

OBSERVATION Post

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MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

JULY 18, 2008

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 51 ISSUE 29

Lima 3/12 comes home

PFC. MICHAEL NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marines and sailors of Lima Battery, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, returned to the Combat Center Monday from a six-month deployment to Okinawa, Japan, and other

countries throughout the Western Pacific.

Three buses filled with the battery's Marines and sailors pulled up to Victory Field at approximately 1 p.m. There, the battery gathered in a formation

and marched onto the field, a tradition kept by the battalion when returning home from a deployment.

Lima Battery was deployed with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) on what is known as a WESTPAC deployment.

While attached to the MEU, the battery

See **HEMCOMING**, A6



3 Free Palm Springs Aerial Tram for military



7 SACC still suppressing drugs and alcohol



9 Soccer season still running at full speed



14 How to prepare for the wildfire threat



PHOTO BY PFC. MICHAEL NERL
PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LESLIE SHAW

Marines and sailors of Lima Battery, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, greet their supporters Monday after their six-month deployment with the Unit Deployment Program. Lima Battery deployed with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) while deployed to Okinawa, Japan.

HQBN commanding officer hands over command

PFC. MICHAEL NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Lt. Col. Michael S. Bodkin relinquished his command to Lt. Col. Brandon D. McGowan during a change-of-command ceremony

July 11, at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

Bodkin will be going to U.S. Central Command in Tampa, Fla., to be a staff officer there.

See **HQBN**, A10



PFC. MICHAEL NERL

Sgt. Major Mark Geletko passes the Headquarters Battalion colors to outgoing commanding officer, Lt. Col. Michael Bodkin, during change-of-command practice at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field July 10 – the day prior to the actual ceremony – while Lt. Col. Brandon McGowan, the battalion's new commander, waits for his cue to receive the colors.

Leader returns from Washington, D.C., to take charge of the Wolfpack



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Lt. Col. James R. Parrington, out-going commanding officer, renders honors during the playing of the national anthem.

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Lt. Col. James R. Parrington relinquished command of 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion to Lt. Col. Kenneth R. Kassner in a change-of-command ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field July 11.

Kassner arrived at the Combat Center after finishing duties as chief of training of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization in Washington, D.C.

Parrington, who took command of the Wolfpack in January 2007, will attend the

See **WOLFPACK**, A5

This Day in Marine Corps History

July 18, 1918

During WWI, Marines began an assault in France as part of a three-division counterattack against the Germans.



COMMANDING GENERAL'S STATEMENT ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Since the founding of our Corps, the qualities that made us an elite military organization consisted not only of hard training, exceptional physical performance and stern discipline but also of human solidarity. Our constant and proven readiness to perform speaks to our ability to dramatically and decisively win battles-not most of the time, but always. In this regard, the faith and the convictions of every Marine, Soldier, and Sailor are just as valued as their willingness to fight for the freedoms of this country. Any form of discrimination that is grounded in age, race, religion, gender, color or national origin as well as sexual harassment and hazing, will not be tolerated.



The cornerstone of this organization is its staff and military personnel. Our value to the Corps is to provide the country with an expeditionary force second to none that can get out of town quickly, be light on its feet and be adaptable wherever we are sent. Equal opportunity is leadership that is absolutely essential for mission accomplishment!

The chain of command and the Informal Resolution System (IRS) are a few of our tools to resolve complaints at the lowest possible level. Those who report discrimination have my assurance that every complaint will be fully investigated. Any member of the Combat Center who engages in inappropriate or discriminatory activities such as hazing, racial, ethnic, religious, or gender related jokes; illegal use of electronic mail to send disrespectful or inappropriate comments, will be subject to administrative and disciplinary actions under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Leaders: it is your responsibility to ensure that every Marine, Soldier and Sailor in your charge is continually educated and fully understands the Marine Corps policy regarding equal opportunity, the complaint process, request mast and reprisal prevention. Don't just be coordinators but rather, be integrators!

Every unit aboard this installation has an Equal Opportunity Representative (EOR). All military members are encouraged to utilize their unit Representative and chain of command to address discrimination and sexual harassment. Gunnery Sergeant Herrick A. Ross is my Equal Opportunity Advisor and he is available to assist in any way he can. His office is co-located with the Command Inspector General (Bldg 1447S) and he can be contacted at 830-4567.

Charles M. Gurganus
Brigadier General
United States Marine Corps
Commanding

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| <p>ACROSS</p> <p>1. Does in 5. Mel, "The Velvet Fog" 10. After the whistle 14. Like Kansas 15. Shakespearean sprite 16. Full of zeal 17. "See ya!" 18. Prefix with economics 19. Brie coating 20. Overcome one's fear 23. Olympics blade 24. Enola ___ 25. Talk radio guest 28. "Hurry!" in the OR 30. Friskies eater 33. Bold poker bet 34. Chimney weep's schmutz 35. Words in disco names 36. 1987 Olmos movie</p> | <p>39. Friendly to humans 40. Put film in 41. For all to see 42. Noteworthy time 43. Mass seating 44. Dreaded fly 45. Debtor's letters 46. Subway Series locale 47. Make it big 53. Betting group 54. Of ancient Peru 55. Touch upon 57. Have no love lost for 58. Martin's "That's ___" 59. Gipp, to Reagan 60. "Phooey!" 61. Colorful salamanders 62. Call for</p> | <p>DOWN</p> <p>1. Frequently, inverse 2. Marker on a green 3. It's inevitable 4. "Welcome to New York" sign spot 5. ___-proof (hard to contaminate) 6. Mount the soap box 7. Rolling in dough 8. "A ___ formality!" 9. Stretch out 10. Stooge known as "Porcupine" 11. Tel ___ 12. Fork prong 13. Actor ___ "Kookie" Byrnes 21. Turn topsy-turvy 22. Compete like Joey Chestnut 25. Social stratum 26. "I do" location 27. Andean beast of burden</p> | <p>28. Fizzy drinks 29. Broadway's "Sweeney ___" 30. Hanker for 31. New ___ (mellow musicians) 32. Linzer ___ 34. Pre-cable TV problem 35. Care 37. Alaska's ___ Islands 38. Hard-luck case 43. "The Gold-Bug" writer 44. Macbeth and others 45. Spot of land 46. Get underway 47. Surf sound 48. Tiny bit 49. "Don't tread ___" 50. Garbage hauler 51. Conical reed 52. Sterile equine 53. Professor's deg. 56. Turner of note</p> |
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[Solutions on A3]

Music, headphones and glow straps

INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE

When we get off work at the end of a busy and stressful day, it is very relaxing to drive home with our windows down and stereo blasting. Exactly how loud are we allowed to have our music?

Combat Center Order P1630.8C states that "All drivers operating their vehicles with the radio or stereo equipment functioning are not allowed to increase the volume so it can be heard outside the confines of the automobile." Although it may be your favorite song, that doesn't mean everyone else wants to hear it!

There also seems to be some confusion on when we are allowed to wear our headphones and when we have to wear glow straps during physical training.

Combat Center Order P1630.8C clarifies this; "During periods of reduced visibility and before morning colors and after evening colors... Personnel participating in individual physical training (running/jogging/walking) must wear reflective vest or reflective belts... No person shall walk, jog or operate a vehicle (to include bicycles and mopeds) wearing headphones or earphones attached to any type of stereo or music-playing device on any paved surface roads aboard the Combat Center, with the exception of the MCAGCC PFT course." This includes both individual and unit PT.

For 233 years, we have maintained the reputation of having higher standards than any military organization. Even when nobody is watching, we, as service members, need to live by these standards by expressing it in how we present ourselves to the world. Don't be "The One" to tarnish this!

Employee Spotlight

Employee: Anita Neu-Fultz
Employer: Armed Services YMCA
Job Title: Executive Director
Job Duties: Organize quality family events, oversee Thrift Store, Family Assistance Program and Fallen Warriors Program.
Hometown: Albuquerque, N.M.
Hobbies: Reading, travel and special events
What do you like about your job: My favorite part about this job is being able to give back to the military community and say "thank you."



Significant achievements since coming to MCAGCC: ASYMCA raised \$300,000 in programs to give back to military members and their families.

Military Service: none
Time on base: 3 years

Centerspeak

What could the base, or individual Marines do to prevent automobile accidents?

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



CPL. MATTHEW WALLDEN
2ND BATTALION, 9TH MARINE REGIMENT,
HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE COMPANY

"Make sure you're rested, have a drive plan and take breaks."



SSGT. RICHARD CARRILLO
4TH TANK BATTALION, DELTA COMPANY

"Use a buddy system, take another Marine and take turns driving."



1ST LT. JAMES M. COVEY
3RD LIGHT ARMORED RECONNAISSANCE
BATTALION, ALPHA COMPANY

"Good leadership strictly enforces the use of HARP forms for trips."

OBSERVATION POST

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
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| <p>FRI. 7/18 & SAT. 7/19</p> <p>Desert Showdown Amateur Boxing. Time: 1 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino, Coachella For more info call 800-585-3737 or http://www.spotlight29.com</p> | <p>FRI. 7/18</p> <p>Theatre 29: Grease Opening Night Time: 6:30 p.m. Where: Theatre 29 73637 Sullivan Rd., Twentynine Palms For tickets call 361-4151 or http://www.theatre29.com</p> | <p>SAT. 7/19</p> <p>Niurka M. "La Emperadora" Time: 7:30 p.m. Where: Morongo Casino Resort & Spa 49500 Seminole Dr., Cabazon For more info visit http://www.morongocasinoresort.com</p> | <p>SAT. 7/19</p> <p>Hippiefest Time: 8 p.m. Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino 84-245 Indio Springs Pkwy., Indio For more info call 800-827-2946 or visit http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com</p> | <p>SAT. 7/19</p> <p>YV Summer Music Festival "THE ANSWER"-Classic Rock Time: 7 p.m. Where: Yucca Valley Community Center, 57090 29 Palms Hwy. For more info call 369-7211 or http://www.yucca-valley.org</p> |
| <p>SAT. 7/19</p> <p>Art Opening: "The Summer of 62" featuring live entertainment and refreshments Time: 4-7 p.m. Where: Studio 62 Art Gallery, 55663 29 Palms Hwy., Yucca Valley For more info call 365-4330</p> | <p>SAT. 7/19 & SUN. 7/20</p> <p>Blak Box Open House and Auditions Time: 11 a.m. Where: HDCC Blak Box Theater, 61231 29 Palms Hwy. Joshua Tree. For more info call 366-3777 or http://www.hidesertplayhouse.com</p> | <p>SUN. 7/20</p> <p>The Wild Bunch Show Time: 2:30 p.m. Where: Gold Camp Mining Company, Mane St., Pioneertown For more info call 220-9614 or http://www.gold-camp.com</p> | <p>TUES. 7/22</p> <p>The Invaders at Water Canyon – rhythm & blues Time: 6 p.m. Where: Water Canyon Coffee Co., 55844 29 Palms Hwy., Yucca Valley - For more info call 365-7771 or http://www.myspace.com/watercanyon</p> | <p>WED. 7/16</p> <p>Summer Movies in Luckie Park "OVER THE HEDGE" Time: As soon as it's dark Where: Luckie Park, field at north side of the racquet ball courts, Utah Trail, Twentynine Palms For more info call, 367-7562</p> |

For the Palm Springs Aerial Tram, July is military appreciation month

THE OFFICE OF THE PALM SPRINGS AERIAL TRAM

The Palm Springs Aerial Tram is having military appreciation month for all of July. All military personnel receive free tram admission with their military I.D.

During this special any guests of military personnel will receive 25 percent off the regular admission with a limit of six extra guests.

The offer is valid through July 31.

The tram takes you to the Mountain Station at 8,516 feet, so it's important to bring warm clothing even in the summer months.

The Long Valley Ranger Station, which is located in the Long Valley picnic area of the park, provides a checklist of the "10 essentials" free of charge to all park patrons. The items are; a map and compass, extra food and water, sun protection, a fire starter, matches in a waterproof container, extra clothing and rain protection, a pocket knife, a first aid kit, a flashlight with extra batteries and bulbs, and a whistle.

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

In order to prepare, people can call the Long Valley and Idyllwild, Calif., ranger stations for information regarding the

weather and trail conditions at 327-0222 or (951) 659-2606 respectively.

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

The Mountain Station also features a restaurant, gift shop, snack bar and a state park visitor center.

If you have any questions just

call (888) 515-TRAM or visit the Palm Springs Aerial Tram Web site at <http://www.pstramway.com>.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

The Palm Springs Aerial Tram seen from the mountain station. The tram ferries people to an altitude of 8,516 feet at scenic Mount San Jacinto State Park. Its home station is located at the base of San Jacinto Mountain in Palm Springs, Calif.

SOLUTIONS

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Cinema 6
Showtimes Effective 7/18/08 - 7/24/08

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| The Dark Knight (PG-13) Everyday 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00 | Mamma Mia (PG-13) Everyday 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00 | Hell Boy 2 (PG-13) Everyday 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00 |
| Hancock (PG-13) Everyday 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00 | Coming Soon 7/25 - Step Brothers 8/1 - The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor | ALL SHOWS • ADULTS \$8.00 BEFORE • SENIORS \$6.00 6:00 PM \$6.00 • CHILDREN \$6.00 www.cinema6theatre.com |

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NREA stresses potential disposal, storage hazards

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs division cautions training units and civilians to follow proper guidelines for disposal of toxic and hazardous material.

An issue stressed lately by NREA is the proper disposal of lithium batteries, which can cause damage if not appropriately cared for.

Most disposable batteries used for small electrical devices are run by maintenance-free lead acid batteries, which are less dangerous than lithium batteries.

However, other heavy-duty batteries contain toxic substances such as lithium, magnesium, cadmium, alkaline, mercury and carbon zinc.

Proper storage of batteries containing magnesium and lithium is especially paramount since they are so reactive, said Joe E. Valls, NREA compliance support supervisor.

"The environmental standard operating procedure tells us how to handle and store these batteries because of their volatility and reactivity," said Valls. "Our effort is to educate Marines and civilians on the proper handling and disposal of these batteries."

Lithium batteries, although



COURTESY PHOTO

If lithium or magnesium cell batteries are not properly stored or disposed of, the plastic coating on the outside of the batteries can melt and break down. Lithium sulfur dioxide, a flammable gas, then escapes the battery cases, increasing the chance of them catching fire or exploding. Keep lithium cell batteries in cool, dry rooms and avoid exposing them to direct heat or freezing temperatures.

dependable and in some cases rechargeable, pose a tremendous threat to military equipment, personnel and the environment if not stored in cool, dry rooms and in their proper containers, according to the Marine Corps Installations West Online Environmental Campus, an online training evolution designed to educate

Department of Defense personnel on environmental safety measures.

Patrick Mills, NREA hazardous waste management branch manager, said proper maintenance of lithium batteries is important, yet not difficult.

"If a battery is no longer useable, it needs to be wrapped in plastic, put into a plastic

container or drum and then put into a near-by satellite waste accumulation area," said Mills. "Lithium is toxic, shock sensitive and reactive to water and temperature. It is not a substance you want to mix with any other materials. And one of the byproducts that comes from them when they are not fully exhausted is lithium sulfur dioxide gas, which is a blood poisoning agent."

Aside from being hazardous to human health, lithium may also contaminate soil and water quality, as well as run the risk of explosions and fires, said Valls.

Mills added that the maximum safe temperature at which lithium can be stored is 125 degrees, which could easily be surpassed in a non-ventilated building in the desert during summer.

Rick Buckles, NREA compliance support inspector, said he wants to see each unit's environmental compliance coordinators pay special attention to these details and continue training units on the guidelines.

Jim Lessard, NREA director, says the proper disposal of these substances cannot be stressed enough to the units who use them.

"We want to make sure the proper disposal of these is used," said Lessard. "If it ends up in a dumpster or trashcan somewhere, we could end up with a fire ... and we have already."

Earlier this year, a fire at the Combat Center's hazardous waste accumulation area ignited two 55-gallon container drums that were allegedly exposed to moisture, said Valls. After one container caught on fire, the heat caused the second container to ignite.

"Luckily, the damage was confined to those two containers due to the response by the base fire department," said Valls.

For further information on proper waste and hazardous material disposal, call the NREA division at 830-5403.

HOT TOPICS

CPR/AED FOR THE PROFESSIONAL RESCUER COURSE

The American Red Cross is offering a CPR and Automated External Defibrillators class for the Professional Rescuer Course Saturday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 6416 Hallee Rd., Joshua Tree, Calif. If you're someone who responds to emergencies, this course teaches you two-rescuer CPR and how to recognize and care for breathing and cardiac emergencies in adults, children, and infants. Please register at the American Red Cross office on Hallee Rd., or call 366-5330 for more information.

RED CROSS DISASTER RESPONSE CLASSES

With the increasing risk of wildfires the local Red Cross chapter is offering free American Red Cross Disaster Response classes. The local Red Cross response to disasters is possible only through participation of the volunteers. If you think you would like to help friends and neighbors when a disaster happens, here is your chance to find out how. Many people want to help after the disaster happens but don't know what they can do, so get some training before a disaster occurs. All disaster classes are free. They will be held at the American Red Cross office at 6416 Hallee Rd., in Joshua Tree, Calif., from 6 to 10 p.m.

Tuesday
Introduction to Disaster Services

Thursday
Overview of Mass Care (feeding, sheltering)

July 29
Shelter Operations

July 30
Emergency Financial Assistance

Call the American Red Cross office at 366-5330 to sign up.

LEGAL AID ASSISTANCE

Legal Aid will assist active duty service members, retirees, dependents, and Department of Defense and contract employees who have access to the base with legal matters the third Wednesday of every month. If there is a conflict or you do not qualify for their services, Legal Aid may be able to help! Call (909) 381-4633 to schedule appointments in advance. Appointments are now available. They begin at 11 a.m. in building 1707, Classroom Alpha.

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3 Months Free offer: Requires participation in Digital Home Advantage with 24-month commitment and qualifying programming, including America's Top 100 or higher, DishLATINO or higher, DishHD package or a select qualifying International package. Customer receives three credits of \$39.99 each, applied to the first, tenth and twentieth months of service. Customer must maintain qualifying programming service to receive all three credits. Digital Home Advantage: Requires 24-month qualifying programming purchase. Restrictions apply, including credit approval and monthly fees for receivers. Early cancellation fee applies. DISH Network retains ownership of equipment. Limit 4 tuners per account. HD programming requires HD receiver and HD television (sold separately). Customer must subscribe to qualifying HD programming or a \$7.00/mo. HD Enabling fee will apply. Lease upgrade fee may apply for select receivers (based on model). Monthly \$5.99 DISH Network DVR Service fee applies for each DVR receiver. Offer ends 07/31/2008 and is available in the continental United States for new, first-time DISH Network residential customers. All prices, packages and programming subject to change without notice. Local and state taxes may apply. Where applicable, equipment rental fees and programming are taxed separately. All DISH Network programming, and any other services that are provided, are subject to the terms and conditions of the promotional agreement and Residential Customer Agreement, available at www.dishnetwork.com or upon request. Local channels packages by satellite are only available to customers who reside in the specified local Designated Market Area (DMA). Local channels may require an additional dish antenna from DISH Network, installed free of any charges with subscription to local channels at time of initial installation. Social Security Numbers are used to obtain credit scores and will not be released to third parties except for verification and collection purposes only or if required by governmental authorities. All service marks and trademarks belong to their respective owners.



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WOLFPACK, from A1

Naval War College in Newport, R.I., for the next year.

Parrington, a Plymouth, Minn., native, was commissioned as a lieutenant in April 1987, before reporting to 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, at Marine Corps Camp Base Lejeune, N.C., to be a rifle platoon commander.

In 1990, he served as a company commander with Bravo Company, 3rd LAR, and participated in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm.

His commission took him on assignments from Marine Corps Security Force Company Panama in 1992 to Joint Inter-Agency Task Force South in Key West, Fla., between 1994 and 2003.

After that assignment, Parrington returned to the Combat Center to take command of 3rd LAR.

Parrington said serving with the men of 3rd LAR has been the highlight of his career.

"I've learned that these guys can do anything," said Parrington. "I consider it an honor to have served with this battalion. They need to keep doing what they are doing, train hard and be ready."

Parrington added he believes there is no better man for the unit to be handed over to than Kassner.

Kassner was commissioned as a lieutenant through the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps program in July 1991.

His first orders assigned him to 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, out of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., in 1992 as commander of Golf Company. He then deployed with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) in support of Operation Continue Hope and Operation Quickdraw in Somalia, as well as Operation Distant Runner in Rwanda.

Kassner then served as a series and company commander for 1st Recruit Training Battalion, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego in 1995.

Upon completion of his duties there, Kassner transferred to the Amphibious Warfare School and graduated with honors in 1999.

He later served as commander of Golf Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, and deployed with the 26th MEU (SOC) to the Balkans to support Operation Silent Lance.

He was later promoted to major and assigned as executive officer of 3rd LAR in 2004.

While there, he served two combat tours with the Wolfpack before reporting to the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization in Washington, D.C., in 2006, where he worked as the chief of training until receiving orders here in June.

Maj. Mark A. List, 3rd LAR's executive officer, said he has had the pleasure of working with both Kassner and Parrington in the past.

List said Parrington's success as a leader could be seen in the way he cared for his Marines, how he focused on mission accomplishment and how he handled the bur-

den of command.

"There were many lonely days he had as the commander," said List, a Tulsa, Okla., native. "How he handled himself was pretty inspiring."

List added he is equally impressed with the performance he has seen in Kassner.

"He is a top-notch officer," he said. "He is going to be a great commander for this battalion."

Kassner expressed his eagerness in taking over the unit and developing the skills of his men to prepare for combat.

"I have a size 16, extra wide pair of boots to fill," said Kassner to Parrington. "But I am eager to carry on the duties of the Wolfpack. This unit reflects the dedication and hard work of you and your team. This is a privilege, and not one I take lightly."

As the outgoing commanding officer furthers his education on warfare, Kassner once again reunites with Marines and sailors of 3rd LAR to lead them wherever their next mission takes them.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

A bouquet of flowers is presented to Suzanna P. Parrington, Lt. Col. James R. Parrington's mother, during 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion's change-of-command ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field July 11. Flowers were also presented to Kassner's wife, Lisa.



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HOMEcoming from, A1

conducted artillery training missions in the Philippines, Thailand, and Camp Fuji, Japan, and stopped between missions at their home port in Okinawa.

Lima Battery first arrived in the Philippines to train the Filipino military on the use of the M777A2 Lightweight Howitzer as part of annual training in Exercise Balikatan 2008. The battery then returned to Okinawa for three to four weeks, said 1st Lt. Peter Lee, a field artillery officer and a native of Glen Ellyn, Ill. They headed for Thailand next, but due to tropical storms had to spend almost two months off the coast of Myanmar. Training at Camp Fuji was also cancelled due to scheduling and weather issues, which also ruined the plans for Exercise Cobra Gold 2008, joint annual training in Thailand, Lee added.

"We were teaching them about modern American techniques and equipment, as well as learning about jungle warfare and counterinsurgency from the Filipino military," said Lee.

The MEU also dropped off 20 Marines and sailors from Lima Battery in Thailand to conduct training on a smaller level and cross train with other foreign militaries.

During the homecoming, friends and family waited eagerly for several hours to

see the Marines and sailors of Lima Battery for the first time in six months.

Alicia Colburn, the fiancée of Cpl. Michael Lemke, a forward observer with Lima Battery, and a native of Adin, Calif., said that she and her fiancé were only dating before the deployment. Lemke proposed over the phone when he was able to have a clear conversation with Colburn.

"It was really hard to talk to him," said Colburn, a Moreno Valley Calif., native. "Most of my talking with him happened when he was in Okinawa."

Some of the families have been separated before due to deployments. This one, however, was not to Iraq, but a WESTPAC deployment, so there was less stress for some of the family members, said Jamie Allen, the key volunteer coordinator for Lima Battery and wife of Cpl. Troy Allen, a cannoneer with Lima Battery.

"I was not as worried this time," said Allen, a Beaumont, Texas, native. "It was easier because there were more people here who understand my situation. On Troy's last deployment I was back at home, and there were not as many people to identify with me."

"This was not as dangerous as his last one, it's the Pacific, not Iraq," she added about her feelings of where her husband was.

After the Marines and sailors of Lima Battery marched on to Victory Field, they



PFC. MICHAEL NERL

1st Sgt. Richard Estrada, company first sergeant with Lima Battery, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, and a native of Beeville, Texas, marches Lima Battery onto the Combat Center's Victory Field to see their families Monday. Lima Battery returned from a six-month deployment to Okinawa, Japan, and the Western Pacific.

were greeted with open arms by their waiting family and friends.

"When given the command, fall out and give your families a hug," ordered 1st Sgt. Richard Estrada, Lima Battery first sergeant and a native of Beeville, Texas, prior to dis-

missing the battery from the formation.

Now that Lima Battery is back at the Combat Center, they will take some time off to see their friends and families and rest before they begin training for their next mission.

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SACC never skips a beat when drugs are on the street

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Substance Abuse Counseling Center not only identifies and rehabilitates service members abusing illegal drugs and alcohol, they also work closely with the units aboard the base to identify the "why" behind individuals abusing drugs and alcohol.

SACC is open to active duty and retired military, family members 18 years or older and Department of Defense employees on a case-by-case basis.

It is made up of different areas to ensure a client is provided with the best treatment possible. The center is staffed by doctors, retired service members and civilians assisted by Twenty-nine Palms

Naval Hospital medical staff who collectively specialize in counseling that work hard to help every service member that walks through their door.

Dr. Steven Mann, the branch head of SACC, said he is proud of the programs they have to offer.

Beth Ayash, SACC's drug demand reduction coordinator, is in charge of running urinalyses, which every unit is required to perform. Her job, which focuses mostly on illegal drugs, also entails making sure people understand the negative effects of using narcotics.

"I try to go back to the basics that life can be fun," said Ayash, an Atlanta native. "Once you add illegal drugs you lose control. You don't decide what type of fun you want to do, the drugs take over."

People's enjoyment and fun in life is a result of having a healthy lifestyle and finding activities to do that can produce a natural high, added Ayash.

Bill Smith, SACC's alcohol abuse preventative specialist, focuses mostly on the negative effects of alcohol abuse and how it affects a person's life.

He educates service members about what can happen when they drink excessively without thinking about the consequences. Smith also speaks to them about everything they will go through after they are caught while driving intoxicated. He points out the impact it will have on their families, friends and command, the price they will have to pay and the possibility of losing their career in the Marine Corps.

"Losing their life is not worth one drink," said Smith, a Wichita Falls, Texas, native. "I want them to realize the devastation it causes with

families and the Marine Corps."

The center works hand-in-hand with substance abuse control officers to help identify service members abusing illegal drugs or alcohol. Every service member must meet with their unit's SACO to complete a questionnaire before being referred to SACC.

The questionnaire is geared toward the service member's well-being and mental health asking questions about deployments, family problems and general feelings to help the SACO and SACC staff determine why the military member was using illegal substances.

SACOs must complete a 40-hour substance abuse program management course taught by the SACC staff, drug demand reduction coordinator and alcohol abuse preventative specialist to become certified to see clients. SACC also holds training sessions and monthly meetings for SACOs to review policies and

address any problems they may be experiencing.

"SACOs must have a thorough knowledge of substance abuse," said Robin Edwards, a substance abuse counselor for SACC. "They have to know what to look for in service members that is associated with drugs and alcoholism."

After an active duty service member completes their initial screening and questionnaire with the SACO, they are referred to the counseling center and treated by a counselor.

After counselors review the SACO's screening test, they conduct additional tests to see what type of treatment and help the person requires.

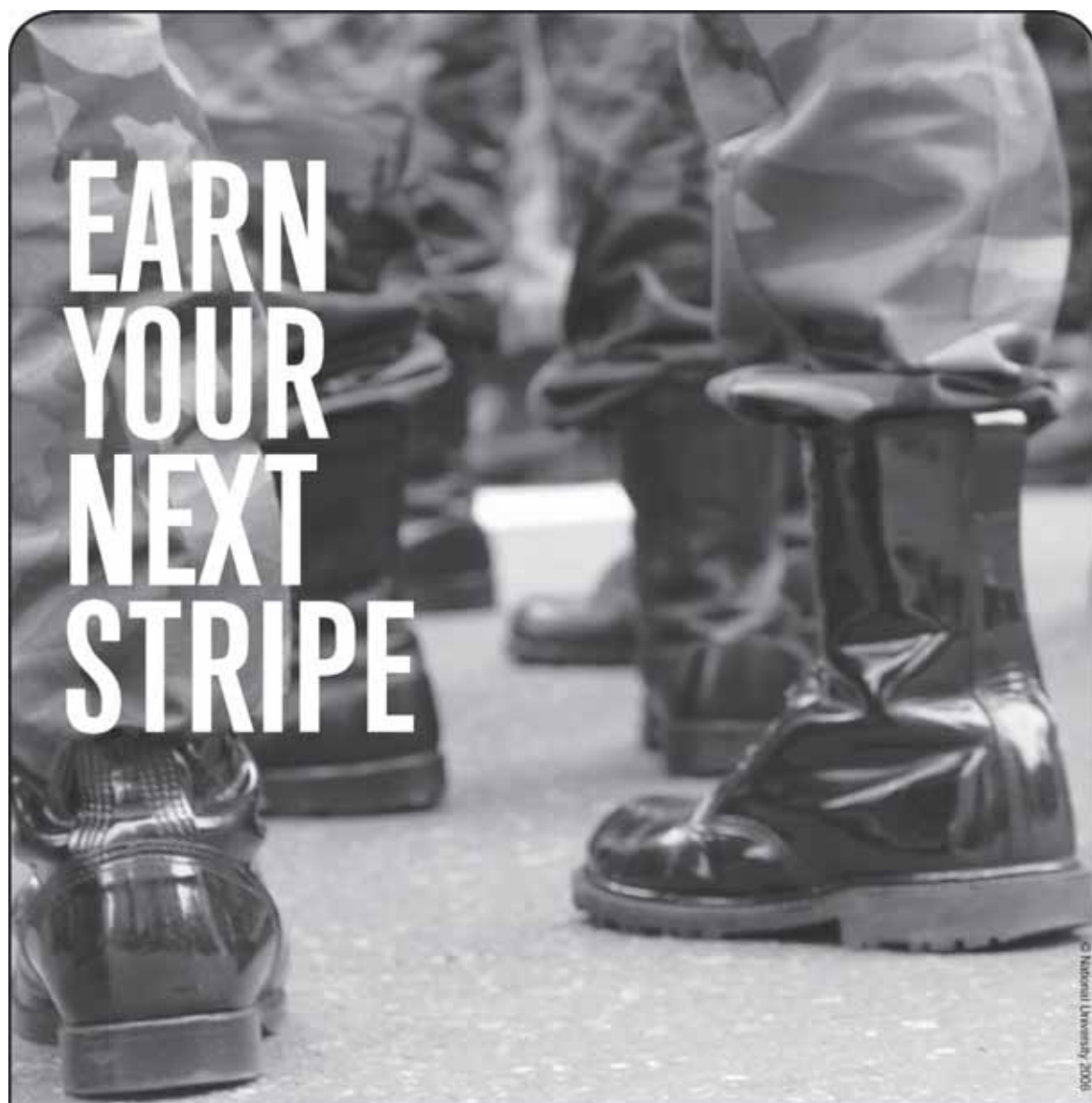
"We try to look at the entire person not just the incident," said Edwards, a Murrieta, Calif., native. Alcohol and drug related incidents are a few reasons someone can be

See SACC, A11



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

William Rodriguez is one of the many doctors, retired service members and civilian counselors who provide counselling services at the Combat Center's Substance Abuse Counseling Center.



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Intramural softball season ends with 3/11 victory

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Commanding General's Intramural Softball League came to an exciting end Tuesday night when 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, defeated Combat Logistics Battalion 7, 7-6, in the league's championship game at the Combat Center's Felix Field.

CLB-7, who won last season's championship trophy, entered the playoffs undefeated with a final league record of 22-0, while 3/11 ended the season with a record of 22-2.

"This year was the most competitive season in the past 10 years," said Randy Husted, sports specialist and the league's umpire-in-charge.

Due to the playoff's double elimination format, CLB-7 went into Tuesday's championship needing to defeat 3/11 twice in a row, added Husted.

The team had suffered an 11-9 loss to the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School 1 Team early in the tournament, while 3/11 was unde-

feated in the playoffs with victories over Exercise Support Division, the Provost Marshal's Office and MCCES-1.

CLB-7 came out of the gates swinging and quickly jumped out to a 2-0 lead, thanks to the infield's defensive strength, which included a well executed double-play.

During the third inning, CLB-7 managed to add another run extending their lead to 3-0. However, in the bottom of the fourth 3/11's bats came alive and tied the game with three runs a piece.

CLB-7's defense continued to hold strong and allowed the team to regain the lead, making the score 5-3 in their favor.

As a CLB-7 victory drew closer 3/11 came full circle and began to support their bats with solid defensive play of their own. This allowed the team to tie the score 5-5 in the seventh inning and force the game into extra innings.

3/11 took advantage of the situation and claimed their first lead of the game, 7-5, and put all the pressure on their opponents.

CLB-7 accepted the chal-

lenge and quickly regained a run, making the score 7-6. However, 3/11 kept their cool, made the defensive plays they needed to, and ended the game with an out at first, giving them the championship.

After the game, both teams were presented with their respective first and second place trophies, and both team's most valuable players for the season were recognized.

For 3/11, the season MVP was shortstop Luis Hernandez, a native of Syracuse, N.Y., and for CLB-7 catcher Steven Collins, from Walpole, Mass., was named MVP.

The league championship was a nice end to the season for 3/11, who opened the intramural softball season by winning the league's pre-season tournament 22-21 over MCCES.

Calvin Whitmore, 3/11 right fielder and Vallejo, Calif., native, said the team played hard all year and credited the team's coach, Bryan Sexstone, with much of the team's success.

Whitmore said Sextone encouraged the team to practice at 6 a.m. on non-game days, and at 6 and 11 a.m. on game days.

The practice regimen was tough, but it gave the team the necessary endurance needed to play quality ball for a full seven innings, he added.

Armando Rivas, 3/11 out fielder, agreed that the team's motivation to practice intensively was key to their success.

"Everyone was able to come together and make sacrifices," said Rivas, a native of El Paso, Texas.

Players who couldn't make scheduled practices would make time to practice on their own so they could stay up to par with their teammates, he added.

"We never quit, and we had to come from behind a few times," said Rivas. "Everyone was a bunch of scrappers."



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Members of the 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, intramural softball team pour water on the head of their coach, Bryan Sexstone, after the team claimed the Commanding General's Intramural Softball League championship Tuesday at Felix Field. The team completed their undefeated playoff-run by defeating Combat Logistics Battalion 7, 7-6.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, first baseman Doug Voigt slides safely into home plate during the Commanding General's Intramural Softball League's championship game Tuesday at Felix Field.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

The intramural softball team from 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, poses for a team photo Tuesday at Felix Field. 3/11 defeated Combat Logistics Battalion 7, 7-6, to claim the intramural softball league championship.

Eenie. Meeny. Miny.

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Tanks booms over TTECG

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The sixth game of the soccer season kicked off as the Tactical Training Exercise Control Group battled against 1st Tank Battalion in the Commanding General's Intramural Soccer League Tuesday at Felix Field.

The game went late into the night, ending in a victory for 1st Tanks with a score of 8-1.

"[Winning] feels amazing," said 1st Tanks midfielder Graham Lewis. "People say playing is only for fun, but it is only fun when winning. Losing is definitely not fun."

The game began at 7 p.m. with TTECG in possession of the ball, making their advance on 1st Tanks' defense off the whistle.

However, 1st Tanks defenders showed no leniency and passed the ball to their offense who peppered shots on TTECG's rookie goalkeeper Daniel Mayfield. He deflected every attempt until a rogue shot deflected off a fellow teammate, scoring the first goal of the game.

The 1-0 lead pumped adrenaline into 1st Tanks as they quickly dominated the field, barely giving

TTECG a chance to blink before rushing the keeper.

Save after save, Mayfield kept the ball from the back of his net until a quick decision from a fellow defender ended the bombardment by kicking the ball out of bounds giving 1st Tanks a corner kick.

The corner kick resulted in the ball dropping right in front of Gerardo Rapeta, 1st Tanks striker, who slammed it into the back of TTECG's net.

Two minutes later 1st Tanks midfielder Graham Lewis blasted the ball from mid-field. The ball soared through Mayfield's hands resulting in another goal bringing the score to 4-0.

TTECG then suffered another goal that rebounded off a teammate, spinning past their keeper to make the score 5-0.

As the clock ticked down with seconds left in the first half, 1st Tanks forward Kyle Wheatley dribbled the ball around defenders, broke away, tricked the keeper by feinting left and sank the ball deep into the right side of the goal, ending the first half with 1st Tanks on top 6-0.

As the second half began, Wheatley scored another goal against TTECG's substitute goal-

keeper, Geoff Rapp, raising the score to 7-0.

In an attempt to come back against the rising score, TTECG caught 1st Tanks off-guard by crossing the ball up field into the waiting feet of Andreas Rodriguez, TTECG's striker, who scored the first goal of the season for his team making the score 7-1.

In response to being scored on, Rapeta maneuvered the ball beautifully, running past TTECG's defenders and keeper scoring his second goal of the game, leaving 1st Tanks victorious with a score of 8-1.

"This game gave us insight on what the coaches and players need to work on," said Tanks midfielder Sam Pomodoro. "This is our first year playing together but I think we have a good mix of experienced and new players, which puts us in the advantage."

Although TTECG lost the game, they kept their heads high using the loss as a learning experience, said Pomodoro.

"Even though we lost, we always try to have fun on the field," said Jay Gutierrez, TTECG right fullback. "Only a few of us have ever played soccer before so we want to make it fun for everyone."

The next match will be Tuesday at 7 p.m. when TTECG goes head-to-head with Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School at Felix Field.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

1st Tank Battalion player Jimmy Merocrespo fights to keep Tactical Training Exercise Control Group player Eric Gregory off the ball during a Commanding General's Intramural Soccer League game Tuesday at Felix Field.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Tactical Training Exercise Control Group defenseman Rick Wright attempts to slide tackle 1st Tank Battalion player Jimmy Merocrespo as he rushes TTECG's goalkeeper during a soccer game with the Commanding General's Intramural Soccer League Tuesday at Felix Field. The game ended in a victory for 1st Tanks with a score of 8-1.

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PFC. MICHAEL NERL

Lt. Col. Michael S. Bodkin, former Headquarters Battalion commanding officer, and his successor Lt. Col. Brandon D. McGowan return to the reviewing stand during a change of command ceremony practice July 10 at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

HQBN, from A1

He says his role will be to support the overall mission of U.S. Central Command's area of operations, which span from the Horn of Africa to Central Asia.

Bodkin also received his second Meritorious Service Medal during the ceremony in recognition of his performance as the commanding officer of the battalion.

"I love having a positive influence on such precious people," said Bodkin, a native of Bucks County, Pa., about why he enjoys leading Marines.

The day before the change-of-command, Bodkin told McGowan to enjoy his new command and from his experience, the Marines of Headquarters Battalion are some of the best people he will work with.

During the ceremony, Bodkin gave his thanks to the service members and civilians of the Combat Center and wished his successor good luck and Godspeed.

McGowan comes to Headquarters Battalion from his

former position as the commander of the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

McGowan, a native of Mission Viejo, Calif., said that he hopes to duplicate the success of his predecessor and continue supporting all Combat Center units.

The ceremony marked McGowan's return to the Combat Center after seven years gone. In April, 1999, McGowan commanded Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, and was later transferred to be the operations officer of 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, after his promotion to major in 2001.

"Standing in awe of these young men and women who defend their country in a time of war - it gives me great hope and faith," McGowan said regarding why he expects to enjoy his new leadership position.

McGowan also said that like in his other commands, all he expects from his Marines is they do their job faithfully and continue the same level of professional performance

as they have under Bodkin.

"You are the valiant Americans who serve our country in a time of war, and I thank you for that," said McGowan during the ceremony.

Sgt. Maj. Mark M. Geletko, the Headquarters Battalion sergeant major and a Pittsburgh native, said that he expects the transition with the new commanding officer to be easy and smooth.

With the pass in review at the end of the ceremony, the change from the old to the new was cemented.



PFC. MICHAEL NERL

After passing the Headquarters Battalion colors to Lt. Col. Michael S. Bodkin, Sgt. Maj. Mark M. Galetko waits for the flag to be passed to the new battalion commander, Lt. Col. Brandon McGowan, during the a change-of-command ceremony July 11 at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

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| <p>FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST SUN. SERVICE & SUN. SCHOOL... 10 AM WEDNESDAY MEETING... 7 PM READING ROOM Tues.-Thurs. 12-3 PM Sat. 9-Noon (Except Holidays) 56039 Santa Fe Trail • 365-4185 Corner Apache Trail, Yucca Valley</p> | <p>Skyview Chapel Church of God Worship Service 10:30 A.M. & 6:30 P.M. Wed. Bible Study 6:30 P.M. 7475 Sunny Vista Rd., Joshua Tree Pastor Abe Casiano Church (760) 366-9119</p> | <p><i>This Week's Spotlight Church</i></p> <p>29 Palms Church of the Nazarene 72603 Juanita Drive • 367-7025</p> <p>Sunday service 10:00 am Children's Church during AM Service Nursery provided www.nazarene29.org</p> | <p>29 Palms Church of the Nazarene 72603 Juanita Drive • 367-7025 Sunday service 10:00 am Children's Church during AM Service Nursery provided www.nazarene29.org</p> | <p>29 PALMS CHURCH OF CHRIST 72309 Larrea Ave. (1 block up from KFC) Sunday Bible Study 10:00AM Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM Sunday Evening Worship 5:00PM Wednesday Bible Study 6:00PM 367-9400 FREE CHURCH RIDES</p> |
| <p>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</p> | <p>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 yvcrs.org</p> | | <p>DESERT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Call for free van ride Sunday 10:00 A.M. - Worship Children's Bible School - Rides Available Visitors Welcome Sunday Concert Series • Call for info 29 Palms • 5688 Sunrise Drive • 361-0086</p> | <p>St. Martin-In-The-Fields EPISCOPAL CHURCH Sunday School 9:00 am • Holy Eucharist 9:00 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.stmartinschurch29.org</p> |
| <p>St. Joseph of Arimathea Episcopal Church Just the Best place to get Married Father Ian Hanley Sunday School, Holy Eucharist 11:30 A.M. Onaga at Church St., Y.V. 365-7133</p> | <p>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</p> | <p>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!</p> | <p>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 "open hearts, open minds, open doors"</p> | <p>FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 365-4014 SUNDAY Bible School.....9:30am Worship.....10:45am WEDNESDAY Bible Study.....7pm</p> |
| <p>The United Methodist Church Yucca Valley 57273 Onaga Tr., 365-3671 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</p> | <p>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</p> | <p>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</p> | <p>First Southern Baptist Church of Joshua Tree Pastor Doug Hutcherson Sun. Worship 10:45am • 6:00pm Sun. Bible Study 9:30am 1st. Wed. Potluck 6:00pm Wed. Bible Study 7:00pm 6088 Sunset Road JT (760) 366-9211</p> | <p>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</p> |
| <p>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. at the heart of Joshua Tree 366-8429 / One80j@hotmail.com</p> | <p>Wonder Valley Community Church 82575 Amboy Road (at Kuhns Road) Office: 367-0279 Bible studies: 9:15AM Sun., 10:00AM Wed. Worship: 5:30PM Sat., 10:30AM Sunday Pastor: Rex Shaver Youth Pastor: Michael Taber</p> | | | |

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3/7 tames Viper, awaits deployment

LANCE CPL. SEAN P. CUMMINS

3RD BATTALION, 7TH MARINE REGIMENT

After a month of life-like training in the sweltering desert heat at Twentynine Palms, Calif., Marines and sailors with 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, completed Mojave Viper, a month-long pre-deployment training evolution, July 10.

The training package gave Marines and sailors the opportunity to battle against role-playing opponents and grueling heat to prepare them for their deployment to Iraq later this year.

"The goal is more or less to qualify the Marines with all the skill sets that they need to perform at a higher level – basically, to be brilliant at the basics," said 1st Sgt. Elvis Tate, the senior enlisted Marine for Headquarters and Service Company.

H&S Company's primary goal throughout Mojave Viper was to support the maneuvering companies logistically, administratively, and medically.

During Mojave Viper, the Marines completed improvised explosive device awareness training, performed casualty evacuation drills, and ran convoys across the Middle Eastern-esque terrain of the Combat Center's training area.

An aspect stressed during the training is to pay attention to IED classes and drink plenty of water, said Cpl. Shawn Hernandez, a rifleman with India Company, 3/7.

"The more knowledge you get, the better you'll be," said the 29-year-old Los Angeles native.



LANCE CPL. SEAN P. CUMMINS

Cpl. John A. Dorn, a Marine with Combined Anti-Armor Team Red, Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, enters his humvee before leading a convoy out of Camp Wilson June 19, 2008. The 23-year-old Marine from Mitchell, S.D., was part of a convoy transporting snipers to Range 400 to participate in a training exercise during Mojave Viper.

Temperatures at Camp Wilson have reached 110 degrees on some days during their 28-day training in the Hi-Desert. Even though 3/7 is based out of Twentynine Palms, the Marines still have to condition themselves being in the heat all day.

"It's the mental thing that

everyone has to get through their heads to be prepared for [Iraq]," said Lance Cpl. Andrew L. Narber, a 21-year-old administrative clerk with H&S Company.

Young Marines getting ready for their first deployment benefit from Mojave Viper by further developing their skills and applying them to real-to-life scenarios.

"You've got to expect the unexpected because you know what is going to happen out there," said Narber from Chariton, Iowa.

The exercises Marines perform during Mojave Viper are about making sure everybody knows what to do before they step foot in Iraq and conduct combat operations and missions.

"Pay attention to the small things. It's the small things that will get you in trouble and get you hurt," Tate said.

For now, the Marines of 3/7 are continuing their training back home and staying focused on their upcoming deployment.

Catching the reading bug



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

David Ruiz, service manager with Orkin Pest Control Services and native of Wrightwood, Calif., shows samples of different insects and arachnids at the Combat Center's Lifelong Learning Library June 11. Ruiz was the guest speaker for the library's Catch the Reading Bug Summer Reading Program. The library sponsors summer reading programs in order to help children retain the information they learned throughout the school year. The theme for this summer's program is bugs and insects. Participation in the program requires children to check books out from the Lifelong Learning Library and maintain a reading log, tracking the hours they spend reading. At the weekly meetings participants learn from subject matter experts and take part in group activities. The program will conclude Aug. 1 when participants are awarded prizes for the number of hours they spent reading throughout the summer. For more information about programs offered at the Combat Center's Lifelong Learning Library call 830-6881.

SACC, from A7

referred to the SACC. People can also self-refer themselves.

Depending on the results of the screening, the counselor will take in the service member and treat him through the center, or they will refer him to a treatment facility outside the Marine Corps.

When a counselor takes the case, they assess the client and identify the areas he or she needs help with and create an individual treatment plan to help overcome their potential for addiction.

SACC counselors also conduct group and individual

counseling sessions, crisis intervention, client education and assist medical officers.

"The more people we can get involved to help makes the outcome better for the clients," said Edwards.

When active duty clients finish their treatment they are referred back to their SACO, who creates an after-care plan to ensure service members do not fall back into bad habits.

SACC's involvement with the base and their constant support in ending drug and alcohol addiction helps service members come back from their dependency and continue to support their unit, said Edwards.

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

Roman Catholic Services Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel

Sun 7:30 a.m. Rosary
Sun 8 a.m. Catholic Mass*
Sun 9 a.m. Military Council of Catholic Women (Bldg 1551)
Sun 9 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

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CBRN Marine provides double threat

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

HIT, Iraq — Cpl. Jeremy M. Wright is a Marine who looks forward to pressure situations.

Wright, a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear defense specialist for 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, is a watch non-commissioned officer in the battalion's Combat Operation Center when he's not performing his primary military occupational specialty. While he works in the COC, he anticipates the day that he may be called to check an area for any chemical threats.

"When I work in the COC, I monitor all the missions and movements of units throughout the battalion's area of operations," Wright said. "I also coordinate with the company level COCs."

Wright, 24, from Cartersville, Ga., understands the importance

of being a watch NCO, but doesn't think it compares to his CBRN job. "I enjoy doing CBRN work," Wright said. "I chose to be in a job not a lot of people get to do."

When Wright is tasked to investigate an area, he takes all the necessary precautions to ensure everything runs smoothly. Before proceeding to the objective, he gives a quick class to ensure the Marines participating in the mission have properly functioning masks and are in the right state of mind.

"I want them to understand that once we're in a hot zone, chemicals are present in the air," Wright said. "If they don't take appropriate precautions there are going to be severe consequences."

In his first deployment, Wright says he has enjoyed being the Marine who is called to enter the hot zone when a suspected hazard is found. Though the battalion hasn't had any actual chemical threats here, Wright continues to

keep his skills sharp in the event that a real threat occurs by going on operations and conducting random tests.

"When I get there, I determine the proper mission oriented protective posture level," Wright said. "I go to the site and begin testing the suspected substance."

Wright can use a variety of machines to figure out what a substance is. The instrument he uses depends on the intelligence he has before he enters a site. He carefully collects a sample of the suspected substance and works to identify it. The process can take a few minutes or hours depending on the situation and how fast he identifies a threat.

Although many people get nervous when they think of a chemical attack, Wright feels right at home.

"This is the best MOS in the Marine Corps," Wright said. "I wouldn't want to do any other job."



CPL. ERIK VILLAGRAN

Cpl. Jeremy M. Wright, a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear defense specialist with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, uses a Hazardous Material Identifier to classify a white powder near Hit, Iraq, July 10.

Water conservation is everyone's responsibility

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Combat Center is committed to delivering the best-quality drinking water. We will continue to remain vigilant in meeting the challenges of source water protection, water conservation, and community education while continuing to serve the needs of all of our users.

Under the "Consumer Confidence Reporting Rule" of the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act, community water systems are required to report water quality information to the consuming public annually.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be

expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that particular water poses a health risk. **Where does my water come from?**

All domestic water supplied to the Combat Center water service area is ground water produced from the Surprise Springs sub-aquifer of the Twentynine Palms Ground Water Basin.

This water is extracted by 11 production wells located in a protected portion of the Sand Hill training area. This water has consistently been of such high quality in nature that it routinely meets all Environmental Protection Agency, and Department of Health

Services primary and secondary drinking water standards without any treatment required before distribution. Basic chlorinating is required by Department of Health Services as a safeguard against possible microbial contamination due to repairs or maintenance of the system.

Due to the isolation and protection of our source water area, contaminants such as organic chemicals, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, pesticides, herbicides, or the microbial Cryptosporidium, Fecal bacteria and E.coli have never been identified as being present in Combat Center source water.

Important Health Information

Some people may be more vul-



COURTESY PHOTO

A Marine refills her CamelBak hydration pack at a water bull, which provides Marines and sailors with drinking water during training exercises, at Camp Wilson.

nerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Persons with weak immune systems, affected by cancer, chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV or AIDS, or other immune system disorders. Some elderly and infants may also be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. The U.S. EPA, and Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Water Conservation Tips

Water conservation measures are an important first step in protecting our water supply. Such measures not only save the supply of our source water but can also save you money by reducing your water bill.

Conservation measures you can

use inside your home include:

- Fix leaking faucets, pipes, toilets, etc.
- Replace old fixtures; install water-saving devices in faucets, toilets, and appliances.
- Wash only full loads of laundry.
- Do not use the toilet for trash disposal.
- Take shorter showers

You can conserve outdoors as well:

- Water the lawn and garden in the early morning or evening
- Use mulch around plants and shrubs.
- Repair leaks in faucets and hoses.
- Use drip watering systems and arid landscapes which include slower growing, low water use plant materials and often incorporate decorative rock or mulch into the landscape design.

Information on other ways that you can help conserve water can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/>.

| Substance (unit of Measure) | MCL | PHG (MCLG) | MCAGCC Water | Range of Detection | Sample Data | Violation Yes/No | Typical Source |
|--|-------|------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------|--|
| <i>Source Wells</i> | | | | | | | |
| Aluminum (ppm) | 1 | 0.6 | 0.029 | ND-0.11 | 2005 | No | Erosion of natural deposits |
| Fluoride (ppm) | 2 | 1 | 0.75 | 0.5-1.1 | 2005 | No | Erosion of natural deposits |
| Gross Alpha Particle (pCi/L) | 15 | 0 | 1.5 | 1.13-2.10 | 2007 | No | Erosion of natural deposits |
| Radium (pCi/L) | 5 | 0.019 | 0.1 | 0.05-1.32 | 2007 | No | Erosion of natural deposits |
| Nitrate (NO ₃) (ppm) | 45 | 45 | 5.0 | 3.7-5.5 | 2007 | No | Erosion of natural deposits. Erosion of natural deposits |
| Methyl-tert-butyl ether (ppb) | 13 | 13 | ND | ND-13 | 2005 | No | Leaking underground storage |
| Total Coliform Bacteria | 1 | 0 | 3 | ND-1 | 2007 | No | Naturally present in the environment |
| Chromium, Total (ppb) | 50 | 100 | 5 | ND-16 | 2005 | No | Leaching from natural deposits |
| <i>Distribution System</i> | | | | | | | |
| Arsenic (ppb) | 10 | 4 | 1.2 | ND-12 | 2007 | No | Erosion of natural deposits |
| Chlorine (ppm) | 4 | NA | 0.66 | 8.9-33 | 2007 | No | Drinking water disinfectant added for treatment |
| Copper 90 th percentile (ppb) | 1,300 | 170 | 22 | ND-31 | 2006 | No | Plumbing corrosion |
| THMs (Total Trihalomethanes) (ppb) | 60 | NA | 1.2 | ND-7.4 | 2007 | No | By-product of system Chlorination |
| HAA5 (Haloacetic Acids) (ppb) | 60 | 60 | NA | ND-8.1 | 2007 | No | By-product of system Chlorination |
| Lead (90 th Percentile) (ppb) | 15 | 2 | <1 | ND-12 | 2006 | No | Plumbing corrosion |
| Total Coliform Bacteria | 1 | 0 | 1 | ND-1 | 2007 | No | Naturally present in the environment |

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According to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Web site, the state of California witnessed a total of 37 wildfires, which covered 149,298.2 acres of land in 2007.

Combating the wildfire threat

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

With the 2008 wildland fire season in full swing, it is important that residents of the Combat Center and the local community understand the wildland fire threat. According to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's Web site, the state of California witnessed a total of 37 wildland fires, which covered 149,298.2 acres of land in 2007.

Assistant fire chief, Darlene Hull, the Combat Center's fire prevention officer, said the majority of wildland fires are caused by lightning and when aided by humidity, wind and terrain, can cause a devastating blaze even in low risk areas, due to its close proximity to the water table, such as the Combat Center.

Hull, a native of South Lake Tahoe, Calif., with three years experience as a wildland firefighter with the Uncompahgre National Forest Service in Colorado, added while more acres are lost annually to lightning, more starts are attributed to human causes.

In addition to lightning, poor situational awareness is another major cause of wildland fires, agreed Shad Murphy, a Combat

Center firefighter with 15 years of wildland fire fighting experience.

Murphy added, home construction, welding, and other forms of metal fabrication often cause sparks that are capable of igniting fires when coupled with such environmental conditions as wind.

Besides construction, motor vehicles can be the source of fires if tire rims are allowed to make contact with the road creating sparks, said Murphy, whose wildland firefighting experience includes tenures with the United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

On top of lightning, construction, and motor vehicle incidents, children can also play a role in the conception of wildland fires, said Hull.

Children often play with fire out of boredom and when those small fires are matched with a child's naive sense of control, a situation is created where a blaze can quickly get out of hand, she said.

No matter what the cause, the consequences of wildland fires can be devastating - both environmentally and financially, said Murphy.

"The desert is not really adapted for fires of high intensity," explained the Yucca Valley,

See WILDFIRE, A15

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

approved by Base Housing. This ensures the Combat Center Trader is not used for commercial real estate endeavors. Ads are run on a first-come, first-serve, space available basis. If you have questions please call 830-3762.

Youth work with American Red Cross, volunteer around base

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The American Red Cross Youth Leadership Program is looking for children ages 10 through 18 to participate in their summer volunteering program, which places children in various work places throughout the base to experience a job they may wish to do as an adult.

The program provides children a chance to give back to the community by volunteering and building the skills they need to become successful later in life.

During the summer, the youth volunteers are sent to offices such as the hospital, the graphic designing office at the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School and the Desert Winds Golf Course.

"We are giving them an opportunity to volunteer in the fields they are interested in," said Kaprece James, the Combat Center's American Red Cross station manager. "We are exposing them to the world while teaching them how to give back to the community."

James has been working with the Combat Center and trying to expand the summer volunteering to a year around experience.

"[The program] gives kids a chance to learn how to help other people," said Savannah Jacobs, who just entered the Youth Leadership Program.

"The summer volunteering program prepares children for anything," added the 12-year-old volunteer.

The Youth Leadership Program hosts different options for the children participating. Along with the summer volunteering program, children have held fundraisers and raised awareness for the measles, Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome initiative. They can also go to the Combat Center's Child Development Center and teach younger children about safety issues aboard the base.

"It is easier for children to relate to each other," said James, a Conway, S.C., native. "They are

more likely to listen to someone they look up to."

Members also travel to American Red Cross workshops throughout California where they learn about public speaking, building a resume and how to look for legitimate college scholarships. Everything that will be taught through the workshops will focus on the children's future and try to prepare them for adulthood.

The program also runs consecutively with the new American Red Cross Club Let-N-Tomorrow, which is run by children for children. The club focuses on youth leadership skills, professionalism and life skills to help prepare them for their future.

"[The club] is something every child needs," said Susan Harz, the American Red Cross youth leadership chair. "It gives them a support group and people to talk to who understand what is going on in their lives."

Harz, who volunteered with the American Red Cross for most of her childhood said she never had a group like this when she was growing up.

"The children are in full control of the club," said Harz, a Twentynine Palms, Calif., native. "They hold the meetings and discuss what fundraisers they want to do."

The children participating in the club have put together disaster kits for family members aboard the base and brochures

that explain everything a family should need in an emergency package.

The club meets every Saturday at 10 a.m. in the American Red Cross office, which is located at the Village Center where the children hold meetings, and create fundraising and volunteering ideas to raise money for their club.

For more information regarding the American Red Cross Youth Leadership Program, call 830-6685.



JAMIE SHANSFIELD

Children participating in the American Red Cross Club "Let-N-Tomorrow," play a game of Ha-Ha as an ice-breaker during their weekly meeting Saturday at the American Red Cross office in the Village Center.

WILDFIRE, from A14

Calif., native.

Murphy said the lack of ecological adaptability in the desert environment makes it hard for damaged or lost plant life to grow back.

With the loss of certain vegetation, the risk of flash flooding also becomes more relevant, especially at this time of year when humidity levels begin to rise, and can result in further ecological damage added Hall.

Joe Zarki, chief of interpretation and public information officer for Joshua Tree National Park in Joshua Tree, Calif., said in the local San Bernardino area, native plants are being replaced by exotic, non-native flora species, in part due to their poor ecological adaptability.

Zarki said these species are changing the fire ecology of the local area by covering once bare ground with a fire-friendly fuel source. This source presents the threat of igniting shrubs that were once isolated from one another and allowing wildland fires to spread more quickly.

With the old vegetation being rapidly replaced by new exotic species, due to the old species' slow maturity process,

the potential for larger and more dangerous fires grows greater every year, said Zarki.

The financial effects of wildland fires can be straining on local economies, forcing districts to exceed annual budgets, which are already in the millions. The cost of fighting the fires and recovering or repairing public structures or infrastructure impacts the budget each year resulting in the loss of funds for other projects, said Murphy.

To avoid wildland fires, Murphy said residents must practice preventive measures and always be aware of what they and the local weather is doing.

When faced with a fire, Hull advises residents to immediately call for help, and if the appropriate means are present, safely put the fire out.

Once the fire is extinguished, file a report with the local fire department, no matter how small the blaze, so firefighters can ensure there is no re-ignite of the fire.

For more information regarding wildland fires visit <http://www.nifc.gov> or <http://www.nfpa.org>.

To report a wild fire, call any of the following numbers, 830-3333 or 830-FIRE on base, or 911 when out in town.

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