

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

DECEMBER 5, 2008

Early Christmas present for 2/7 families



4 Prepare your vehicle now for winter



7 Staying fit through the holidays



11 Money saving tips for holidays



Gunnery Sgt. Jose E. Caraballo, a platoon sergeant with Headquarters and Service Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, says hello to his daughter, Esther, during his homecoming Nov. 30 at the Combat Center's Victory Field.

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

VOL. 51 ISSUE 49

Combat Correspondent

In the late hours of Saturday and Sunday, the Combat Center began to welcome back the Marines and sailors of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, who deployed from the Combat Center in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in March and April, at the Combat Center's Victory Field.

Although the focus of 2/7's deployment centered on helping the Afghan people and mentoring the Afghan National Police, increased attacks forced the battalion to conduct more security and counterinsurgency patrols.

In addition to the full spectrum of operations 2/7 was challenged with, the battalion also had to deal with an enormous area of operations, improvised explosive devices, logistical challenges brought on by a quick diversion from Iraq to Afghanistan, as well as having their deployment extended.

However, during the deployment, 2/7 helped to bring peace and prosperity to the local Afghan population by laying the groundwork necessary for future U.S. forces to expand on and by conducting numerous civil military operations projects.

The friends and loved ones of those Marines and sailors who returned Saturday and Sunday braved cold temperatures and late hours, but spirits were high and the warfighters of 2/7 were greeted

See 2/7, A10

STX prepares Marines to train foreign security forces

CPL. MARGARET HUGHES Combat Correspondent



12 New firing range on mainside

This Day in Marine Corps History -Dec. 4, 1950-Lt. Col. Raymond G. Davis led 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment into Hagani-Ri, Korea, after four days of intense fighting. Davis received the Medal of Honor for his actions.

Marines with I Marine Expeditionary Force and II Marine Expeditionary Force took part in a Situational Training Exercise Nov. 20 and 21 on Range 220A aboard the Combat Center.

This STX is a unique event that trains small groups of Marines to be advisors for foreign security forces. The skills they learn from this small portion of overall training will prepare them for a more thorough Mission Rehearsal Exercise directly following.

"It is the walk of the crawl, walk and run process," said Maj. Scott Kinner, the assistant operations officer for Advisor Training Group.

The exercise consists of

See STX, A15



CPL. MARGARET HUGHES

Marines prepare to cross an open street in a simulated Iraqi town during a Situational Training Exercise Nov. 20 and 21 on Range 220A aboard the Combat Center. It is designed to challenge a team as a whole in a stressful environment, leaving the Marines with a stronger confidence in stressful situations and a more polished skill set.





PT Safely

We all know that it is Physical Fitness Test/Combat Fitness Test season, so safety during physical training is paramount. Per CCO 1630.8C, During periods of reduced visibility, and before morning colors and after evening colors, pedestrians, other military formations, shall walk/run/jog on the left side of the roadway facing oncoming traffic.

Personnel participating in individual physical training (running/jogging/walking) must wear reflective vests or reflective belts. Formation runs will not be conducted on Del Valle Road at any time due to heavy traffic.

Drivers of motor vehicles are asked be cautious of pedestrians on the roadways.

For information on motor vehicle regulations or any traffic regulation go to the MCAGCC home page to CCO 1630.8C.

The following services are available to on-base personnel and residents through the Crime Prevention Section:

Literature, Briefings, Education, Crime Assessments, Safety Tips, Stranger Danger Program, McGruff the Crime Dog, Officer Friendly Program, Operation Identification (Property Identification), Child Identification and Fingerprinting.

For more information about the above services, contact the PMO Crime Prevention Section at 830-4561/6094.

Department of Conservation launches new green gift guide

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. (Nov. 18) – Just in time for the holiday season, the California Department of Conservation has launched an updated and enhanced version of its online guide to help consumers find eco-friendly gifts and decorating tips.

The DOC created the Green Gift Guide (available exclusively at greengiftguide.com) to promote one of the simplest ways to incorporate sustainability into consumer lifestyles – bottle and can recycling – and also provide information and ideas on environmentally preferable products for the home, office, children, pets and the outdoors. Many of the products are made from recycled bottles, cans and other materials, or otherwise incorporate sustainable practices into manufacturing, thereby saving energy and natural resources.

"Beverage container recycling is on the rise, and the Green Gift Guide is an easy way for each of us to close the recycling loop by buying recycled," said Bridget Luther, director of the DOC. "Shopping for recycled content products and other innovative items helps us move toward a more livable world. People may not realize how many wonderful options there are for not only buying sustainable holiday presents, but for year-round shopping as well."

Shoppers can browse through a catalogue of Web sites that feature "green" gifts such as tableware made from recycled glass bottles, a cell phone charger that uses solar energy, low flow shower heads, organic clothing and more.

The site provides tips for the holidays, including eco-friendly ideas for entertaining and New Year's resolutions to help Californians reduce their carbon footprint. An interactive blog is available for visitors who are looking for additional ideas on how to be environmentally conscious throughout the year. Visitors are encouraged to participate and add their own ideas.

The site allows visitors to suggest additional Web sites that offer eco-friendly products. Users can simply fill out the "Suggest a Product" form and submit it for approval.

Guests are also encouraged to send a Green Gift Guide postcard to their friends and families to encourage sustainable purchasing practices.

Californians recycled 7.6 billion beverage containers during the first six months of 2008, 76 percent of the 10 billion sold in the state. That was a five percentage point increase over 2007. By recycling billions of aluminum cans, glass and plastic bottles during that time, Californians decreased greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to eliminating the energy consumption of 11,000 households for one year.

Greengiftguide.com and all other aspects of the state's beverage container recycling program are paid for with unclaimed refunds of CRV beverage containers, at no cost to the state's general fund.

In addition to promoting beverage container recycling, the Department of Conservation maps and studies earthquakes and other geologic phenomena; classifies areas containing mineral deposits; ensures reclamation of land used for mining; regulates oil, gas and geothermal wells; and administers agricultural and open-space land conservation programs.

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Centerspeak What is your favorite place to eat on base and why?

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



SEAMAN MARK ALMAZAN Corpsman, Lima Battery, 3/11



SGT. AARON ALBRITTON T.O.W. GUNNER, H&S CO., 3/7



GUNNERY SGT. BRADLEY COX INTRUCTOR, BRAVO CO., MCCES

For more information about DOC programs, visit http://www.conservation.ca.gov.

Employee Spotlight

Name: Patrick M. Burgdorf



Hometown: Canastota, N.Y.
Organization: Combat Center Plaque Shop
Job Title: Manager
Job Duties: Creating plaques and dogtags for the
Marines and sailors of the Combat Center.
Hobbies: Gardening
What Do You Like Most About Your Job:
Interacting with the younger Marines.
Significant Achievements: Being able to work
here and support the Marines and sailors.

Military Service: 20 years in the United States Marine Corps. **Time at the Combat Center:** Since 1994 "Taco Bell, because they have rice there." "Subway, it's healthy food and they have a good variety there." "The Quick Break, because it's good food and cheap. It tastes good."

OBSERVATION POST

Commanding General

Brig. Gen. Charles M. Gurganus

Public Affairs OfficerJennie E. HaskampPublic Affairs ChiefGunnery Sgt. Chris W. Cox

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FRI. 12/5 & SAT. 12/6	FRI. 12/5 THROUGH 12/20	FRI. 12/5 THROUGH 1/4	SAT. 12/6	SAT. 12/6
Dave Gleason & Old Californio Time: 8 p.m. Where: Pappy & Harriet's 53688 Pioneertown Rd. Pioneertown For more info call 365-5956 or visit http://www.pappyand harriets.com	Theatre 29: Best Christmas Pageant Ever Time: 7 p.m. Where: Theatre 29 73637 Sullivan Rd. 29 Palms For more info call 361-4151 or visit http://www.theatre29.com	Season of Light Exhibition Time: All day event Where: Hi-Desert Nature Museum 57090 29 Palms Hwy. Yucca Valley. For more info call 369-7212 or visit http://www. hidesertnaturemuseum.org	Manny Pacquiao Time: 6 p.m. Where: Fantasy Springs Casino 84-245 Indio Springs Pkwy.,	Art & Crafts Fair Time: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Where: 29 Palms Art Gallery 74055 Cottonwood Dr. 29 Palms For more info call 367-7819 or visit http://www.29palmsart gallery.com
SAT. 12/6 Holiday Craft Faire Time: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Where: Yucca Valley Community Center 57090 29 Palms Hwy. Yucca Valley. For more info call 369-7211 or visit http://www.yucca-valley.org	SAT. 12/6 14th Annual Light Parade Time: 5:30 p.m. Where: Parade Route from Adobe Rd. to Hwy 62 For more info visit http://www.29chamber.com	SAT. 12/6 Holiday Open House at the Hi-Desert Nature Museum Time: 2-5 p.m. Where: 57090 29 Palms Hwy. Yucca Valley For more info call 369-7212 or visit http://www.hidesert naturemuseum.org	SAT. 12/6 Pearl Harbor Remembered at Palm Springs Air Museum Time: 1 p.m. Where: 745 N. Gene Autry Trl., Palm Springs For more info call 778-6262 or visit http://www.palmspringsair museum.org	SAT. 12/6 5th Annual Toys for Tots Motorcycle Run Time: 10 a.m. Where: Hutchins Harley-Davidson 55405 Hwy. 62, Yucca Valley to Luckie Park in Twentynine Palms For more info call 365-6311

Some ways to celebrate Christmas in Twentynine Palms

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Combat Correspondent

With Christmas right around the corner, people are scrambling to find plane tickets home, but what about all the Marines, sailors and families spending their normally snow-covered holiday in the desert?

For those staying in the area for the holidays, there are events and programs aboard the Combat Center and in the surrounding community available to help create an enjoyable Christmas.

On base, the Lifelong Learning Library is scheduled to host a free Holiday Celebration for Combat Center families tonight from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Participants will have the chance to sing their favorite Christmas carols, and well-known Christmas stories will be read to children.

"The celebration gives our fami-

lies an option to enjoy their holidays without having to travel very far," said Tara Drummond, a library technician. "Santa will also be there giving out gifts to the children."

On Saturday, Operation Enduring Families is hosting a free Winter Festival for base personnel and their families.

The Winter Festival will be held at the base Community Center from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., where participants have the opportunity to play games, win prizes and participate in various arts and crafts while enjoying a wide variety of food and beverages.

Children will be able to create ornaments for their Christmas trees back home, and have their picture taken with Santa Claus and his helping elves for free. A raffle drawing for both children and adults will give away a variety of toys and household items including a convection oven, microwave, coffee maker and a JVC digital camcorder for the adults; and a Little Tikes basketball hoop, Hot Wheels collectible cars and a Huffy Sea Star bicycle for the children.

"This event will help some little dreams come true," said Sony Avalos, a special events program assistant. "Some families may be feeling the economic strain and can't get their children present for Christmas. This will give those children a chance to get presents and enjoy their holidays."

For the families wishing to

travel off base to enjoy their Christmas holiday, they can watch and perhaps participate in the 14th annual Winter Light Parade in Twentynine Palms, Calif.

"Many of the local businesses will extend their hours for the viewers' convenience," said Jessica Wagner-Shultz, an office manager with the Twentynine Palms Chamber of Commerce. "The parade entrance fee is \$15 and is open for everyone to come out and participate and enjoy."

The parade consists of various

floats and designs decorated in Christmas lights. There are no limits to what can be entered into the parade as long as it can sustain the light fixtures.

The parade is on Saturday, and begins at 5:30 p.m. starting on Adobe Road and travelling to Highway 62.

So before driving down the hill to partake in a little Christmas spirit, remember the local folks are planning enjoyable Christmas events, too, for those wishing to stay close for the holidays.





LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

The children of Staff Sgt. Casey McCullin, an explosive ordnance disposal technician with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, Meghan, 7, Killian, 2, and Keeley, 4 months, pay a special visit to Santa Claus at last year's Winterfest Dec. 8, 2007.

	MES 365-9633	Showtimes
Bolt (PG) Fri-Sun: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00 Mon-Thurs 2:30, 4:45, 7:00	Twilight (PG13) Fri-Sun: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00 Mon-Thurs 2:30, 4:45, 7:00	Four Christmases (PG13) Fri-Sun: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00 Mon-Thurs 2:30, 4:45, 7:00
Punisher War Zon (R) Fri-Sun: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00 Mon-Thurs 2:30, 4:45, 7:00		ALL SHOWS • ADULTS \$8.00 BEFORE • SENIORS \$6.00 6:00 PM \$6.00 • CHILDREN \$6.00 www.cinema6theatre.com
U-HAUL RENT		ua Tree • Yucca Valley 1-7141

It's time to winterize your vehicle now!

CPL. MARGARET HUGHES

Combat Correspondent

When temperatures begin to drop, it is a sign that winter is right around the corner and vehicle problems and accidents are sure to follow.

Although Twentynine Palms stays relatively warm during the winter compared to other areas around the country, the temperature can still drop below freezing, which means winterizing your car is important, especially for Marines and sailors who are traveling up to those snowy mountains for skiing and snowboarding.

According to The Safety Corner monthly newsletter from the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, there are many tasks that should be checked and taken care of to winterize vehicles before the winter season rolls around.

• Don't put off a 30,000-mile full service.

• Flush the cooling system and replace the coolant.

• Have battery serviced and load tested to check its ability to hold a charge. If the battery is more than four and a half years old, replace it.

• Check the lights, heater and defroster.

• Get a brake check if you haven't had one in the last six months.

• Ensure a spare tire is filled with air and all proper tire changing equipment is in the trunk.

• Since air contracts in cold temperatures, check tire pressure regularly with a tire gauge to ensure tire pressure is at a safe



A truck, with its front axle banged up after swerving off the road, is stranded in Big Bear, Calif., in 2007. Preparing your vehicle, equipment and planning for winter weather can alleviate problems you might have in the future.

level and ensure all tires are in good condition.

• Replace windshield wiper blades and ensure the windshield washer reservoir is filled with freeze-resistant windshield washer fluid.

• Keep the gas tank as full as possible to prevent moisture from freezing in the gas lines.

• Put together an emergency winter kit including blankets, extra boots and gloves, ice scraper, small shovel, flashlight, flares, water, and kitty litter for traction if stuck in snow.

"Following these basic guidelines can help save lives," said Col. Monte Dunard, the director for MCCLL. "Every year there are reports of people that go off the road and are not prepared for winter survival. Having a few supplies can make the difference between life and death."

Having these supplies is a necessity for those traveling to Big Bear, Calif., said Rachael Jahn, the safety compliance coordinator for Big Bear City Fire Department.

For those Marines and sailors traveling up to the mountains this winter, Jahn suggests to dress in layers, have a set of chains for all four tires, and always have food and water. She also suggests to never drive below a half tank of gas because you might be turned away if the roads are too hazardous or if the vehicle is deemed unsafe for the road conditions at the time.

"Depending on the conditions, you can be turned back by local authorities if the vehicle doesn't have chains or is not a four-wheel drive vehicle with snow tires," Jahn said. "Always carry chains if you're heading up to Big Bear."

Preparing your vehicle, equipment and plan before the season kicks into full gear can alleviate a problem you might have in the future.

"Think about a survival plan now, not when you get stuck in a snow bank coming back from a short or long ski weekend," Dunard said.

HOT TOPICS BASE GAS STATION

CLOSED FOR INSPECTION

The Combat Center Gas Station will be closed for an annual inspection today from 7 a.m. -2 p.m.

COYOTES BECOMING A BIGGER PROBLEM

Recently, more and more coyotes have been spotted in housing areas on and off base scavenging for food. This poses a threat to both the coyotes and the residents. We must remember they were here first and extra precautions must be taken to avoid harmful or threatening situations to humans and wildlife. Coyotes are clever and dangerous animals; some of them are carrying rabies. For tips on how to keep the coyotes away from your homes, log on to http://www.keepmewild.org.

TOYS FOR TOTS MOTORCYCLE RUN

The 5th annual Toys for Tots Motorcycle Run, co-sponsored by Hutchins Motor Sports and Z107-7 radio in conjunction with the Rotary Clubs of Yucca Valley and Twentynine Palms, will begin at 10 a.m. Dec. 6 at the Hutchins Harley-Davidson location at 55405 State Route 62 in Yucca Valley and make its way east through the Morongo Basin to Luckie Park in Twentynine Palms. The entry fee is a new, unwrapped toy worth at least \$10 (please, no stuffed animals). All makes and models of motorcycles are welcome to participate. Riders of any type of motorcycle can register on line at www.hutchins motorsports.com or sign up at Hutchins starting a 8 a.m. For more information contact Alethia at Hutchins Motor Sports, 365-6311 or Gary Daigneault at 366-8471.

DEERS OFFICE CLOSURE FOR HOLIDAYS

The DEERS office will be closed during the holiday season on the following dates: Close at 12 p.m., Dec. 24, and reopen at 12 p.m., Dec. 29. Close at 12 p.m., Dec. 31, and reopen at 12 p.m., Jan. 5.

Disabled American Veterans stands up for women service members

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Combat Correspondent

Since the United States was founded, women have played key roles in the military, from disguising themselves as men and participating in combat to carrying rifles around the world.

Nowadays, women make up approximately 15 percent of all active duty service members, with nearly 1.7 million women having already served in the military, according to http://www.stand up4vets.org, a Disabled American Veterans advocacy Web site. Since the events of 9/11, more than 90,000 women have served

in the military. Of this number, 37 percent have received health care benefits from Veterans Affairs.

With an ever increasing number of women serving in the military, the DAV has its sights set on helping them receive the benefits they deserve.

"With more women answering the call to duty, more women veterans need timely access to health care and other earned benefits and services when they return," said David W. Gorman, the executive director of the DAV headquarters in Washington, D.C., in a DAV publication earlier this year. "The Department of Veterans Affairs needs to expand treatment and counseling for women veterans, including those who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as those from previous generations.

"The VA must not only be prepared for the rising number of women veterans coming into the system, but also must undertake comprehensive efforts to develop and provide mental health and medical care services that are uniquely suited to women," he added.

Allen Pagdilao, the DAV transition service officer for the Morongo Basin area, also said getwar, he added. Not only do they run the risk of being wounded, killed or experiencing post traumatic stress disorder, they must also face the possibility of sexual trauma. According to the VA, approximately 20 percent of female service members under their care since 2002 have reported forms of sexual trauma.

Due to the unique care women veterans may need, the DAV is working hard to pass legislation to expand and improve the quality of health care for female veterans.

ting service women the benefits they need is extremely important.

"We need to recognize our women veterans, whether they are disabled or not," said the Philippines native. "We can't be leaving any of our disabled veterans behind."

More than 177,000 women have served in Iraq and Afghanistan since the start of the "The DAV has been working with lawmakers and congressional staff as part of our Stand Up for Veterans initiative, and is encouraged that bipartisan legislation has now been introduced to help meet this goal," said Joseph A. Violante, the DAV national legislative director, in a DAV publication in

See DAV, A15

Welcome Home Active
Duty Men and Women"Thank you for
your sacrifice"DISCOUNT AUTO
INSURANCEBig Love Insurance
361-8022Across from McDonalds & 7-11
Lic#OB19752

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ADULT MEDICAL CARE CLINIC: PHA PROCESS

To comply with DOD 6200.4 and OPNAVINST 6120.3, all permanent party active duty members of Headquarters Battalion and MCCES must schedule a Preventive Health Assessment with the Adult Medical Care Clinic during their birth month. The PHA process takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. Adult Medical Care Clinic maintains a database of PHAs performed and provides reporting of monthly compliance to unit commanders. To schedule a PHA, call 830-2621, e-mail bradley.wiens@med.navy.mil, or stop by the clinic. PHAs are not performed on Thursdays.



A lesson in faith

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Combat Correspondent

For those Marines, sailors, family members and civilian employees of the Combat Center interested in learning about their religious faith, the Marine Corps **Communications-Electronics** School's Chaplain's Office offers Faith Lessons, a monthly meeting where members discuss stories of the ancient world and share why they are still important for us today in order to strengthen their faith.

Lt. Terry L. Moran, a chaplain with MCCES, said the one-hour lessons begin by watching one of the Faith Lesson DVDs created by ordained minister and evangelical historian Ray Vander Laan, followed by a discussion of the DVD, and concluding with prayer.

Filmed in Israel and throughout the Middle East, Laan uses the DVDs to reveal insights into the relevance of God's word by exploring the historical, geographical and cultural context of the places where stories found in the Bible are said to have taken place.

While Faith Lessons is meant to explore the word of God, Moran explained, an additional focus of the session is the sense of community amongst ranks, fellowship, spiritual enrichment and personal growth that can be built amongst the group's members.

"You get to know other Christians in the military, and it places us all on common ground," said Moran.

In addition to discussing the biblical stories spoken about in the DVDs, the group shares personal stories and reads bible passages in order to meet the group's goal of relating the topics covered to modern day life.

"It's really interesting listening to people share stories," said Moran.

Lt. Chris Hester, also a chaplain with the MCCES, said the lessons really help the Bible come alive.

"I think it's great," said Hester, a native of LaGrange, Ga. "It's the closest you can come to going to the holy land without getting on a plane.³

Hester added the lessons challenge him to be the person he wants to be as a Christian, encourage him, and help him



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA The Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School's Chaplain's Office will be offering Faith Lessons, a monthly meeting where members discuss stories of the ancient world, and share why they are still important for us today in order to strengthen their Christian faith, and focus on building a sense of community, fellowship, spiritual enrichment and personal growth amongst group members.

move his faith closer to Christ.

Staff Sgt. Christopher Bankhead, an assistant team leader with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, said the DVD is a useful aid

that helps group members relate to each other on a spiritual level.

'These lessons are great," said Bankhead, a native of Springhill, La. "This is my noontime lunch spirituality. You get a good spiritual boost.

For more information on the Faith Lessons schedule contact Moran at 830-0294.

Pollution prevention program saves money, keeps MCAGCC green

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Division has implemented a pollution prevention program, which will dramatically reduce the installation's budget on solid and hazardous waste storage and disposal.

The program, known simply as "P2,' falls in accordance with a number of Department of Defense, state and federal laws, primarily the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, which addresses the disposal of solid and hazardous waste.

The Combat Center adopted the P2 program after Marine Corps Order 5090.2A was published, requiring all Marine Corps installations to establish a written P2 policy, said Plessie Ellitt, the NREA P2 program manager.

Jim Lessard, the NREA director, said the base's P2 initiative has evolved since it became standard practice here.

of the Navy and Marine Corps for a number of years," said the York, Maine, native. "However, we only used to focus on what was coming out of the pipe, so to speak. Now we're trying to create a cradle to grave policy, which tracks pollution from start to finish.

"It's a team effort," he added. 'Basically, NREA has the lead, but we have to go out and cooperate with shops base-wide who use hazardous waste to get different materials or eliminate the hazardous waste stream altogether."

Since the base adopted a P2 plan, the initiative has charted numerous achievements in environmental safeguarding and cost reduction.

"Some of our more notable successes are the recycling of hazardous wastes, such as antifreeze, and diesel and JP-8 fuel," said Ellitt, a St. Louis native. "We've also decreased energy expenditure with a cogeneration facility that supplements energy during high "Pollution prevention has been a part peak hours of usage and established a

range residue recycling program.

"Another big thing is our bioremediation program," he added. "We have a team that helps Marines clean routine spills, mostly oil and fuel, which occur in the training areas. Then we 'air raid' the soil by sucking out the contaminants."

Ellitt said bioremediation is much more cost-effective than shipping the dirt out as hazardous waste. Instead, the soil is used to supplement the base's landfill.

Patrick Mills, the Hazardous Waste Management Branch manager, said the Hazardous Material Reutilization Program, which recycles and reuses hazardous waste, has become an efficient and reliable program.

There are a lot of times when we pick up hazardous materials that are still good, even if their shelf life may have expired,' he said. "So far, we've been able to reduce our hazardous waste footprint with antifreeze alone by 24 metric tons."

Mills added, antifreeze isn't the only thing his branch recycles for the base's tenant units. Lead acid batteries, oil, fuel, and all other types of hazardous waste, to include scrap metal from Combat Center ranges, are recycled and fit for reuse or disposed of in a cost-effective manner.

So far, the Hazardous Waste Management Branch has eliminated three separate waste streams aboard the base, meaning they have found ways to recycle the waste as opposed to simply getting rid of it.

"I think what we're doing here is unique," he said. "We're not the only base doing this, but we're definitely the only base doing it in such a large capacity. The best part is, using this recycled waste comes at no cost to the tenant units. All they have to do is come down to my HAZMAT yard. Everything they need is there and free for the taking."

Recycling hazardous waste not only helps the environment, but also saves the Combat Center money which was

A5 DECEMBER 5, 2008



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OBSERVATION POST

Black Friday deals get deadly

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Combat Correspondent

Everyone loves the post-Thanksgiving sales on Black Friday, a day where millions of shoppers nationwide hit the retail stores early, hunting for the best deals on merchandise.

In lieu of the recent economic recession, a break from higher prices is nice for the average consumer, but have Black Friday consumers gone too far this year?

Many stores across the country were hit hard with nothing more than a surge in customers and profits, but a Wal-Mart in Valley Stream, N.Y., was the stage for a savings tragedy.

According to a Nov. 28 CNN article, the crowd began forming outside the retailer at 9 p.m. on Nov. 27. By the time the store was ready to open at 5 a.m., the swarm of shoppers numbered in the thousands.

Another article, published Monday at http://www.newsday.com, said the police were called nearly two hours prior to the store's opening to settle a disturbance outside the doors.

Despite police presence and increased Wal-Mart security, these shoppers could wait no longer and threw common sense right out the window. Just minutes before the doors opened, the crowd began to riot,

smashing through the doors and trampling Jdimytai Damour, a 34-year-old temporary worker at the store, to death as they made a mad dash for discount items.

"He was bum-rushed by 200 people," said fellow Wal-Mart employee Jimmy Overby. "They took the doors off the hinges. He was trampled and killed in front of me.

"They took me down, too," added the 43-year-old. "I didn't know if I was going to live through it. I literally had to fight people off my back."

During the human stampede, Damour's coworkers, local law enforcement officials and paramedics attempted to help him, but were also overrun by the herd of shoppers hungry for bargains. Four other people were treated for minor injuries, including a 28-yearold woman who is eight months pregnant.

As if all that isn't horrid enough to imagine, when the Wal-Mart employees announced the store was closing because of Damour's death, the customers became angry and refused to leave.

Personally, I find this kind of consumerism to be sickening. Trying to shop in a crowded store is bad enough as it is, but how low can people sink to save a buck?

User comments for the news articles blame a number of reasons for this tragedy. Many place the fault on the con-



This Wal-Mart in Valley Stream, N.Y., was the scene of a tragic and preventable crime Nov. 28. In a frenzy of greed and with complete disregard for human life, customers at this Wal-Mart rushed the doors of the store and ripped them from their hinges shortly before the scheduled 5 a.m. opening. Jdimytai Damour, a 34-yearold temporary Wal-Mart employee, was trampled to death. Four others were injured, including a 28-year-old woman who was eight months pregnant.

sumers who were so caught up in a frenzy of low prices they set aside all common sense and regard for human life.

Several of the comments also expressed anger toward retail stores nationwide. They said they feel the Black Friday sales are unnecessary and the greed displayed by these retailers is the most shameful act of all. Regardless of who is to blame, I think this type of behavior is completely unacceptable.

See WAL-MART, A15

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(13 men and women are assigned to the city from the sheriff's station)

Yucca Valley spends about 35 percent of its general fund on public safety.

(12.5 deputies are assigned to the town from the sheriff's station)

The South Desert Regional Fire Zone, which includes the fire stations in every Hi-Desert community except Twentynine Palms (but including Wonder Valley), expects to get **\$6.2 million in taxes** next year, most of the revenue for its \$10 million in spending.

■ One firefighter's turnout gear costs around \$1,500 ■ One fire truck costs over \$400.000

Information sources: local and county government budgets, county fire department and Yucca Valley officials

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CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Combat Correspondent

The months of October through January are what Americans refer to as the "holiday season." This season is punctuated by overzealous shopping for house decorations, pulling out the old recipe boxes, and of course, enjoying a vast amount of food.

In order to help Marines, sailors and family members keep off a little winter weight, the East Gym and Community Center offer several options to keep base personnel active.

The East Gym, which is open 24 hours a day, offers service members and spouses an opportunity to build a personal workout plan with personal trainers, said Linda Rummel, manager of the East Gym and lead personal trainer. Although there is no waiting list for active duty personnel, there is a three to four week waiting list for spouses.

However, spouses may obtain information about home programs at the East Gym front desk.

"You don't need any equipment with the home programs," said Rummel, a Twentynine Palms, Calif., native. "If you have a jump rope at home, do that for three to five minutes a couple times a day and you can get in a half hour of cardio easily. Play with your kids, park farther away in the parking lot and take stairs instead of escalators when you shop."

Rummel added that aside from staying physically active, a healthy diet is equally important for keeping off holiday pounds.

She suggests replacing sugar

with Splenda whenever possible, to choose whole grains over white grains, and bring personal snacks when shopping instead of eating mall food.

Monica Moore, East Gym assistant manager, said in addition to watching what you eat, watch the amount of food on your plate, as well.

"You want to focus on your portion sizes," said Moore, a Twentynine Palms, Calif., native. "Eating smaller serving sizes can make a difference. Be sure you're eating whole grains and plenty of fruits and vegetables. They are high in fiber and will fill you up faster so you have a smaller chance of pigging out."

For those interested in taking a more aggressive approach to weight loss or staying in shape, the Community Center offers several exercise classes throughout the week. The classes, which are available upon registration, include: bosu ball and stability ball, cardio kickboxing, core exercises, step aerobics, spinning, yoga, pilates and more, said Yvonne Warfield, Community Center aerobic coordinator.

"Our Aerobic Program will offer all the same classes that we offer throughout the year from December first to the 19th," said Warfield.

Classes take place five times a week beginning at 9 a.m. A full schedule of Community Center aerobic classes may be found at the Community Center. A shortened version of the week's schedule will also be granted for Christmas and New Years.

For more information call the East Gym at 830-6440 or the Community Center at 830-3380.



Lance Cpl. Chris Buerkle, a rifleman with 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, is spotted by a fellow Wolfpack Marine, Lance Cpl. Garrick Gaffney, while lifting weights at the East Gym Monday.





CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Cpl. Chris Person, a rifleman with Grapplers Company, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, works out his back and arms at the East Gym Monday. Although cardio works better for burning fat, exercises like these strengthen muscles and can help increase metabolism. ©2008 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved. BATMAN and all related characters and elements are trademarks of and © DC Comics.

PG-13 PANERTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED (*) Intense Sequences of Violence and Some Menace Bonus Material/Trailer Not Rated. DINE DECTURES (*) A WARNER BROS. PICTURES A WARNER



Where DO your local tax dollars go?

SALES TAX on normal purchases, excluding groceries, is 7 3/4 percent, a portion of which goes back to the city where the purchase was made. Every time you buy \$100 worth of non-grocery items in Twentynine Palms, the city gets \$1. In the current fiscal year, the city of Twentynine Palms is looking to get \$702,000 in general funds from sales-tax revenue.



EVERY TIME you spend a dollar anywhere in San Bernardino County, a half-cent of your sales tax goes into the Measure I fund, which is then redistributed to cities, like Twentynine Palms, based on population. Measure I funds are used to pay for transportationrelatated expenses, including improvements to existing road.



PROPERTY TAXES are a major source of General Fund revenue for Twentynine Palms and help pay to maintain city parks, such as the

newly-dedicated Bucky Bucklin Park. For every dollar you pay in property taxes for property in the city limits 26 cents comes back to the city. In the current fiscal year, this will add \$1,350,000 to the city's General Fund coffers.

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PURCHASE GASOLINE anywhere in the state and a portion of the sale is a gasoline tax, which goes to

Sacramento before it's redistributed back to cities based on population. During the 2007-08 fiscal year, the city received \$492,775

Story and photos by Kurt Schauppner The Desert Trail









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NREA tracks, monitors endangered species

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. **DUNN**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

In recent years, the Combat Center has been taking active steps toward saving the surrounding environment, including the preservation of natural resources found within its borders.

In the base's Sand Hill training area, several miles west of Camp Wilson, the Natural Resources Environmental Affairs and Division is working to track and preserve the endangered desert tortoise.

We're federally mandated to track and monitor all local animals and all animals that we research in the TRACRS

[Tortoise Research and Captive Rearing Site] facility," said Steve Selser, an NREA natural resources specialist. "The law requires us to monitor them monthly. We currently track approximately 40 tortoises, almost all of which are female."

Selser added the importance of tracking female tortoises is to find out if they have been mating, so they can bring them to the TRACRS facility where they can safely lay their eggs and be returned to the wild.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Office Web site, desert tortoises typically mate in the spring, but females can carry sperm for up to five years before they decide to lay their eggs. In order to help preserve this endan-



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Steve Selser, a natural resources specialist with the Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Division, investigates a desert tortoise burrow in the Sand Hill training area Tuesday. NREA is required by federal law to monitor a certain number of each wildlife species aboard the base. Approximately 40 tortoises are being tracked and monitored by NREA in the Sand Hill training area alone.

gered species, NREA specialists must monitor each female and get them to TRACRS if they are ready to lay their eggs.

Selser and the rest of NREA's natural resources branch begin this process by pinpointing the tortoises' location from the previous month on a chart. Each of the reptiles has a transmitter attached to its shell, so they can be tracked using frequencies from a radio telemetry receiver. Every tortoise has its own designated frequency and can be picked up by the receiver, which resembles a handheld antenna.

By using the receiver, Selser and the team can easily track down each tortoise to ensure it is alive and still living in the training area. Occasionally, Brian Henen, an NREA ecologist who specializes in tortoises, will test for signs of pregnancy in the females by using ultrasounds and x-rays to see if they are bearing eggs.

Selser said the tortoises spend approximately 90 percent of their lives underground, so it is sometimes difficult to find them. The reptiles will use their tiny claws to dig out burrows in the earth where they can seek shelter from harsher climates.

Although finding them is difficult, the natural resources specialists can still locate the tortoises using the receiver. In the event they discover a tortoise has died, they immediately try to determine the cause of death to study the animals and see what types of climate changes can affect them more dramatically.

NREA also provides classes for every Marine Corps unit coming to train aboard the Combat Center. The briefs cover a variety of topics, but have a specific section which focuses on desert tortoises

'The desert tortoise is a very unique animal," said Brent Husung, an NREA natural resources specialist, during a brief for personnel from 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Dec. 2. "The tortoise has been living in this area for more than 1.3 billion years.

"However, the desert tortoise is also an endangered species," he added. "It is protected by the Environmental Protection Act. By law, you cannot kill, harm, harass, buy, sell, trade, or attempt to do any of the above to a desert tortoise.

Husung also taught the Marines what to do if they happen to find a desert tortoise while they are training. He said the best thing to do is to stop all activity in the area, notify the chain of command and they will get permission to remove the animal from harm's way.

'To move a tortoise, always approach it from the front," he said. "Gently lift up the animal and then gently place it back down about 75 feet away from where you found it. Also, be sure to point it in the direction it was previously traveling."

Husung added the desert tortoise can store nearly 40 percent of their body weight in water, but



Steve Selser, a natural resources specialist with the Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Division, uses a radio telemetry receiver to track desert tortoises in the Sand Hill training area Tuesday.

it will evacuate its bladder if frightened. In a dry climate like the desert, this can seriously harm the tortoises, so it is important not to frighten them.

If someone comes across a desert tortoise in the wild, it is imperative they contact the proper authorities immediately to receive further instruction.

NREA will continue to track. monitor and preserve the desert tortoise and other natural resources aboard the base. Another contractor is also monitoring desert tortoises displaced by the new Combined Arms Military Operations on Urban Terrain facility being built at Combat Center Range 220.

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2/7, from A1

with loud applause, hugs, kisses, and hot coffee.

Jennifer Kimbrough, the wife of Petty Officer 3rd Class Tyrone Kimbrough, a hospital corpsman with Headquarters and Service Company, said the deployment was tough but with the help of

Service Times:

Sunday Morning Worship 9:45

Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00

(760) 361-2450

4751 Adobe Rd.

29 Palms, Ca. 92277

spirit_truthworshipcenter@yahoo.com

57373 Joshua Lane Yucca Valley, CA 92284 (**760) 365-0769** www.JoshuaSprings.org

family, God, and frequent trips to the movies, she got through it.

"I'm just glad to have him back," said Kimbrough. "Just to know he'll come in at 4:30 in the evening just like he did before he left is great."

Kimbrough, who braved the cold with the couple's daughter, Zarria, and son Makaio, said the

Spirit and Truth Worship Center

family held off on Thanksgiving in order to celebrate it as a whole later that night.

'We have a whole lot to be thankful for," said Kimbrough. "Not just in him returning home, but all of them."

Katherine Keating, grandmother of Lance Cpl. Travis D. Tuttle, a mortarman with Weapons Company, said she also relied on her religious faith to help her through the deployment and that her Thanksgiving was made extra special by her grandson's return.

"It's the best Thanksgiving I you get?"

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Captain Russ Schellhaas, the commanding officer of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, embraces his son after returning home from deployment Nov. 30 at the Combat Center's Victory Field.

helped her deal with the deployment and that she was really excited to have her son back since she knew the experience he was going through all too well due to her involvement in Operation Desert Storm while serving in the army.

Manuel Bojorquez, father of Lance Cpl. Manuel Bojorquez, a rifleman with Company F, said he was very proud to be part of the homecoming for all the Marines.

Bojorquez, an army veteran who participated in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, also said he gave thanks this Thanksgiving for the warriors of 2/7 who have helped ensure that we can all enjoy our freedoms this holiday season and for many more to come.

The Marines and sailors of Company G and Headquarters and Service Company got a warmer reception later in the week, when they returned during daylight hours to Victory Field and were greeted by friends and family.

10 :00AM

5:00PM

6:00PM

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OBSERVATION POST



Tips on keeping the wallet full during holidays

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

With the holiday season just a hop and a skip away, stores across the nation are rapidly stocking up on Christmas decorations and gifts as the shopping center disk jockeys blow dust off the Christmas music albums.

Although you may be stressed at the thought of waiting in long lines, shouldering your way through the crowds, finding parking spots and being able to afford holiday food and gifts, there are people and organizations aboard this installation who can help reduce at least one of those stressors.

The personal financial management program at the Village Center specializes in training, counseling and education of financial responsibility and budgeting.

Sandra Little, the installation personal financial management specialist, said budgeting for the holidays can be as simple as making a spreadsheet.

"Christmas comes at the same time every year," said Little, a Fontana, Calif., native. "You know when it's coming so you can plan for it if you want to."

Little said when she has clients come to her office, she discusses with them their leave and earning statements, emergency saving funds, investments and appropriate times to spend that extra cash.

"Always try to keep a very low balance and don't overspend," she cautions. "Some people think that saving money means giving up things they like which could be



Money doesn't grow on trees, but if proper budgeting takes place, a small pot of cash can grow into a strong, healthy investment in time for the holiday season.

considered a luxury. It's not necessarily about giving things up; it's about recognizing what you can afford to have once every other week and what you can make a treat for yourself."

The Navy Marine Corps Relief Society also does its part on educating service members and their families on the importance of budgeting not only for the holiday season, but also year-round.

Jenny Gonzalez, Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society chair of volunteers, explains how the organization assists service and family members with financial concerns.

"When we have Marines and their families come in, we usually sit down with them and make a short-term budget plan over a three month period," said Gonzalez. "What we're doing is looking for a pattern of spending so they can see where they can

start making improvements."

Ellie Kay, a military wife and author of more than 11 best selling books, gives practical tips on saving money in her books "How to Save Money Every Day" and "A Tip a Day with Ellie Kay: 12 Months' Worth of Money-Saving Ideas".

Kay also hosts financial seminars which draw crowds numbering in the thousands, she said at a book signing seminar at the Combat Center Officer's Club June 17.

For additional money saving tips, refer to Kay's books or to the Web sites http://www.mon eyinstructor.com or http:// www.usnews.com.



U.S. MARINE CORPS FORCES, SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

INFORMATION AND RECRUITMENT BRIEF Location: MCAGCC 29 PALMS BLDG.1707 Date: Dec. 8, 12-4 p.m. Date: Dec. 9-11, 8 a.m., 12 p.m., 4 p.m.

The purpose of this brief is to educate all available Marines and Navy Corpsmen about MARSOC. For those that are interested in volunteering for possible assignment, we will conduct preliminary and physical screenings.

MARSOC has approximately 132 military occupational specialties with a variety of ranks within our unit. We will talk with all interested personnel to see if billets are available. We are primarily screening for the following billets and ranks: 02xx Cpl-GySgt, 03xx LCpl-Sgt, 0302 1stLt – Maj, 0621 LCpl-Sqt, 0629 SSqt-GySqt, 2336 Sqt-GySqt, 26xx CpI-GySqt, 28xx Cpl-GySgt, 8007 Capt-Maj, Navy Corpsmen HM2-CPO.

All Marines and sailors are encouraged to attend these briefs to educate themselves about MARSOC. Recruiters will be available after the briefs to answer any questions.



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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 Chane

Immaculate Heart of Mary Children's RCIA - 4–5:30 p.m. Catechist Meeting - 5–8 p.m. (Second Tuesday each month) C&E Barracks Building 1666 Bible Study - 6:30 p.m. Chaplain Hester 830-6187

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.

Baptism Class - 6-7:30 p.m. (First Tuesday each month) Wednesday

Lay-Led Independent Baptist Breakfast, West Wing - 8:30 a.m. Non-Demominational 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.

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 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

"Faith Lessons" Bible Study Building 1651, at 12 p.m. with Chaplains Moran and Hester. For more info call 830-6187 **Immaculate Heart of Mary**

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

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)

* Indicates Child Care Provided +Appointments can be made for Confessions by calling 830-6456/6482

Tuesday, Dec. 9 11:00 a.m. Twenty-nine Palms Senior Center 6539 Adobe Rd. Twenty-nine Palms

Tuesday, Dec. 9 12:30 p.m. Yucca Valley Community Services 57090 Twentynine Palms Hwy. Yucca Valley

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YGF120707

New firing range now at Combat Center Obstacle Course

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Obstacle Course is now no longer just a

place where Marines and sailors stationed here can work on their physical fitness, but also an area where they can work on their combat marksmanship, thanks to

a new emerging technology trainer temporarily stationed here.

Capt. Jose Vengoechea, the experiment division project officer for the Marine Corps Warfighting



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Col. Randall P. Newman, the 7th Marine Regiment commanding officer, takes aim while participating in a demonstration of a new emerging technology trainer at the Combat Center's Obstacle Course Nov. 20.



Laboratory located at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., said the trainer is part of project Simulation Enhanced Predeployment Training and Rehearsal, an organizational tool being used to package different predeployment technologies for Marines, and is being looked at as method of teaching Marines how to accurately engage moving targets.

'The Marine Corps currently does not have a live-fire facility to adequately train Marines to hit moving targets. That is why we are looking at emerging technology to bridge that gap," said Vengoechea, a native of Miami.

The emerging technology trainer, which arrived Nov. 17, consists of a laser and live-fire capable trailer and a four-station, laser-only modular classroom. It will be observed and compared to other methods currently used to train Marines, like the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer, and any emerging technology to see which provides the best results, added Vengoechea.

Jack Sparks, branch head for the modeling and simulation branch of MCWL, said the primary objective of MCWL's experiment is to determine whether use of an emerging technology trainer for moving target marksmanship training significantly increases an individual's capability in that skill.

Sparks also said secondary goals include comparing ETT effectiveness to similar simulated training, and to gain insight into the importance of incorporating live-fire into simulation training.

"The results will be based off of four groups made up of 48 Marines each," said Vengoechea. "All four groups will go through the same pre-test, which consists of classes on marksmanship fundamentals, live-fire at Range 109, ISMT simulated firing and

live-fire in the emerging technology trainer."

Vengoechea added once all groups have completed the pretest, the first group will be given time to study their materials before taking the post-test which is exactly the same as the pre-test. The second group will train on the ISMT before completing the post-test, and the third will fire 400 simulated and 90 live-fire rounds using the ETT before testing out. The fourth group, who will be using their own weapons, will fire 160 simulated rounds and 340 live rounds in the ETT before results are examined.

Once all groups have completed, we will look at the disparity between the pre-test scores and the post-test scores for all groups to see which group showed the most improvement," said Vengoechea.

Seaman Enrico Santos, a hospital corpsman who was providing medical support during an ETT demonstration Nov. 20, said he believes Marines and sailors will be very interested in the ETT since it is very similar to a video game.

Santos, a native of Chula Vista, Calif., who got a chance to use the ETT, said while the system is different than the range, he sees it improving combat marksmanship and mental alertness because of its realism.

Sparks said when not in use for experiment support, the ETT will be available to units aboard MCAGCC to conduct moving target engagement training until its departure in April 2009. The self contained system will have an operator available eight hours per day, five days a week. Combat Center units will be able to send Marines to specific ETT training, in order to qualify them as ETT operators, so their respective units can take advantage of this training opportunity.





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R

Michael Clavton



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOI A

An operator of a new emerging technology trainer observes Marines in the emerging technology trainer live-fire capable trailer as they participate in an ETT demonstration at the Combat Center's Obstacle Course Nov. 20. The trainer is part of project Simulation Enhanced Predeployment Training and Rehearsal.

How to battle a bout of holiday blues

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Combat Correspondent

The holiday season is just around the corner, and as people begin to look forward to presents, relaxation, delicious food and being with family, many people don't realize depression is a common sentiment during the normally jolly season.

Holiday blues can hit anyone, especially service members, or their families, said Lt. j.g. David Nelson, the Headquarters Battalion chaplain.

"I advise people not to drink [alcohol] when feeling depressed," said Peter Morris, the Family Advocacy Program branch manager. "Alcohol is a depressant and will make you feel worse in the long run."

People who get overwhelmed with holiday stress, or those who have nobody to share their holiday with are more likely to experience depression.

The overwhelming feeling hits some people when they go over their budget when buying gifts, or others who can barely find enough time to relax in their jam-packed schedule, Nelson explained.

"People forget to just enjoy the holidays," said Nelson, a Piedmont S.C., native. "People just get exhausted and they lose the joy in the holiday season.

"I have a saying. It goes; make the main thing about the main thing. Don't get caught up in the simple stuff," he added.

The Web site, http://www. mayoclinic.com lists ways to cope with holiday depression, which includes sticking to a budget, planning ahead and creating a schedule to ensure everything runs smoothly, learn to say no and only take on wanted tasks, don't abandon healthy habits, and seek professional help if the holiday blues become too much to handle.

Depression can hit more severely in service members who are spending their holiday season in their barracks room alone, said Nelson.

"The best way to combat this depression is to find a support group," Nelson said. "It doesn't have to be from a church, but just a group of friends that all share a common interest that you can hang out with during the holidays.

"The worst thing is to isolate themselves," continued Nelson. "This is supposed to be the most wonderful time of the year, but they feel like crud. They need to get out and enjoy their time off work."

The Combat Center and surrounding community host programs to help homesick Marines and sailors. Information, Tickets and Tours sells discounted tickets to a variety of places including Knotts Berry Farm and cabins at Lake Havasu, Ariz.

"People who lived in a city might get depressed if they are stuck in Twentynine Palms," said Morris, a Yucca Valley, Calif., native. "I suggest they get on a bus, or drive to Palms Springs [Calif.] or Cathedral City [Calif.] so it reminds them a little bit more like home."

The Adopt-a-Marine program is also available during Thanksgiving and Christmas day, where families from Southern California are opening their homes to Marines and sailors for the holidays.

Service members also have a high chance of becoming depressed after the holiday season, especially if they went home and spent time with family and friends.

"We see a lot of depressed Marines when they start coming back from the holidays," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Fernando Bobadilla, the leading petty officer at the mental health clinic at Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital. "The get back to the desert and homesickness just kicks in. They miss home, their family, friends and they don't want to be here."

Bobadilla, a Subic Bay, Philippines, native, says the best way to get over the homesickness is to call home and speak with their family to find an outlet to release the pent up emotion.

"It may be hard in some males, but confiding in a friend about your feelings also helps," continued Bobadilla.

If the holiday blues become too much to handle, talk to a chaplain or visit the counseling center for further help.



The holiday blues can hit anyone, anywhere, but there are services aboard the Combat Center to assist in preventing and combating depression.



Interested in starting a great new career? Come join the next American Red Cross Dental Assistant Training Program!

The next session of the American Red Cross Dental Assistant Training Program will begin Jan. 12. To be eligible for this training program, you must be 18 years or older and a military sponsored ID card holder.

The program consists of approximately 750 hours of classroom and clinical experience. Hours are scheduled roughly 6:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Participants must also complete an Adult CPR course and have current immunizations. Reimbursement for childcare or transportation is not available. While this is a significant commitment, the Dental Clinic provides quality training and trainees will leave the program with marketable skills.

Applications are available at the Red Cross office located at the Village Center and must be completed and returned by the deadline date of Jan. 2. Applicants will be interviewed on Jan. 6 and notified of their selection status within two days. Due to the chemicals and radiation students may be exposed to through the course, women who are pregnant may not be considered for this program. Each class is small to ensure quality training.

COURTESY PHOTO

Completed applications must be returned to the Red Cross office at the Village Center by the deadline date of Jan. 2. For questions regarding the Dental Assistant Training Program, contact the Red Cross office at 830-7101/6685 or email dentalprogram@american redcross29.org.

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

By enrolling in the American Red Cross Dental Assistant Training Program, you could become a dental technician like Seaman Michealla Argumedo, with the 23rd Dental Company clinic, seen here conducting a routine oral cleaning on Lance Cpl. George Kindler, a Light Armored Vehicle crewman with Company D, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, Oct. 8.



plus get Relax GAS your current auto loan rate by up to Switch your current auto loan to Pacific Marine, where you can relax your rate by up to 2% AFR*, and save — plus get \$100. Relax your current loan rate by up to 2%APR* (as low as 5.50%_{APR}*)
Receive a \$100 bonus deposit after your loan is funded? Defer your first payment for up to 90 days Choose a term of up to 84 months for the lowest possible payment Relax your rate and save with an auto refi from Pacific Marine. **Apply today!** Log on to www.pmcu.com, visit a branch, or contact the Call Center at 1-800-736-4500. **PACIFIC MARINE** -credit union YOU CAN JOIN 1-800-736-4500 • www.pmcu.com Membership open to everyone living or working in San Diego, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties

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OBSERVATION POST

GREEN, from A5

previously spent on solid and hazardous waste disposal.

"Almost \$1 million worth of products have been recycled and returned to the Marines here in the past two years – waste that was previously disposed of," said Mills. "You always have to find better ways of doing business. We're always trying to find ways to make "All the tactics we're using are alused every day in general indusimtry," he added. "We're not reinventing the wheel here. We're just finding processes that work and reaping the benefits for the base, text

ronment." The Combat Center's P2 program is an ever changing initiative, said Lessard. NREA, and the

the Marine Corps and the envi-

the best bang for the best buck.

Marine Corps as a whole, are always looking for ways to improve their pollution prevention procedures.

"Currently, Headquarters Marine Corps is getting ready to test a tracking system that can monitor hazardous waste use from cradle to grave," he said. "Our P2 assessments also look at the use of alternative fuels and other products. If we can't find alternative products, we try to find ways to reduce the amount of hazardous waste we're generating from our current processes."

P2 is not only monitoring and remedying solid and hazardous waste use, but also tracks air quality, water treatment, facilities maintenance and more. The P2 initiative has spread its wings at the Combat Center and will continue to evolve to fit the needs of the base and the Marine Corps. "To put it simply, what would

you rather do?" asked Mills hypothetically. "Would you rather pay someone to take out your garbage, or have them pay you to take it? It's all about cost diversion and cost avoidance. Even if we see no profit, as long as we're keeping the environment safe for the Marines and their families, we're doing a good job."



Combat Center Trader Ads

AUTOMOTIVE

2003 DODGE 1500 QUAD-CAB V-8. All power, trailer, parking, chrome tow wheels, low milage, refinance with NFCU for \$240/month. Call (928) 581-9351.12/5/08

2007 HONDA ACCORD EX.

Excellent Condition only 34,071 miles! Sunroof, automatic transmission, alloy wheels. Asking \$17,500. (410) 279-2477. 11/28/08

2005 HONDA ACCORD SE.

Moon Window Power 6 Cylinder \$16,500 leave message 367-3326. 11/28/08

The deadline for submitting Trader ads is noon Wednesday, for the upcoming Friday's paper.

Trader Ad Forms are available at the Public Affairs Office and may be filled out during normal working hours at Bldg. 1417. **TOYOTA TACOMA TRUCK** BED DIVIDER. Fits 2005-2008 models. Excellent condition. Asking \$200. Contact 835-4178. 11/28/08

2003 DODGE QUADCAB RAM 2500 Beautiful/well maintained. New brakes/tires \$12,200 (under blue book). Call Don 830-5581. 11/21/08 2006 SILVERADO 1500 HD for sale. Lots of extras. Call 898-5549 for more details. 11/14/08

2001 HARLEY DAVIDSON 883 XL. 6,000 miles. garage-kept, screaming eagle exhaust, \$4,500. Call Billy Gillenwater at (910) 548-1373 or 830-7399. 11/14/08

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

MOTORCYCLE VSTAR 1100 For sale by owner. Low miles. \$6,200 Call Alfred 362-2512 10/24/08

1986 FORD F-250 TRUCK. Extra-cab, diesel 6.9, speed with overdrive. Set up for gooseneck or 5th wheel. \$3,500 OBO. Call 447-0499. 10/10/08

EASTON 8 FT CARBON AIR HOCKEY TABLE. Model X6896, two years old. \$400. Call 865-0168. 12/5/08

MISC.

CRAFT SHOW at Sagewood Manor Apartments. 6215 Ocotillo Ave. off Adobe Rd. Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Great Prices. 12/5/08

Web site at: http://www.29 palms.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

LUGGAGE HARTMAN FOR SALE. Two suitcases, one carry-on. Tweed, \$500 set. Bose 3-2-1 system, older model, \$500. Call 660-9153 after 6 p.m. 11/28/08

FOR SALE KENMORE WASHER AND DRYER great condition, \$200. Free color TV. Call Chris at 362-5293. 11/21/08

KITTEN, 4 MO. OLD FEMALE Very loving, to indoor home. \$15. Call 362-4131. 11/14/08

LARGE BREAKFRONT CHINA CABINET. Oak finish. \$300. firm. Call Stephen at 567-0400. 11/14/08

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.

1,000'S OF COLLECTIBLE BASEBALL, FOOTBALL **STAR TREK & STAR WARS** CARDS (Also some basketball) Many dollars below appraised value. Call Stephen at 567-0400. 11/14/08

NINE OUTDOOR POTTED PLANTS for sale. Several varieties, \$45 for all. Call (559) 904-7326. 11/7/08

BOWFLEX EXTREME, Excellent Cond \$800 OBO AT&T Blackberry Pearl good Cond \$100 OBO. Call 401-3739. 11/7/08

SALE KENMORE FOR WHITE ELECTRIC RANGE. Self-cleaning, dual heating area with ceramic smooth top and warmer zone, with manual, like new. \$400 OBO. Call 361-3686. 11/7/08

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

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

SNCO EVENING DRESS Mess with GySgt chevrons 42R, trousers 34 all accessories included, like new worn only twice \$380 obo. Blues jacket 41R anodized buttons, 2 trousers 1 33R/30L \$50 all 3. Call 408-3505. 10/24/08

25 CUBIC FOOT KENMORE REFRIGERATOR Excellent condition, \$400 call 368-7976. 10/17/08

BASEBALL PITCHBACK AND BATTING TEE Pitchback is \$25, and Batting Tee is \$10 Call 368-7976. 10/17/08

SEVEN **CLASSIC-STYLE** BALL GOWNS, all black \$50 for each gown, Call 368-7976. 10/17/08

32 INCH TV Two years old, still in excellent condition \$150 910-9300 10/17/08

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

STX, from A1

multiple parts or lanes that allow the Marines to teach, coach and mentor while Iraqi and Afghan role players execute the tasks. The lanes include a meet and greet, site exploitation, room clearing, cordon, urban movement, medical lane, staff planning and vehicle check points.

The goal is to "provide immersion based training to expose the Marines to the complexities of operating with for-eign security forces," said Lt. Col. Richard Warmbold, the deputy director for Advisor Training Group.

The meet and greet and staff planning lanes are the most important because they are mission essential, Kinner said. The sole purpose of these deployed Marines is to enable their Iraqi and Afghan counterparts to accomplish assigned missions more professionally and independently, which requires time getting to know and understand the foreign security forces capabilities so they can be better advised.

The meet and greet allows the Marines to initially meet the foreign security force role players that they will be living and work-

pose of this aspect of the training is to begin developing a relationship with their counterparts, practice language skills, and interacting and employing their interpreter.

Staff planning allows advisor teams to conduct more work with foreign security force role players, Kinner said. This allows the Marines to learn more about their foreign personalities, counterparts' morale, daily battle rhythm, patrol cycle, current and upcoming missions, and logistical and communication status of the security forces.

"It focuses the advisors on the mission they are about to embark on and the importance of the relationship that is formed with the foreign security forces they are embedding with," Warmbold said.

All of the lanes are designed to challenge a team as a whole in a stressful environment, Kinner said. The Marines will leave the lanes with a stronger confidence in stressful situations and more polished skill set.

"I have been involved in advisor training for more than two years, and I have yet to see any training conducted by any organization that measures up to the

ing with, Kinner said. The pur-



Marines prepare to evacuate a mock casualty out of a simulated Iraqi town during a Situational Training Exercise Nov. 20 and 21 on Range 220A aboard the Combat Center. This STX is a unique event that trains small groups of Marines to be advisors for foreign security forces.

quality I witnessed," said Army Col. Michael Clark, the deputy director for the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance, who observed the

Marines in the training exercise to analyze and disseminate information to increase the effectiveness of all advisor training. "From the outstanding role players to the contemporary scenarios to the excellent cadre running the training, it all adds up to a first rate training experience for the students."

WAL-MART, from A6

How many people must die for someone else to save a few dollars on a television? One thing that really shocked me is this happened at a Wal-Mart, which is already home to some of the lowest prices around. The people who killed Damour are not only murderers, but also cheap skates.

When I think about the importance Americans put on the purchasing of material goods, I can only hang my head in shame. It's this type of behavior that puts this country in a negative light – it characterthe greed stereotypical izes Americans are so infamous for in other countries.

I guarantee none of the people who were involved in the "doorbuster sale" at that Wal-Mart are thinking about the man they killed that day. What do they care? They

got great bargains on electronics!

The Nassau County police are sifting through hours of video footage to try and identify the ringleaders of the stampede. I hope they find every single one of them and, to borrow a cliché, throw the book at them. Every single one of those people deserves what may be coming. My only glimmer of hope is that if the police don't get them, karma will.

Instead of enjoying the rest of their holiday weekend, Damour's friends and family, some of whom are employees who were also working that morning, mourned the death of an innocent man trampled my a greedy mob.

Damour's coworkers had to continue working that day, because the store reopened to the public at 1 p.m. They said they know many of the people involved in the stampede were

coming back into the store to shop later that day.

"I look at these people's faces and I keep thinking one of them could have stepped on him," said one employee, in a www.nydaily news.com article. "How could you take a man's life to save \$20 on a TV?"

I've never really condoned these shopping sprees, or the commercialism of major holidays in general, but now I really frown upon it. I get mad when I have to wait in line at the grocery store, so you can imagine how furious I am about these deaths.

All that's left for me to do is hope Americans can get through the rest of their holiday shopping without increasing the body count. Sadly, my optimism for an absence of more 50 percent off sales ending in tragedy is fading fast.

DAV, from A4

September. "We will continue working through our legislative and grassroots efforts to ensure passage of this legislation that will make significant improvements in care for women veterans.

"For several years, the DAV has urged that the VA conduct further research on the needs of women veterans," he added. "Now it is vital to examine the particular needs of women veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan."

Violante said some of the ways the VA could help would be to expand counseling services for spouses and children of combat

veterans. Since women veterans may play a different role in their households, counseling should be expanded to include the families as well.

The DAV is working hard to pass legislation to help women veterans receive the medical care they need, Pagdilao. said Although there is little activity in the Combat Center area so far, the initiative is rapidly being pushed forward the help those women who have answered the call to duty.

For more information about the Stand Up for Veterans program, call Pagdilao at 830-4131, or log on to http://www. standup4vets.org.



On approved credit. Plus government fees and taxes, any finance charges, any dealer document preparation charge, and any emission charge. Exp. 12-9-08

Y.V. Chrysler 29 Palms10%Service Department!10%WillitARYWillitARYWe service allMash with30-60-90KSERVICEYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerriceYerrice</