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MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

AUGUST 29, 2008

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 51 ISSUE 35

War Dogs raid Taliban headquarters

CPL. JAMES M. MERCURE

2ND BATTALION, 7TH MARINES

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan — Marines conducted their first major assault on a Taliban headquarters in NowZad, Afghanistan.

The Marines' major accomplishments of the raid were the destruction of several enemy buildings, fighting positions, improvised explosive devices and the capture of a Taliban fighter.

Although the Marines of Company F, Task Force 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, part of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix, have operated here in support of Operation Enduring Freedom since early April, this offensive represents TF 2/7's

See **TALIBAN, A10**

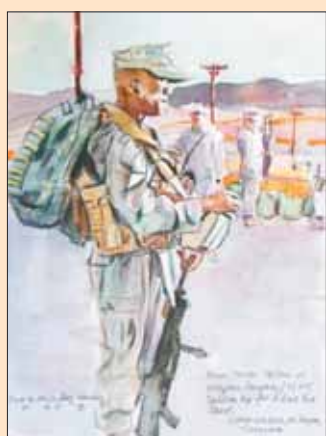


CPL. JAMES M. MERCURE

Lance Cpl. Michael Molesta, an infantryman assigned to 1st Platoon, Company F, Task Force 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, climbs to the top of a destroyed building in a Taliban headquarters in Afghanistan to post security for his platoon.



3 Dining options in Twentynine Palms



4 Mojave Viper depicted by combat artists



5 American Red Cross honors youth volunteers



9 Warfighting Lab tests theories aboard Combat Center

3/7 departs for Iraq

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines and sailors from 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, departed the Combat Center Tuesday and Wednesday on a seven-month deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

More than 1,000 Marines and sailors left the Unit Marshalling Area in the early and mid-morning hours of both days to the waves and tears of their families and loved ones.

1st Lt. Evan Bradley, executive officer of Weapons Company, said the battalion has the initial mission of helping with security and training local police forces.

"We're trying to transition to operational over watch," explained Bradley, a native of Blue Island, Ill. Bradley added that the long-term goal of the deployment is to slowly turn more control over to the local government and civilian population.

"Basically we're going to let the [Iraqi security forces] take control," said Bradley. "We're going to stick by their side, but we want the Iraqi face to be on everything happening."

Bradley said he was confident his Marines and sailors were ready to meet the mission head on after a successful Mojave Viper.

Bradley also said even though the pre-deployment training went well for 3/7, the battalion would continue to receive training on counter-insurgency, local customs and languages while on their way to Iraq.

"We're going to continue educating them as we go over," said Bradley. "We'll teach them all the things that will combine to make us win."

While families also expressed their belief that 3/7 was well-trained and ready to bring the fight to the enemy, many admitted

See **DEPLOY, A10**



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Staff Sgt. Verice Bennett, platoon sergeant, Company I, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, shares one last hug with his son, Sekye, at the Combat Center's Unit Marshalling Area before leaving for duty in Iraq Tuesday.



LANCE CPL. COREY A. BLODGETT

An M1A1 Main Battle Tank from 1st Tank Battalion's Company G, engages light armored targets with explosive anti-tank rounds during the battalion's bi-annual gunnery qualification at Range 500 Tuesday. The Marines have been of their tanks for more than a year after deploying to Iraq with a provisional mission of providing Main Supply Route security.

Back in the Saddle 1st Tank Marines get back on their machines after more than a year

LANCE CPL. COREY A. BLODGETT

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

After Marines from Company G, 1st Tank Battalion returned from Iraq in May 2008, where they performed patrols and security missions instead of their primary role as armored support, they did what they were supposed to do; they got back on their tanks.

The Marines completed the 10-day portion of the battalion's gunnery qualification, a three-month, bi-annual qualification for the M1A1 Main Battle Tank, at Combat Center Range 500 Tuesday, after more than a year away from their machines.

"They had a provisional mission in Iraq providing main

supply route security, where they weren't even on tanks," said Lt. Col. Tom Gordon, 1st Tanks' commanding officer. "So, besides completing our semi-annual qualifications, this has been essential refresher training in getting them back on their tanks and back up to their high level of proficiency."

Each company in the battalion spent 10 days in the field performing several different day and night live-fire tasks from the tanks, on which they were graded by an observer, having to pass seven out of 10 of the scenarios to qualify.

"They are tested and graded on every possible scenario," said Gunnery Sgt. Jason

See **TANKS, A11**

This Day in Marine Corps History

-August 29, 1916-

Marine Corps Reserve was founded.

Military voting: Questions and answers

Where is my "legal voting residence?"

For voting purposes, your "legal voting residence" can be the state or territory where you last resided prior to entering military service or the state or territory that you have since claimed as your legal residence. Even though you may no longer maintain formal ties to that residence, the address determines your proper district, ward, precinct or parish for voting purposes. To claim a new legal residence you must have simultaneous physical presence and the intent to return to that location as your primary residence. Military and family members may change their legal residence every time they change permanent duty stations or they may retain their legal residence without change. Family members may have a different legal voting residence from the member. A JAG officer or legal counsel should be consulted before legal residence is changed because there are usually other factors that should be considered besides voting.

Can I vote in person where I am stationed?

Military members may vote in the state or territory where stationed if they change their legal residence to that state or territory, even if they live on a military installation. Be advised that there are legal obligations that may be incurred, such as taxation, if you change your state or territory of residence. Therefore, consult a Judge Advocate General officer or legal counsel before making such a decision. At the present time, there are no provisions for personnel stationed outside the United States to vote, in person, where stationed.

My family members are not in the military. Can they also vote absentee?

The law entitles eligible family members of military personnel to vote absentee. Family members are considered to be in the same category of absentee voter as military members and generally should follow the same procedures. Family members of military personnel residing overseas, who are U.S. citizens and who have never resided in the U.S. may claim one of their U.S. citizen parent's legal state or territory of residence as their own if allowed by the state.

If you have questions about where or how to vote, what forms to use or state specific regulations, consult the Voting Assistance Guide available in print form from Federal Voting Assistance Program or your Voting Assistance Officer, or its online version available at <http://www.fvap.gov>.

Unit Voting Officers

Unit	Phone #	Unit	Phone #	Unit	Phone #
HQB	830-7083	3/4	830-8524	MWSS-374	830-7329
7th Mar	830-5800	3/11	830-5535	CLB-7	830-5021
1/7	830-5777	3rd LAR	830-4897	D Co. 3rd AAVs	830-7196
2/7	830-6410	1st Tanks	830-7885	Naval Hospital	830-2903
3/7	830-7497	VMU-1	830-6034	MCCES	830-6786
				Dental Clinic	830-7054

A Labor Day message from the Commandant of the Marine Corps Aug. 22, 2008

During the labor day holiday, we celebrate the contributions of working Americans who have made our country great. Our Marines and sailors contribute to this tradition every day, all around the world. While many are currently deployed in support of the long war, many others will use this weekend to relax and spend time with family and friends.

As you enjoy the various recreational opportunities available this holiday weekend, you must identify potential hazards and plan to mitigate the associated risks. Unfortunately, we still have far too many Marines making poor decisions when driving or riding a motorcycle.

FY 2008 has been a particularly deadly year, with 23 fatal motorcycle mishaps alone. This year, for the first time, the number of motorcycle fatalities is outpacing all other private motor vehicle deaths. We must stop the hemorrhage of motorcycle fatalities. Almar 014/08 requires leaders to know which Marines are motorcycle riders and to ensure they are thoroughly trained and prepared to safely ride. Additionally, white letter 02-08 challenges NCOs to be on the lookout for blatant at-risk behavior and enables them to stop it. I have asked commanders, via separate correspondence, to conduct a stand down prior to Labor Day to focus on this issue. If you see a Marine in the process of making a bad decision, stopping him or her should be just as easy as calling "cease fire" on a range to prevent a fatality. I expect each of you to be at the forefront of our force protection efforts and to reinforce responsible driving and motorcycle behavior.

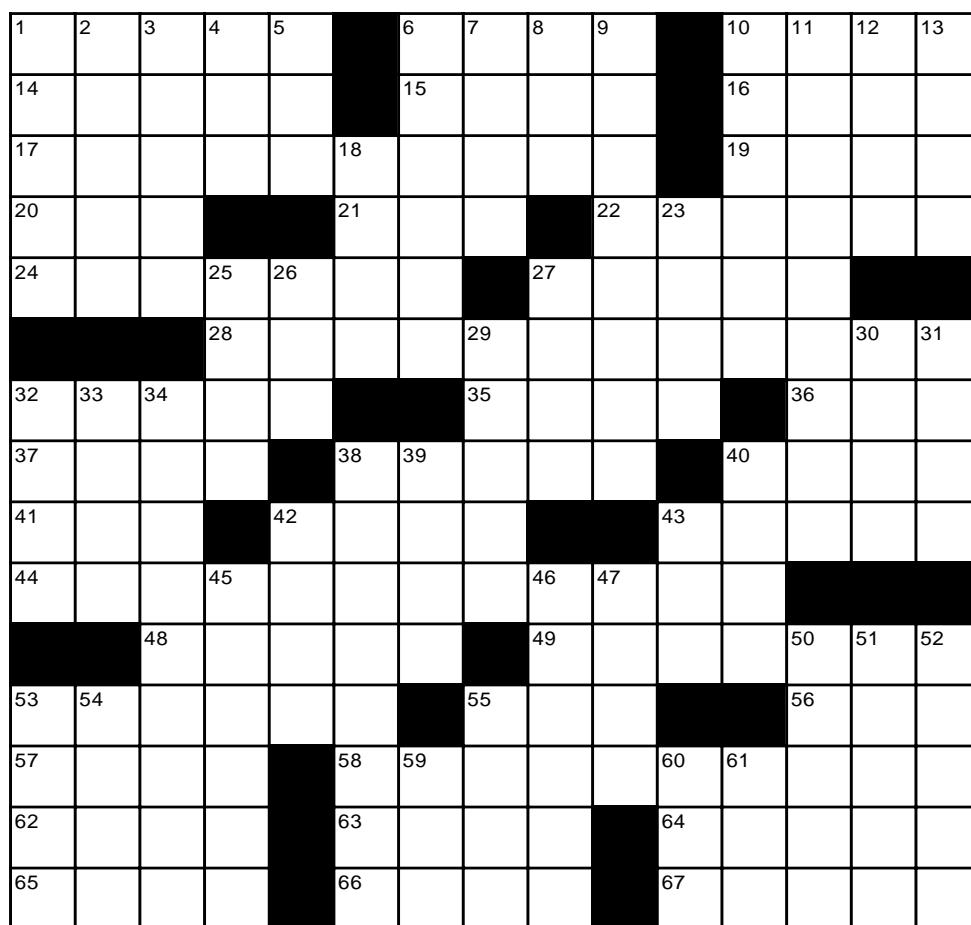
I want everyone to enjoy the labor day holiday, and I trust you will take care of yourself and those around you. Have a great weekend, and come back safely.

Semper Fidelis

James T. Conway

General, U.S. Marine Corps, Commandant of the Marine Corps

PAPER TRAIL



ACROSS

- Alpha's opposite
- Lily of Utah
- Jordin Sparks or Taylor Hicks
- Gondoliers' tools
- Tartan-sporting group
- Brussels-based org.
- Some arithmetic to memorize
- Prefix with inflammatory
- "The Stepford Wives" author
- Aer Lingus destination: Abbr.
- West Bank city
- Card game with melding
- Ancient region in Asia Minor
- One of a showy hoops team
- Feral cat's home
- Low man in choir

- "The Wire" on ___
- Dates regularly
- Internet hookup, for many
- Word repeated after "Que" in song
- Aardvark's morsel
- Ohio rubber center
- Candidate for a Ph.D., say
- Paddock papas
- More saccharine
- To boot
- ___ Paulo, Brazil
- Manhattan's Park or Lexington: Abbr.
- Mideast ruler
- Shades
- Enjoy the kiddie pool
- Pennsylvania port city
- Shelled out
- Wilma's toon mate
- Short swims
- Junk yard purchases

DOWN

- Fiber-___ cable
- Ballerina Shearer
- Violinist Mischa
- "___ whizz!"
- Braying beast
- Brightly colored beetle
- Dresden's river
- Guy's date
- Like a tiny town
- Very soon
- Former anchor "CBS Evening News"
- Grid Hall of Famer
- Pork or beef cut
- Yugoslavia's Marshal ___
- Son of Seth
- Goes gray
- On the ___ (secretly)
- Stressed type: Abbr.
- Flowed back
- Longest river wholly in Spain
- Horse hue

- "Fast!" on a memo
- Jocular Jay
- Doesn't hold accountable
- Touched with affection
- "___, poor Yorick"
- Ball (arcade game)
- Baseball bosses: Abbr.
- Fed one's face
- Layered, like a wedding cake
- Grammarians' concerns
- Delinquent GI
- Electric dart firer
- It's what's happening
- Takes five
- Province E. of Que.
- General Bradley
- Saucy sort
- Mentalist Geller
- Cleopatra's undoer
- Mineral spring site

[Solutions on A8]

Centerspeak

What is your opinion of the new Combat Fitness Test?

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



PVT. TONY BRIANT
STUDENT, MCCES

"It seems like it will be a lot more challenging. It will keep Marines who do well on the PFT in shape and challenge them, and help those who don't do well on the PFT improve."



CPL. WYDEDRICK RANDLE
SUPPLY WAREHOUSE CLERK, H&S COMPANY, 1/7

"I think it's great because it's a bit more physical and it trains a lot more body parts then push ups and sit ups."



STAFF SGT. TARANTULA EDWARDS
PLATOON COMMANDER, HQBN, 1ST MARINE DIVISION, CAMP PENDLETON, CALIF.

"I think it will be good for the new breed of Marines. All the physical conditioning comes into play with the fight against terrorism."

Employee Spotlight

Name: Donovan Miskell

Organization: Professional Engineering Incorporated.

Job Duties: Video teleconference technician for G-3.

Hometown: Los Angeles

Hobbies: Writing, music and movies

What do you like most about your job: Getting to meet different people. It's not always the same thing every day.

Significant Achievements: The first video technician to be certified with his company.

Military service: Four years with the United States Marine Corps as a combat photographer.

Time employed at the Combat Center: Since December 04



OBSERVATION POST

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FRI. 8/29 Desert photos by Bruce Miller & Andy Woods Time: See Web site for restaurant hours Where: 29 Palms Inn, 73950 Inn Ave. For info call 367-3505 or visit http://www.29palmsinn.com	FRI. 8/29 Dave Mason in Concert Time: 9 p.m. Where: The Rock Yard at Fantasy Springs, 84245 Indio Springs Pkwy., Indio For more info call 342-5000 or visit http://www.fantasy-springsresort.com	SAT. 8/30 The Neville Brothers Time: 8 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino, 46-200 Harrison St., Coachella For more info call 800-585-3737 or visit http://www.spotlight29.com	SAT. 8/30 New Moon Drum Circle Time: 7 p.m. Where: Joshua Tree Retreat & Event Center, 59700 29 Palms Hwy. For more info call 365-8371 or visit http://www.jtrcc.org	SUN. 8/31 "Once Upon A Dirt Road" film screening Time: 2 p.m. Where: Hi-Desert Cultural Center, 61231 29 Palms Hwy., Joshua Tree For info call 366-3777 or http://www.hidesertplayhouse.com
SUN. 8/31 Closing art reception, A Roadside Attraction Time: 4 p.m. Where: A Roadside Attraction, 69197 29 Palms Hwy. 29 Palms (on the Hwy. in Indian Cove area) For more info call 362-4100	TUES. 9/2 Classical Guitar Class Time: 7 p.m. Where: Yucca Valley Community Center, 57090 29 Palms Hwy. For more info call 369-7211 or visit http://yucca-valley.org	TUES. 9/2 Chris Walters on guitar, dobro Time: 7 p.m. Where: 29 Palms Inn, 73950 Inn Ave. For more info call 367-3505 or visit http://www.29palmsinn.com	WED. 9/3 Square Dance Classes Time: 7 - 9 p.m. Where: The Elks Lodge, 6501 Elks Trail Dr. 29 Palms For more info call 367-7061	WED. 8/27 Free Evenings at Palm Springs Art Museum Time: 4 - 8 p.m. Where: Palm Springs Art Museum For more info call 322-4000 or visit http://www.psmuseum.org

Looking for some good food? There's a rainbow of flavors all around

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Many people assume they have to drive to Yucca Valley to find a good restaurant. What they may not know is Twentynine Palms is home to a wide range of affordable sit-down and fast food restaurants that are close to the Combat Center. Conveniently located aboard the Combat Center are a few fast food restaurants such as Carl's Jr., Domino's Pizza, Churches Chicken, Taco Bell and Subway that all serve different tastes.

Charlies Coffee House serves breakfast and lunch specials, including breakfast wraps, pancakes and patty melts. It is in building 1863, near Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School headquarters, and is open to all ranks.

Duffer's Retreat is a small restaurant located at the Desert Wind Golf Course and serves a wide variety of breakfast and lunch meals, and recently expanded to add a salad bar.

A popular deli aboard the base is Quick Break. Located inside the Marine Corps Exchange, the sandwich shop sells a wide variety of sandwiches, wraps, soups, hot-dogs and chicken. The deli is also open in the morning to sell a variety of breakfast foods such as breakfast bagels and English muffins.

According to the Marine Corps Community Services Web site, <http://www.mccs29palms.com>, the Officer's Club is considered the premier dining facility aboard the base. The restaurant is open to all ranks and serves lunch and dinner. Monday night is steak night, Wednesday night is pasta night, and Thursday night is seafood night.

Outside the gates there are the traditional fast food restaurants such as Burger King, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Subway, Santana's, McDonald's, Del Taco and Jack in the Box. These restaurants are located on Highway 62 and Adobe road.

For those who are too busy or

don't have any way to travel, pizza and Chinese food are available from a handful of restaurants that deliver such as Pizza Hut, Domino's, Papa Johns, How-How's, China Inn and Peking Inn.

People prefer a sit-down eatery they can choose from, such as 29 Palms Inn, The Wonder Garden Café, Rocky's New York Style Pizzeria, Laura's Café, Pete's American and Greek Family

Restaurant, Las Palmas, The Rib Company, Edchadas, Carousel Cafe and Fuji's Restaurant are a few of the choices.

The 29 Palms Inn is a small hotel with a built-in restaurant that is open to the public. The Inn serves a variety of food that includes seafood, steak, chicken, pork and salads, with different specials every night, and garden fresh vegetables.

"We like to say we have a con-

tinental cuisine with a southwestern flare," said "Chef" Beareller, executive chef and kitchen manager at 29 Palms Inn. "We also have a bar that serves a variety of alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks. People can just come in and sit at our bar, they don't have

to order food." The Inn is also known for their fresh salads and vegetables. They grow their own vegetables, fruits and herbs in a surprisingly extensive garden on the grounds. The inn

See DINING, A10



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

29 Palms Inn Restaurant is open to the public and serves all natural and organic meat and vegetables. More than 60 percent of the vegetables they serve are grown in their own garden.

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

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

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Combat artists record Mojave Vipers on canvas



OFFICIAL USMC ARTWORK BY SGT. KRISTOPHER BATTLES

This illustration created by Sgt. Kristopher Battles, one of only two combat artists in the Marine Corps, depicts Lt. Cmdr. Kobena Arthur, the chaplain for 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, conducting a field service during 2/25's Mojave Viper pre-deployment training.

CAPT. PAUL L. GREENBERG
2ND BATTALION, 25TH MARINE REGIMENT

There are hundreds of thousands of Marines spread across hundreds of occupational specialties, yet only two of them are combat artists, and they are both reserve Marines.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Michael Fay and Sgt. Kristopher Battles travel around the world photographing, sketching and painting Marines and sailors in action.

They both traveled here Aug. 3, from their home base at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., to historically document in sketches

and watercolor paintings the first two weeks of Mojave Viper, a requisite pre-deployment training evolution for 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment.

"We want to capture, in art, the unique experience of fellow reserve Marines training at Mojave Viper," said Fay. "Through our eyes, we want to get as close as possible to the realness of what is happening - the sweat, suffering, boredom and adrenaline. In an era of digital imagery, our art is slowed vision. There is depth to it. The viewer can see that the artist was there and get an idea of how the subjects were feeling."



CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 MICHAEL FAY

Sgt. Kristopher Battles (bottom, right), a combat artist based at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, sketches the Marines of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, during a live-fire combined arms assault course at the Combat Center Aug. 8.

Fay's Marine Corps career has spanned 33 years, during which time he has worked as a mortarman, bookkeeper, a CH-46 avionics technician, crew chief, and as a recruiter. Though he had been sketching and studying art most of his life, he didn't become a combat artist until January 2000.

"It was the fall of '97, and I'd been out (of the Marine Corps) a few years," Fay said. "I was walking by an art gallery in Fredericksburg, Va., and I recognized the paintings in the window as the original work of Lt. Col. Donna Neary, a reserve Marine and combat artist for more than 20 years. I went in, met her, and discussed Marine Corps combat art. She asked to see some of my work, so I walked three blocks

back to my apartment to get my sketchbook, which included pieces I'd done during [Operation] Desert Shield in Oman and in Mogadishu, Somalia. She asked me if I would be interested in coming back in as a combat artist. It sounded like a good idea."

At the age of 47, Fay re-entered the Corps on a two-year contract as a mobilized Individual Ready Reservist and has been drawing and painting non-stop ever since.

The reserve Marines of 2/25 received Fay with a sense of both awe and fascination as he and Battles sat in the 110-degree heat sketching the troops during their training.

"With a reserve unit like this, the level of knowledge about art and the questions I received tells

me that they fully appreciate what we're trying to do," explained Fay.

The artists rotated through the companies and followed the Marines in the brutal combined arms assault courses located in a remote region of the Mojave Desert.

They slept in the field, ate Meals-Ready-to-Eat, and worked feverishly in the Quonset Huts back at Camp Wilson, creating watercolors in the stifling mid-day heat and spraying them with fixative to keep out the dirt and grit.

They returned to the National Museum of the Marine Corps Aug. 18 to register these new pieces in the artwork collection there and for future use at exhibitions in museums throughout America.

"It was totally unexpected. I just saw a guy writing in a notebook, and then he tapped me on my shoulder and showed me the sketch. I thought he did a good job," said Lance Cpl. Nicholas A. Gleason of Marathon, N.Y., a Company F Marine who is a life-long sketch artist himself.

In addition to documenting the troops in action, Fay also taught a tactical sketching class for the Scout-Sniper platoon of 2/25 Aug. 11.

Cpl. Tim Barber, who has been with the platoon since May 2007, is

See ARTISTS, A7



OFFICIAL USMC ARTWORK BY SGT. KRISTOPHER BATTLES

The illustration above by Sgt. Kristopher Battles, combat artist, shows reserve Marines training at the Combat Center. The illustrations created by Battles and Fay will be registered at the National Museum of the Marine Corps.



OFFICIAL USMC ARTWORK BY CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 MICHAEL FAY

CWO 2 Michael Fay, combat artist, created this illustration of a Marine from Weapons Company, 2/25, training with a Multifunction Agile Remote Control Robot, used to investigate a suspected improvised explosive device at Camp Wilson.

Visit Our

Back to School

Enter to WIN! 2008 Contest

Section

Clip out contest entry forms found in your Hi-Desert Star, Desert Trail, Observation Post or Hi-Desert Shopper during August 20th – 30th & you could win one of these prizes...

"Oh Boy, Summer's Over!"
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De Morrow's Jewelry,
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from
Bodywork by Deb
Yucca Valley

2 - \$15 Gift Certificates
2 - \$20 Gift Certificates
from
Le Coffee House
Yucca Valley

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Movie Rentals
from
Super Star Video
Yucca Valley & 29 Palms

2 - \$10
Lunch Specials
from
Indian Cove Market
29 Palms

3 - \$45
Gift Certificates
for Back to School
Haircuts & Styles
from
Yvonne at Hat's Off
in Yucca Valley

\$40 to \$65
10 - Tanning Sessions...\$40.00 value
3 - Spray Tans.....\$65.00 value
from
Elektric Beach Tanning
29 Palms

\$25
Gift Certificate
for a Body Deli Product
from
Faces Day Spa
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Sept. 3, 2008**

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HOT TOPICS

CG'S INTRAMURAL RIFLE MATCHES

The Combat Center Marksmanship Training Unit would like to invite teams to compete in the Commanding General's Intramural Rifle and Pistol Matches. Teams will consist of four shooters to include at least one staff noncommissioned officer or officer. Classes will begin Sept. 29 at 7 a.m. at MTU. All participants are required to attend. The opening ceremony first shot will be at 7 a.m. Oct. 2 and the closing ceremony will be held at 1 p.m. Oct. 17, followed by a barbecue for all shooters. All participants are required to use the M16A2/A4/M4 Service Rifle and the M9 Service Pistol and required to attend all marksmanship classes. Military retirees are also invited to compete. For more information please contact MTU at 830-6700.

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 you have a legal matter and are not able to get an appointment at the Legal Assistance Office due to your work schedule, it is not a subject the LAO handles, 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. at building 1707, classroom A.

SPONSORSHIP REQUESTS E-MAIL

As a reminder, effective July 2, the Vehicle Registration office will no longer accept sponsorship requests over the telephone. All sponsorship requests for family members and/or guests should be sent to the Vehicle Registration e-mail address. This request will be good for a one day visitor pass. If a longer pass is required, the sponsor will be required to meet the guests in person at the Visitor Center. The Vehicle Registration e-mail address can be found in the GAL: SMB PLMS PMO Vehicle Regs. Request will only be accepted from @usmc.mil or @navy.mil e-mail accounts.

Red Cross recognizes young volunteers

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The American Red Cross Youth Leadership Program hosted an awards and recognition banquet for children and teens who volunteered over the summer at the Combat Center's Community Center Aug. 22.

There were 30 volunteers who were recognized for participating in the summer program who had been placed in various work places throughout the Combat Center to experience first-hand a job they were interested in.

The volunteers received a certificate in exchange for the hard work and time they gave during their summer.

The children volunteered at Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital, the Provost Marshal's Office K-9 unit, Combat Camera, Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School, the Public Affairs Office, the Lifelong Learning Library and the Combat Center's American Red Cross office.

Many of the volunteers did small jobs around their designated workplace, which when combined, saved their adult counterparts time and energy from their busy schedule, said Kaprece James, Combat Center's American Red Cross manager.

Some of the volunteers had more of a hands-on approach while volunteering at their work places, like Josh Holmes, who volunteered at PMO's K-9 unit.

Holmes, 13, worked alongside the Marines and helped feed and exercise the dogs while learning about what it takes to become a police dog handler. Holmes was also able to ride with the Marines and their dogs while they conducted drug searches.

"It gives us a lot of chances to get out and meet new people," said Holmes about the summer volunteering program. "It was a lot of fun and gives us a chance to help out in any way we can."

The children also had the option to continue to volunteer through the American

Red Cross Club "Let-N-Tomorrow," which was founded in June. It runs consecutively with the Youth Leadership Program. Through the club young volunteers can remain in their designated workplaces and work after school or on weekends.

"The summer program will continue through the club for the



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

American Red Cross volunteers stand together with Kaprece James, Combat Center's American Red Cross manager, during an awards and recognition banquet at the Community Center Aug. 22.

kids who want to continue volunteering their time," said James.

The club, which focuses on youth leadership skills, professionalism and life skills to help prepare them for their future, was founded by James, a Conway, S.C., native.

The club meets every other Saturday at 10 a.m. in the American Red Cross office, which is located at the Village Center. During the meetings, club members and adult leaders socialize and create fundraising and volunteering ideas to raise money for their club.

As the volunteers get older and more experienced the adult leaders slowly give up their charge of the gatherings, letting the children take over responsi-

bilities and plan everything.

"[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."

So far the volunteers have put

together disaster kits for family members aboard the base and brochures that explain everything a family should need in case of an emergency.

For more information, about the summer program or "Let-N-Tomorrow" contact James at 830-6685.

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Corpsman saves lives on the way home

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

As Seaman Apprentice Brian T. Earle sat half-asleep in the passenger's side of a car traveling down a Southern California interstate, the last thing on his mind was the possibility of needing to apply training to save the lives of a few strangers.

But when Earle opened his eyes, he witnessed a vehicle rollover that may have tested the courage of any other driver on the road that day.

On July 15, Earle, who was then a corpsman with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, was traveling back here from San Diego with Lance Cpl. Alexander Huff, a scout sniper he recently deployed to Iraq with.

Earle said he and Huff witnessed a pick-up truck with a trailer over correct a maneuver, sending the truck full-speed through a guard rail.

"The trailer and truck kind of jack-knifed," explained Earle, a Houston native. "Then as the truck went through the guard rail, the trailer broke off and

the truck went flipping down the hill."

Recognizing the severity of the accident, Earle instructed Huff to pull to the side of the road. Both men ran from their vehicle and were the first on the scene.

There were three passengers; two women and one man. The man, who was sitting in the front passenger's seat, was unconscious along with the driver. The woman in the back seat was conscious and asking for help.

"It's weird how when you are trained, you're told to make an assessment of the situation as it happens," said Earle. "I found myself doing that as I ran over there."

When Earle and Huff reached the truck laying on its right side, they found gasoline spilled on the ground and smoke emitting from the undercarriage of the truck. Earle's first thought was to turn off the vehicle since he knew some newer model vehicles use a cyclic air conditioner that sparks when it starts, he said.

"With all that gasoline around, all it would have taken was a spark and you could've had a fire," he said. "That

would've made it a lot harder for me to get the people out."

Earle kicked in the back window to help the woman in the backseat out.

He recalled there were many possessions in the compartment which made it impossible for him to reach the front of the truck from the back seat and assist the other passengers.

As he helped her out of her seat belt, Earle said he kept the woman calm by talking to her and asking questions about possible medical conditions of the fellow passengers.

He then instructed a nearby civilian to talk to her and keep her awake in case she had suffered a concussion. Earle approached the front of the truck and discovered the driver was still unconscious and had lost one of her arms.

"The man was surprisingly calm," said Earle. "He was covered in blood, but most of it was from his wife."

Another man arrived and used a knife to chip and pry the shatter-proof

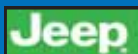
See CORPSMAN, A8



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Brian T. Earle, a former corpsman with Headquarters and Service Company, 1st battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, saved the lives of three strangers in a vehicle rollover on a Southern California interstate July 15 with the help of a Marine scout sniper in his unit, Lance Cpl. Alexander Huff.

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3/4 Jump Platoon shows versatility

CPL. ERIK VILLAGRAN

REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 5

AL ANBAR PROVINCE, Iraq — The Jump Platoon with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, is proving you can teach an old dog new tricks.

The purpose of a jump platoon is to ensure the safety of a battalion commander during missions. The Jump Platoon with 3/4 has accomplished this demanding task, and then some during their combat deployment.

"Our purpose is to transport the battalion commander from point A to point B safely, while providing security," said Sgt. Jay J. Richardson, 29, section leader with Jump Platoon from Midland, Mich.

The platoon's missions have led them all over the battalion's vast area of operations. They have spent long hours on the road trav-

eling to and from the cities of Hit, Haditha and Haqlaniyah. The platoon usually has secondary missions once they reach a destination.

"We conduct convoys from forward operating bases to meetings with sheiks and the Iraqi Police," Richardson said. "Once we're on site, we provide mounted security as well as internal security."

Recently, the Marines in Jump Platoon have been performing alternate missions. On the days they don't escort the battalion commander through the AO, they assist the battalion's law enforcement professional.

"We conduct a mounted combat patrol," Richardson said. "We set up 360 degree security and provide dismounted security so the LEP can do his job."

The alternate objectives have allowed the Marines to perform missions they would be doing if they were still with their original

companies.

"Each Marine is more than qualified for (different) missions because the platoon is made of four or five Marines from each company," said Lance Cpl. George M. Dickey, 21, machine gunner with Jump Platoon, from Port Washington, Wisc.

Having Marines from various companies allows the Marines to learn from each other and share knowledge that will help them accomplish the platoon's missions.

"We're glad we're doing missions that will help the Iraqi people," Dickey said. "I've noticed a lot of improvement in Iraq."

Richardson believes the cohesiveness in the platoon has led to them performing every mission without incident and has allowed them to accomplish every objective.

"This is one of the best platoons I've ever been in," Richardson said.



CPL. ERIK VILLAGRAN

Cpl. Christopher J. Gudvangen, a rifleman with Jump Platoon, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, keeps a look-out while the battalion's law enforcement professional speaks to an Iraqi family in western Al Anbar Province, Iraq, Aug. 21.

ARTISTS, from A4

a graphic designer from Montclair, N.J., in his civilian career. Barber said that the class was definitely beneficial for him professionally, both as a Marine sniper and an artist.

"It helped me hone my skills," said Barber. "I didn't expect to get to do anything like this. As far as application, a picture is worth a thousand words. When you can accurately depict a battle space in combat and relay that information back to higher [headquarters], that is where you really make your money."

The snipers have cameras and powerful lenses to take photos during scouting and reconnaissance operations, but Barber explained that sketching is a vital tool which all snipers should have.

"It really brings things back to fundamentals," added Barber. "If you don't have that foundation of observing and recording information, you can't fully utilize the new technology."

As the battalion is nearly three months into their pre-deploy-

ment training program here, the series of grueling live-fire ranges in the oppressive summer heat has left many of the battalion's Marines exhausted, both physically and mentally.

"I think the sketching breaks the routine of training for the Marines, especially when they're out here going non-stop from range to range," said Fay. "Sgt. Battles and I are blessed that we can do something like this full-time. Not many artists get paid for their work. We do. We are able to go out every day and do something we have a passion for."

One day in the future, the Marines of 2/25 may be able to take their children and grandchildren to the National Museum of the Marine Corps to see images of them in the Mojave Desert in 2008, training for deployment in support of the Global War on Terror.

"What we are creating here with our sketches and paintings is not just art," emphasized Fay. "It is artifacts."

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CORPSMAN, from A6

windshield from the car.

"I got pretty cut up on my hands because we were just grabbing glass and nothing else," said Earle. "But getting those people out of the car took precedence over everything since it was smok-

ing."

After removing the windshield, Earle used a belt to slow the now unconscious woman's bleeding. Huff, Earle and the unidentified Samaritan helped the man slide out of the truck. They then climbed into the truck and supported the woman as Earle cut

away her jammed seatbelt.

Once out of the truck, Earle used a splint of wood from the guard rail and some long underwear to make a tourniquet on the woman's missing arm.

Fire trucks soon arrived to find the two men covered in blood and gasoline standing with the accident victims.

"The CHP [California Highway Patrol] told me I was an idiot," said Earle. "But I think after I told them I was in the military, they kind of got it."

Earle added the police wanted Earle and Huff to remain at the scene and talk to the fire department, but Earle insisted on returning to base since he was late for duty.

"He absolutely deserves

some award for his actions," said 1st Lt. Benjamin A. Cunningham, Headquarters and Support Company commander, about Earle.

Chief Petty Officer Dexter V. Parrish, 1/7 senior medical department representative, agreed.

"It's not an easy thing to go into harm's way to help someone," said Parrish, a Nashville, Tenn., native. "The pressure was high, and a lot of other people would have buckled under that pressure. He's a very unassuming kind of guy, and those are the kind of people you expect great things from and get the greatest results from."

Since Huff is recently at the Marine Corps Basic Scout Sniper School at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Staff Sgt.

Jeremiah Dohl, Huff's scout sniper platoon sergeant for 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, spoke on his behalf.

"Lance Cpl. Huff is a very reliable Marine, and it shows in his actions," said Dohl, a Wellington, Nev., native. "He showed that camaraderie that exists between a Marine and a corpsman. A corpsman told him to do something, he listened and they worked as a team."

Earle agreed, saying he believed it was the very nature of the corpsman-Marine relationship that helped save the lives of three strangers.

"I felt I had an obligation to help because of my medical training," said Earle. "Huff took me seriously, and I felt he had complete confidence in knowing that I could do my job. He didn't ask any questions."

Earle, who left active duty service in July, has been submitted to receive the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, said 1st Sgt. Thomas M. Reeves, H&S Company first sergeant, 1/7.

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 Wed. Service 7:00 pm
 73331 Sullivan Road, 29 Palms • 367-9973

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

Map showing location of churches in the area, including Sage, Buena Vista, Cholla, Pioneer Town, and HWY 62.

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Warfighting Lab tests new theories to empower companies

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines from 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, participated in the final exercise of Enhanced Company Operations Limited Objective Experiments 2 field study in tents outside the Combat Center's Marine Corps Tactics and Operations Group building Aug. 20 through 22.

The purpose of the ECO LOE-2 field study is to evaluate training Marines in company-level operations, because Marines in areas such as Iraq and Afghanistan are encountering an increase in the number of combat missions that require a full company's attention, due to the mission's large size and distribution over a wide land mass.

"This is preparation for Mojave Viper and their deployments," said Maj. Tom Browne, company-level operations project officer, Marine

Corps Warfighting Laboratory, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. "They're getting real world training on where they might be going."

One of the main focuses of the field study was observing the ability of the Marines to set up and manage experimental Company Level Operations Centers, which are part of the effort to provide company commanders with quick and accurate information in future combat situations.

"The goal is to be able to analyze and collect information and act on it," said Maj. Brian Greene, an instructor with MCTOG.

Capt. Jose Vengoechea, project officer, MCWL, said the Marines from 1/7 were selected by their commanding officer based on their security clearance level and their ability to handle the complex computer communication equipment associated with CLOCs and which is not normally operated by infantry Marines.

Vengoechea also said all the Marines participating in the CLOC, except the field radio operators, were infantrymen who he believed would rather be in the field with their comrades, but who were providing the battalion with an essential warfighting tool by participating.

"The CLOC gives the company commander a tremendous capability to conduct semi-independent operations," said Vengoechea. "It gives his company the ability to process intel at a lower level and turn it around much quicker to affect operations."

From July 29 through Aug. 19 Marines participating in ECO LOE-2 received classroom instruction on CLOC leadership, intelligence training, and operations training.

The final exercise allowed the Marines to apply their training to a radio and computer simulated battlefield allowing instructors and observers to evaluate the usefulness of training received over the last three weeks, and how the training prepares Marines for operating a CLOC in a Combat Operations Center, said Browne, a native of Stafford, Va.

"The CLOC FinEx was designed to be practical application for the Marines that received all the CLOC training, and it also gave us an opportunity to evaluate the CLOC model," said Vengoechea.

According to the CLOC information sheet, MCWL initiated the CLOC project at the request of Training and Education Command following the Emerging Training Requirements Conference in 2007.

At the conference it was observed that the demands of fighting irregular warfare require advancements in organization, training, and equipping company headquarters to improve effectiveness.

"In Iraq, companies are being asked to do the work of battalions and battalions the work of regiments," said Vengoechea, a native of Miami. "That work was too much for a company staff to handle effectively, so the CLOC was born."

The CLOC project is currently focused on the company-oriented Forward Operating Base model, which is used to support tactical operations and is currently employed in Iraq.

"It's really focused toward a



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Marines from Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, participate in the final exercise of the Enhanced Company Operations Limited Objective Experiments 2 field study at the Combat Center's Marine Corps Tactics and Operations Group Building Aug. 21.

mature theater where counterinsurgency is prominent," said Greene, a native of Gaithersburg, Md.

However, Browne said the MCWL is currently looking to make the CLOC project more expeditionary, and subsequent experimentation will look more closely at mechanized and foot mobile models in order to break away from the "mature theater" application.

According to the information sheet, once the final interviews have been conducted and all data has been analyzed, MCWL and other participating parties, which include MCTOG, Tactical Training and Exercise Control Group, and

the Command and Control Training and Education Center of Excellence, will develop a refined CLOC model and forward all ideas, concepts, data and training recommendations to Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., for possible implementation or other action.

The project is expected to produce at a minimum a battalion training package that can be utilized by the operating forces in preparing battalions for future combat situations, but it's primary focus was to evaluate new training meant to keep Marines one step ahead of the enemy.

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

Sunday

Roman Catholic Services Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel

Faith Formation/CCD-8 a.m.
Confessions+ - 8:45 a.m.
Rosary - 9 a.m.
Catholic Mass* - 9:30 a.m.
Children's Liturgy of the Word 9:30 a.m.
Confessions+ - 4:15 p.m.
Choir Practice - 4 p.m.
Rosary - 4:30 p.m.
Catholic Mass - 5 p.m.

Protestant Services Christ Chapel

Lay-Led Independent Baptist
Breakfast, West Wing - 8:30 a.m.
Non-Denominational Service
Worship - 9 a.m.
Children's Church - 9 a.m.
Sunday School - 10:15 a.m.
Youth Group 6 p.m.

Pastor-Led Lutheran Worship

Worship-NHTP Chapel-11:15 a.m.

Lay-Led Gospel Service

Worship - 11:30 a.m.

Legend

* Indicates Child Care Provided

+Appointments can be made for

Confessions by calling 830-6456/6482

Weekday Events

Immaculate Heart of Mary

Catholic Mass Mon-Fri - 11:45

a.m. (except holidays)

Monday

Christ Chapel

Praise & Worship Rehearsal-4 p.m.

Immaculate Heart of Mary

Catholic Mass, Mon-Fri -

11:45 a.m. (except holidays)

Tuesday

Christ Chapel

Christian Women's Fellowship* -

9 a.m., (September - May)

Immaculate Heart of Mary

Children's RCIA - 4-5:30 p.m.

Catechist Meeting - 5-8 p.m.

(Second Tuesday each month)

Baptism Class - 6-7:30 p.m.

(First Tuesday each month)

C&E Barracks Building 1666

Bible Study - 6:30 p.m. Chaplain

Hester 830-6187

Wednesday

Christ Chapel

Praise Band Rehearsal - 6 p.m.

Food/Fellowship - 6:30 p.m.

Non-Denomination Bible Study-

7 p.m.

Lay-Led Gospel Bible Study-7 p.m.

Immaculate Heart of Mary

Military Council of Catholic

Women* - 9:30 a.m. Sept. - May

Youth Teen - 6 p.m.

Knights of Columbus - 7 p.m.

(1st Wednesday each month)

Thursday

Immaculate Heart of Mary

RCIA-6-7:30 p.m. Resumes Sept. 11

C&E Barracks Building 1666

Bible Study - 11:30 a.m., Chaplain

Moran 830-6187

Friday

Christ Chapel

Gospel Rehearsal - 5 p.m.

Immaculate Heart of Mary

Exposition/Adoration of the

Blessed Sacrament 12:15-4:30 p.m.

(First Friday each month)



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Photographs courtesy of the Library of Congress

Operation Enduring Families ends summer with a splash

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marine Corps Community Services hosted its fourth annual End-of-Summer Pool Party here at the Officer's Club pool Friday.

The party was thrown to support Operation Enduring Families, an organization started during the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom to support families of deployed service members, said Kelly Coe, MCCS special events program coordinator.

"OEF is an initiative that started to bring more support to spouses and families of the deployed," said Coe. "The pool party was one of the original events we had back when OEF

started here."

The all-hands party opened the pool and children's pool to approximately 200 attendees, provided free barbecue and music played by a disc jockey.

"I saw a bulletin for this and decided it would be fun to go with my kids," said Natasha Durette, wife of 1st Lt. Jeremy Durette, supply officer-in-charge with Headquarters and Support Company, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion.

"This kind of stuff is great because it gives families, and especially wives, a chance to meet and greet," said Durette, a Coroval, Puerto Rico, native. "It's especially important when all the husbands are deployed, and it gives us a chance to have fun with our kids."



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Jena Durette, 7-year-old daughter of Natasha and 1st Lt. Jeremy Durette, enjoys a free hotdog at the pool party.

Jena, Durette's 7-year-old daughter, said she loved swimming every chance she gets and even made a new friend during the party.

"I became friends with Alexis in the deep pool," said Jena between mouthfuls of hotdog.

Capt. Bryan J. Caldwell, deputy director of Company C, Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School, attended the party and agreed about the importance of making family-oriented programs and activities available to base personnel.

"This base has always been good about putting on events for families," said the Albany, Ore., native. "It's things like this that make Twentynine Palms such a great base for families."

Other annual MCCS-sponsored events include the Sounds of Freedom Music Festival Sept. 13 and the Ugly Gown Ball in November, said Coe.

Other programs are designed to impact certain family members, like the Lifestyles, Insights, Networking, Knowledge and Skills, or L.I.N.K.S. program that is tailored to educate and welcome new military spouses into a military lifestyle.

New events and activities for families are constantly sought out by MCCS to keep morale high for Combat Center families, added Coe.

For more information about MCCS events call 830-5086.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Nicholas Mallard, 2-year-old son of retired Petty Officer 1st Class Tawania Mallard, splashes in the children's pool during the End-of-Summer Pool Party hosted at the Officer's Club Friday.

TALIBAN, from A1

more prevailing mission of carrying out full spectrum operations with a focus on police training and mentoring the Afghan National Police.

The task force and coalition forces are bringing the fight to the enemy's doorstep.

"We far exceeded our objectives. Our goal was to just reach the Taliban headquarters, but we actually had the opportunity to exploit it," Company Gunnery Sgt. Hogan Kindrick said. "We had the opportunity to implode their fighting positions to make them useless to the enemy."

After various engagements with the enemy, the Marines have learned the Taliban quickly removes its dead and wounded from the scene where the fighting has taken place. But, during this raid, they captured a wounded enemy fighter.

"In my entire time here, I never thought we would capture one of the enemy," said Capt. Ross Schellhaas, company commander. "After he was detained, we did everything we could to take care of him."



CPL. JAMES M. MERCURE

A Marine assigned to Company F, Task Force 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, posts security after his platoon breached a Taliban headquarters in recent fighting in NowZad.

The enemy prisoner of war had serious head trauma that was treated on site. Once the Marines got the prisoner back to their forward operating base, he was medically evacuated for further treatment.

"You can kill a lot of enemy forces, but when you bring one of theirs back, it hits close to home for them," said 1st Sgt. Eric W. Rummel, company first sergeant. "Whether they know he's dead or alive, it doesn't matter. It's still a huge blow to their morale."

To clear the path for the raid, TF 2/7's combat engineers platoon swept with mine detectors and breached the enemy's walls with explosives enabling Fox Company to push through and accomplish its mission.

"The enemy knows it can't match us toe-to-toe in a firefight, so it uses mines and IEDs to try and slow us down and limit our movement," explained 2nd Lt. Patrick Caffrey, combat engineers platoon commander.

After Company F overran the Taliban stronghold, anything useful to the enemy was either destroyed or captured. The Marines then returned to their forward operating base.

"There is a line of enemy troops with bunkers and firing positions. We know where the enemy is and where the supply routes are," said Capt. Schellhaas, who added that his Marines are very capable of removing the Taliban's presence in NowZad.

With additional support, the Fox Company commander said his Marines could certainly remove the Taliban's presence in NowZad.

"Our original mission was to train the ANP, but the mission changed and we've adapted to it," said Lance Cpl. Brandon W. Besendorfer, an infantryman assigned to 1st Platoon. "The Taliban here are trained fighters. That's why we need reliable close air support and some additional firepower. That would help us get rid of the Taliban here for good."

DINING, from A3

also bakes their own bread, makes a signature wine from their own grapes, makes their own salad dressing and all their meat is chemical free.

The Wonder Garden Café in downtown Twentynine Palms, formerly known as the Finicky Coyote, is a vegetarian-friendly restaurant that serves breakfast bagels, deli sandwiches, a wide range of salads, ice cream, yogurts, pastries, smoothies and coffee.

Rocky's New York Style Pizzeria is an Italian restaurant that serves a wide assortment of pastas, pizzas, lasagna and sandwiches.

"Their garlic bread is very good," said Barbara Demorrow, a frequent eater at the pizzeria. "They also have this cheese bread that goes perfect with their lasagna."

Laura's Café serves sandwiches, hamburgers and salads, but they are well-known around Twentynine Palms for their hot wings. They serve hot wings with bone-in or boneless with a wide variety of flavors and spices that range from instant fire, to spicy barbeque.

Pete's American and Greek Family Restaurant is open seven days a week for breakfast, lunch and dinner and serves mostly seafood and steak. They also serve home-made soup.

Las Palmas is a Mexican restaurant known for their fajitas. Their specials normally include enchiladas, burritos with rice and beans. Edchadas is also a Mexican restaurant, but is liked for having a happy hour and serv-

ing a wide range of alcohol from their bar.

The Rib Company is a restaurant that specializes in ribs, but also serves steak, seafood and sandwiches.

Carousel Café is a small restaurant designed to look like a merry-go-round. They serve breakfast, lunch and dinner, and every meal gives the visitor plenty of food at an affordable price. They are known by their burgers, and due to high demand, have begun having burger specials, which give customers more burgers for even lower prices. When ordering from the dinner menu, customers will also receive soup, a salad, a potato cooked to their liking, vegetables and a dinner roll.

Fuji's Restaurant is a Japanese restaurant that serves a regular menu of hamburgers and steaks, yet are more known for their sushi and seafood.

"Fuji's is a great place especially for the Marines who were stationed at Okinawa, Japan," said Jan Peters, the wife of Lt. Col. Gary Peters who retired and moved to Twentynine Palms. "The food at Fuji's tastes almost exactly like the food you can eat in Japan."

There are many restaurants aboard the base and just outside the base that serve different types of food of different types of styles. By no means is this review complete. There are many more restaurants with menus to satisfy your palate. All you need to do is look and you'll find that a satisfying meal made just for you is right around the corner.

DEPLOY, from A1

it was hard to see their Marines and sailors go.

Amanda Bennett, wife of Staff Sgt. Verice Bennett, platoon sergeant, India Company, said she dealt with her husband's previous deployments, which included participation in Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom, by concentrating on work and obtaining her bachelor's degree. However, Bennett a native of Seattle, confessed this deployment was a little harder due to the presence of their son, Sekye.

"It doesn't get any easier, and kids make it sadder," said Bennett, who is due to give birth to the couple's second child in January, two months before 3/7 is scheduled to return home.

The family of Lance Cpl. Joseph Michael

Peregrina, a rifleman with Kilo Company, were also saddened by the departure of their loved one, but said they were proud of Peregrina and happy to see him fulfilling a lifetime goal.

"He always had the passion to become a Marine," said Jonette Tusques, a family friend who helped raise Peregrina. "Every conversation had Marines in it."

Lori Rogors, 3/7's family readiness officer, said the families will continue to receive news and updates about their Marines and sailors through the battalion's newsletter.

Rogors, a native of Victoria, Texas, said families and not just spouses will continue to receive the knowledge and resources needed to guide them through the deployment until the Marines and sailors of 3/7 arrive home in early Spring.

Combat Center Trader Ads

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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: 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.

TANKS, from A1

Villasana, 1st Tanks' battalion master gunner and grading observer during the training.

"We scored them on everything from firing the 240G (M240G Medium Machine Gun) at enemy troops, shooting the .50 caliber (M2 .50 caliber Machine Gun) at enemy truck targets, to firing their main gun at either armored targets or using explosive anti-tank rounds against light armored targets," explained Villasana about the long days for Company C.

The Marines also had to perform those same scenarios under different situations, such as operating in a nuclear, biological, and chemical environment and working with their tank in a "degraded" mode, said Villasana, a Sabinal, Texas, native.

"That's when we take certain capabilities away from the Marines, simulating a malfunction in the tank," he explained. "Meaning we won't let them use their laser targeting system or the primary sites for example."

Gordon said degrading capabilities by imputing malfunctions into the tank is an important aspect of the training because along with fighting the enemy, the Marines "have to be able to fight their tank," or overcome mechanical obstacles they may face.

"The tank is equipped with the most technically advanced fire control system in the world, but that doesn't mean anything if it malfunctions in combat," said Gordon, a native of Boston. "It also has a gunner's auxiliary sight,

which is just like what the tanks of World War II and Korea used, and the Marines have to learn to fight using that sight as well. It allows them to have confidence in their weapon systems, so they know they can fight with their tank no matter what happens."

Fully understanding their tanks and conducting such intense training is what separates the Marines from other militaries, according to Gordon.

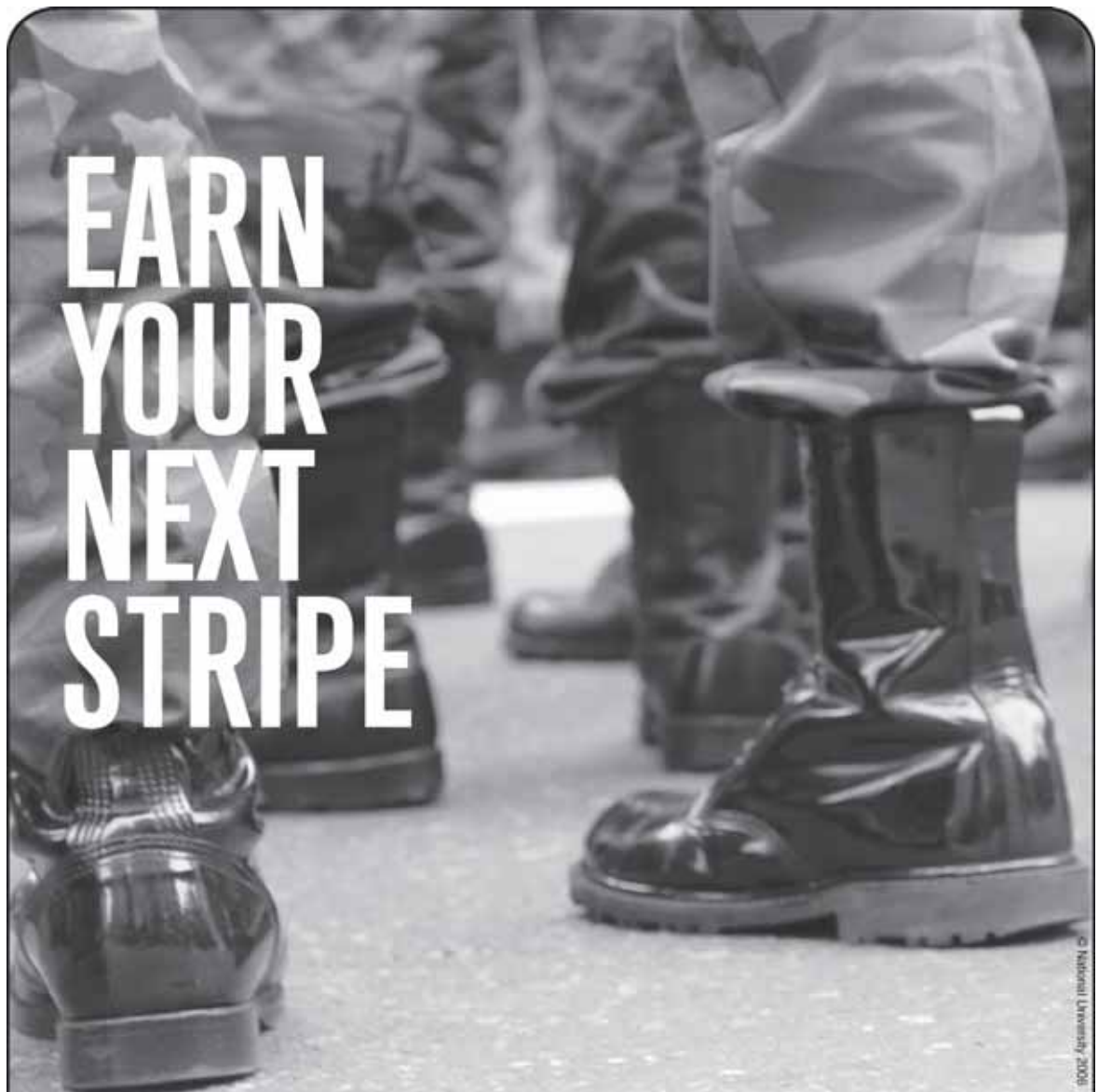
"Most militaries man tanks; the Marine Corps equips Marines with tanks. And that's a big difference," he said.

Staff Sgt. Christopher Baker, the Company C gunner who trained and prepared the Marines for qualification, said ever since the Marines got back onto their tanks, he has been nothing but impressed.

"We haven't been on tanks in about a year and a half," he said. "The progression has been dramatic, a lot faster than anyone had expected. The crews were eager to learn and all the drive in the world is coming from these Marines. From what I've seen, I feel confident that they can definitely handle the tank in any situation thrown at them."

With such enthusiasm and high performance on their tanks, Villasana said the Marines showed that they are glad to be back in the saddle, fulfilling their main purpose once again.

"They love being back on their tanks," he said. "This is what they went to school for and they're happy to actually get back on the tank, pull some triggers and do what they were trained to do."



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