.

OSTIN DOUGLAS PAUL ROMMES
Son of Sgt. Doug Rommes and wife, Maegan.
Born on March 19, weighing 7 lbs, 3.9 oz and measuring 20 inches.

MADDOX STRAUSS ALEXANDER
Son of Sgt. Christopher Alexander and wife, Kerri.
Born on March 24, weighing 8 lbs, 5.2 oz and measuring 19.6 inches.



CARMELO LUIS BERDUCIA
Son of Cpl. Luis M. Berducia and wife, Chiara.
Born March 24, weighing 6 lbs, 12.6 oz and measuring 19.6 inches.

• SPRING •

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Tearing it up!



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Justin Robinson, a Combat Center Fire Department firefighter, pries a car door loose with a vehicle extrication tool during an exercise at the Center Fire training area Saturday. The training was designed to teach Center Fire personnel how to free car accident victims trapped inside their vehicles.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Serena Morales, 16, holds the Advanced Portable Detector 2000, which is used to detect harsh chemicals in the air at the Combat Center's Fire Department during the Hesperia School tour of the base April 9.

TROOPING from, A4

effective war fighting capabilities. After nearly three years, and through the intervention of friends and former commanding officers, Sigman got a job at Marine Corps Systems Command. Initially Sigman was allowed to be on permanent limited duty and extended his contract for 18 months. He was also selected to be promoted to gunnery sergeant over the summer of 2007. "I had to get approved to re-enlist on permanent limited duty and that took almost a year," said Sigman. Finally in October of 2007, Sigman re-enlisted at the Marine

Corps Museum in Quantico, Va., in front of a sign that said "Once a Marine, always a Marine." "Re-enlisting made me feel brilliant," added Sigman. "It's all about Marines taking care of Marines." Marines that work with Sigman enjoy his presence and enthusiasm. "Gunnery Sergeant Sigman inspires me daily by his motivation and is currently in the perfect billet where he gets to field a great piece of gear and still interact with infantry Marines," added Capt. Stephan Karabin, TOW project officer, Marine Corps Systems Command, Quantico, Va. Sigman is a 14-year Marine who plans to retire as a Marine.

SUMMIT from, A14

with cheers and laughter. Amir Awad, the 18-year-old class sergeant, said the day's events have intensified his aspiration to become a San Bernardino County sheriff. "I already wanted to join the Marines before I came out," said Awad about the base tour. "But that made me think 'I'm going!'" Awad added that during his time at the academy, he has

learned vital leadership skills he will need as a deputy sheriff, like maintaining order. Ashley Evans, a 17-year-old special team squad leader of the color guard and drill team, agreed. Evans said the experience she has gained from the academy and from her position as a squad leader will serve her for years to come. "For the most part, it [the academy] instills a sense of honor, snaps you into shape and makes you respect other people," said Evans, a Victorville native. "And it's great for team work." Awad, also a Victorville native, said he would like to thank all personnel who made the tour possible, and for providing the students with the opportunity to see how things are run in the Marine Corps and in law enforcement. To learn more about the academy, visit their Web site, www.slahd.com.

CAREER FAIR

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23
Community Center Bldg. 1004
9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.



Aproximately 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.



Details, 830-7225
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