

# OBSERVATION Post

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MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

DECEMBER 19, 2008

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

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## 2/7 remembers their courageous brothers



SGT. RAY LEWIS

Maj. Lee Helton, the executive officer of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, stands at parade rest in front of the battalion during 2/7's memorial service Dec. 12 at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field. Twenty men gave their lives during 2/7's recent deployment to Afghanistan.

### CPL. MARGARET HUGHES

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

On a somber day with overcast skies, a chill breeze blew over a ceremony of service members, family and friends joined together to forever memorialize in their hearts and minds the bravery of their brothers-in-arms and protectors of freedom.

Marines and sailors with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment gathered with service members, friends and family for a memorial service Dec. 12 at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, to pay respects to 20 men who gave the ultimate sacrifice during the unit's recent deployment to Afghanistan.

"Today we memorialize our brave fallen," said Gunnery Sgt.

See **BROTHERS, A10**



SGT. RAY LEWIS

A ceremonial firing detail waits to receive the command to prepare to fire during the memorial service. Service members, family and friends joined together to pay their respects to their brothers and loved ones lost.

### 2/7's Fallen Warriors

**Sgt. Michael T. Washington**, 20, of Tacoma, Wash., killed June 14.

**Pfc. Michael R. Patton**, 19, of Fenton, Mo., killed June 14.

**Lance Cpl. Layton B. Crass**, 22, of Richmond, Ind., killed June 14.

**Pfc. Dawid Pietrek**, 24, of Bensenville, Ill., killed June 14.

**Capt. Eric D. Terhune**, 34, of Lexington, Ky., killed June 19.

**Lance Cpl. Andrew F. Whitacre**, 21, of Bryant, Ind., killed June 19.

**Sgt. Matthew E. Mendoza**, 24, of San Antonio, killed June 20.

**Afghan interpreter Mohammad Abaid Dawary**, killed June 20.

**Navy Hospital Corpsman Dustin K. Burnett**, 19, of Fort Mohave, Ariz., killed June 20.

**Staff Sgt. Christopher D. Strickland**, 25, of Labelle, Fla., killed June 25.

**Lance Cpl. Ivan I. Wilson**, 22, of Clearlake, Calif., killed July 21.

**Lance Cpl. Jacob J. Toves**, 27, of Grover Beach, Calif., killed Aug. 14.

**Lance Cpl. Juan Lopez-Castaneda**, 29, of Mesa, Ariz., killed Aug. 14.

**Cpl. Anthony G. Mihalo**, 23, of Naperville, Ill., killed Aug. 14.

**Sgt. Jerome C. Bell Jr.**, 29, of Auburn, N.Y., killed Sept. 19.

**Cpl. Jason A. Karella**, 20, of Anchorage, Ala., killed Oct. 9.

**Cpl. Adrian Robles**, 21, of Scottsbluff, Neb., killed Oct. 22.

**Lance Cpl. San Sim**, 23, of Santa Ana, Calif., killed Oct. 22.

**Army Specialist Deon L. Taylor**, 30, of New York, killed Oct. 22.

**Capt. Trevor J. Yurista**, 32, of Pleasant Valley, N.Y., killed Oct. 27.

### This Day in Marine Corps History

-Dec. 20, 1989-

Operation Just Cause was launched in Panama. Cpl. Garreth C. Isaak was killed and three others were wounded.



### See page 4

Combat Center gets drilled



### See page 7

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas

# Rancho Mirage Boy Scout gives big to troops



AIMEE HANDAL

Stephen Handal stands next to several care packages at his home in Rancho Mirage, Calif.

**SGT. REGINA ORTIZ**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Stephen Handal, a 14-year-old Boy Scout from Rancho Mirage, Calif., led efforts to assemble and deliver more than 635 care packages to deployed Marines from the Combat Center.

Handal, a Life Scout and eighth-grade student at St. Theresa School in Palm Springs, Calif., wanted to do something patriotic for a leadership project required to attain the Eagle Scout rank, according to an article in the Desert Sun published Dec. 13. Although his goal was to collect enough items to send 150 care packages, he accumulated items for more than 200 care packages. He then received a \$5,000 donation which allowed him to buy items for an additional 435 care packages.

The care packages included Christmas stockings, a personalized letter, beef jerky, sunflower seeds, playing cards, Red Vines, Oreos, cheese and crackers, granola bars, Cup of Noodles and hot chocolate.

"I feel honored to be able to help U. S. Marines who are doing so much for our country," Handal said.

On Dec. 7, Handal and fellow Life Scouts Robert Routon, a 15-year-old Palm Springs, Calif., native and Killian Buggy, a 13-year-old Palm Desert, Calif., native, delivered 80 boxes containing 635 care packages and bulk items such as coffee, Gatorade, books and magazines to the Zone, where they were unloaded by Marines and will be shipped through Desert Mail Call by the Single Marine Program.

## Safest Automobiles Announced

Find out if the 2009 model truck or car you want to buy is rated as one of the safest. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, an independent, non-profit organization funded by automobile insurance companies recently released their list of the trucks and automobiles that rate their Top Safety Pick for 2009. The list and information on how vehicles are tested and rated can be found at <http://www.iihs.org>.

*Note: This is provided for information only and is not an official endorsement of any product.*

## Employee Spotlight

**Name:** Michelle Pimentel  
**Hometown:** Mesquite, Texas  
**Organization:** Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society  
**Job Title:** Relief Services Assistant  
**Job Duties:** volunteer and director support, case and administrative work.  
**What Do You Like Best About Your Job:** The volunteers and seeing the burden lifted off the society's clients and the look of relief on their faces.  
**Significant Achievements:** Recently received a level three certification at the society.  
**Hobbies:** Running and reading.  
**Military Service:** none, wife of 2nd Lt. Benjamin A. Pimentel.  
**Time at the Combat Center:** since July



## A TRIBUTE TO SAM THE SHAM

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15			16				
17					18			19				
20				21			22					
23			24	25			26					
			27				28			29	30	31
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45							46	47				
			48				49			50	51	52
53	54	55					56			57		
58						59			60	61		
62						63			64			
65						66			67			

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**ACROSS**

- 1. Place for a barbecue
- 6. Any ship
- 9. Bank take backs
- 14. \_\_\_-garde
- 15. Itsy-bitsy
- 16. For go the ceremony
- 17. Attorney's means of preparation, perhaps
- 19. U.S. Grant foe
- 20. Order from Domino's
- 21. Make a pick
- 22. Department store section
- 23. "The," for one
- 26. Elisabeth of "Leaving Las Vegas"
- 27. Perjurer
- 32. Brazen woman
- 35. Kind of palm
- 36. From \_\_\_ Z
- 37. Blog comments

**DOWN**

- 39. Fannie \_\_\_
- 40. Coll. admission factor
- 43. Platform part
- 45. Utter nonsense
- 48. Trash can, on a PC
- 49. Solar "blemish"
- 53. Demand's partner
- 56. Inflate, as expenses
- 57. Arctic explorer John \_\_\_
- 58. Holiday paper
- 59. Sources of tunes, to some musicians
- 62. Grant player
- 63. Actress \_\_\_Longoria Parker
- 64. Place to moor
- 65. Hurler Johnson, "The Big Unit"
- 66. Cub Scout group
- 67. See 15-Across

**DOWN**

- 32. Fastener on a trunk
- 33. Provo's state
- 34. Explorer Hernando de \_\_\_
- 37. N'awlins sandwich
- 38. Seaport of Algeria
- 41. Used scissors on
- 42. Place to buy a mountain bike
- 43. Sword's superior
- 44. Fleur-de-\_\_\_
- 46. Honshu native
- 47. Without a stitch
- 50. Working stiff
- 51. Like a bucket of song
- 52. In a peeved mood
- 53. Evil Disney lion
- 54. Celestial bear
- 55. One of the Ivies
- 56. Apply macadam to
- 59. G-man or T-man
- 60. Took the bait
- 61. 1300 hours

## Centerspeak

If you could domesticate any wild animal and keep it as a pet, what would you tame and why?

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



SGT. GRANT QUINN  
 HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE CO., 3RD LIGHT ARMORED RECONNAISSANCE

"A wolf because they work as a team and there is always a leaer of the pack."



CPL. MIGUEL VALENZUELA  
 HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE CO., 1ST TANK BATTALION

"I would tame a lion because I am a fan of cats, and it is one of the biggest cats I could get."



PFC. AMJAD SHOUEKANI  
 CO. A, MARINE CORPS COMMUNICATIONS-ELECTRONICS SCHOOL

"I would want a Siberian tiger because it would be cool to see it attack something."

## OBSERVATION POST

**Commanding General** Brig. Gen. Charles M. Gurganus

Public Affairs Officer Jennie E. Haskamp  
 Public Affairs Chief Gunnery Sgt. Chris W. Cox

Press Chief/Editor Sgt. Regina N. Ortiz  
 Layout, Design Leslie Shaw

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<b>FRI. 12/19 - 1/4</b> <b>Season of Light Exhibition</b> Time: All day event Where: Hi-Desert Nature Museum 57090 29 Palms Hwy. Yucca Valley. For more info call 369-7212 or visit <a href="http://www.hidesertnaturemuseum.org">http://www.hidesertnaturemuseum.org</a>	<b>FRI., SAT., &amp; SUN. - 1/4</b> <b>WildLights at The Living Desert</b> Time: 6 - 9 p.m. Where: The Living Desert 47-900 Portola Ave. Palm Desert For more info call 346-5694 or visit <a href="http://www.livingdesert.org">http://www.livingdesert.org</a>	<b>FRI. 12/19 - 12/23</b> <b>A Christmas Cactus</b> Times: Mon.-Fri. 8 p.m. Sat. 7 p.m., Sun. 2 p.m. Where: Blak Box Theatre 61231 29 Palms Hwy. Joshua Tree. For more info call 366-3777 or visit <a href="http://www.hidesertculturalcenter.com">http://www.hidesertculturalcenter.com</a>	<b>FRI. 12/19</b> <b>Holiday Spectacular</b> Time: 8 p.m. Where: McCallum Theatre For more info call 340-ARTS or visit <a href="http://www.mccallumtheatre.com">http://www.mccallumtheatre.com</a>	<b>FRI. 12/19</b> <b>Martin Nievera &amp; Brian McKnight</b> Time: 6 p.m. Where: Morongo Casino Resort 49500 Seminole Dr., Cabazon For more info call (800) 252-4499 or visit <a href="http://www.morongocasinoresort.com">http://www.morongocasinoresort.com</a>
<b>SUN. 12/28</b> <b>Lui Shan with special guest Suzan Guterres</b> Time: 3 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino 46-200 Harrison Pl. Coachella. For more info call (800) 585-3737 or visit <a href="http://www.spotlight29.com">http://www.spotlight29.com</a>	<b>SAT. 12/27 - MON. 12/29</b> <b>Ventriloquist, Terry Fator</b> Time: 7 p.m. Where: Morongo Casino Resort 49500 Seminole Dr., Cabazon For more info call (800) 252-4499 or visit <a href="http://www.morongocasinoresort.com">http://www.morongocasinoresort.com</a>	<b>SAT. 12/27</b> <b>JT Village Art Market</b> Time: 8 a.m. Where: Joshua Tree Retreat & Event Center 59700 29 Palms Hwy., Joshua Tree. For more info call 365-8371 or visit <a href="http://www.jtrcc.org">http://www.jtrcc.org</a>	<b>WED. 12/31</b> <b>Ring in 2009 with Sarah Gayle Meech and StoneHoney</b> Time: 8 p.m. Where: Pappy & Harriet's 53688 Pioneer Rd. Pioneertown. For more info call 365-5956 or visit <a href="http://www.pappyandharriets.com">http://www.pappyandharriets.com</a>	<b>WED. 12/31</b> <b>New Year's Eve With Ramon Ayala</b> Time: 8 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino 46-200 Harrison Pl., Coachella For more info visit <a href="http://www.spotlight29.com">http://www.spotlight29.com</a> or call (800) 585-3737

# Palm Springs Aerial Tramway: An adventure for all seasons

**LENA ZIMMERSCHIED**  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER

PALM SPRINGS, Calif. – Think of the desert and pictures of swimming pools and golf courses come to mind. But adventure? For that you can take the 10-minute, 2.5-mile ride which begins at the Valley Station – elevation 2,643 feet and ends at the Mountain Station – elevation 8,516 feet and is the gateway to

the Mount San Jacinto State Park and Wilderness area.

The top of the Tramway is transformed into a pristine snow covered playground during the winter. Visitors can try their hand at cross-country skiing or snowshoeing, enthusiasts have found the area to be unsurpassed in its challenging trails. Didn't bring your own? Rental equipment is available at the Adventure Center, which is open from mid-

November until mid-April (snow conditions permitting). For the more adventurous and well-experienced, snow camping offers a special way to spend a weekend, or plunge into a good old-fashioned snowball fight.

During the summer months, when it is well into the 100s in the desert, the mountains offer more than 54 miles of hiking trails, camping and guided nature walks as a pleasant alternative to chilling

out. Remember it's nearly 40 degrees cooler at the top. Trails range from the awe-inspiring 5 1/2-mile trek to the peak of San Jacinto. At 10,834 feet, it is the second tallest mountain in southern California, to the one-mile nature walk through picturesque

Long Valley, located just behind the Mountain Station. Primitive campsites are located throughout the State Park. Wilderness permits are required for any hiking or backpacking and may be obtained from the Ranger Station located in Long Valley.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

A Palm Springs Aerial Tramway car approaching the Mountain Station at Mount San Jacinto State Park.



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<b>15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs Friday</b>							
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
<b>15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs Friday</b>							
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			
<b>15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs Saturday/Sunday*</b>							
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
<b>15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs Saturday/Sunday*</b>							
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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Four Christmases (PG13) Fri-Wed: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00	<b>OPENING CHRISTMAS DAY</b> Bedtime Stories (PG) Dec. 25th. Marley & Me (PG) Dec. 25th. Valkyrie (PG13) Dec. 25th. Call Theatre for Showtimes www.cinema6theatre.com	

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# MCAGCC, Seabees seek energy in earth

**LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN**  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Public Works Division and sailors from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 40 at Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme, Calif., have teamed up to find a source of renewable geothermal energy in the Combat Center's West training area.

The hunt began when NMCB 40's drilling team of 20 sailors began their operations at the first well site Dec. 2.

"Basically what we're doing is drilling five geological wells," said Chief Petty Officer Jeremy Trujillo, the NMCB 40 drilling

team officer in charge. "We're taking each well down to about 1,000 feet, testing the temperature of the fluid when it goes into the hole and when it exits the hole.

"We generally drill for geothermal energy near fault lines," added the Albuquerque, N.M., native. "Our ultimate goal is to try to obtain geothermal energy caused by friction from fault lines."

Since operations can't be halted once drilling begins, the Seabees of NMCB 40 have been working around the clock since they began drilling at the first well site earlier this month. The 20 sailors have been working 10-hour shifts in

See SEABEES, A8



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Seabees with the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 40 drilling team from Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme, Calif., erect a drill tower for work at the Combat Center's West training area Tuesday. The Seabees are helping the Public Works Division find hot spots for geothermal energy in the West training area, which can be used to support the base and cut down energy usage.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Petty Officer 1st Class Peter Hidalgo, a construction mechanic with the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 40 drilling team from Naval Base Ventura County, Port Hueneme, Calif., pours a chemical compound called sodium bentonite into water wells at the Combat Center's West training area Tuesday.

# Physical Therapy keeps rehabilitation on track

**LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL**  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

In addition to surgery and other areas of medical treatment, the Combat Center's Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital supports Marines and sailors trying to return to full strength with the hospital's physical therapy department, headed by Cmdr. Dale Jensen.

The department has been around since the hospital was established, said Jensen, who is from Boulder City, Nev., and works to help service members recover and rehabilitate themselves from injuries or surgeries. The department remains open

from 7:30 a.m. until 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

"We are a predominantly orthopedic clinic," he said. "Patients see us for rehabilitation conditioning. Our staff works with various treatments to help people as they try to get back to full duty."

The department's staff of eight sailors includes two physical therapists, four physical therapy technicians and one administrative clerk, with Jensen as the head of the department.

They see approximately 1,200 to 1,500 patients a month for physical therapy. Jensen said his department sees patients primarily for three types of injuries.

"Necks, backs and knees are the three most common conditions we treat patients for," Jensen said. "Because of all the running that sailors and Marines do for PT [physical training] their joints get worn on so badly from time to time."

The department also sports new equipment and the staff offers training in the Combat Center's pool when it is available.

"We've received recent upgrades to our equipment, and an expansion to our facilities," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Zachary Boles, a physical therapy technician and a native of Decatur, Ill. "The expansions began in

February of this year, and were finished recently in October. We've made a smooth transition into using all our new equipment, along with our aquatic training when the pool is open."

Boles elaborated, the pool training is low-impact and is used to help promote full-body PT so patients are able to get back into shape without aggravating old injuries.

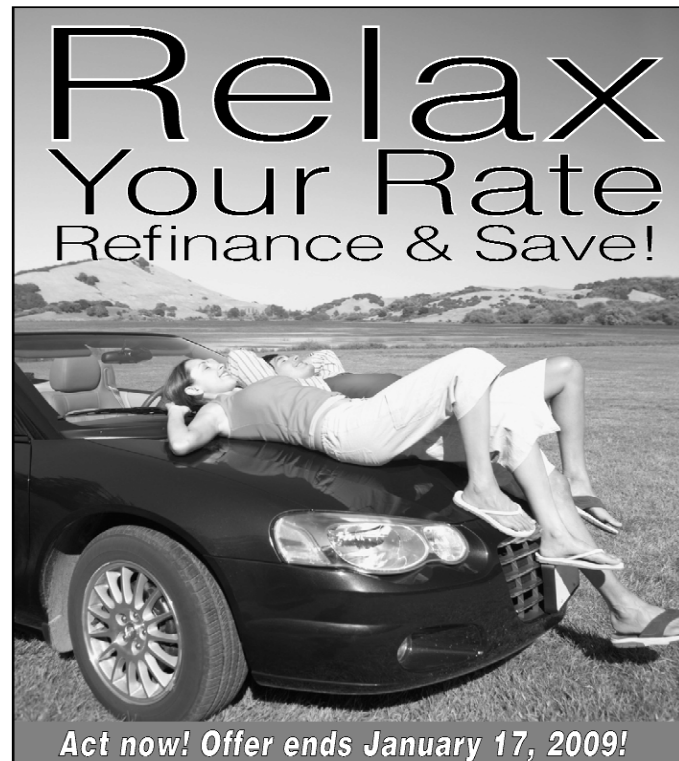
Petty Officer 1st Class Sheryl Woodards, a physical therapy technician and a Chicago native, has been doing her job for more than 10 years. Woodards puts her experience to use as the senior enlisted member of the department.

"We always strive to make progress in how we treat people, interact with patients and most importantly help people get back to where they were before their injury," Woodards said.

More than how severe the injury is, sometimes simply putting off treatment is what can make recovery time longer than necessary.

"Treatments are different depending on severity of injuries and how long it took them to get prescribed for the treatment and begin it," she said. "Also, we can treat anything from fingers to entire limbs, or pain in the torso, there's lots of different treatments for anything we encounter."

Jensen said that no matter what, the most important thing the department works for is to help people get back to where they were before, stop pain and heal injuries.



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## HOT TOPICS

### FINRA MILITARY FINANCIAL EDUCATION FORUMS

The Financial Industry Regulatory Authority will be hosting Military Financial Education Forums at the Protestant Chapel from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. for all Marines, sailors, family and Department of Defense personnel. FINRA is the largest non-governmental regulator for all securities firms doing business in the U.S. Federal law gives FINRA the authority to discipline those that violate the rules. They are considered unbiased educators for the consumer/investor. A few of the topics that they disseminated information on are: Mutual Funds, Educational Plans, Savings for Retirement, and Scams. This foundation does not sell anything; it is solely an educational service.

### LEGAL ASSISTANCE OFFICE CLOSURE FOR HOLIDAYS

The Legal Assistance 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 05, Close at 12 p.m., Jan 16 and reopen at 12 p.m., Jan 20. Due to the holiday hours, Notary and Will Executions will be Tuesdays from 1-3 p.m.: Nov 24-28, Dec 22-26, and Dec 29-Jan 2.

### PROVOST MARSHAL'S OFFICE CLOSURE

The Vehicle Registration Office will close at midnight on Dec. 24 and reopen at 8 p.m. on Dec. 27 for the Christmas holiday. Visitor Passes will be issued at the Main Gate.

### 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>.

### 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.

### 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](mailto:bradley.wiens@med.navy.mil), or stop by the clinic. PHAs are not performed on Thursdays.

# PMO builds solid relationship with local law enforcement

LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

In an effort to build a solid relationship with local law enforcement agencies, Marines from the Combat Center's Provost Marshal's Office observed officers from the California Highway Patrol and the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department during a sobriety and driver's license checkpoint Dec. 12 in Yucca Valley, Calif.

The Combat Center's provost marshal, Maj. Pietro P. Scarselli, said PMO, CHP and SBCSD, meet on a monthly basis and have been discussing a joint venture in order to foster a common understanding amongst each other and provide Marines with a glimpse of how civilian law enforcement operates.

"We feel this is a valuable opportunity for our military policemen to increase their proficiency," he explained.

Scarselli, a native of New York,

also said such collaborations with civilian law enforcement play an important role in community relations, as well as ensuring that the lines of communication are open, so when joint help is needed by the local community, for example during a natural disaster, the process runs smoothly.

Officer Robert McCloud, the CHP's public information officer, said any time his office gets the opportunity to work with the Combat Center in an effort to increase awareness about drunk driving, they are happy to do so.

McCloud agreed with Scarselli that joint ventures, such as the one on the night of Dec. 12, will help the two offices build a stronger professional relationship and the willingness to assist each other in their attempts to enforce law and order.

While the role of the Marines at the checkpoint Dec. 12 was to possibly assist with traffic control and to take into custody any military personnel processed by the

civilian authorities, the patrolman from PMO instead just observed the many aspects of civilian law enforcement and the operation of a sobriety checkpoint.

The Marines watched how the officers interacted with local residents, worked in teams of two, moved around and checked vehicles, performed sobriety tests, communicated amongst each other, and ensured the safe passage of motorists by identifying intoxicated or unlicensed drivers.

To help fight against the cold temperature, those at the checkpoint were provided with heaters and snacks, which also provide all of those involved with the opportunity to introduce themselves to one another and build professional relationships.

"I think this is a good thing because it helps improve public relations and relations with local law enforcement," said Lance Cpl. Chris Tim, a PMO patrolman who



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Pfc. Bryan J. Eccleston, a patrolman with the Provost Marshal's Office, observes as a California Highway Patrolman performs a sobriety test during a sobriety and driver's license checkpoint operated by the CHP and San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office at an intersection in Yucca Valley, Calif., Dec. 12.

observed the checkpoint Dec. 12.

The Lexington, N.C., native said it's a good experience seeing how CHP and SBCSD function because

it provides those Marines who have considered entering civilian law enforcement with an idea of how civilian agencies serve and protect.

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# Headquarters Battalion brings home Best of the West title

**RICHARDSON MIRON**

*THE CAMP PENDLETON SCOUT*

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – On a gray, gloomy Saturday afternoon, Marine Aircraft Group 39's football team found itself in a dark, dreary place. At least that's what it feels like after you lose the big game.

"This is definitely heartbreaking," MAG-39 defensive lineman David Jones said softly after the final seconds of the Best of the West Championship ticked off the 11 Area field's scoreboard.

"We wanted to do it for our coach (Gary Munford), we wanted to do it for ourselves. We overcame a lot this year, and we came with the intention of winning this game. But it just didn't happen."

The Mad Dawgs' magical run

through the Pendleton Cup Football League's All-Base Playoffs came crashing down in the annual showdown that pits the base's top intramural squad against the best from Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Headquarters Battalion.

The Mad Dawgs' home-field advantage didn't amount to much as quarterback Brett Hayes coughed the ball over three times in the fourth quarter and the visitors rallied for an impressive 28-18 victory.

Hayes, who had played so brilliantly during the postseason – including the first three quarters of action against Headquarters – made one mistake after another during the final 12 minutes of play. The visitors were more than ready to capitalize.

"We had some turnovers and

they scored on some broken plays, and that's what decided the game," Munford said. "The only thing I can say is the ball just didn't bounce our way."

Hayes concurred, saying the game's turn of events was "shocking." Things had started so well for the Mad Dawgs, who looked capable of blowing out their rival during the opening 10 minutes of action.

MAG-39 marched 60 yards on seven plays to open the game with a 20-yard scoring pass from Hayes to Jeremy Rykard. Then, on Headquarters' first possession, MAG-39 recorded a safety after three ugly plays and a botched

snap on a punt attempt gave the Mad Dawgs two easy points.

Sitting with an 8-0 lead, MAG-39 looked to have the game under control – not that the visitors noticed.

"We knew we were going to come back," Headquarters' quarterback Charles Jefferson said. "We just had that confidence."

Trailing 8-0, Headquarters finally got something started when Jefferson hit Anthony Eldridge with a deep pass that went 81 yards, setting up a game-tying score by fullback James Griffin.

The two teams traded two

See BEST, A11



PAT CUBEL

Headquarters Battalion's quarterback, Charles Jefferson, prepares to pass the ball at the Best of the West Championship game at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 13.



PAT CUBEL

Anthony Eldridge, a Headquarters Battalion receiver, was named Most Valuable Player of the Best of the West Championship game and received two touchdown passes.

## Toys for Tots brings Christmas cheer



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Douglass Sparks, 2, inspects which hot wheel car he wants for Christmas during the Toys for Tots pick up aboard the Combat Center Wednesday. The Toys for Tots pick-up allowed parents and guardians to choose one large, one medium and one small toy for each child, along with a stuffed animal, a book and one stocking stuffer. Toys for Tots has been collecting toys throughout October, November and December to help give the children aboard the Combat Center and through the local community a chance at a present-filled Christmas.

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# Winter at the Combat Center



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Santa asks a child how old he is before giving him his Christmas present during the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital Christmas Party at the Combat Center Officer's Club Dec. 12. Santa gave every child ages 12 and younger, a present during the event.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Marines at the Combat Center's Camp Wilson make their way through snow to get back to their K-Span berthing spaces Wednesday during the second of two snow storms which hit the entire Morongo Basin.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Dustin Leef, Combat Center firefighter, puts together a trampoline in support of Santa's Workshop, an annual program put on by the Combat Center Fire Department to assemble families' toys at no cost.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

A Christmas tree stands at the Officer's Club in celebration of the season.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

The Combat Center's welcome sign as seen from the side of Adobe Road in Twentynine Palms, Calif., blanketed with snow as some abnormal weather hit the entire Morongo Basin Wednesday.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

The statue of Robert E. Bush, a corpsman who received the Medal of Honor for bravery in World War II, sits silently as snow falls on the Combat Center Wednesday during a snow storm which hit the entire Morongo Basin. Yucca Valley, Calif., residents experienced similar weather Monday as rain fell and the temperatures dropped below freezing, causing the second of two snow storms this week.

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\$2.8 million was spent on improving Two Mile Road and Utah Trail. \$2.1 million went to rehabilitate Adobe Road. The median on National Park Drive, which adds to both the scenery and the security of the road, is thanks to Measure I dollars.

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**SEABEES, from A4**

crews of five for several weeks. Gary Morrisett, the PWD energy manager, said the base has been trying to reduce the amount of energy it uses through con-

struction and renovation projects. Drilling for geothermal energy will help create a continuous source of energy, and will save money and the environment. "We're looking at using a low temperature heat exchange,

which will basically recycle hot water, then transfer it into a secondary liquid," he said. "The steam created by the transfer will power a turbine for energy, and the water will be put back in the ground and reused.

"We're still in the exploratory phase of this project," added Morrisett. "If we do find enough heat down there, we need to decide if we want to build a geothermal plant here."

The geothermal energy drilling is all a part of the Combat Center's plan to reduce energy usage and increase renewable energy sources aboard the base.

The energy manager for Headquarters Marine Corps at

Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., Scott Houldsworth, said the transition to renewable energy sources is an important part of the Marine Corps' mission.

"We must ensure a secure and reliable energy and water supply to support the operating forces and their families through the energy and water efficient management of facilities' infrastructure," he said. "We also need to reduce the life cycle operating costs of the Marine Corps facilities and manage future commodity price volatility."

PWD has other ongoing projects designed to reduce energy usage aboard the Combat Center, namely the heating and cooling sys-

tems in the buildings, and the interior and exterior lighting on the base.


"We're looking at two key things here - quality of life and energy saving," said Morrisett, a Belleville, Ill., native. "When we're able to tie those two things together, we're able to benefit the base in both ways, and hopefully the Marines as well."

"We've been trying to find different projects and different ideas we can incorporate into the energy saving program," he added. "All the ideas we have in place can either save energy or produce energy."

The next projected energy efficiency goal, which is set by the Department of Energy, is for military installations to be using seven-and-a-half percent renewable energy by the year 2012. Morrisett said the Combat Center is well on its way to reaching that goal.

PWD will continue its initiative to reduce the amount of energy used aboard the base, and will look at alternative, renewable sources of energy to help save the environment surrounding the base.

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*This Week's Spotlight Church*

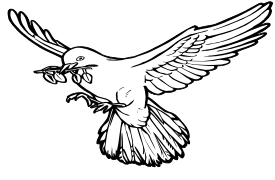
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 Pastor: Rex Shaver  
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# 1st Tanks blows away Steel Knight

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

In conjunction with various other units from 1st Marine Division, 1st Tank Battalion underwent the training evolution known as Steel Knight at the Combat Center Dec. 6 through 12.

The exercise is a large-scale combined arms exercise designed to train different types of units, which included artillery, fixed and rotary-wing aircraft, tanks and amphibious tracked vehicles, combat engineers, and infantry, said Sgt. Maj. Conrad Potts, the battalion sergeant major.

Potts added Steel Knight is great training and very important for his battalion.

"It is the culmination of all the training that goes into a CAX," said Potts, who comes from Louisville, Ky. "It's meant to make sure we can all work together as a team with other units. We can exercise our core competency at the MAGTF [Marine Air Ground Task Force] level. It's good training to get us used to accomplishing our objective in conjunction with other units."

Potts elaborated on the extent of the entire exercise and described the various types of

training conducted by the battalion.

"We have a lot of down time and smaller scenarios where it gives the individual sections time to rehearse for the final exercise," said Potts before the training culmination. "During the final exercise though, it's going to be impressive with all the other elements we're going to see from the other units and weapon systems."

"There's MCLC's [Mine Clearing Line Charges] that are going to go off when the tanks are breaching burms on their push forward during the training," Potts said as he highlighted some aspects of the training. "We're going to have an entire battalion of tanks firing and then moving -- lots of artillery and air. It should be a good show."

Potts talked in depth about the other units involved in the training.

"Other than just us out here, there are multiple other units in support of the operation," he said. "India Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment is out here, along with elements of both 1st and 3rd CEB [Combat Engineer Battalion]. Elements of both 1st and 3rd LAR [Light Armored Reconnaissance] are

also here along with parts of 3rd AABn [Amphibian Assault Battalion]. Fixed and rotary-wing aircraft are out here from several squadrons. Also, all of 11th Marine regiment is here supporting the exercise. They are giving us our artillery support."

Marines who were on the ground participating in the exercise were those like Cpl. Luke Taylor, a radio operator with Company C, 1st Tanks, who comes from Seattle.

"There's a whole bunch of different units out here right now," Taylor said. "It's a huge CAX. It's great training for the tankers. Charlie Company; they're the next to deploy. I think it's going to be a good workup for them to gain some experience."

Other members of 1st Tanks did their part in the exercise, the new battalion medical officer, Lt. Cmdr. Marc Dobson, spoke highly of the exercise, and how impressive and complex it was.

"I haven't been with Tanks for even a month, and already this is one of the most impressive things I've seen in my career," said Dobson, who comes from Decatur, Ga. "Not a lot of people get to see stuff like this. It's really impressive to see how complex and interesting an operation like this one is. It takes a lot of coordination, and you see how important every job in the Marine Corps is."

Dobson added he really enjoys his job.

"There's a lot of worse ways to make a living," he said. "It's great that this is what we're all paid to do."

The Steel Knight exercise, which plays counterpart to the battalion's summer exercise, Summer Heat has been held since the 1990's.

The Marines and sailors with 1st Tanks will spend the holiday resting with friends and families before thundering back into their training schedule in January.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Two tanks with Company C, 1st Tank Battalion, roll down a pass to make their way to the next fire mission during the battalion's exercise known as Steel Knight, which ran from Dec. 6 through 12.

## 1st Tanks BAS gets new addition

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

1st Tank Battalion recently received a new battalion medical officer, filling a gap for the billet that has been open for six months.

Lt. Cmdr. Marc Dobson, who comes from Decatur, Ga., said he took the job shortly before Thanksgiving, and spent time in the field training with the Marines for the first time during the Steel Knight training evolution, which took place Dec. 6 through 12.

"I was a medical officer in the Army from 1985 through 1995," said Dobson. "In the Army I was attached to light infantry and airborne units. Right after September 11, 2001, I came back to duty in the Navy. And now I'm here serving with 1st Tanks. It's a great organization to be with."

Dobson elaborated on how highly he thinks of his new battal-

ion.

"Tanks is the best unit I have ever served with," he said. "It's a great unit to work with, great people, and I have never been attached to a Marine unit before, so this is a first for me. I was in the field doing training for the first time with Marines during Steel Knight, and that was a good experience for me."

Dobson said 1st Tank Bn. is a place he would like to stay for the remainder of his career, based on what he has seen from the battalion from the very beginning.

"Right when I got here I got the opinion that this is a great place to be," he said. "Tanks is one of the most professional units I have ever served with. I'd like to stay here as long as possible. I feel right at home. It's a great group to be with."

Dobson said observing 1st Tanks during Steel Knight was one of the most impressive things he's ever seen.

"It was pretty awesome to see

the whole battalion and all their support working together during Steel Knight," Dobson said. "Very impressive. I'm glad these guys are on our side."

"I really enjoyed the training, I got to know a lot of the Marines in the battalion," he added.

The 1st Tank Battalion Aid Station has been without the guidance of a sailor in Dobson's position for some time. The battalion's senior medical department representative, Chief Petty Officer Thomas Teleha, said he is thrilled to have another medical officer to provide care to the Marines and sailors of 1st Tanks.

"We haven't had an M.O. in a long time, since June in fact. It's been strange not having a care provider in that position," said Teleha, who comes from Coraopolis, Pa. "He's a great person to have around. From the beginning, he was getting settled

See BAS, A12



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

A Mine Clearing Line Charge explodes as 1st Tanks prepares to assault through their objective during a portion of the combined arms exercise known as Steel Knight. The exercise ran from Dec. 6 through 12.

## 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.

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

"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)

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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

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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.

### BROTHERS, from A1

Christopher Lillie, the ceremony narrator and battalion administration chief for 2/7, while speaking to the solemn crowd before reading the names of the fallen.

As each name was called, Marines meticulously placed weapons, helmets, boots and pictures in honor of each Marine, sailor, soldier or interpreter who gave their lives, in a traditional Marine memorial; rifle muzzle down, helmet resting on the buttstock, a pair of boots placed at attention and a photo of the service member resting above the boots.

With the placement of each memorial, the fallen men's families in attendance fought back tears as fellow Marines presented crisply folded American flags and bouquets of flowers to them in remembrance of their loved one.

After the last name was called, and flag and flowers were given, Lt. Col. Richard Hall, the commanding officer of 2/7, reflected on the Marines' lives as warriors.

These brave men did not die in vain, Hall said. They gave life and prosperity to those who had none, and gave protection for their brothers who may have

shared the same fate.

"We are here today to remember and to give respect to our fallen sons, husbands, friends and brothers," Hall said. "We will together recount not how each man died, but how each man lived. I want to honor them and carry on their story to anyone who will listen."

With Hall's final remarks, Lt. Russell Hale, the 2/7 chaplain, gave his pastoral reflection to help support the wounded hearts of those who knew the fallen men.

Hale said to entrust that a greater being is there for everyone facing these testing trials, and to live our lives in a manner that is worthy of the calling each person receives.

After Hale conveyed his healing words, bagpiper Maj. Sean Smith played "Amazing Grace" before the battalion was called to attention for a ceremonial role call.

Sgt. Maj. Matthew Brookshire, the sergeant major of 2/7, initially called several Marines whose names answered from the assembled ranks. Brookshire called the names of the fallen, as if calling role. After each name was called, it was only met with silence, while a fellow Marine hung their dog tags over each service member's

rifle and a scarf with the colors of the Afghan flag tied around the buttstock of the Afghan interpreter's memorial.

After the last name was called, the ceremonial firing of rifles and the playing of taps by two buglers brought many to tears.

After colors were called to retire, Hale gave his benediction at the conclusion of the ceremony before friends and family were invited to pay respects to the fallen heroes' memorials and meet the men their loved ones fought next to.

"This is a very emotional day, but it's good to have closing with the families," said Sgt. Joseph France, a machine gun section leader with Company G, when reflecting on the ceremony.

Many families talked with Marines of 2/7, reminiscing on the stories their friends told, while some knelt and prayed in front of the memorial of the man they so dearly missed.

With the heartfelt sound of a mother crying as her forehead touched the tip of the boot on her son's memorial, the families, friends and service members said a last goodbye to their brothers and loved ones.

"On behalf of a grateful nation, we bid farewell to these fallen men," Hall said.



**SGT. RAY LEWIS**  
A Marine holds a bouquet of flowers that he will give to a fallen warriors' family during 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines' memorial service Dec. 12 at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.



**CPL. MARGARET HUGHES**  
Memorials for 20 men who gave their lives during 2/7's recent deployment to Afghanistan are perfectly aligned during their memorial service Dec. 12 at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

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**BEST, from A6**

more scores - MAG-39's coming on a 1-yard run by Hayes and Headquarters' on a 30-yard broken play scramble by Jefferson - taking a 16-16 tie into halftime.

But on the first play of the fourth quarter, Headquarters' defensive back Sean Tate made

the play of the game.

Just six yards away from the end zone, Hayes had the ball knocked loose by Tate, who recovered it, killing what should've been a go-ahead scoring drive for MAG-39.

"I just knew I had to make a play," Tate said of his game-changing turnover.

"I didn't keep control of the ball, so I have to take that. That's on me," said Hayes.

A few plays later, MAG-39 blitzed and Jefferson made it pay with a strike to Eldridge, who beat Larry Mix on the play, racing 84 yards for what turned out to be the game-winning touchdown.

"They blitzed and we were

able to capitalize on the play," said Headquarters' coach Daymian Brown. "All Eldridge had to do was just run to daylight."

Trying to force the action, Hayes threw his first of two fourth quarter interceptions on MAG-39's next possession.

The visitors made the Mad Dawgs pay too, as the talented

Jefferson marched his team to the end zone, where he found Victor Runsewe with an insurance score (3 yards), putting the game out of reach for MAG-39.

"I just take my hat off to Twentynine Palms," Munford said. "They persevered when they could've packed it in. They kept playing."

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**BAS, from A9**

in and preparing himself to be the best at his job that he could be. After Lt. Kane Walsh left last summer, we were without a person in his position, which made doing our job over here much more difficult."

Teleha added, since he has seen the new medical officer doing his job, he thinks highly of

him for his proficiency.

"He is an exceptional medical care provider," said Teleha. "You can really tell that his main concern is doing his best for the Marines and sailors he works with. He truly embodies the provider image; that someone who cares and takes the extra step to get the job done like he should have. It's been outstanding, and I'm glad that

he is part of our team now."

Teleha added Dobson's job, which is to be the senior-most knowledgeable care provider for medical issues to the Marines and sailors of 1st Tank Bn., should be easy for him because of his attitude and skill.

The battalion commanding officer, Lt. Col. Tom Gordon, has even taken notice of the newest addition to the family.

"I know we've been without an M.O. for quite some time now, and it's good to have that crucial spot filled by a skilled person," said Gordon, who comes from Boston. "I know that was his first field operation coming out with Marines during Steel Knight, he really enjoyed it, I think, and took a lot from what he saw of the battalion. He should be a great addition to the team."

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