Lima 3/12 comes home

PPC. MICHAEL NRRL
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 deployed with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) while deployed to Okinawa, Japan.

HQBN commanding officer hands over command

PPC. MICHAEL NRRL
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.

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

CPL. NICOLB A. LAVINE
Combat Correspondent


This Day in Marine Corps History

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

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 drive home with our windows down and stereo blasting? E. racketly 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. 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.

The chain of command and the Internal Reflection 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 having, racial, ethnic, religious, or gender related jokes; illegal use of electronic mail to send derogatory 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 must and retaliation 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 Representatives and chain of command to address discrimination and sexual harassment. Gunny Sergeant Hector 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 General Office (Hwy 1447) and he can be contacted at 936-4507.
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 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 visitors 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.

**THE OFFICE OF THE PALM SPRINGS AERIAL TRAM**

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.

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.

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**SOLUITIONS**

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

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NREA stresses potential disposal, storage hazards

CPL. NICOL. A. LAVINE
Correspondent/Classroom Alpha

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 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 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 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 coordinator pay special attention to these details and continue training units on the guidelines.

Lesard, 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 Lesard. “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.

“I 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 800-5403.

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.

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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.


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 burden 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 to 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.

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.
The Marines and sailors of Lima Battery marched on to Victory Field, they were greeted with open arms by their waiting family and friends.

"When given the command, fall out and proceed to the Combat Center," said 1st Sgt. Richard Estrada, Lima Battery first sergeant and a native of Beeville, Texas, prior to dismissing 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.
Center.

ices at the Combat Center’s Substance Abuse Counseling
members and civilian counselors who provide counseling serv-
William Rodriquez is one of the many doctors, retired service
ians assisted by Twentynine Palms
retired service members and civil-
center is staffed by doctors,
the best treatment possible. 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
tells making sure people under-
stand 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 fami-
lies, 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 the drugs and alcoholism.”

Dr. Steven Mann, the branch
head of SACC, said he is proud of
every service member that walks
through their door.

“We try to look at the entire
person not just the incident,” said
Edwards, a substance abuse
prevention specialist and alcohol
abuse preventative specialist to
come complete with their unit’s SACC
and alcohol. Every service member
must meet with their unit’s SACO
to complete a questionnaire
before being referred to SACC.

The questionnaire is geared
ward the service member’s well-
being and mental health asking
questions about deployments, fam-
ily problems and general feelings
to help the SACC and SACO staff
determine why the military mem-
ber was using illegal substances.

SACC’s must complete a 40-
hour substance abuse program
management course taught by the
SACC staff, drug demand reduc-
tion coordinator and alcohol
abuse preventative specialist to
become certified to see clients.

SACC also holds training sessions
and monthly meetings for
SACO’s to review policies and
address any problems they may
be experiencing.

“SACO’s 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 SACC, they are referred to
the counseling center and treated
by a counselor.

After counselors review the
SACC’s screening test, they con-
duct additional tests to see what
type of treatment and help the
person requires.

“We try to look at the entire
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Edwards, a Murrieta, Calif., native.
Alcohol and drug related incidents
are a few reasons someone can be
seen at SACC.

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William Rodriguez is one of the many doctors, retired service
members and civilian counselors who provide counseling serv-
ces at the Combat Center’s Substance Abuse Counseling
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Intramural softball season ends with 3/11 victory

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLLA

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 undefeated 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 bats came alive and tied the game with three runs.

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. The game went extra innings.

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

CLB-7’s defense continued to hold strong and allowed the team to regain the lead, making the score 7-6.

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, ran, lifted the score 7-6 and credited many of the team’s success to their coach, Bryan Sexstone, whom both teams were asked to come together and make sacrifices, said Rivais, 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 Rivais. “Everyone was a bunch of scrappers.”

The team played hard all year and credited their 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.

“Every woman was able to come together and make sacrifices,” said Rivas, a native of El Paso, Texas.

Members of the 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, 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.

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

As the clock ticked down with 15 minutes remaining in the game, 1st Tanks took the lead. 1st Tanks midfielder Sam Pomidoro said 1st Tanks forward Kyle Wheatley scored another goal, ending the first half with 1st Tanks on top 6-0.

The 1-0 lead pumped adrenaline into 1st Tanks as they quickly took control of 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 goalkeeper Geoff Rapp, raising the score to 7-0.

Wheatley scored another goal, leaving 1st Tanks victorious with a score of 8-1.

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 keeping 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 Pomidoro. “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 Pomidoro.

“Even though we lost, we always try to have fun on the field,” said Jay Gutierrez, TTECG’s substitute goalkeeper. “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.

The day before the change of command, Bodkin gave his thanks to the service members and civilians of the Combat Center and wished his successor good luck and Ggodspeed.

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 1st Battalion, 7th 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 our 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. Galekto sits at the new battalion commanding officer and was present for the ceremony.

With the pass in review at the end of the ceremony, the change from the old to the new was cemented.
After a month of life-like training in the sweltering 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 things 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 response, weapons training, performed casualty evacuation drills, and ran convoys across the Middle Eastern-desert terrain of the Combat Center’s training area.

An aspect stressed during the training is to pay attention to IED heads to be prepared for [Iraq],” said Cpl. Shawn Hernandez, a rifleman with India Company, 3/7.

“It’s the mental thing that you get, the better you’ll be,” said the 29-year-old Los Angeles native.


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

“You’ve got to expect the unexpected because you know what is going to happen out there,” said Naber from Charlton, 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.

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 services, 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 SACC, 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.
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 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 production wells located in a protected portion of the Sand Hill Ground Water Basin.

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 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.

Water 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 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/.

CBRN Marine provides double threat

CPL. ERIK VILLAGRA
3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment

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

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.

Marine Corps, Wright said. "I didn't want to do any other job."
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COMBATTING THE WILDFIRE THREAT

With the 2008 wildfire season in full swing, it is important that residents of the Combat Center and the local community understand the wildfire threat. According to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Web site, the state of California witnessed a total of 37 wildfires, 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 wildfires 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 wildfires, 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 fabrications 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 wildfires can be devastating - both environmentally and financially, said Murphy.

“No better place to retire, “explained the Yucca Valley.

See WILDFIRE, A15
Youth work with American Red Cross, volunteer around base

LANCE CPL MONICA C. ERIKSON
Combat Center Ombudsman

The American Red Cross Youth Leadership Program is looking for children ages 8-16 years old to participate in their summer volunteer program, which places children in leadership roles to give them 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 skills they need to become successful later in life.

During the summer, the youth volunteers will be responsible for running the Child Development Center and trying to give back to the community by volunteering and building skills to help prepare them for adulthood.

Children participating in the American Red Cross Club will have a chance to learn about public speaking, build self-confidence, and life skills to help prepare them for adulthood.

For more information regarding the American Red Cross Youth Leadership Program, call 830-6655.

Information regarding the American Red Cross Youth Leadership Program

The potential for larger and more dangerous fires grows every year, said Joe Zarki, chief of interpretation and public information officer for Joshua Tree National Park in Joshua Tree, Calif., said

Joe Zarki, chief of interpretation and public information officer for Joshua Tree National Park in Joshua Tree, Calif., said that fire may hold meetings, and create fundraising and volunteering ideas to build the local area by covering the areas impacted by fires. Once the fire is extinguished, the local San Bernardino area, natural plant life, and life forms to recover.

For more information regarding the American Red Cross Youth Leadership Program, call 830-6655.

Apologies for the length, but there were many details that needed to be included to provide a comprehensive overview of the program and its importance.

The children are in full control of the club, said Harz, a 21-year-old at the California Institute of Technology (Casey program), who said she never knew what was growing up.

Children participating in the American Red Cross Club are given a chance to learn how to help other people, said Savannah Jacobs, who just entered the Youth Leadership Program.

The program provides children for anything, said the 12-year-old volunteer.

The Youth Leadership Program Hosts different options for the children participating. Along with the summer volunteer program, children have held clubs and raised awareness for the meals, Human Immunodeficiency Virus and AIDS, and the American Immunodeficiency Syndrome initiative. They can also go to the Combat Center Track and allow the children to participate.

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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 becomes more relevant, especially at this time of year when humidity levels begin to rise, and can result in further ecological damage, added Hall.

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