

OBSERVATION Post

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MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

MAY 28, 2008

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 51 ISSUE 22



4 Rice rationing spreads to Combat Center



5 Teaching kids to say "nope" to dope



6 EOD sharpens skills at EROC



7 MWTC hosts 4th annual 10K course

This Day in Marine Corps History

-May 29, 1991-

5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade departed the Bay of Bengal after two weeks of disaster relief operations following a devastating cyclone.



PHOTO BY CPL. MICHAEL S. CIFUENTES
PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LESLIE SHAW

Brig. Gen. M. G. Spiese, former commanding general of the Combat Center, relinquishes command to Brig. Gen. Charles M. Gurganus, Combat Center commanding general, during a change-of-command ceremony at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field May 22.

Combat Center bids Spiese farewell, welcomes Gurganus

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

A change-of-command ceremony was held at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field May 22 when Brig. Gen. Charles M. Gurganus relieved Brig. Gen. M. G. Spiese as the Combat Center's commanding general.

Spiese had commanded the Combat Center since April 2007 and is moving on to the Training and Education Command at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., where he will serve as the commanding general.

Gurganus, a native of Wilmington, N.C., came to the Combat Center from Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., where he served as the assistant division commander, 2nd Marine Division.

The ceremony began with musical pieces performed by the Combat Center Band, and an invocation by Navy Cmdr. Thomas P. Hall, chaplain.

After the march of the colors, guest of honor Maj. Gen. Michael R. Lehnert, commanding general, Marine Corps Installation West,

See COMMAND, A9

MWTC expands curriculum, looks toward the future

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

MARINE CORPS MOUNTAIN WARFARE TRAINING CENTER BRIDGEPORT, Calif. – Since the Mountain Warfare Training Center Bridgeport, Calif., was established in 1951, the focus of the base has been to train Marines, sailors and other military personnel, both foreign and domestic, for mountainous and cold weather conditions.

A symposium, with representatives from commands throughout the Marine Corps, was held here May 13-15 to discuss the training required to prepare a Marine Air Ground Task Force and its elements for operations in complex, highly-compartmentalized terrain, cold weather and high altitude.

"We're going to create a training package for any unit, up to and including a MAGTF, that comes to the Mountain Warfare Training Center," said Lt. Col. Scott Johnston, MWTC operations officer. "The focus of the symposium was to identify mission-essential tasks (MET) they can train to in



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Marines from the Mountain Warfare Training Center command staff and symposium attendees walk the trails behind MWTC May 14.

this environment, and how they will conduct the training."

In 1951, MWTC was known as the Cold Weather Battalion. They were responsible for providing cold weather training to replacement troops deploying to the Korean Conflict. The base's role expanded in 1963 to include mountain training.

Following a nine-year period of caretaker status from 1967 to 1976, MWTC became the Marine Corps' premier training center for mountain and cold weather warfare.

MWTC is currently host to a variety of formal schools, including Mountain Scout Snipers Course, Mountain Medicine and Cold Weather Mountain

Medicine, Mountain Leaders Course, Assault Climber Course and Mule Packing. There is also a Mountain Operations Course offered to battalion-sized units.

Johnston said MWTC used to cater to units who came to the base to train for whatever course

See MWTC, A12

Administration Corner

NEW JOINS: For service members who return from performing a period of temporary additional duty or temporary duty in excess of 30 days away from Twentynine Palms, you will need to come to the Installation Personnel Administration Center New joins section and conduct a From TAD Audit and possible Travel Claim. You must complete this within three days of returning to your parent command. This will help assist in ensuring that you are in receipt of appropriate entitlements and avoid any possible pay related checkages.

SGLI PREMIUM RATE DECREASE: Effective July 1, the Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Benefits issued a memo, dated March 13, 2008, decreasing the Servicemembers Group Life Insurance premium rate from the current level of \$0.07 per \$1,000 of coverage to \$0.065 per \$1,000 of coverage. For example, \$400,000 of coverage will now cost \$26 a month vice \$28 a month. For additional rates, please refer to <http://www.insurance.va.gov/sglisite/>. Reference: PAAN 17-08 and RPAAN 13-08

AWARDS: Personnel assigned to the following units or participating in the following operations, during the listed dates, may be eligible for unit award(s) in accordance with MARADMIN 227/08:

- (1) Hq, Task Force 134, Baghdad, Iraq (16Dec05-31Dec06)
- (2) Hq, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, Baghdad (15Dec06-18Feb08)
- (3) Hq, Iraq Assistance Group, Baghdad; Taji, Iraq; and Camp Beuhring, Kuwait (16May06-15May07)
- (4) Hq, Combined Joint Task Force Troy, Camp Victory, Baghdad (17Dec05-07Dec06)
- (5) Hq, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, Baghdad (01May06-30Apr07)
- (6) Joint Area Support Group-Central, U.S. Embassy, Baghdad (01Jul07-28Feb08)
- (7) Joint Staff, Pentagon, Va (12Sep03-17Sep07)
- (8) Hq, U.S. Strategic Command Offutt AFB, NE (10Jul04-15Jul07)
- (9) U.S. Marine Forces Central Command (15Oct01-05Jun03)
- (10) Peru Earthquake Relief Operation (16Aug07-12Sep07)
- (11) Hurricane Felix Operation in Nicaragua (05Sep07-18Sep07)
- (12) Philippine Mudslide Relief Operation (17Feb06-28Feb06)

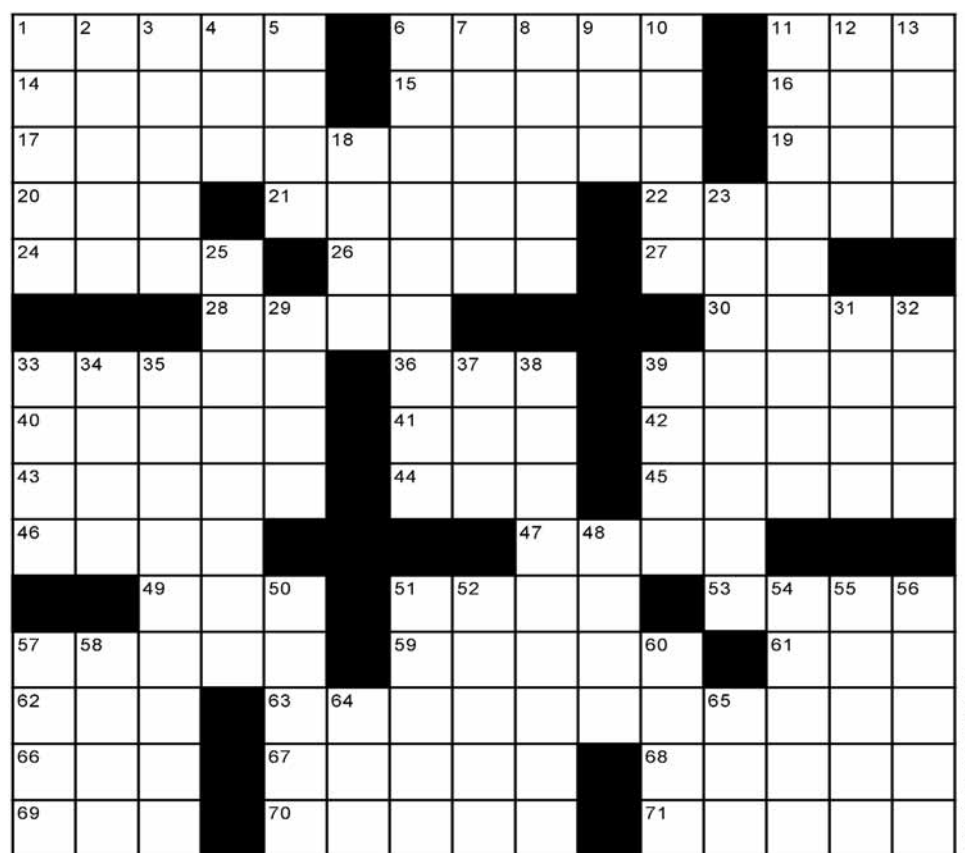
If you believe you are eligible for, please contact your respective S-1 office.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY (YOUR MONEY)

If you...	You must report to IPAC at the...	No later than...
- Return from a location outside the U.S.	Deployment Office	within 5 days upon return
- Return from outside the U.S. on emergency leave	Deployment Office	within 5 days upon return
- Visit a Medical Treatment Facility (Hospital)	Deployment Office	within 5 days upon return
- If you are going on Terminal Leave	Separations Office	10 days prior to leave
- Receive notification of orders (PCS or PCA)	Orders Office	immediately upon notification
- Add or lose a dependent (spouse, child, etc.)	Customer Svc Office	within 5 days of change
- Transfer units on base (PCA, TAD, or FAP)	New Joins Office	within 5 days of reporting
- Transfer units from off base (PCS)	New Joins Office	within 5 days of reporting
- Are a MCCES student with an admin issue	HMB (with pass)	within 5 days

... in order to complete and update your information and receive your entitlements

FAMILY REUNION



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ACROSS

1. Blue toon
6. Rock bottom
11. URL ending
14. Cooperstown's Paul or Lloyd
15. Greet the day
16. ____-Locks, Fla.
17. "Texaco Star Theater" host, familiarly
19. One-eighty
20. Actress Vardalos
21. Apartment vacancy sign
22. Explorer ____ da Gama
24. Timeline breaks
26. "That can't be!"
27. Peyton's QB
28. Word on Irish stamps
30. Ever and ____
33. Colorful horses
36. "The Simpsons" storekeeper
39. Biscotti flavoring
40. Radiate, as charm
41. "Gunga ____"
42. 1980 DeLuise movie
43. Not very bright
44. Dry, to a vintner
45. 1904 presidential candidate Parker
46. Not fooled by
47. "Thundering" group
49. Baby seal
51. Smelting waste
53. Rights org.
57. Dropped a line
59. Ageless hurler satchel
61. ____ Tafari (Haile Selassie)
62. Jed Clampett struck it
63. Developer of a tart apple, familiarly
66. Bend shape
67. Eat like a pig
68. Have a sample of
69. Like a fox
70. Paired, like 34 dn.
71. Pill allotments

DOWN

1. Wielded a bat
2. Suffix with Beetle
3. Open, as a bottle
4. Fam. tree member
5. Guitar ridge
6. Hammer targets
7. Politico Specter
8. "Same here!"
9. "It ____" (answer to "Who's there?")
10. Superman portrayer
11. "The Addams Family" character
12. Crude org
13. Bread spread, for short
18. Othello, for one
23. Hawkeye Pierce player
25. Distributes, as invitations
29. "Gotcha"
31. ____buco
32. Sign gas
33. Change the decor of
34. Plow team
35. Tom Sawyer's guardian
37. Many a take-out order
38. Freed from shackles
39. Way out there
48. Like a souffle
50. "Fever" singer ____ Lee
51. Fire starter
52. Artie of "MADtv"
54. Illusionist ____Angel
55. Starbucks buy
56. Works the theater aisles, informally
57. Miseries
58. Small stream
60. Business sign abbr.
64. Aussie hopper
65. ____ Zedong

[Solutions on A5]

Centerspeak

What do you like most about summer time?

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



PFC. JAMES COOPER

LAV CREWMAN, 3RD LIGHT ARMORED RECONNAISSANCE BATTALION

"I like going out to the lake with all my friends."



CPL. MATT DERMOTTA

TANK CREWMAN, 2ND TANK BATTALION

"Just relaxing, having fun and spending time with my daughters."



CAPT. MIKE JUDGE

EXECUTIVE OFFICER, HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 25TH MARINE REGIMENT

"I really enjoy the holidays like Memorial Day and the Fourth of July."

OBSERVATION POST

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WED. 5/28 Dark Sunday Time: 8:30 p.m. Where: Agua Caliente 32-250 Bob Hope Drive Rancho Mirage For more info call (888) 999-1995	WED. 5/28 Blues Jam Time: 7 p.m. Where: Kokopelli's Kantina 57154 29 Palms Highway Yucca Valley For more info call 369-6660	THURS. 5/29 Free Community Evenings at the Palm Springs Art Museum Time: 4-8 p.m. Where: Palm Springs Art Museum, 101 Museum Drive Palm Springs For more info call 325-7186	FRI. 5/30 – SUN. 6/1 Chuckwalla Fest Time: Evenings Where: Pappy & Harriet's Pioneertown Palace 53688 Pioneertown Road Pioneertown For more info call 365-5956	SAT. 5/31 Jerry Lewis Time: 8 p.m. Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino 84245 Indio Springs Parkway Indio For more info call 342-5000
SAT. 5/31 Joshua Tree Certified Farmers Market Time: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Turtle Island, Downtown Joshua Tree, South side of 29 Palms Hwy., just west of Park Blvd., Joshua Tree For more info call 363-1934	SAT. 5/31 Pioneertown Posse Time: 2:30 p.m. Where: Pioneertown Posse Mane Street, in front of the Pioneer Bowl Pioneertown Fore more info call 364-3544	SAT. 5/31 Draw the Line (FREE Admission) Time: 8 p.m., 10 p.m. Where: Morongo Casino and Resort, 49500 Seminole Drive Cabazon For more info call 800-252-4499	SAT. 5/31 Eddie Griffin Time: 8 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino 46-200 Harrison Place Coachella For more info call 866-377-6829	SUN. 6/1 Regine Velasquez Time: 4 p.m. Where: Morongo Casino and Resort 49500 Seminole Drive Cabazon For more info call 800-252-4499

ASYMCA offers free summer programs to Combat Center families

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center Armed Services YMCA is kicking off the summer season with a variety of programs for Combat Center families.

Aside from well-known, regular events normally sponsored and hosted by ASYMCA, a few new programs have been introduced to the Combat Center.

This year, ASYMCA will offer its first free week of summer camp for 8 to 14-year-old children of active duty service members from June 21 to 28 at Camp Oakes at Big Bear Lake, Calif.

Registration forms can be found at the ASYMCA headquarters building and must be filled out and turned in by June 13. The sign-up process is on a first-come, first-serve basis and can accommodate 86 children, said Sony Alavos, ASYMCA business manager.

Jodi Bennett, the ASYMCA program coordinator, said the organization is trying to make it possible to have free summer events like this every year.

The camp will include various activities, some of which are horseback riding, archery, arts and crafts, nature hikes, wall climbing, swimming, team building competitions and several sports events.

In addition to the camping trip, ASYMCA is hosting a number of other summer events on base.

The Kid's Care Club is a program which encourages children to get involved in community service, said Avalos.

The Soap Box Derby Race, which takes place in conjunction with the annual Street Fair and Car Show, is scheduled to kick off June 6 from 5 to 8:30 p.m. at Cactus Drive. Although the sign

up deadline has already passed, participants may still sign up, said Bennett.

Parent-child interactive summer classes run from July 7-31. These classes are for parents with children between the ages of 2

and 9 and are intended to prepare the children for preschool and kindergarten.

"These give parents and kids stuff to do in the summer," said Bennett about ASYMCA summer programs.

The ASYMCA is a non-profit organization that works to strengthen qualities of life for military families and communities by providing programs tailored to their needs, according to the Twentynine Palms ASYMCA

Web site <http://www.twentyninepalmsasymca.org>.

For more information about summer programs, visit their Web site or call Bennett at 830-7481.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
Capt. Stanton Lee supervises children as they climb aboard military vehicles during a Kids Care event Oct. 29, 2007. The children also gave candy bags to Marines training in Mojave Viper exercises.

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Base Post Exchange	Building 1664	Subway	29 Palms Community Center	29 Palms Staters	Joshua Tree Park Blvd.	Stater Bros WalMart	Palm Springs Airport	
5:00	5:25	5:30	5:40	5:45	6:00	6:10	7:00	
15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs								Friday
Palm Springs Airport	Indian Canyon & Andreas (Casino)	Indian Canyon & Tacheva (Hospital)	Stater Bros WalMart	MCAGCC				
7:00	7:10	7:15	7:50	8:30				
15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs								Saturday/Sunday*
Base Post Exchange	Building 1664	Subway	29 Palms Community Center	29 Palms Staters	Joshua Tree Park Blvd.	Stater Bros WalMart	Palm Springs Airport	
10:00	10:25	10:30	10:40	10:45	11:00	11:10	11:45	
4:00	4:25	4:30	*4:40	*4:45	*5:00	*5:10	*5:45	
15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs								Saturday/Sunday*
Palm Springs Airport	Indian Canyon & Andreas (Casino)	Indian Canyon & Tacheva (Hospital)	Stater Bros WalMart	MCAGCC				
12:00	12:10	12:15	12:50	1:35				
*6:00	*6:10	*6:15	*6:50	*7:35				

*SUNDAY SERVICE BEGINS AT 29 PALMS COMMUNITY CENTER. All weekend service is for Saturday only except for the final return trip which includes both Saturday and Sunday service.

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'Rice-rationing crisis' spreads to local commissary

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

It is all over the news: countries across the world have put major restrictions on the amounts of

rice being imported and exported. The international rice-rationing crisis recently found its way through our guarded gates and into our own commissary.

But, there is no need to panic,

said Bernie Gomio, store administrator.

The food allocation, which began May 6, is due to the storms in Thailand and higher-than-usual demand for rice, said Gomio.

"Our distributor has put an allocation on the store," he said. "It's according to the store's sale history of rice."

What does this mean for Combat Center commissary patrons? Only that the commissary will not have extra quantities of rice for storage, nor can special orders for rice be made, said Jennifer Stevens, store computer assistant order clerk.

"We have a 20-pound limit per person, per purchase," said Stevens. "But right now, we don't have any 20-pound bags on the shelves."

Stevens added the type of rice in highest demand is jasmine and calrose, both of which were heavily imported from Asian countries in the past.

Due to shortages in rice production, the countries which previously provided rice have either cut down on or completely stopped exports in



Customer Ashley Kriesel scans the almost-empty shelves of white rice products at the commissary here.

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

G-4 showcases plans to improve quality of life, training

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Over the next few years the Combat Center will be undergoing various projects, to ensure the base can better accommodate every service and family member stationed here or on board temporarily, by improving their quality of living.

Many of these changes are in preparation for the upcoming 1,700 active duty Marines and their families slated to be stationed aboard the base between fiscal year 2007 through fiscal year 2012.

"We are doing everything we can in our abilities to help these units stand up until we can get facilities for them," said Lt. Cmdr. Yvonne Lyda, Public Works Officer.

With the help of Lincoln Military Housing and the Family Housing Division, 99 new homes have been built in Joshua Heights and 636 houses have been renovated in Adobe Flats 1, 2 and 3.

The Marine Palms neighborhood is scheduled to begin rebuilding 284 new, three-bedroom homes that will be open to junior enlisted and noncommissioned officers. Construction for the housing complex is slated to

begin in fiscal year 2009.

"They're going to be like Joshua Heights homes only bumped up a notch," said Ray Zapata, Housing Manager of Family Housing Division.

As part of the new neighborhood, Lincoln Hunt Military Housing and the Family Housing Division are planning to build a community center with pool and a youth sports complex which will have baseball fields and a youth soccer/football field to meet the increased base demand for recreational facilities.

Three barracks and two parking structures are also lined up to be built on mainside to help provide boarding and parking for the incoming Marines, said Master Gunnery Sgt. Joe Orozco, Billeting Chief of Bachelor Housing.

Vista Del Sol housing has also been changing to help improve quality of life to the families living in the three neighborhoods.

Most of the houses have undergone electromagnetic painting for the outside paneling, which helps seal cracks and is more weather resistant than other outdoor paint. Steel security doors and portable air conditioners have also been installed in the homes.

Since the entire housing area

was built to use swamp coolers, the base had to have congressional approval before beginning an electrical upgrade to be able to use central air conditioners, said Zapata.

The upgrade is slated to be complete by this fall, and as houses are moved to central air, their unused portable AC's will be placed in the other homes that will not be able to be switched to central air this year.

While houses are being built and upgraded on mainside, the Combat Center has also begun implementing changes to the way the Marines and sailors train while in the field by beginning to construct a new training facility, Combined Arms Military Operations in Urban Terrain or CAMOUT.

CAMOUT will be a mock village spanning 185,800 square meters where units can train in non-live fire and live-fire exercise that closely resemble what they will be experiencing while deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, or even other parts of the world.

The first phase of the 1500 building CAMOUT facility has been completed with the building of the first 10-block urban core. A water pipeline is also scheduled to be built within the next few

months in the CAMOUT facility.

Exercise Support Division has been receiving new equipment daily in support of the Marines training for their upcoming deployment. ESD has had to come up with new inventive ways to maintain and repair the equipment due to the lack of space for all the new equipment.

"We have modernized our warehouse to accommodate our spare parts," said Lt. Col. Shawn Tatum, ESD officer-in-charge. New elevator-type storage cabinets store up to 7,000 parts in roughly 25 percent of the floor space of traditional warehouse. ESD is also adapting their maintenance processes to realize better efficiency by eliminating non-value added steps.

To improve quality of life for the entire base, the waste water treatment plant is in the design phase to renovate and upgrade the facility and get rid of the odor normally associated with the Combat Center, said Jim Lessard, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs deputy director. Construction to upgrade the facility is due to begin in 2009.

Solar panel lights are also slated to be placed around the physical fitness test course and Felix

See IMPROVE, A8

HOT TOPICS

THE GLOBAL COMBAT SUPPORT SYSTEM PROGRAM BRIEF

The Global Combat Support System (GCSS-MC) Program office is giving a brief and demonstration to I MEF units and TECOM Schools personnel aboard Twentynine Palms. This event will be held at the base theater on May 30. It starts at 8 a.m. and takes about 4-6 hours. For more information please contact Master Sgt. Rogelio Zamora, at 830-4915.

ASYMCA SOAPBOX DERBY

It is time once again for the ASYMCA Soapbox Derby being held June 6. There are still slots available. Parent meeting will be held Monday May 19 at 5:30 p.m. at ASYMCA. The race will also be kicking off the Twentynine Palms Street Fair and Car Show. Entry fee for the race is \$25 per child. Space is limited to the first 50 sign ups. Sign ups are still open to all entries.

Categories are:

5 to 8 years old-Stock Division (no prior Soapbox experience)

9 to 14 years old-Stock Division (no prior Soapbox experience)

5 to 8 years old -Super Stock Division (previous experience)

9 to 14 years old-Super Stock Division (previous experience)

We provide the Derby kit and you provide the imagination! *Kit does not include tools.

Adult supervision is required.*

Where to register:

Armed Services YMCA

MCAGCC Bldg 192

Race Day: Pit opens 3:00 p.m.

Inspection 4:00 p.m.

Race starts at 4:30 p.m.

Please call Jodi Bennett at 830-7481 for more information or e-mail to henryas

ymca@roadrunner.com.

SIGN-UPS FOR JUNIOR ALL-AMERICAN FOOTBALL OF SOUTHERN CALIF.

Sign-up will be held May 31,

June 7 and June 14 from 9

a.m. - 12 p.m. at Luckie Park

in Twentynine Palms. Early

bird sign-ups for playbacks or

new players begin now and

end June 30. Regular sign-ups

begin June 30 and end July 31

or until teams are filled.

Teams include; Micros ages

8-10, Junior Pee Wee ages 9-

12, Pee Wee ages 10-13 and

Midget ages 11-14.

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DEFY encourages youth to say 'No' to drugs

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Drug Education for Youth program is looking for children and adults to participate in the free, year-round, two-phase drug education and mentorship program for Department of Defense dependents 9 to 12 years old.

Phase I of the program consists of a week-long leadership camp at Camp Fox in San Diego July 27 through August 1.

The camp is designed to teach children how to become leaders through a series of classes and team-building activities.

"We give them the tools they need to make it easier for them to say no and stay drug-free," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Adolfo Gonzalez, assistant plans, operations, and medical intelligence for Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms, Calif., and DEFY mentor. "We work on self-esteem, talk about conflict resolution, peer pressure, doing what is right, and we discuss what makes

a good role model and how to strive to become a good citizen."

The children are split into groups and go on daily hikes, have a chance to tie-dye shirts, sit around a camp fire, swim and work their way through obstacle courses.

The different groups will also perform colors ceremony every morning and evening throughout the week. Each group will also carry their own team guidon with them at all times.

"We try to instill a sense of patriotism in them," said Gonzalez. "It is awesome to see children wanting to perform colors with such respect."

At the end of the camp, the children participate in the Presidential Challenge where they perform as many pull-ups, sit-ups and push-ups as possible. The child with the most gets recognized at camp graduation.

One month after camp graduation, Phase II of the DEFY program begins with monthly get-togethers.

The program revolves around an interactive curriculum that

focuses on teaching children how to resist drugs, alcohol and gangs.

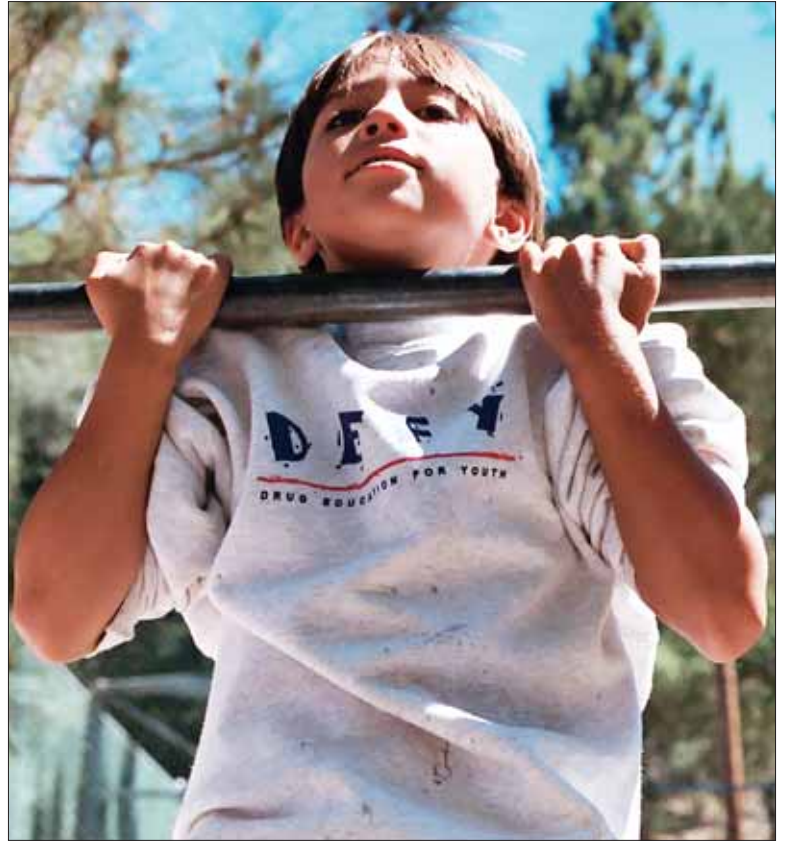
Lt. Abigail Velazquez, NHTP's customer relations officer and DEFY program coordinator, said many parents have approached her and praised the program for teaching their children how to avoid drugs.

"Some of these children have been offered drugs at school," said Velazquez. "They said no and told their parents when they got home."

"We always tell the kids to communicate with their parents," she continued. "It helps them keep an open relationship with their mom and dad."

According to a DEFY brochure, the program creates positive experiences for children so they are more likely to choose healthier alternatives instead of substance abuse and gang involvement.

Registration deadline for youth applications is June 20, and mentor applications are due June 15. For more information regarding the DEFY program or camp, contact Velazquez at 830-2475 or abigail.velazquez@med.navy.mil.



LT. ABIGAIL VELAZQUEZ

A child performs pull-ups during the Presidential Challenge on the last day of the Drug Education for Youth Phase I camp July 19, 2007. The winners of the Presidential Challenge will be recognized at camp graduation.

Survivor Benefit Plan premiums end after 360 payments

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The benefits retired service members receive in the near future through the Uniformed Services Survivor Benefit Plan will improve even more in the near future.

Beginning Oct. 1, retirees paying into SBP who are at least 70 years old and have made 360 payments into SBP will no longer be required to pay their monthly premiums.

According to a news release posted on military.com, retired veterans who satisfy the age and monthly payment requirements will see an end to their SBP premiums.

"Basically, SBP is like insurance for a service member's family," said Linda L. Lamoreux, Career Resource Office administrative assistant and former Installation Personnel Administration Center retirement chief. "Service members pay 6.5 percent of their pension as a monthly premium to receive full SBP coverage."

Lamoreux added the premium may vary, depending on the amount of coverage desired by the individual service members.

Retirees can choose who they want to receive their benefits on the SBP application form. In the unfortunate event of the retiree's death, their designated recipients are entitled to 55 percent of their pension for the rest of their lives.

According to the news release, any retirees enrolled in SBP before Oct. 1 were required to pay their monthly premium until they became deceased. With this new law, retired veterans who meet the aforementioned criteria will be placed on "Paid-up SBP" status.

Once eligible retirees are considered on Paid-up SBP status, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Kansas City, Mo., will automatically stop deducting their monthly premiums from their pension.

However, qualifying service members who achieve Paid-up SBP status before Oct. 1 will not

receive any refunds for premiums paid made after they met the eligibility criteria.

In accordance with the law, similar changes have also been made to Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan.

DFAS is currently making changes to retiree payment plans to monitor the eligibility of SBP and RSFPP recipients. The

updates are scheduled to be completed this month.

Retired service members will be able to track their own eligibility through their Retiree Account Statements sent after December 2008, which will indicate how many premium payments they have made. Recipients will receive a notification in the mail shortly before they qualify for Paid-up

SBP status.

For more information about SBP and other pay updates, log on to <http://www.dfas.mil/retireepay.html>, or call the Retired Activities Office at 830-7550.

To read the entire May 6 press release, log on to <http://www.military.com/benefits/survivor-benefits/older-retirees-will-see-an-end-to-sbp-premiums>.

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Combat Center's EOD technicians blasting new trails

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines from 1st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., started the Explosive Ordnance Device Recovery and Operations Course at the Combat Center's EOD training facility May 19.

The course is a unique, two-week pre-deployment training session that builds team cohesion among EOD teams, said Gunnery Sgt. Kelly M. Crawford, EOD technician and EROC chief instructor.

According to the EOD Web site, their mission is to neutralize hazards associated with explosive ordnance which because of unusual circumstances, are beyond the normal capabilities of other specialties and present a threat to operations, installations and material.

Crawford said the course, which incorporates classroom instruction and practical applications in the field, was designed and created by EOD technicians who deployed to Iraq and recognized EOD's need for a formal training exercise capable of adapting to a new enemy and their tactics.

"[Improvised explosive devices] are here to stay," said Crawford, an eight-year veteran of EOD. "IEDs are not just in Iraq, and we'll encounter them everywhere."

Crawford said IEDs are a new type of warfare, and therefore the idea of looking back to previous wars for answers is useless.

"We've got to get away from the idea of lesson learning from previous wars," said Crawford. "You can't use old doctrine to fight this new war."

Crawford, combat veteran, said this is why EOD technicians from the Combat Center took the

initiative and created the informal course that is currently in place.

EOD technicians at the Combat Center are currently working on formalizing the course since the only official training currently available is the U.S. Army Global Anti-Terrorism Operational Readiness (GATOR) Training Course at the Ordnance Munitions and Electronics Maintenance School, Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville, Ala.

Once official, the course will be taught at the Combat Center by Marines for Marines, but will be open to EOD technicians from other services.

Unlike the GATOR training, which places service members in joint service teams for the length of the course only, the Combat Center's training exercise brings already established teams from their respective duty stations to the Combat Center in order to fine tune their working relationship before they head to a combat zone.

Staff Sgt. Matthew P. Bateman, EOD team leader, 1st EOD Company, said terrain is a significant difference between the GATOR training and the training received at the Combat Center.

"The training environment much more resembles Iraq," said Bateman, who has deployed to Iraq three times in his six and half years with EOD.

After completing a demolition exercise on May 21, Bateman said his team has already benefited from the courses' first three days.

He said the course's curriculum is cut from incident reports written in Iraq, and therefore it brings team members who have not deployed to Iraq as EOD technicians up to the level of their comrades.

The course's "crawl-walk-run" approach provides rookie EOD technicians, fresh out of MOS school, with more specific IED training, as well as exposure to the newest equipment, basic demolition techniques, and specific EOD scenarios before deploying, said Bateman.

He said the course serves as a great refresher for EOD members who have previously deployed to Iraq and will return sometime in the future.

"This is a great course," said Bateman, whose team is slated to deploy to Iraq in the next few months. "It gives team leaders and other technicians an opportunity to get back into the game and get their edge back."



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

An Explosive Ordnance Disposal technician from 1st EOD Company shares ideas with a fellow team member during the Combat Center's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Response and Operations Course May 21.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

An EOD technician from 1st EOD Company out of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., works with a Talon Robot during the Combat Center's EROC training May 21. The new course is run by EOD technicians from the Combat Center and provides EOD technicians with scenarios taken straight from reports written in Iraq.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

An EOD technician works with TNT explosive during the Combat Center's EROC training. The EROC training is taught by Marines for Marines, but is open to other services.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

An EOD technician from 1st EOD Company works with an explosive charge and a Talon Robot during the Combat Center's EROC training May 21.

The EROC is not pass or fail, and there are no formal exams or graded exercises. The EROC exists to give EOD technicians a course that can change scenarios as quickly as they change in Iraq and expose technicians to those scenarios in a safe and controlled environment. It is flexible enough to incorporate additional training as well as eliminate exercises that have become obsolete.

"This is definitely the next step in the evolution of training for Iraq," said Bateman.

Crawford said many EOD technicians forfeit their personal time with loved ones in order to train their brothers-in-arms.

However the EOD technicians here at the Combat Center are willing to make such sacrifices in order to ensure that everyone comes home.

Phase V Road closures and construction



Work Description – Full replacement of Del Valle from South of Cottontail Rd. to Condor Gate and the cap the entire road with rubberized asphalt

Scheduled Dates – May 29 to June 23

Detour Description – Access to Marine Palms housing and the ball fields will be via Smoketree Ave. and an access road to Plant St. Access to the mini-mart and points South will be by Smoketree Ave. to the access road across old Marine Palms to Mineral St. The intersection at Agate and Del Valle will be open allowing traffic to follow Agate Rd. to Calcite Rd. with a crossing at Cottontail Rd. Traffic flow into the gas station will be from Agate Rd. with a circular flow around JT Automotive. Access to Adobe Flats and the RV park will be through a dirt access road that parallels Del Valle Rd. Traffic in Adobe Flats will be rerouted to exit and enter the housing area on an access road on the north side of Adobe I. Street parking in Adobe Flats during this time period will be limited to allow two way traffic flow. To gain access to the TLF and all CDC buildings, a one way road will be created from Mineral St., passing behind Building 193 to Saddleback Ave., then through the TLF.

MWTC hosts 4th annual 10K course

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Three competitors in the fourth annual Mountain Warfare Training Challenge perform a low crawl, one of five types of obstacles runners had to complete during the race May 17. The 10K off-road foot race began at 11 a.m. from the Mountain Warfare Training Center parade grounds. More than 300 runners participated in the event.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Competitors in the fourth annual Mountain Warfare Training Challenge take off from the starting point May 17.

MARINE CORPS MOUNTAIN WARFARE TRAINING CENTER BRIDGEPORT, Calif.—The Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center held its fourth annual Mountain Warfare Training Challenge 10K off-road foot race May 17.

More than 300 runners took off from the starting point at 11 a.m. in front of the MWTC parade grounds, immediately negotiating the steep, half-mile slope affectionately referred to as “Heart Attack Hill.”

Along the route, participants encountered a number of man-made obstacles which provided an added challenge to the already rigorous terrain. The first obstacles was a five-foot wall the runners had to scale, followed by two rows of tires each participant had to run through.

After the wall climb and the tires, the next obstacle was a tunnel crawl. Two 25-foot tunnels were positioned alongside the dirt road for the runners to crawl through.

The race heated up as the route slowly climbed in elevation, peaking at approximately 7,520 feet. The elevation began to drop halfway through the race as the winding road led the runners to an area called the Prisoner-of-War Training Camp.

At the POW Training Camp, the competitors encountered their next set of obstacles. They had to scale a pyramid made of hay bails, then crawl under a low-lying metal structure.

After another tunnel crawl, the only obstacle left for the runners to face was the winding, downhill road leading to the finish line at the parade grounds.

The first runner to finish was Ross McMahan, a 38-year-old from Incline Village, Nev., with a time of 45 minutes, 13 seconds. The winner in the women’s cate-

gory was Andrea Lindsey, a 19-year-old Gardnerville, Nev., native. Lindsey clocked in at 51:46 and finished sixth in the overall competition.

“It was fun,” said David Feltgen, MWTC assistant mess hall liaison. “We all went out there to have a good time. We weren’t really expecting to win anything, but we’re glad we did.”

Feltgen and his teammates, Paul Thomas, MWTC chief cook, and Aaron Sarinana, food service specialist, received first place for the fastest team with a time of 1:01:19.

An awards ceremony was held at the parade grounds after the race. Medals were presented to the top three runners from each category by Col. David B. Hall, MWTC commanding officer; men’s overall, women’s overall and team’s overall. Awards were also presented to the top three runners from each age group.

“Coming from someone who has worked and lived up here for the past few years, anyone who started and finished this race is a winner in my mind,” said Hall.

All MWTC guests were invited to stay and enjoy food and family activities at the Parade Grounds after the race. The MWTC’s Pickel Chalet restaurant and other local vendors were selling a variety of refreshments. Other booths had games set up for children to play. A small pond was also open for children to try their luck at catching fish.

Later in the evening, Buffalo Country, a local country and western band from Walker, Calif., performed live music for the remainder of the guests and MWTC personnel.

Craig Randall, MWTC Fitness Center manager, said planning for the event began December 2007.

“This is important to me,” he said. “My

See CHALLENGE, A8



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CHALLENGE, from A7

main priority is making sure the Marines and their families are involved in this. This is their base and I want them to have a good time."

Although Randall was in charge of organizing the race, he

said he feels not all the credit can go to him.

"It's really been the MCCS staff and the Marines that have been making this happen," said the 33-year-old Coleville, Calif., native. "None of this would've come together without their help."

This is the first year the base

has held the race without the support of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. MWTC will continue to hold an annual Mountain Warfare Training Challenge.

To view the results of the race, log on to <http://www.y-events.com/results.html>, scroll down to Mountain Warfare Training Challenge and select either Individuals or Teams.

IMPROVE, from A4

Field's walkway and pond area. The solar lights will be on motion detectors with a 30-minute timer to give night runners a safe place to exercise.

Most of the buildings between 1st Street and 3rd Street will be replacing their lights with Dark Sky compliant

fixtures which help reduce light pollution in the night sky and to conserve energy.

"The lights will broadcast down to reduce light pollution," said Lyda. "Next year we will be replacing exterior lights with solar lights." The Combat Center will also study turning off unnecessary lights at night as an energy conservation measure.

Geothermal energy and wind studies are also underway to identify potential sources of renewable energy. These projects will complement the existing 6 acre solar field aboard base currently producing 1 Megawatt of power, and the Cogeneration Plant which converts exhaust from the power plant to chilled water for air conditioning. Additionally, all buildings built after October 2008, will be built to the latest in industry conservation standards and will be certified as LEEDS Silver. Each of these measures are a reflection of MCAGCC's commitment to being a leader within DoD for alternative energy and energy conservation.

The unprecedented changes that are scheduled to take place within the next few years at MCAGCC are the result of the forward thinking of the Marine and Civilian Marine team. These changes will measurably improve the lives of the Marines, sailors and their families while respecting the members of the surrounding communities.

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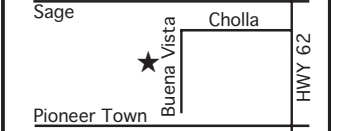
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The season that no one misses

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

It's that time of year again, folks. No, not tax season. It's allergy season. The season that brings all those festive pollen particles out into air.

Although it may be nice to see all some desert flowers in bloom, it could be difficult to appreciate for someone with watery, itchy eyes.

According to Web MD, a Web site popular for its informative articles on health, allergies affect almost 20 percent of Americans today.

The base provides various prescription medications for patients seen at the adult medical care clinic, said Navy Lt. Marat Grigorov.

He added the best treatment for allergies is to avoid the allergens altogether.

"It's a very simple problem but it affects a lot of people out here," said Grigorov. "Unfortunately, with the demands facing the Marines and sailors, avoidance doesn't work."

Due to the high training demand of service members aboard the Combat Center, prescription medications are the next best bet.

"If we exhaust all options with

prescription meds, we refer you to an allergist," said Grigorov.

Consulting an allergist takes approximately one week and getting an appointment may be close to two weeks, he added.

"We try to have it done in a two to four weeks total," he said about the diagnosis process. "The typical process is to wait two weeks for results of prescriptions and then we go from there and refer you to an allergist."

After an appointment has been set up, the allergist sets up a shot cycle to determine what allergen is causing the symptoms.

Of the two types of allergy tests available, the allergy skin test and the blood work test, the most accurate is the skin test, according to Web MD.

This test is performed by either injecting a small amount of an allergen into the skin with a needle or by scratching the skin to expose it to the allergens applied to it.

Most allergy sufferers react to at least one of the four most common allergen triggers: pollen, mold, animal dander and dust mites.

Allergies are hereditary, or passed on to children from their parents. An allergy to a specific

trigger may not be passed down; only the tendency to have allergies, according to Web MD.

Pollen problems are the hardest to fix, given that only someone who lives in a plastic bubble could completely avoid all pollen exposure during allergy season. The best solution to this problem is to keep windows shut, the air conditioner on, and a well-timed medication schedule.

There are several over the counter options as well as prescription medications available.

Since each of the following medications work for specific allergy symptoms, be sure to consult your doctor before use.

If allergies have a strong enough effect on a person's body, that person could eventually develop asthma.

Despite the fact allergies and asthma are separate conditions, they also go hand-in hand, said Martha Hunt, Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital health promotions coordinator.

"Asthma is your body reacting to something it is allergic to," said Hunt.

Hunt added some people may have what is called anaphylaxis; a rare but life-threatening condition of extreme allergic reactions to specific



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

When spring desert flowers like these bloom, it may be enough to aggravate allergies of pollen sufferers.

allergen triggers.

Since most people do not have anaphylaxis, medication and preventative measures should be sufficient to avoid over-exposure to allergen triggers, according to Web MD.

If you find yourself sneezing

constantly or have itchy eyes and nose, don't be afraid to talk to your local medical advisor or corpsman about allergy symptom relief.

For more information about allergies, go to <http://www.webmd.com>.

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

Faith Lessons During Lunch

A DVD series titled "Faith Lessons" on the Promised Land Crossroads of the World 1 will be played every Thursday from 12 to 1 p.m. in building 1651. If you have any questions, please call 830-6187.

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

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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



COMMAND, from A1

Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., commented on Spiese's contributions to the Combat Center.

"What [the Spiese family] brought was passion," said Lehnert. "A passion for taking care of our Marines, families and sailors."

While Lehnert was saddened by Spiese's departure, he was also pleased with the arrival of Gurganus.

"Twenty-nine Palms is losing a great leader, but we're getting another one," said Lehnert.

Lehnert then passed the microphone to Spiese, who thanked the Combat Center band, civilian dignitaries from throughout the Coachella Valley, and the Marines and sailors of the Combat Center.

"I am proud to have had the opportunity to serve with [the Marines of the Combat Center]," said Spiese.

Spiese also made sure to thank his wife Filomena.

"If my passion for the Combat Center has been matched by anyone it would be her," said Spiese.

Gurganus, who first met Spiese when the two attended Officer Candidate School together, also spoke about Spiese's dedication to the Combat Center.

"He's protected the institute of training for the United States Marine Corps," said Gurganus.

Gurganus praised the quality of Marines the Combat Center is producing and said he was a recipient of the Combat Center's hard work while deployed in Iraq as the ground combat element commander, II Marine Expeditionary Force in Al Anbar Province, Iraq.

"It's obvious that the [Combat Center] does exactly what the Commandant of the Marine Corps wants it to do," said Gurganus.

Gurganus, who was commissioned in May 1976 after graduat-

ing from the University of South Carolina, began his Marine Corps career as a rifle platoon commander and company executive officer of 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment.

Throughout his career, Gurganus, has served in numerous operational and supporting establishment billets.

Operational assignments include assistant operations officer, rifle company commander, and weapons company commander with 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, and deputy commander, 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade.

Supporting establishment duties included depot training officer, officer-in-charge of the field training unit, and operations officer of support battalion at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C., and company commander, Officer Candidate School, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va.

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3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, continues operations in Haditha

CPL. ERIK VILLAGRAN
3RD BATTALION, 4TH MARINE REGIMENT

HADITHA, Iraq — Marines continue to patrol here in an effort to keep the streets safe and to assist the Iraqi Police.

Marines with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, conducted a security patrol through the city to show the locals that Marines are still active in keeping the city secure.

"We go on patrols to show that we're still a presence in the city," said Cpl. James W. Blacker, 23, a team leader with Company K from San Diego, Calif. "The patrols show the people that we're here to help, and it also keeps insurgents from setting up (improvised explosive devices)."

Marines zigzagged through the city ensuring, no suspicious activities were happening. Along the

way, they greeted and tossed candy to kids who would approach the patrol.

An IP officer also joined the Marines in patrolling the city. Marines are used to Iraqi policemen with them and were pleased to get a policeman to join them. The IP has been patrolling with Marines in the city to prepare themselves for the Marines' eventual departure.

"We take (Iraqi policemen) with us to teach them how to patrol correctly," said Lance Cpl. Christopher A. Ramirez, 22, a rifleman with Company K from Los Angeles. "We want them to get familiar with patrolling so they can get efficient and train themselves."

Marines try to integrate Iraqi policemen in their patrols as frequently as possible to give them more experience. It also allows

See HADITHA, A12



CPL. ERIK VILLAGRAN

Corporal James W. Blacker, 23, a team leader with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, from San Diego, hands Iraqi girls candy during a patrol in Haditha, Iraq, May 13. Marines conducted a security patrol through the city with an Iraqi policeman and were pleased with how the policeman performed. Marines have seen improvements in the Iraqi Police force since they arrived in the city.



Birth announcements



ROGER JOE FOX III

Son of Cpl. LeShae Fox and husband, Roger.

Born on April 7, weighing 6 lbs., 7 oz and measuring 19.3 inches.

HEITH ALLEN WYATT

Son of Sgt. David Wyatt and wife, Lorri.

Born on April 12, weighing 8 lbs., 8 oz and measuring 20.4 inches.

DILLION JAMES MOLINA LEWIS

Son of Chief Warrant Officer 2 David Lewis and wife, Alma.

Born on April 14, weighing 6 lbs., 13.5 oz and measuring 18.9 inches.

EMILIA DIAZ

Daughter of Cpl. Juan Carlos Diaz and wife, Esmeralda.

Born on April 19, weighing 5 lbs., 9 oz and measuring 17.5 inches.

OLIVIA KAREN HAMILTON

Daughter of Staff Sgt. Junior Hamilton and wife, Miyashi.

Born on April 21, weighing 7 lbs., 3 oz and measuring 20.2 inches.

IAN ADRIAN MARTINEZ

Son of Lance Cpl. Daniel A. Martinez and wife, Blanca.

Born on April 22, weighing 7 lbs., 4.2 oz and measuring 19.1 inches.

SOFIA RIITTA BANE

Daughter of 2nd Lt. Denver Bane and wife, Lisa.

Born on April 23, weighing 6 lbs., 14 oz and measuring 19 inches.

ZYLEI AMANDA COX

Daughter of Zack Cox and Kelly Dunaway.

Born on April 23, weighing 7 lbs., 10 oz and measuring 20 inches.

BROOKE OLIVIA PATTERSON

Daughter of Cpl. Joshua Patterson and wife, Mercy.

Born on April 23, weighing 7 lbs., 7 oz and measuring 19.2 inches.

AUDREE ELIANA VASQUEZ

Daughter of Lance Cpl. Jacob E. Vasquez and wife, Desiree.

Born on April 23, weighing 6 lbs., 4.8 oz and measuring 19.1 inches.

MAXIMUS WILLIAM GILBAR

Son of Lance Cpl. Justin Gilbar and wife, Holley.

Born on April 24, weighing 6 lbs., 7.6 oz and measuring 18 inches.

CHEYENNE LYNN HOWARD

Daughter of Pfc. Robert M. Howard and wife, Mindy.

Born on April 24, weighing 8 lbs., 6 oz and measuring 20.5 inches.

DESTRY CAMERON ACHTERBERG

Son of Cpl. Courtney Achterberg and husband, Brian.

Born on April 25, weighing 6 lbs., 13 oz and measuring 20.5 inches.

JOSIAH NEIL FUNDELL

Son of Staff Sgt. Royce Fundell and wife, Jodi.

Born on April 25, weighing 7 lbs., 11 oz and measuring 18.5 inches.

JOZELYN HAILEY MILLER

Daughter of Sgt. Travis J. Miller and wife, Crystal.

Born on April 25, weighing 6 lbs., 11 oz and measuring 19.4 inches.

DOMINIC EMMANUEL ARELLANO

Son of Sgt. Jesus Arellano and wife, Maria.

Born on April 29, weighing 8 lbs., and measuring 19.4 inches.

ANGEL DAMIAN MEAUX

Son of Sgt. Christopher Meaux and wife, Sendi.

Born on April 29, weighing 6 lbs., 9 oz and measuring 17.9 inches.

ADRIAN ALLEN FRAMPTON

Son of Sgt. Dustin A. Frampton and wife, Yarley.

Born on April 30, weighing 6 lbs., 12 oz and measuring 18.2 inches.

SEAN CAMERON DENNING

Son of Sgt. Samuel Denning and wife, Alicia.

Born on May 3, weighing 7 lbs., 12.4 oz and measuring 18.5 inches.

ADELITA VALENTINA GARCIA

Daughter of Lance Cpl. Francisco J. Garcia and wife, Lindsey.

Born on May 3, weighing 6 lbs., 7.7 oz and measuring 18.3 inches.

BLAKE ALEXANDRE HICKS

Son of Lance Cpl. Zachariah Hicks and wife, Kristin.

Born on May 4, weighing 8 lbs and measuring 19.7 inches.

JOHNNY ELIZANDER LOPEZ JR.

Son of Cpl. Johnny Lopez and wife, Jeanette.

Born on May 5, weighing 6 lbs., 2.4 oz and measuring 19 inches.

CAMELLIA PEARL HOLTHAUS

Daughter of Yuri and Ciji Holthaus.

Born on May 6, weighing 7 lbs., 5.7 oz and measuring 19.5 inches.

CALEB ADIN ALFREDO VALDES

Son of Staff Sgt. Daniel A. Valdes and wife, Neneveh.

Born on May 6, weighing 9 lbs, 12 oz and measuring 20.9 inches.

AVA LORENA JANE MATTICE

Daughter of Cpl. Dana Mattice and wife, Amber.

Born on May 8, weighing 6 lbs., 9 oz and measuring 18.8 inches.

ETHAN CHRISTOPHER KRAMER

Son of Sgt. Robert Kramer and wife, Miranda.

Born on May 9, weighing 8 lbs., 6 oz and measuring 19.2 inches.

WESLEY COLE BYRD

Son of Lance Cpl. William Byrd and wife, Felicia.

Born on May 10, weighing 5 lbs., 2.3 oz and measuring 17.5 inches.

EZEKIEL JEVON MITCHELL

Son of Cpl. Stephen Mitchell and wife, Liberty.

Born on May 11, weighing 6 lbs., 12 oz and measuring 18.9 inches.

AMEELIA MAY JOHNSON

Daughter of Lance Cpl. Christopher Johnson and wife, Katelin.

Born on May 12, weighing 8 lbs., 2 oz and measuring 19 inches.

MACKENZIE ANN NELSON

Daughter of Navy Lt. Thomas Nelson and wife, Carla.

Born on May 12, weighing 7 lbs., 14.5 oz and measuring 18.7 inches.

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Employee Spotlight



Employee: Jennifer I. Bullock

Employer: Homeland Security Solutions Inc.

Job Title: Vehicle registration clerk

Job Duties: Vehicle, weapon and pet registration, as well as contractor IDs

Hometown: March Air Force Base, Calif.

Hobbies: Basket weaving

What do you like most about your job: I love the people I work with, and everything about this job is amazing.

Significant achievements since coming to the MCAGCC: The occasional thumbs up

Military service: None, spouse of Lance Cpl. Johnny Bullock

Time on base: 3 months

Combat Center Trader Ads

AUTOMOTIVE

2001 XLH 883 HARLEY DAVIDSON 6,400 miles. Lots of extras. \$4,500. Day 830-6958 Evening 760-369-3019. 5/21/08

2005 37BHSS 37' Forest River Salem Travel Trailer. Only used once. 2 Bedrooms! Must See! (\$18,500) 760-217-1314. 5/21/08

2004 JEEP WRANGLER X SPRT 6 Cyl, 4 ltr, 5 spd, 4WD, hardtop (soft available) new tires, no accidents, 53K, Great shape. All maintenance records. Kelly blue book, \$14,600-15,500. Asking 14K. (559) 904-7326 5/14/08

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.

2002 FLSTC HARLEY-DAVIDSON® Heritage Softail Classic, luxury blue with stripe, under 4,400 miles. Accessories included, excellent condition. \$14k Call 221-8831 5/14/08

2007 SUZUKI 90 ATV/QUAD brand new only used three time less than 10 hours, garaged, very well maintained, ridden by daughter, green sticker up to date (\$1500) 285-1603. 5/7/08

ATV 50CC KAZUMA 2005 \$400 OBO Call Chris at (760) 362-5293 5/7/08

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

1964 CHEVY TRUCK. 400 small block, 700R4 trans. Edlebrock intake, carb, headers, flowmaster exhaust. Less than 10K miles on rebuilt eng/trans setup. \$6,500. Call Tom. (240) 256-0545. 5/7/08

2006 YAMAHA 125 TTR MOTORCYCLE almost brand new, garaged, very well maintained, ridden by daughter, green sticker up to date (\$1200) 285-1603 5/7/08

2004 HONDA 70 MOTORCYCLE low hours/miles, garaged very well maintained, green sticker up to date (\$1000) 285-1603. 5/7/08

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

2007 POLARIS 500 SPORTSMAN EFI 4X4 green (ATV/quad) less than 50 hours/low miles, garaged, very well maintained, green sticker up to date, ridden by wife (\$5000) 285-1603 5/7/08

MISC.

COLLECTIBLE MEMORABILIA CARDS Baseball, football and Star Trek collectible cards at very low prices. Many set and individual players/cards available. Call Stephen at 567-0400. 5/28/08

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.

FEMALE ROOMMATE WANTED to share new 3 bedroom home with w/d close to Joshua Tree Nat'l Park. Available June 1. \$575/month. Security deposit \$750. (406) 370-9736. 5/21/08

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SCHWINN STATIONARY EXERCISE BIKE, like new, hardly used. \$150 OBO. (760) 361-1209. 5/7/08

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

JOSHUA SPRINGS SCHOOL UNIFORMS. Approx 12 medium (10-12) collared shirts, and several size 8 trousers. Some never worn. Make offer. Call Tom. (240) 256-0545. 5/7/08

SCHWINN ORANGE COUNTY CHOPPERS STING-RAY BIKES (2) 20 inch (1 red, 1 blue) (1) 16 inc red \$75 each or OBO Call Chris at (760) 362-5293 5/7/08

2 GOLDEN RETRIEVERS. Free to good home: 3 yrs old each. Registered, neutered. Never been apart, love kids! Call (760) 285-1603 5/7/08

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.

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HADITHA, from A10

the Marines the opportunity to correct IP mistakes during patrols, and Marines have noticed improvements in the policemen's abilities.

"When we got here, they didn't know how to patrol," Ramirez said. "They're still a little rough around the edges with their technique, but they're better than before."

The policeman attached to the patrol performed to the Marines expectations. They said he did well, but that was expected because he was one of the more senior policemen.

"The patrol went smoothly," Ramirez said. "Our communication went down, and we had to resort to secondary communications, but other than that, we did everything we were supposed to."

As policemen continue to progress in their abilities, more kids are getting interested in becoming policemen.

"A couple of kids have come up and asked how old they have to be to become (a policeman)," Ramirez said. "They also ask about the process of becoming a (policeman)."

With the IP getting better by the day and kids being attracted to the job, the future is looking bright in Haditha.



CPL. ERIK VILLAGRAN

Lance Cpl. Sonny M. Olivera, 20, a rifleman from Camarillo, Calif., assigned to Company K, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, patrols through Haditha, Iraq, May 13. Marines conducted the security patrol with an Iraqi policeman.

RICE, from A4

an attempt to keep it internal, said Gomio.

"Naturally, people are going to take care of their own before they take care of anyone else," he said.

Gomio added he has noticed the impact it has had on customers.

"It has definitely had an effect," he said. "In the morning, I notice customers go to the rice first thing to see if it's in yet."

Both Gomio and Stevens caution against giving in to widespread panic which may

be caused by the food-rationing news.

"It's kind of like before a hurricane hits, and everyone is out stocking up on water," said Stevens. "This is all over the news, and it may start the panic effect."

Gomio agreed, saying the shortage may be a matter of perspective.

"There's not really a bad shortage," said Gomio. "We have domestic rice grown here that is the same quality as the kind from Thailand. Once the supply and demand rate goes back to normal, everything else will, too."

Several warehouse-style retail grocery stores have also put limitations on the amount customers may purchase at a time in order to control sudden consumer stockpiling of food, according to a news article titled "Rice rationing at US stores," published April 25 at <http://www.psfk.com>.

It is unknown how long the rice-rationing crisis will last.

"There is no fix to this right away," said Stevens. "But it's nothing to panic about, it's just a process."

For more information on commissary rice allocations, call 830-7572.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Marines from the Mountain Warfare Training Center command staff and symposium attendees walk the trails behind MWTC May 14. The hike was conducted to show the MWTC guests the terrain around MWTC.

MWTC, from A1

they desired. Recently, the sights have been set on training units on a larger scale.

"While we will continue to offer our formal schools, we want to train MAGTF components at MWTC," said the 42-year-old Boulder, Colo., native. "This includes the Ground Combat Element, Logistics Combat Element and the Air Combat Element. Each one of these elements has different METs they must accomplish."

According to a report written by Lt. Col. James McArthur, MAGTF Training Command deputy director exercise plans, the Marine Corps Operating Forces strongly desire to conduct training at the MAGTF level at MWTC.

The report also stated the attendees of the symposium would like to see MWTC inclusion in Operation Enduring Freedom pre-deployment training.

"The mountain warfare symposium that took place here was the first opportunity in a long time for the [Fleet Marine Force] to help define what the training establishment can best provide in mountain and cold weather training to meet their needs, whether it be for a formal school, unit training across the MAGTF or for pre-deployment training requirements," said Lt. Col. R. P. Etnyre, MWTC executive officer.

Etnyre added the last time MWTC had the occasion was in 2004 when the Office of the Secretary of Defense held a similar conference.

"The conference helped us come to the realization that MWTC is the only Department of Defense facility that provides a training venue in a structured cadre to meet the Marine Corps' needs and provide the training in this very difficult area of warfare," he said.

"Right now, the Marine Corps puts a lot of emphasis on urban warfare and desert warfare training," said Etnyre. "However, they haven't put the same attention on mountain or cold weather training, which is not only indicative to OEF, but in other areas throughout the world."

Members of the Tactical Training Exercise Control Group, Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron 1, and Advisor Training Group will be helping MWTC develop training programs for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Marine Corps Tactics and Operations Group will also assist in the design of command and control during the exercises.

MWTC will continue to train Marines, sailors, and other military personnel, including allied and joint forces, to support OIF, OEF and other future operations.

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