

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

FEBRUARY 13, 2009 SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957 VOL. 52 ISSUE 6

In transition: ATG trains teams for new mission

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Advisor Training Group, which operates out of the Combat Center's Camp Wilson, provides pre-deployment training to Marines

and Sailors to teach them how to advise and train foreign security forces.

Seven types of transition teams are currently trained by ATG; 96 teams were trained here last year. ATG also supported 2nd Battalion,

7th Marine Regiment, and 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment pre-deployment training last year, said Col. Eugene N. Apicella, the director of ATG and a native of

See ATG, A9



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Staff Sgt. Sam Overton fires a Dragunov Sniper Rifle during the foreign weapons training, which is part of what the Advisor Training Group instructs Marines on before they deploy. Training with foreign weapons is part of what the Advisor Training Group does to help train Marines before they deploy.

Combat Center infantry battalion departs to hit the sands of Al Asad

CPL. MARGARET HUGHES
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

As the chill of the crisp, desert air swept by the neatly-aligned packs of Marines and sailors from Companies B and C 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, friends and families bid farewell to their loved ones in uniform near the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Monday night before they departed for Al Asad, Iraq.

With 1/7's fifth deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Marines' mission will be much different than their previous deployments, said Staff Sgt. James Hammock, a platoon commander with Baker Company.

"The mission of this deployment is to help Iraqi police with patrolling and getting them ready to take back their country so we can push out [of Iraq]," Hammock said.

Some of the battalion's combat veterans, with multiple deployments under their belts, agree the mission in Iraq has drastically altered from previous years.

"This will be an interesting deployment because a lot of things are changing in Iraq," said Sgt. Abel Loreda, a platoon sergeant with Baker



CPL. MARGARET HUGHES

Lance Cpl. Brandon Renshaw, a vehicle commander with Weapons Platoon, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, helps zip up his girlfriend's jacket to keep her warm before he departs for Al Asad, Iraq, Monday night across from the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

Company. "But the main goal is to make sure all my Marines come back alive."

Although there is still a threat of firefights and being hit by improvised explosive

devices, the fight is much different now than in 2004, Hammock said. Before the mission was to eliminate the

See DEPLOY, A7

New suits in the running



STAFF SGT. CHRISTOPHER TIRADO

Commandant Gen. James Conway unveils the new running suit prototype to Marines in Iraq.

LANCE CPL. JACQUELYN M. WHITE
HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS

WASHINGTON — Marine officials recently announced the new physical training uniform will be issued to all active duty Marines free of charge.

The running suits, first revealed to Marines in Iraq Nov. 7, 2007, started arriving in bulk at Marine Corps installations in January, Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James Conway said. The mandatory possession date is Oct. 1.

According to Marine Administrative

Message 015/09, released Jan. 9, commanders must ensure each Marine receives the running suit and record it in each service record book. The message also states every Marine is responsible for maintaining and retaining their gear.

Distribution Phase III, also known as the "all hands issue," is already underway, said Lt. Col. A. J. Pasagian, program manager of Infantry Combat Equipment, Marine Corps Systems Command.

Marine Forces Reserve has been

See PT GEAR, A9

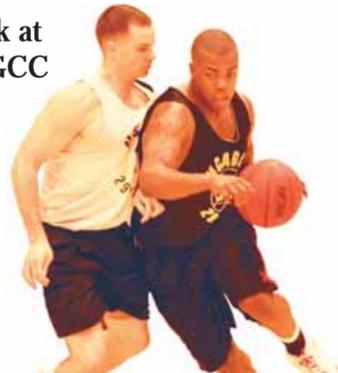


Dreams become reality; reflections for African-American History Month - See A3

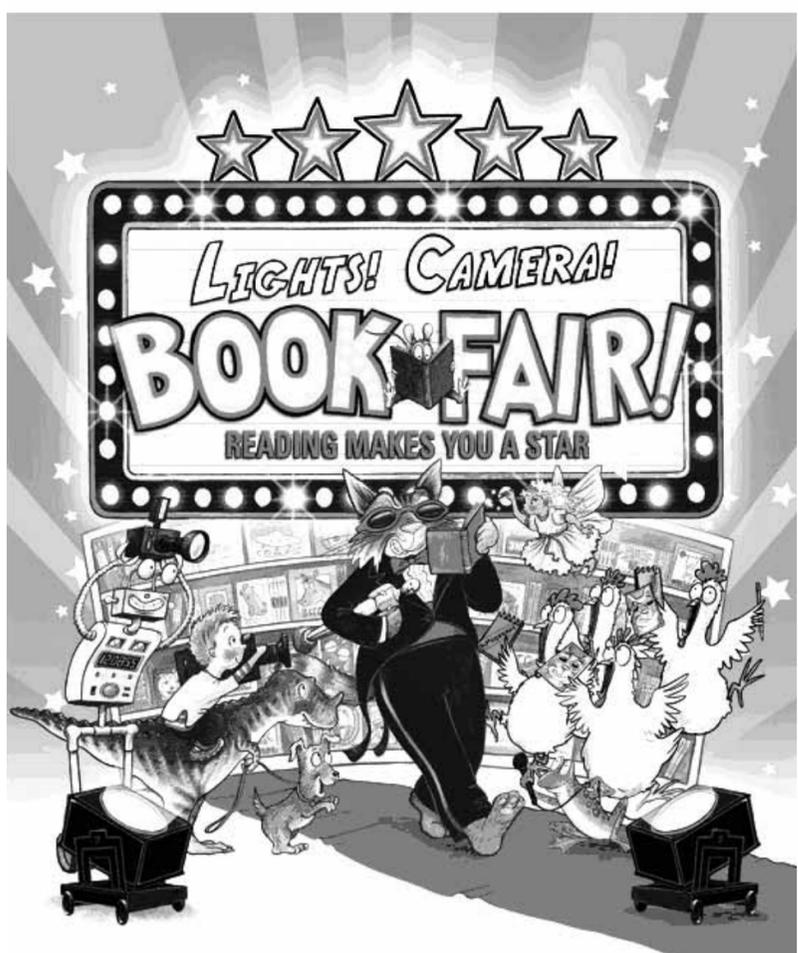


One step at a time with 7th Marines HQ - See A8

A Look at MCAGCC hoops
See B1



Signs and designs at Wood Hobby Shop - See B1



Condor Elementary PTO Spring Book Fair

Family Reading Night
with Condor Community

March 5, Connections 4-6:30 p.m.
March 9, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
March 10, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Muffins for Moms/Guardians morning
March 11, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. (open at 7:30 a.m.)
March 12, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (open at 7:30 a.m.)

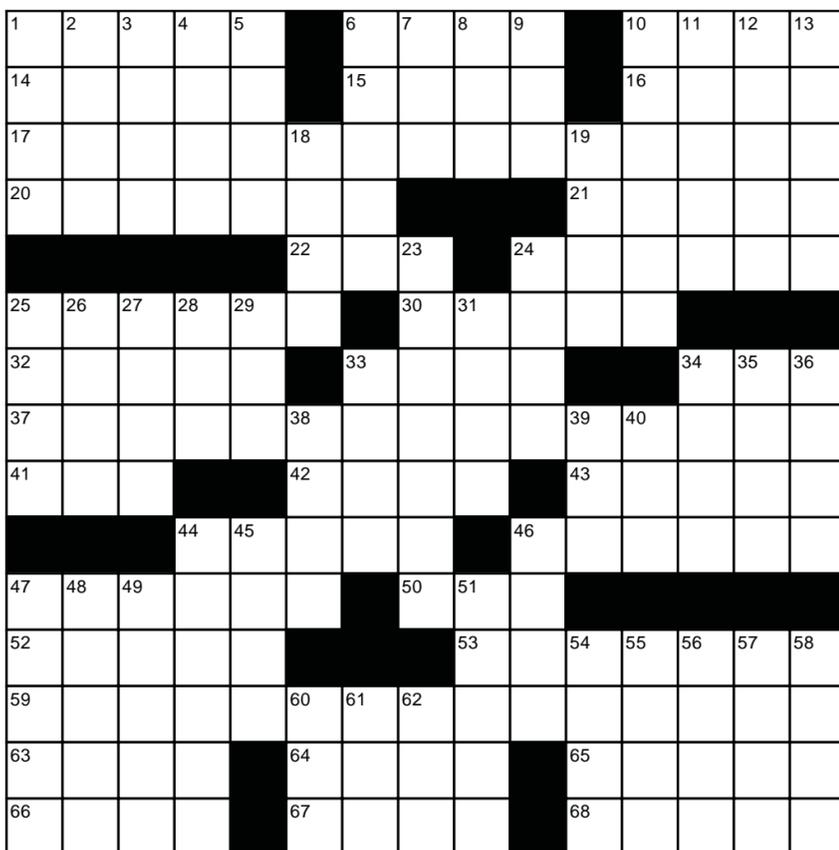
Donuts for Dads/Guardians morning
March 13, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (open at 7:30 a.m.)

Condor Elementary

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<http://bookfairs.scholastic.com/bookfairs/cptoolkit/publish/condor29palms>

X MARKS THE SPOT



American Profile Hometown Content

01/25/2009

ACROSS

1. Lacking spirit
6. Screen symbol
10. "Woe ___"
14. Without support
15. Went like heck
16. For men only
17. X is the symbol for this
20. Walks feebly
21. Place to hit a bucket of balls
22. Pewter, in part
24. Like many wedding tuxes
25. Duller of the senses
30. Turn topsy-turvy
32. Pop's Ronstadt
33. Well-worn pencil
34. Massage locale
37. X indicates one
41. To the ___ degree
42. Hellenic H's
43. Top-tier invitees
44. "No bid," in bridge
46. Lacking consistency
47. Eliot's Silas
50. Guessed-at fig.
52. "Kiss my grits!" sitcom
53. Two-deck game
59. X signifies this
63. "___ a Lady" (Tom Jones hit)
64. Closely related
65. Celery piece
66. "Slung" dish
67. Lady's escort
68. Drum accompanying a sitar

DOWN

1. Seemingly boundless
2. Doo-wop voice
3. Cruise stopover
4. "What's ___ for me?"
5. Rink fake
6. Reply to "Who's there?"
7. Voting "nay"
8. Sun or moon
9. Prefix with natal
10. Cuba or Aruba
11. Time on the job
12. Mutt's woe
13. Pelted on Halloween
18. One-named artist
19. Small warbler
23. Whack job
24. Country's McEntire
25. Lena of "Chocolat"
26. Guinness serving
27. Ruler division
28. Commotion
29. Pit goo
31. ___ down (criticizes)
33. Movie studio sights
34. Loretta of "M*A*S*H"
35. Mole, to a gardener
36. Pseudo-cultured
38. Caboose's place
39. Fabric fuzz
40. ___-mo replay
44. One way to pay
45. Hammer end
46. Walk of Fame implant
47. Cattail's locale
48. Hilo hello
49. Frosty coatings
51. Bloodhound's lead
54. Boss Tweed lamponer
55. Utah ski resort
56. Wild guess
57. Spill the beans
58. "Diana" singer Paul
60. Has-been horse
61. Luau strings
62. Hr. fragment

[puzzle Solutions on A4]

Combat Center Spotlight

Employee: Malori Harris
Organization: Jasmine's Espresso Cafe
Job title: Barista
Job Duties: handle the money, make coffee, inventory supplies, and train new workers.
Hometown: Silverdale, Wash.
Hobbies: Snowboarding, riding dirtbikes, shopping and visiting Laughlin and Vegas with my girls.
What I like most about my job: I like interacting with the customers, especially the regulars.
Significant achievements since aboard MCAGCC: I became a manager after four months of working here.
Any military services: No, my husband is a lance corporal with 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion.
Time employed at MCAGCC: 8 months.



Hot Topics

VARSITY MEN'S SOFTBALL TRYOUTS

The Varsity Men's Softball team will begin holding tryouts on Thursday, 6 p.m. at the Felix Softball Field. Tryouts will continue on Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m. and Thursdays at 6 p.m. Please contact Debra or Skip at the Sports Department at 830-6857 for more information.

NEW GYM HOURS

Effective Tuesday, the East and West Gym/Fitness Centers new hours of operation will be 4:30 a.m. - 10 p.m., seven days a week.

THURSDAY: RECRUITER SCREENING TEAM TO VISIT COMBAT CENTER

The Headquarters Marine Corps Recruiter Screening Team will visit the Combat Center Thursday to screen pre-designated enlisted Marines for potential future assignment on recruiting duty.

VICTIM ADVOCATE VOLUNTEERS WANTED

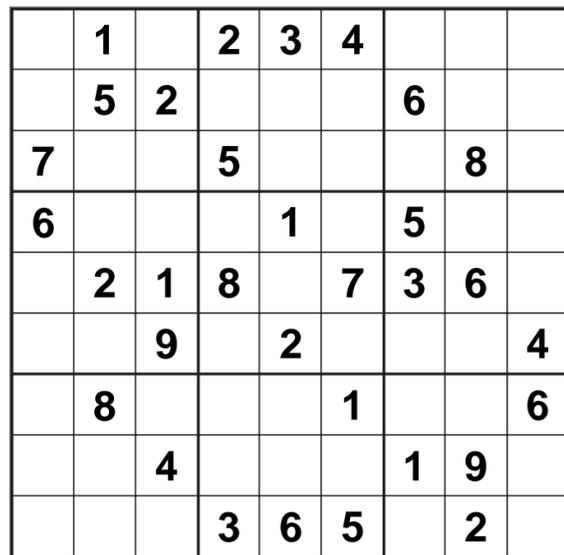
The Marine Corps Community Services Counseling Services Victim Advocacy Program is currently looking for volunteers to assist military families in our community. If you are interested in spending a couple of days per month to help families affected by domestic violence, and have experience or want to learn more about keeping military families safe, contact Michelle Shotwell at michelle.shotwell.ctr@usmc.mil or call 830-4314 for more information. Training will be provided.

This Day in Marine Corps History

Feb. 13, 1943

U.S. Marine Corps Women's Reserve formed.

SUDOKU



Centerspeak

What are you going to spend your tax return money on?

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



PFC. ADDISON LUNA
3RD COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION,
SUPPORT CO.

"I'm going to use it on my wife and little girl by getting them new furniture."



LANCE CPL. JEREMY GOODWIN
2ND BATTALION, 23RD MARINE REGIMENT, 4TH
COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, CO. C

"I'm going to invest it in real estate property."



STAFF SGT. ROBERT WELLS
3RD BATTALION, 4TH MARINE REGIMENT,
HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE CO.

"I'm going to finish some tattoos I have."

OBSERVATION POST

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

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Public Affairs Chief Gunnery Sgt. Chris W. Cox

Press Chief/Editor Lance Cpl. Corey A. Blodgett

Layout, Design Leslie Shaw

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African-American History Month recognizes vital heritage

CPL. MARGARET HUGHES
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Being the first African-American president of the United States, Barack Obama has helped put into perspective how far this country has come together to put aside prejudices of ethnicity.

With the celebration of African-American History Month this month, it is not only a time to reflect about what African-Americans have overcome throughout America's history, but also how this country as a whole has progressed into a nation of unity.

Although there are many events throughout our history that have made this country what it is today, there are a few of note that merit reflection.

Every American culture has put its stamp on our country's history, but African-American history has altered

our society as a whole. One of the first significant events was the establishment of the Emancipation Proclamation during the Civil War when President Abraham Lincoln officially passed it in 1863. It stated that all slaves within any state or designated part of a state

shall be forever free. As time progressed, laws for segregation grew more numerous in the first half of the 20th century, but great leaders and African-American role models of hope rose in the face of that adversity. At the beginning of the 20th century, Booker T. Washington,

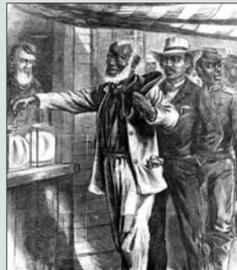
George Washington Carver and W.E.B. Du Bois helped stress the importance of industry and higher education to African-Americans. African-Americans have made great strides in other areas as well. The Tuskegee **See HISTORY, A7**

Significant events in African-American history

-January 1, 1863
Emancipation Proclamation issued, forever freeing slaves within any state, or designated part of a state in rebellion.



-February 3, 1870
15th amendment adopted, guaranteeing a citizen's right to vote would not be denied on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.



-July 4, 1881
Booker T. Washington founds the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Alabama, which becomes the leading school of higher learning for African Americans.



1863

1870

1881

-1920s and 1930s

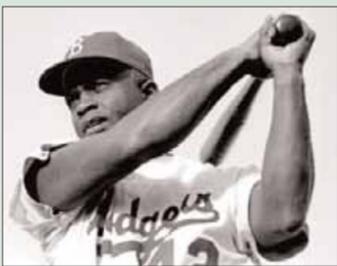
The Harlem Renaissance flourishes, fostering a new black cultural identity with its own literary, artistic, and intellectual movement.

- February 12, 1909

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) established.

1920-1930

1909



- April 15, 1947
Jackie Robinson breaks Major League Baseball's color barrier when he is signed to the Brooklyn Dodgers.



- 26 July 1948
President Harry S Truman signed Executive Order 9981, integrating the U.S. armed forces.



-May 17, 1954
Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kan. declares that racial segregation in schools is unconstitutional.

1947

1948

1954



- November 4, 2008
Barack Obama becomes the 44th president of the United States.

- June 3, 2008
Sen. Barack Obama becomes the first African American to be nominated as a major party nominee for president.

- July 2, 1964
President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act, prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin by federal and state governments.



- August 28, 1963
Martin Luther King delivers his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

2008

1964

1963

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BEQ construction relieves living space woes

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center is currently working to upgrade outdated barracks and build new bachelor enlisted quarters and parking facilities.

The new barracks will not only be more environmentally friendly, they will also be designed to improve the quality of life for those living there.

Currently no buildings on base meet the requirements of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. To resolve this issue, these new barracks, along with future barracks to be constructed in place of existing ones, will meet the national guidelines adhered to by LEED, said Lt. Cmdr. Allen Sullivan, the resident officer in charge of construction here and a native of Rolla, Kan.

"The process is going to start by tearing down buildings 1425 and 1426 and building new bachelor enlisted quarters and a parking garage to accommodate those who move in there," Sullivan said. "The biggest contribution the barracks will make aboard the base is to raise the number of available spaces people have to live in."

Unlike older structures, the new buildings will be more eco-friendly, because they use energy more effi-

ciently, he added.

The new barracks will be a better place for service members to live and interact with one another, said Todd Brochu, an ROICC engineering technician from Boston.

"The new barracks will be an improvement in living conditions for those who live in there," Brochu said. "They're roughly the same size as most other barracks around the base, but with the addition of a new barracks, and also the parking spaces, it will help to ease the large number of Marines who may be displaced."

There is little, if any room for new service members to move in right now, although measures are being taken to solve the problem.

"Yes we are [at maximum capacity], however we are working diligently to improve this situation," said Kevin Harrigan, the bachelor billeting division director. "As we work towards meeting the CMC's 2012 goal, it is a top priority of the CG [commanding general] to house junior Marines and sailors at the highest standard of living possible. With saying this, fiscal year 2009 will be one of our most challenging years, as six BEQs are being renovated and we plan to replace the furniture and equipment in four. During renovations individuals must be displaced from



Buildings 1425 and 1426 were torn down to make room for new bachelor enlisted quarters and parking spaces to house unmarried service members aboard the base.

their quarters. We as Bachelor Billeting Division understand that this creates a hardship on individuals and units and are doing every-

thing possible to lessen this hardship."

Harrigan said there are measures being taken every day to alleviate this situation.

Some of those measures include approving Sergeants in the BEQ to reside off base as well as the implementation of hiring Barracks

Coordinators to increase the continuity of maintaining BEQs therefore increasing the quality of life for our Marines and sailors.

Alcohol abuse becoming a deadly decision for Marines

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Substance Abuse Counseling Center has been working hard to educate and help Marines and sailors who are becoming, or have become dependent on alcohol.

There are steps drinkers will go through that lead the way to become an alcoholic, said Bill Smith, the Substance Abuse Counseling Center's substance abuse prevention specialist. Every individual reacts differently to alcohol from their biological makeup, their mental state and social network.

Smith said the first step

into becoming an alcoholic is social binge-drinking, which is alcohol misuse. Social binge-drinking is when there is an occasional misuse of alcohol and the drinker can normally control their intake.

Alcohol abuse is the next level. Abuse is when a drinker forms a pattern with their alcohol intake and begins drinking more often, even throughout the morning.

Dependency, also known as alcoholism, is when someone becomes physically or mentally dependent on alcohol and without it, will experience withdrawal.

The Substance Abuse Counseling Center rarely sees cases of alcoholism

since a Marine and sailor will be referred to the center by their unit as soon as their problem arises and will help treat the service member before their problem gets out of control.

"We're usually the first people a Marine opens up to," said Robin Edwards, a substance abuse counselor. "We show them help is available, and we show them what we have to offer to help them."

When a Marine or sailor is referred to the counseling center, they are assessed and put into different treatments depending on the type and severity of the abuse.

"Our job is to screen them and determine what

level of care is needed," said Edwards, a Murrieta, Calif., native.

The first step is called Out Patient, which is a two-week course that runs four hours a day. During Out Patient, the service member will be instructed on the dynamics of alcoholism, how the alcohol chemicals affect their body, and the dynamics of themselves and their families, which may make them more prone to having a control problem with alcohol.

"A Marine can have the first drink of his life, and a week later he is going to work drunk," said Smith, a Wichita Falls, Texas native. "A lot of what is going on is in the family dynamics,

which is what we look at. Did his parents drink? Was alcohol readily accessible to him when he was growing up? Were his parents alcoholics or alcohol abusers?"

The second course is for the more severe, or second-time abusers. Intensive Out Patient is three weeks long and runs for half a day, throughout the week. This course is the same as regular Out Patient, but goes more in depth into how alcohol is running and ruining the patients life.

The last step, which is mainly for alcoholics, is Residential Care. It places the abuser in a medical establishment for four weeks while teaching them the importance of staying sober.

All the courses come with a one-year after-care program, which will help service members deal with any urges or problems that arise after their treatment.

"We can treat alcohol, but that is just looking at one side of the problem," Smith said. "We have to ask ourselves, why is that Marine drinking? If we don't treat both sides, we are asking that Marine to relapse again. Most of this is done while the Marine is participating in after-care."

Lt. Cmdr. Steven Hicks, the chaplain for the Catholic Chapel, agreed with Smith, saying every case of alcohol abuse and alcoholism is different.

"Sometimes it is just a circle of depression, they get depressed because they are drinking," said the San Angelo, Texas native. "Then they drink because they are depressed."

A pamphlet the counseling center gives out, it shows danger signs that may signify if a person has a problem with alcohol abuse. A few of those signs include having problems with family, friends or the police because of alcohol, doing things when drunk that would never have been done while sober, drinking when angry or when other strong emotions arise.

Other symptoms include drinking before going to work, urging others to drink, drinking and driving, injuring themselves or others while under the influence, drinking to forget personal problems, drinking excessively by themselves, and experiencing a personality change after drinking.

For more information regarding alcohol abuse or the counseling center, contact the center at 830-6376.

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Young Marines prepare for 50th anniversary

JANELLE JOHNSEN

HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS

WASHINGTON—Young Marines have an important milestone to look forward to in April 2009 - their 50th anniversary.

Since the program's humble beginnings in 1959 with a handful of boys in Waterbury, Conn., the Young Marines has grown into an international program currently serving 14,000 boys and girls ages 8 through completion of high school.

In 1959, members of the Brass City Memorial Detachment of the Marine Corps League formed the very first Young Marine unit, the Young Marines of Waterbury Connecticut. By 1960, the Waterbury unit's membership had grown to over 300 boys and 20 adult instructors.

By 1975, membership was extended to females

and in 1980, the Internal Revenue Service granted the Young Marines status as a not-for-profit 501(c)3 youth educational organization.

"Those dedicated Marines in Waterbury, Conn., nearly

50 years ago saw a chance to share with the youth in their community some of those values that, to them, were worthy values to pass along," says Michael Kessler, National Executive Director of the Young

Marines. "It isn't clear how significant they thought their actions would become or whether they knew that their vision would manifest itself into the program we have today."

As the 50th anniversary

of the Young Marines approaches, some of the original members of the very first unit in Waterbury, now members of the Brass City Detachment of the Marine Corps League are hosting

an anniversary celebration April 24-26, 2009, for the Young Marines where it all began.

Joe Ganavage, member of the Brass City

See 50TH, A7



LANCE CPL. MONICA G. ERICKSON

Young Marines lay in the prone position at the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer during their visit to the Combat Center in May of 2007.

NMCRS to raise more funds, give back to service members

CPL. MARGARET HUGHES

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society starts its annual active duty fund drive aboard the Combat Center March 1.

The drive is conducted each year at Navy and Marine Corps installations to collect money so the non-profit charitable organization can continue to help Marines and sailors who are in need of financial assistance.

"Virtually 100 percent of the funds raised goes back to the sailors and Marines," said Raymond Caldwell, the direc-

tor for NMCRS Twentynine Palms.

Last year, the drive collected \$74,205 in donations, Caldwell said. The goal is to exceed last year's donated funds so NMCRS can continue to help even more service members with financial hardships.

"We would like to have contact with every active duty person on base so they know where to turn when they have an emergency," Caldwell said.

Active duty Marines and sailors can donate to the fund by contacting their unit coordinator to give a one-time

cash donation or set up a military allotment, he added.

"We want to raise as much funds as possible so we can keep assisting Marines and sailors," said Michele Cutrer, the chair volunteer for NMCRS Twentynine Palms.

NMCRS offers assistance in a variety of different areas, including Quick Assist Loans up to \$300, developing spending plans, interest-free loans or grants to help with emergencies, and education loans for spouses of active duty service members.

"If you think you have a financial need, come to us first, especially before you get

into poor financial situations," Caldwell said.

The society for Twentynine Palms rendered loan assistance to 1,624 service members and grant assistance to 217 last year.

"They are there to help the Marines in a time of need," said Denise Cullum, the 7th Marine Regiment family readiness officer. "When Marines deploy, the spouses have the ability to access a source of money in case of an emergency."

For more information, assistance or to donate, contact NMCRS Twentynine Palms at 830-6323.

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

Sunday

Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel Roman Catholic Services

8 a.m. Faith Formation / CCD
Sept. - May building 1551
8:45 a.m. Confessions+
9 a.m. Rosary
9:30 a.m. Catholic Mass*
9:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word
4:15 p.m. Confessions+
4 p.m. Choir Practice
4:30 p.m. Rosary
5 p.m. Catholic Mass

Christ Chapel

Lay-Led Independent Baptist Breakfast, 8 a.m. West Wing

Non-Denominational Christian Service

9 a.m. Worship*
9 a.m. Children's Church
10:15 a.m. Sunday School*
6 p.m. Youth Group

Lay-led Gospel Service

11:30 a.m. Worship Protestant Chapel

Assemblies of God Fellowship

9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Morning Service building 1707, room G

Legend

* Indicates Child Care Provided

+ For Appointments for Confessions call 830-6456/6482

Weekday Events

Immaculate Heart of Mary
Mon-Fri 11:45 a.m. Catholic Mass (except holidays)

Monday

Immaculate Heart of Mary
Mon-Fri 11:45 a.m. Catholic Mass (except holidays)

Tuesday

Christ Chapel

9 a.m. Christian Women's Fellowship* Sept. to May Evening service at 7 p.m. - Protestant Chapel west wing

Immaculate Heart of Mary

4-5:30 p.m. Children's RCIA
5-8 p.m. Catechist Meeting (Second Tuesday each month)
6-7:30 p.m. Baptism Class (First Tuesday each month)

Wednesday

Christ Chapel

6 p.m. Praise Band Rehearsal
6:30 p.m. Food/Fellowship
7 p.m. Non-Denomination Bible Study
7 p.m. Lay-led Gospel Bible Study

Immaculate Heart of Mary

9:30 a.m. Military Council of Catholic Women* Sept. to May
6 p.m. Youth Teen
7 p.m. Knights of Columbus (1st Wednesday each month)

Thursday

Immaculate Heart of Mary

6-7:30 p.m. RCIA Resumes Sept 11
C&E Barracks building 1666
11:30 a.m. Bible Study
Chaplain Moran 830-6187

Friday

Christ Chapel

5 p.m. Gospel Rehearsal
Immaculate Heart of Mary
12:15 p.m. 4:30 p.m. Exposition/Adoration Most Blessed Sacrament (First Friday each month)

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Fraud, waste, abuse: A rising problem in the Marine Corps

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Every night, government issued laptops are taken home to complete unfinished work, however, some people use their laptops to indulge in the games programmed on the machine. When issued gear, like the laptop, is being misused, it is considered Fraud, Waste and Abuse, which makes the user a criminal in the eyes of the United States government.

By definition, Fraud, Waste and Abuse is any willful means of taking or attempting to take unfair advantage of the government; careless or needless use of government funds; or the theft or misuse of government assets, said Master Sgt. T. Tice, the inspector chief at the Command

Inspector General's Office.

During an informal survey, 26 out of 30 junior Marines had never heard of the term "Fraud, Waste and Abuse." Two had heard of it, but didn't know any details about what it was, and two others had a vague idea of the concept and the criminal acts that fell under it.

Tice said he wants to get the word out to everyone aboard the Combat Center on what Fraud, Waste and Abuse is and why it is important for everyone to understand that misusing government assets is against the law, and can be punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

"These definitions attempt to cover every avenue of self-benefiting criminal activity for which the Command Inspector General's Office handles investigations into those

reported," Tice said.

"So what does that mean? To put it simply, anyone who takes advantage of the government, or anything owned by the government, through misuse, theft and carelessness is considered a criminal and is punishable under the UCMJ.

Fraud, Waste and Abuse is important for Marines to be aware of, especially at the Combat Center, due to the large amount of training equipment that is used throughout a unit's time in Mojave Viper, a month-long pre-deployment exercise units come to the Combat Center before deploying.

"Fraud, Waste and Abuse-related improprieties, such as theft or misuse of government resources, are serious matters which can significantly increase the operating costs and reduce available resources

needed to support the Marine Corps operating Forces," said Tom Gardner, an investigator for the Inspector General's Office. "This can greatly impact the Combat Center with respect to all the training conducted here; personnel, equipment, Government resources and so forth."

Lance Cpl. Clay Newberry, an infantryman with 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, currently going through Mojave Viper agreed with Gardner, saying it was important to ensure proper use of government issued gear, especially during training.

"A misuse of a weapon or a laptop should have punishable consequences," said Newberry, a St. Louis, native. "I understand it is needed for the important things, but if you look at it, who decides what is important and what isn't?"

Fraud, Waste and Abuse posters have been posted throughout the Combat Center, and every building should have one, Tice said.

The posters display a hotline where people can call and report cases of Fraud, Waste and Abuse anonymously. If a building does not have a copy of this poster, contact the Inspector General's Office at 830-4268. To report a case of Fraud, Waste and Abuse, contact their hotline at 830-7749.

Most common fraud, waste and abuse cases

- Government vehicles: using for non-official business
- Mess halls: receiving food fraudulently
- Issued equipment: black-marketing issued gear
- Government Computers: utilizing for personal use

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATALIE MARIE SMITH

Daughter of Lance Cpl. Aaron Smith and wife, Jamie. Born on Dec. 11, weighing 8 lbs., 9 oz and measuring 21 inches.

ELIZABETH RAVEN DE LA ROSA

Daughter of Lance Cpl. Juan A. De La Rosa and wife, Julie. Born on Jan. 26, weighing 7 lbs., 11 oz and measuring 19.4 inches.

JOSHUA ALEXANDER HILL

Son of Cpl. Vanessa J. Hill and husband, Austin. Born Jan. 7, weighing 8 lbs., 15 oz and measuring 20 inches.

ALEXANDER KEITH RINALDI

Son of Sgt. Keith Rinaldi and wife, Julie. Born Jan. 8, weighing 7.2 lbs. and measuring 19.5 inches.

CORY DUPREE TRIBBLE JR.

Son of Sgt. Cory D. Tribble and wife, Roxanna. Born Jan. 9, weighing 7 lbs., 7.8 oz and measuring 20.4 inches.

JOHNATHAN JAMES ARSENAULT

Son of Cpl. Albert Arsenault and wife, Anita. Born Jan. 11, weighing 7 lbs., 9 oz and measuring 19.7 inches.

ISAIAH LUIS GARCIA

Son of Lance Cpl. Jose Garcia and wife, Laura. Born Jan. 12, weighing 6 lbs., 9.2 oz and measuring 19.1 inches.

SILOAM DIVINA MAGRA

Daughter of Lt. Cmdr. Errika Walker-Magra and husband, Placido. Born Jan. 12, weighing 5 lbs., 15 oz and measuring 18.8 inches.

DOMINIC "DJ." GENOVESE

Son of Sgt. Justin Genovese and wife, Tara. Born Jan. 14, weighing 7 lbs., 3.5 oz and measuring 20.5 inches.

MARISSA FAITH MEJIA

Daughter of Sgt. Jesse Mejia and wife, Rachel. Born Jan. 21, weighing 8 lbs., 1 oz and measuring 20 inches.

SABRIYA MARIE BENNET

Daughter of Staff Sgt. Verice W. Bennett and wife, Amanda. Born Jan. 21, weighing 8 lbs., 2.5 oz and measuring 20.8 inches.

LYLA ANN LERMA

Daughter of Cpl. Reyes Lerma and wife, Ashley. Born Jan. 21, weighing 6.6 lbs., and measuring 19.1 inches.

BRAYDEN CARTER GRIGGS

Son of Lance Cpl. Corey Griggs and wife, Michelle. Born Jan. 23, weighing 8 lbs., 4.2 oz and measuring 20.5 inches.

CONNOR MICHAEL BROWN

Son of Lance Cpl. Nathaniel Brown and wife, Shaina. Born Jan. 23, weighing 7 lbs., 3.5 oz and measuring 19.9 inches.

JOSLYN ROSE PETERSON

Daughter of Lance Cpl. Kyle S. Peterson and wife, Christina. Born Jan. 24, weighing 6 lbs., 13 oz and measuring 19.4 inches.

JOSEPH MICHAEL CHRUSCH

Son of Cpl. Ryan Chrusch and wife, Julie. Born Jan. 24, weighing 5 lbs., 11 oz and measuring 18.8 inches.

CANDICE DAWN MORRIS

Daughter of Lance Cpl. Shaun T. Morris and wife, April. Born Jan. 24, weighing 6 lbs., 8 oz and measuring 20 inches.

CHEYANNE MARIE HEWTON

Daughter of Cpl. Macy Hewton and wife, Ashley. Born Jan. 26, weighing 6 lbs., 14 oz and measuring 19.4 inches.

ALFREDO THOMAS FRANCO II

Son of Staff Sgt. Alfredo T. Franco I and wife, Sgt. Kristy J. Franco. Born Jan. 26, weighing 8 lbs., 11 oz and measuring 21.5 inches.

BELLA MARIE HOOD

Daughter of Lance Cpl. Douglas Hood and wife, Anna. Born Jan. 27, weighing 7 lbs., 6.9 oz and measuring 20 inches.

EAMMAH JEAN LANDERS

Daughter of Cpl. Matthew Landers and wife, Amber. Born on Jan. 28, weighing 7 lbs., 4.2 oz and measuring 20 inches.

NATALIE SAMANTHA DURRETTE

Daughter of 1st Lt. Jeremy Durette and wife, Natasha. Born Jan. 28, weighing 6 lbs., 3 oz and measuring 18 inches.

TRIXIE LISA TERRY

Daughter of Lance Cpl. Jeffrey Terry and wife, Amber. Jan. 29, weighing 7 lbs., 1 oz and measuring 18.5 inches.

ZOE MARIE DANOS

Daughter of Cpl. Joshua Danos and wife, Kendra. Born Jan. 30, weighing 7 lbs., 6 oz and measuring 20.1 inches.

LOGAN HART THOMAS

Son of Cpl. Anthony Thomas and wife, Cpl. Angelica Thomas. Born on Jan. 31, weighing 6 lbs., 12 oz and measuring 19.9 inches.

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50TH, from A5

Memorial Detachment of the Marine Corps League and former member of the very first Young Marine unit says that a celebration for the Young Marines 50th anniversary is in order.

"Sam Beamon State commandant and a Young Marine from 1960 came up with the idea of an anniversary for the Young Marines and I loved it. So I said let's have a party," said Ganavage.

The official anniversary celebration will take place right where the Young Marines got their start, in Waterbury, Conn., April 24-25, 2009. The festivities will include a parade, the unveiling of a street in Waterbury dedicated to the Young Marines, a monument devoted to the founding of the Young Marines and a Marine Corps ball-style banquet.

The Young Marines and the Brass City Memorial Detachment of the Marine Corps League are seeking stories, editorial contributions and photos from past and present members of the Young Marines so that they can compose a document about the organization's history for future generations of the Young Marines to learn from and enjoy. In addition to the historical document, the Young Marines will place some of the contributions in a time capsule for Young Marine members to open in the year 2059. All contributions are welcome and can be sent to: 50years@youngmarines.com or contact Young Marines National HQs at (800) 717-0060.

Former and current members of the Young Marines are also invited to attend the anniversary celebration in April 2009.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
Sabrina Sammel, a participant in the Young Marines Program, is promoted to private first class by her parents during the graduation ceremony at the Combat Center Jan. 23.

HISTORY, from A3

Airmen, the first all-black military aviators, were war heroes during World War II. They flew over 3,000 missions and were credited with shooting down 109 Luftwaffe aircraft

over Europe, sinking the German-operated Italian destroyer TA-23 by machine-gun fire, and the destruction of numerous enemy fuel dumps, trucks and trains.

Jackie Robinson broke color barriers for professional

sports and was signed to the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947, becoming the first African-American Major League Baseball player since 1889.

With time, came the slow desegregation of schools, bus companies and other means of separating ethnicities. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled most instances as unconstitutional under the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment, which was ratified on July 9, 1868.

The Civil Rights Movement, with one of its most prominent figures Martin Luther King Jr., helped push the government to pass new civil rights legislation. The Civil Rights Act was signed into law in 1964 by President Lyndon Johnson. It is the most far-

reaching act of legislation supporting racial equality in American history.

From Malcolm X, Shirley Chisholm, and Jesse Jackson to Oprah Winfrey, Colin Powell, Halle Berry, and President Obama; all had their effects on bringing equality to this country not only for African-Americans, but for all people regardless of ethnicity.

African-American History Month is a time to celebrate how far this country has come since its establishment over two centuries ago. Although it is concentrated on the heritage of African-Americans, this month's call to reflection is relevant to every American because it has influenced how we raise our children today.

DEPLOY, from A1

enemy, now we must concentrate on training and preparing to turn things over to help prepare their country for a better future.

As friends and families spent their last few moments with their loved ones for the final time until they return from the deployment, many hugged, kissed and joked around. Others expressed concern for their safety, and how they will dearly miss their Marine or sailor.

"I'm nervous on every deployment, but I'm not as scared on this one because he will be in an MRAP [Mine Resistant Ambush Protected] vehicle," said Patti Redmond, the stepmother of Cpl. Matthew Redmond, who is on his third deployment. "But we pray every day and for every one of these Marines."

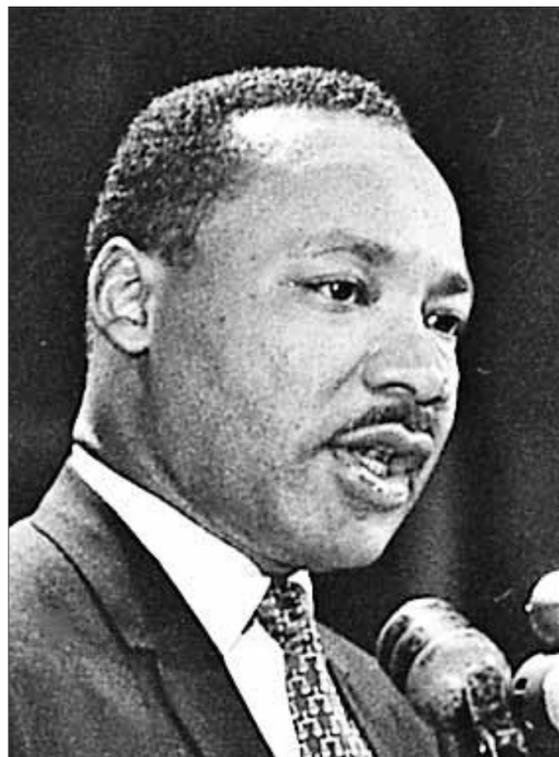
With the gear ready to go and the Marines on the bus, the Marines and sailors

from the battalion headed out to do their jobs and help bring peace to Iraq.

"I expect many good things to come from 1/7," Hammock said. "We will make a positive impact on the country before we leave."



CPL. MARGARET HUGHES
Sgt. Robert Creeden, a section leader with Weapons Platoon, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, poses for a photo with his son Gavin, 7, before he departs for Al Asad, Iraq, Monday night.



COURTESY OF U.S. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
Martin Luther King Jr., one of the forefront leaders in the fight for racial equality in the 1950's and 1960's, is most recognized for his legendary speech "I have a dream." He helped impel the government to pass the Civil Rights Act in 1964. It is the most far-reaching act of legislation supporting racial equality in American History.

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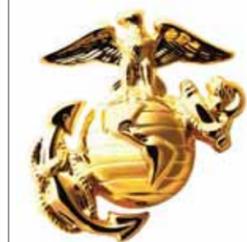
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Trader Ad Forms are available at the Public Affairs Office and may be filled out during normal working hours at Bldg. 1417.

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

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

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

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

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

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

approved by Base Housing. This ensures the Combat Center Trader is not used for commercial real estate endeavors.

Ads are run on a first-come, first-serve, space available basis. If you have questions please call 830-3762.

7th Marines' HQ logs road time with hike

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Before Marines deploy to Iraq or Afghanistan, they must prepare themselves by training both physically and mentally for the rigors of combat.

As part of their pre-deployment training, the Marines and sailors of Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment, undertook a nine-mile conditioning hike in the morning hours of Feb. 5, beginning at their communications headquarters, which took them slightly into the training grounds of the Combat Center to improve their physical fitness and endurance.

The company conducted the training to help develop their combat efficiency and prepare for their upcoming deployments, said 1st Sgt. Luis Hernandez, the company first sergeant and a native of Syracuse, N.Y.

"This was designed to get the Marines of Headquarters Company, who are primarily

not infantry Marines, into a combat mindset," Hernandez said. "This should be a good wake-up for them. The hike will push them and their bodies to the extreme, and give them a small taste of what they could experience on a deployment."

Hernandez said the hike was only one part of what the regiment will be doing to improve their state of combat readiness.

Pre-deployment Training Programs differ, even for Marines who are all part of the same unit. Headquarters in 7th Marines is part of an infantry unit, but they are not infantry Marines themselves, and must train when they can to better adapt to their place.

"As part of your PTP training, which occurs on a regular basis, we made this week the conditioning hike," he said. "The company is preparing to better fit into the infantry regiment they're in. Every week we work on something. It could be anything from marksmanship to



Marines and sailors with Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment, march during their nine-mile hike Feb. 5. The training hike was meant to get the Marines of Headquarters Company prepared for the physical and mental strains they may face on an overseas deployment.

conditioning like this, to any number of things."

The training hike began early in the morning so the Marines could finish early

and work through the rest of the day.

"It was an early morning, but at least we got done with it early," said Pfc. Justin McCrory, a switchboard operator with the company and a Denver native.

"It wasn't really that hard," he added. "Sometimes you

wish you didn't even take breaks, it would make it go even faster."

McCrory and another Marine, Lance Cpl. Brandon Stockellburg, were among those who performed road guard duties throughout the hike.

As road guards, McCrory

and Stockellburg marched at the front of the formation to stop traffic for the other Marines as they moved across areas of vehicle traffic.

Pfc. Angel Toledo, a data network specialist with the company, who is from Woodbridge, N.J., was chosen out of the crowd to carry the company's guidon.

"I'm pretty confident that I won't, but if I fell out that would look pretty bad," Toledo said before the hike began.

"The guidon is just one more thing to carry. It's like having two rifles and that'd be something good to have in Iraq," Toledo added, when giving his opinion on the guidon being a weapon and not a stick.

After the hike was over, the Marines and sailors of the company stretched out and carried out their work for the rest of the day while recuperating from the training.



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Pfc. Justin McCrory, a switchboard operator with Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment, strains under the weight of his pack as he guards the road for the rest of the company.

Operation Pacifier

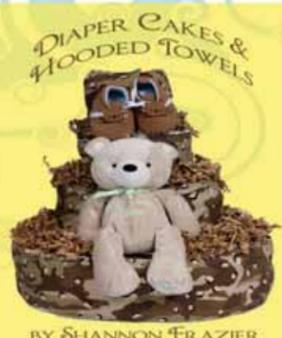
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ATG, from A1

Tiffin, Ohio.

"We train multiple types of training-teams here," Apicella said. "The Marines who train with and work with, foreign security forces, military, border patrol, and police are all instructed by our people here."

ATG's updated training plan gives the newly formed teams a few more days at home station to work on their Marine skills before they arrive at ATG and focus on their Advisor skills.

"We have a new 16-day schedule to allow Marines more time to gel as a team at the MEF level," Apicella said. "These Marines are taken from their original units and put together. Most have never worked together before, and at the MEF level they are put formed as a team about 120 days before deployment. Our old schedule was a three days longer than this one."

"By giving them more time to work together and get to know each other in the MEF stage, they should arrive better prepared to focus on being Advisors because they have their Marine move, communicate, plan, and shoot skills down as a team. Our new schedule increases their immersion with role-players earlier in the program and gives them better practice while supporting continued team building."

In addition to a change in their schedule, ATG is planning to have their compound expanded to give Marines a better training environment.

"We are going to expand our compound here and have a small FOB [Forward Operating Base]," said Dr. Herbert E. Peterson, the academics officer for ATG and a native of Munich, Germany. "We want total immersion while the teams are going through their training cycle. We want to

eliminate all distractions and give them the most realistic experience possible before they are down range."

Peterson elaborated on why it is so important for Marines to have the most in-depth training possible.

"If we give them the best experience now, then they will be able to better comprehend and learn from their small mistakes here," Peterson said. "They have the ability for remediation here, and that goes a great deal towards helping them do their job better."

The new schedule also enables the Marines attending the ATG package to request time to further train themselves in areas where they believe they need additional work. Communications equipment, motorized operations, medical are a few examples, he said.

"If a team is struggling in one specific area, they can request extra supported instruction and training during designated times in the training plan we have for them," Peterson said.

"It's not what Marines are used to doing, they don't usually stand off to the side and instruct others on what to do," he said. "It is an effective method of fighting a war. You instruct the partner nation security forces of that country and you let them police or fight their battle after you have helped them out."

The success of the advisor teams sent overseas can be attributed to the way they prepare themselves for the different nature of advising vice doing, coordinating vice commanding, influencing vice directing the latter all of which Marines and Sailors are intimate experts.

ATG trains Marines and sailors in accordance with their motto.

"An effective advisor is like a shadow on a mostly cloudy day," Peterson said.



Kalin Tobin, an instructor with Advisor Training Group, teaches a class on loading foreign weapons.

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL



Maj. Andrew J. Nelson and Seaman Danish Shariff fire an automatic burst from their Russian-made Ruchnyo Pulemyot Kalashnikova machine gun.

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

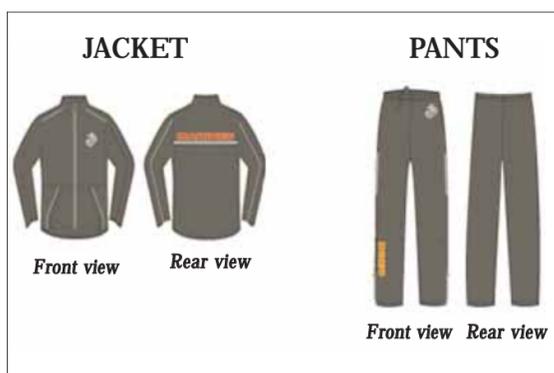
PT GEAR, from A1

provided guidance on how to order individual running suits for their Marines.

Once the order has been placed, units can expect deliveries within 3-4 days. However, Marines will not be able to purchase the new suits at the exchange until after the Corps-wide distribution.

Uniforms will be ordered electronically through the Kentucky Logistics Operations Center and individually shipped to units. When ordering uniforms, each Marine must know their inseam, waist and hip measurements. If a Marine is due to change duty stations, they should order the running suit when they reach their new location.

Conway initiated the development of the new running suit to provide a quality and durable physical training uniform to be worn in various climates. The expectation was that the running suit would be dis-



COURTESY ILLUSTRATION

An added safety feature is the silver vertical reflective stripes running along the sides and back of the running suit.

tinctive like other Marine uniforms, all of which say "Marine" when worn, Pasagian said.

"I think they are a great improvement," said Staff Sgt. Nicholas A. Soares, Marine Corps Recruiting Command.

They are more comfortable, practical, durable and breathable in comparison with the sweats, he added.

The running suits are made with silver vertical reflective stripes running

along the sides and one across the back. The jackets have the Marine Corps emblem on the front, with "MARINES" displayed transversely along the back. The trousers have "USMC" running down the bottom outside the right pant leg.

Regulations pertaining to the running suit were published in All Marine Message 019/08. For more information on the new PT uniform, call (703) 432-3313.

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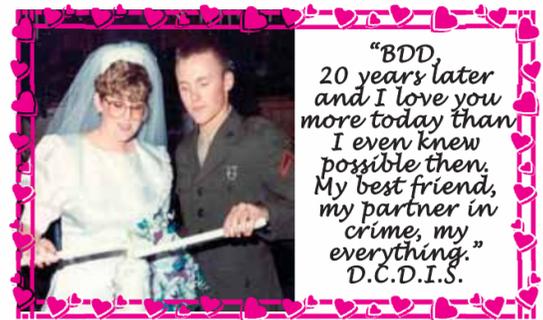
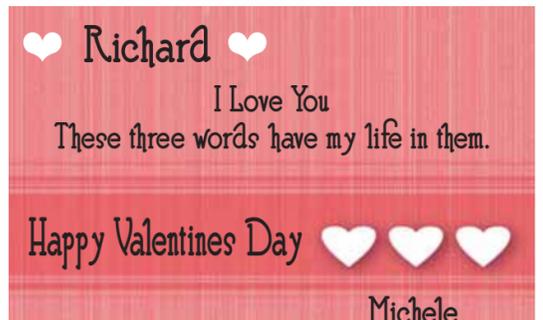
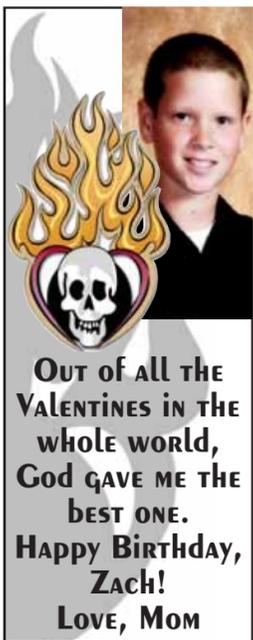
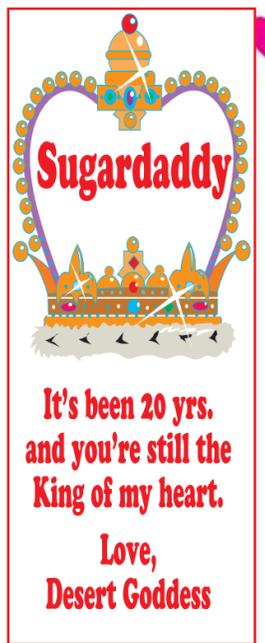
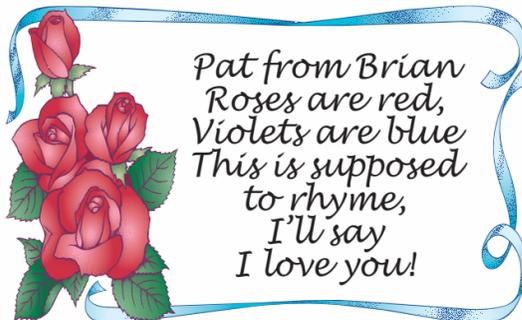
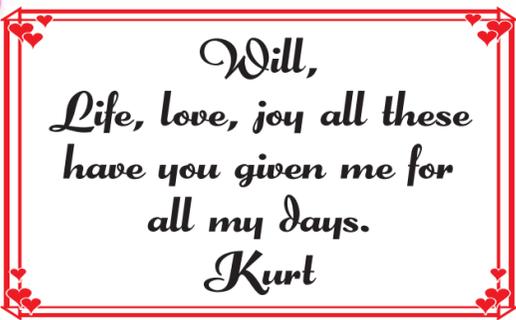
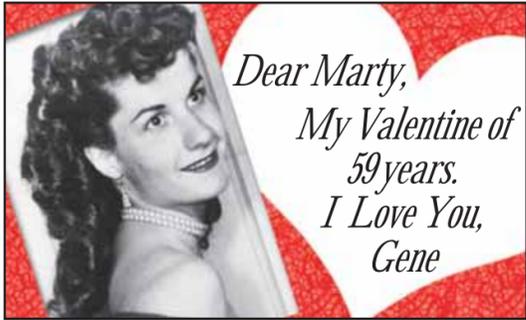
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HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

Love Notes



SPORTS AND LEISURE

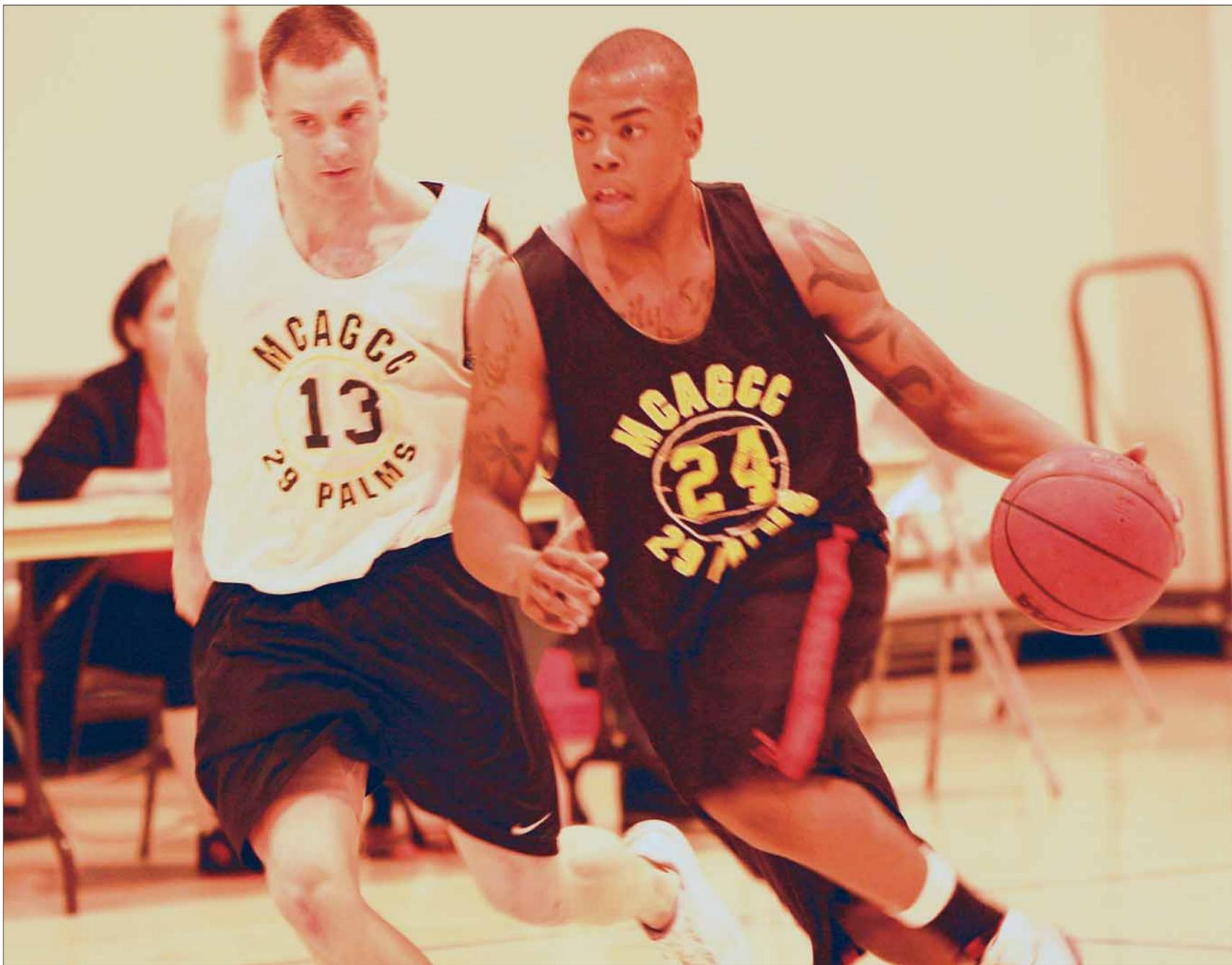
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B1

Hoopin' it up with MCAGCC



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Centel Redmond, [right] a small forward with 1st Tanks, blows through the opposition as he makes his way down court to score. Tanks played two games Wednesday night and won both, even without a coach. — See B3 for current standings

Get hands-on experience at Wood Hobby Shop



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Sgt. Stephen Foster, an assaultman with Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, and Don Miller, the manager for the Wood Hobby Shop, work on building furniture for Foster's children's bedroom.

LANCE CPL. M.C. NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

In the old days, when you wanted a table, you couldn't make a run to the Home Store, lay down some cash and drive it home. You had to put your hands to work before the family had a household surface to eat off of.

Nowadays, woodworking is more of a layman's art form, and the Combat Center's Wood Hobby Shop, located in building 1342 on Sturgis Road is the place where even someone who has never whittled a stick can build plaques, picture

frames and yes, even a table.

The Wood Hobby Shop offers affordable prices on wood, tools to check out, laser engraving services, and a wide variety of knowledge and experience for service members interested in the art of working with wood.

The shop is open from Wednesday to Friday from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. Tools are available, said Don Miller, the manager for the Wood Hobby Shop. The only requirements are a few short safety

See WOOD SHOP, B3

Valentine's Day ideas for the non-romantic

LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Every year on Valentine's Day, couples throughout the world bombard each other with flowers, love cards and chocolate, but what if they want something more than a carnation and heart-shaped card that reads 'I love you?' This year, amaze your significant other with an idea that goes above and beyond and shows how much you love

one another.

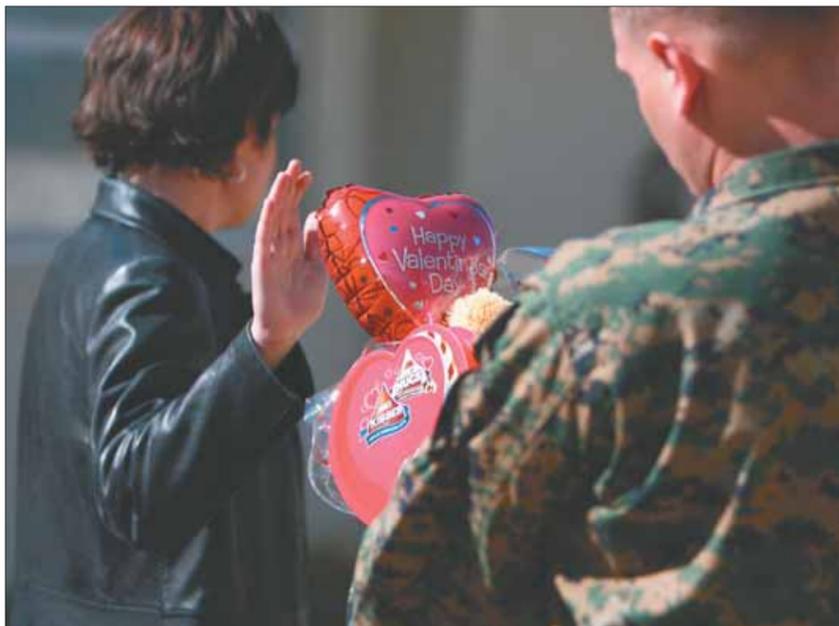
When looking at a Valentine's Day gift, think of items that a loved one would actually hold an interest in their hobbies or life. From tickets to their favorite sports team to a complete art set, full of drawing markers, pencils and charcoal. If a gift comes from the heart and actually relates to a loved one's interests, you're golden.

This year, Valentine's Day falls on President's Day

weekend, which gives most people a chance to extend their gift to a weekend getaway. San Diego is only a few hours away, and is home to various parks and attractions including Sea World, the Wild Animal Park and the zoo, all fun places to go especially if your loved one is also an animal lover.

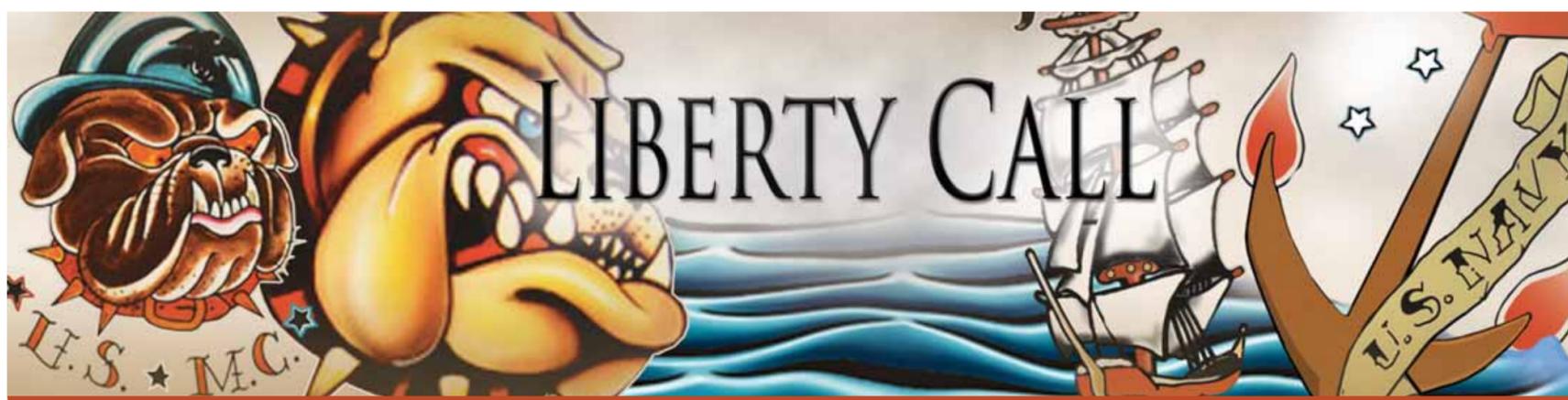
The Palm Springs Aerial Tramway is also a great place to visit, especially if your

See ROMANTIC, B4



LANCE CPL. COREY BLODGETT

This year on Valentine's Day, try to spice up the gift-giving by dumping the stuffed animals and chocolates and get your loved ones a gift that appeals to their everyday life and interest.



FRI. 2/13 Sweetheart Luncheon Time: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Where: Little Church of the Desert 6079 Adobe Rd. Twentynine Palms For more info, call 367-4322 or 367-1673	FRI. 2/13 Verizon Tour de Palm Springs Bike Event Time: All day event Where: Palm Springs Convention Center 277 N. Avenida Caballeros Palm Springs For more info, call 568-2800	FRI. 2/13 Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival Time: All day event Where: Riverside County Fairgrounds 82-503 Hwy 111 Indio For more info, call 1 (800) 811-FAIR or log on to http://www.datefest.org	FRI. 2/13 & SAT. 2/14 Pepe Aguilar Time: Fri. - 9 p.m., Sat. - 8 p.m. Where: Morongo Casino 49500 Seminole Dr Cabazon For more info, call (951) 849-3080 or log on to http://www.morongocasinoresort.com/entertain2.cfm	SAT. 2/14 Morongo Basin Horsemen's Association Time: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Where: Morongo Basin Horsemen's Association Arena 3133 Balsa Ave Yucca Valley For more info, call 366-2459 or log on to http://www.mbha.us
SAT. 2/14 Fairy Tale Family Fun Day Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Where: Hi-Desert Nature Museum 57090 29 Palms Hwy Yucca Valley For more info, call 369-7212 or log on to http://www.hidesertnaturemuseum.org	SAT. 2/14 Kid's Valentine's Day Dance Time: 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Where: Yucca Valley Community Center Complex 57090 29 Palms Hwy Yucca Valley For more info, call 369-7211	TUES. 2/17 Taking Chance sneak peek Time: 7 p.m. Where: Combat Center Sunset Cinema The true story of Lt. Col. Michael Strobl returning the body of Combat Center Marine Lance Cpl. Chance R. Phelps to his hometown after he was killed in Iraq. To view the movie trailer, log on to http://www.hbo.com/films/takingchance/	FRI. 2/20 Brooks & Dunn Time: 8 p.m. Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino 84245 Indio Springs Pkwy. Indio For more info, call 342-5000 or log on to http://www.fantasy springsresort.com	FRI. 2/20 & SAT. 2/21 Improv Comedy Club Time: 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino 84245 Indio Springs Pkwy Indio For more info, call 342-5000 or log on to http://www.fantasy springsresort.com

HBO's 'Taking Chance' to appear at Sunset Cinema

COURTESY OF HBO
MEDIA RELATIONS

"Taking Chance"

As a special sneak peek, the upcoming HBO film "Taking Chance" will be screened at the Combat Center's Sunset Cinema Tuesday at 7 p.m. to

honor the memory of Lance Cpl. Chance R. Phelps, who was killed April 9, 2004, while deployed to Iraq with Battery L, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment. Based on Retired Lt. Col.

Michael R. Strobl's personal journal of the same name, "Taking Chance" chronicles one of the silent, virtually unseen journeys that take place across the country, bearing witness to the fallen and all those who, literally and figuratively, carry them home. In spring 2004, Lt. Col.

Michael Strobl came across the name of 19-year-old Phelps, a young Marine who had been killed in action in Iraq. Strobl, a Desert Storm veteran with 17 years of military service, requested that he be assigned for military escort duty to accompany

Chance's remains to his family in Dubois, Wyo. Strobl, who recently retired after serving 24 years in the Marine Corps, developed the original story with the strong support of Phelps' parents, John Phelps and

Gretchen Mack. His first-person account, which began as an official trip report, gives an insight into the military's policy of providing a uniformed escort for all casualties.

"The Department of Defense provides a uniformed escort to ensure that the remains of all servicemen



COURTESY PHOTO
The new release, "Taking Chance" will be screened at the Combat Center's Sunset Cinema Tuesday at 7 p.m. to honor the memory of Lance Cpl. Chance R. Phelps, who was killed April 9, 2004, while deployed to Iraq.

who have died are transported with proper respect and safeguarded all the way to wherever the loved ones desire the final resting place to be," Strobl said. Very quickly, however, it became apparent to Strobl

that his journey with Phelps was something that transcended any of his expectations. At every step along the way, from the groundskeepers he passed along the road, to the cargo handlers at the airport, he witnessed a spontaneous out-

pouring of support and respect for the fallen Marine.

"Beginning in Virginia, and then especially in Dover [Del.] and from there on, I saw how people were reacting

to Chance's sacrifice," Strobl said. "I felt like I really wanted to remember it, and the best way to do that was to capture

See MOVIE, B4



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

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He's Just Not That Into You (PG13) Fri-Mon: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00 Tues-Thur: 2:30, 4:45, 7:00	Taken (PG13) Fri-Mon: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00 Tues-Thur: 2:30, 4:45, 7:00

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LANCE CPL. BRYAN G. CARFREY
Retired Lt. Col. Michael R. Strobl stands next to actor Kevin Bacon during a premier showing of HBO's made-for-TV movie 'Taking Chance.' Bacon plays the role of Strobl in the movie as a uniformed military escort bringing home the body of Lance Cpl. Chance Phelps who was killed in action April 9, 2004.

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Combat Center sports standings



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
Filber Labitad, a point guard with Marine Wing Support Squadron-374, shoots a free throw after being fouled. MWSS-374 was the second team to lose to 1st Tanks Wednesday during the Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League.

Intramural Basketball Standings as of Wednesday

Team	Wins	Losses
NHTP	4	0
Ole School Plus	3	0
MCCES All-Stars	3	0
1/7	3	1
IPAC	2	2
MCCES A	1	2
MWSS-374 (A)	2	2
MWSS-374 (B)	2	2
1st Tanks	2	2
3rd CEB	0	3
CLB-7	0	3
MCCES Party	1	3



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
Filber Labitad, a point guard with Marine Wing Support Squadron-374, comes down the court on a breakaway after stealing the ball from the opposing team.



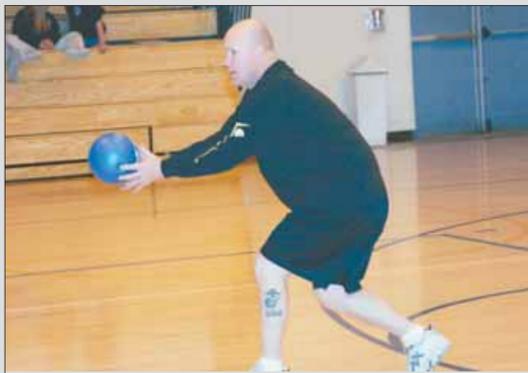
LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
Centel Redmond [right], a small forward with 1st Tanks, fights his way past his opponent as he makes his way down court.

Intramural Dodgeball league standings as of Wednesday

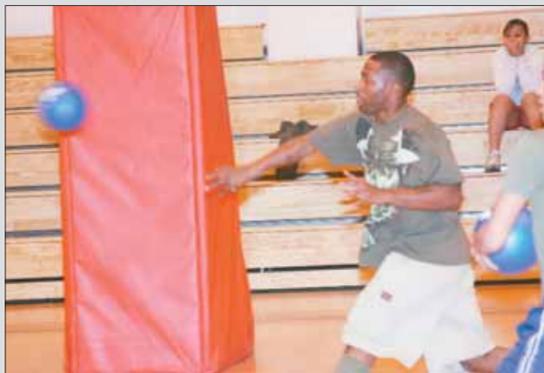
Team	Wins	Losses
Fainting Goats	5	0
Jive Turkeys	4	1
MCCES A Co.	4	1
Sapper	3	2
MTU	3	2
A-Team	2	3
Tanks #4	2	3
Dental	1	4
Hospital	1	4
Justice League	0	5



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
Players with Marksmanship Training Unit rush the court and get the balls for their team. The Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball league meets every Tuesday at 6 p.m. for play.



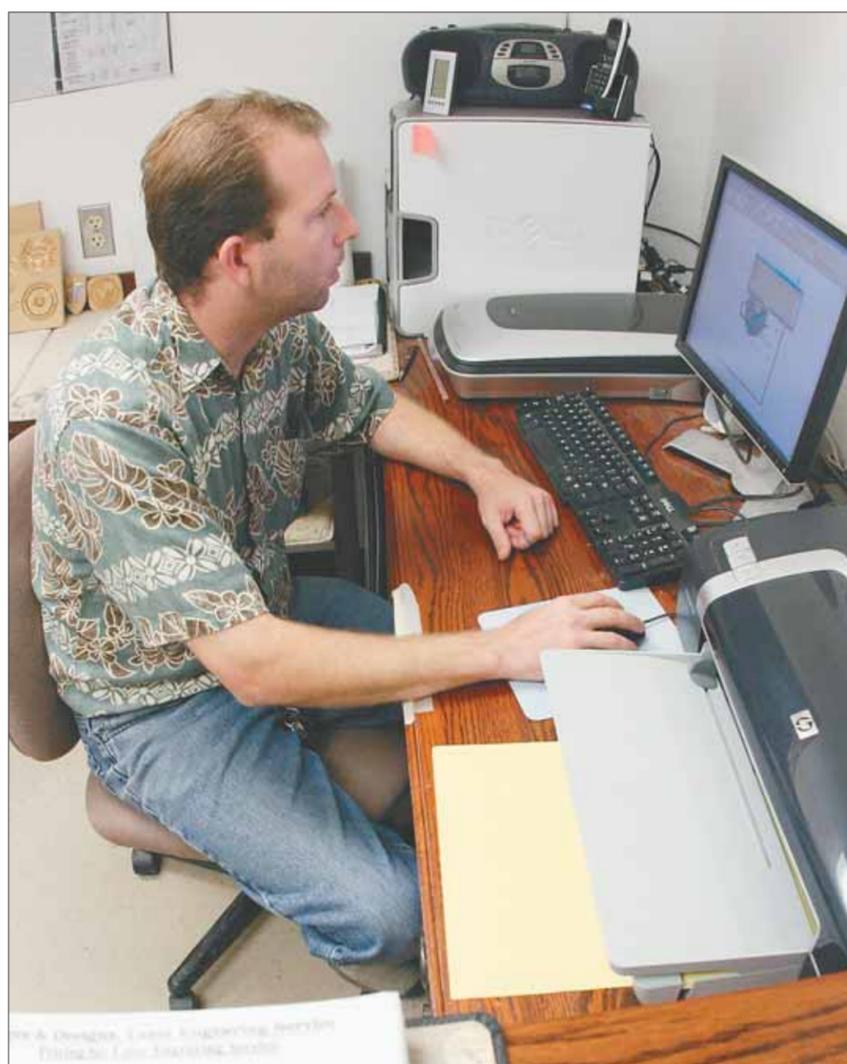
LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
Rodney Bolton, a player with Marksmanship Training Unit, catches a ball from one of his teammates before slinging it at the opposition. The Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball league meets every Tuesday at 6 p.m. for play.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
Roderick Beachum, a player with the Unpredictables fights against the odds when his team was outnumbered three to one Tuesday night. The Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball league meets every Tuesday at 6 p.m. for play.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
A player with the Unpredictables takes a hard hit in a bad place Tuesday night during the Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball league. The Unpredictables lost, even with the addition of new players to their team.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
Robert Henry, a recreation assistant with the Wood Hobby Shop, inputs information into the laser engraving system they use. Employees of the shop are the only ones authorized to use the engraver, but it is available to anyone for a fee.

WOOD SHOP, from B1

classes given at the shop.

"The prices are much lower than anywhere else around here. You can get a day's worth of work done for less than five dollar," said Miller. "Learning wise, all you have to do is ask when you're up here, either myself or my assistant are always eager and willing to help out one of our customers."

Miller, who calls Twentynine Palms, Calif., his home has been an employee at the shop for 20 years, and says the shop is doing well, with approximately 30 to 40 new faces coming in and doing their safety classes per month. With a good base of regular customers, and a healthy body of newcomers the shop is in good shape to keep going.

The majority of patrons work on furniture for their homes, or plaques for their family or unit.

The shop has its own supply of wood, ranging from regular types like Oak and Maple, to exotic woods like koa or cherry. The shop has approximately 20 different types of wood available for purchase.

Other than allowing patrons to make their own projects in the shop, the staff also offers laser engraving services.

Miller and his assistant, Robert Henry, a recreation assistant with the shop, are able to run pictures and other data through the machine and operate it to make designs.

"It's a CO2 laser that cuts the wood, glass -- pretty much anything but metal -- that we put in there," said Henry, who comes from Burbank, Calif. "The laser uses frequencies to make its cuts. Before all the cutting happens, we either take the image that people give us, or we take one from our database, which has almost every unit aboard the base in it. We take whatever picture we have, and enhance it so it is a higher resolution, remove all lines that would just add clutter, then simply run the appropriate sized wood through the engraver."

The shop charges different rates for different laser engraving projects, Henry said. Their photograph engraving set-up fee is \$20 to \$40. The art set-up fee is less than \$20. Their text set-up costs \$2.50 and finally, the Clip Art set-up costs \$3. The fees for laser engraving add one dollar per minute the project takes.

With wood available to purchase, Henry added, a crafter can either make their own plaque or buy one of many pre-made ones.

"We have same-day service," he explained. "The projects can run as short as a half hour, which includes bringing it in and having whatever you want. It is an extremely precise system," Henry said. "It makes designs far more intricately than the human hand can."

Henry continued to elaborate on the detail the laser engraver can perform at.

Henry stated the engraver can also do in-lay work, and color text depending on how much text is put into a project.

Some Marines are fairly new to woodworking and to the shop, like Sgt. Stephen Foster, an assaultman with Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment.

Foster said that he has gotten lots of help whenever he needed it, and everything has been very valuable.

"When I've had problems they've been there to walk me through every step of the way," Foster said. "When I'm not asking for help, they let me go about what I do when I'm doing it."

Foster said he is currently working on a bed for his son and it is his first project. Foster continued that he hopes to finish it soon.

For more information on the Wood Hobby Shop, you can contact the manager at 830-7214.

MOVIE, from B2

it in a journal.”

By the time Strobl returned home, he had filled 20 pages of a journal with his observations about the people and experiences he had encountered.

“I walked into my house, and my wife said, ‘How was your trip?’” he said. “I felt so drained I couldn’t even explain it, so I went downstairs and typed up my notes. The next morning, I left the notes on the table and she read them, and I figured while I have these notes, I may as well share them with a few people. So I sent them to about six or seven coworkers and then it kind of exploded after that. The story seemed to really touch people. My innocuous trip report became ‘Taking Chance.’”

The story became an Internet phenomenon when it was widely circulated throughout the military community and eventually reached the mainstream media.

After his death, Phelps was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star with Combat Distinguishing Device and a Purple Heart medal for his heroic actions during the ambush that led to his death.

“I feel the responsibility to Lt. Col. Strobl, his family, and the family of Chance Phelps, to approach the material with as much honesty, integrity – and to approach it with as little vanity – as possible,” said actor Kevin Bacon, who portrays Strobl in the film. “Chance Phelps was a heroic kid who had his whole life in front of him, and hopefully whose spirit and memory will live on through this film. His death was a terrible tragedy and a reality of war.”

“Taking Chance” is set to debut on HBO Feb. 21 at 8 p.m., and was an official selection at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival. To view the movie trailer, log on to <http://www.hbo.com/films/takingchance/>.



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

This Valentine's Day, instead of only getting your loved one stuffed animals and chocolate, find something personal that will show your significant other you truly know them from the heart.

ROMANTIC, from B1

loved one misses their snowy home state. The Tramway is low in cost for a pass, \$22.25 for one adult. They are also hosting a special Valentine's Day dinner at the Peaks Fine Dining Restaurant, located at the mountain station. Dinner per person is \$70, and reservations are required.

If you feel like staying close to home, the Combat Center's Officers' Club is also hosting a romantic dinner for lovebirds. The dinner is scheduled to begin at 5 p.m.

Every woman will receive a rose upon entering the club, and the dinner includes two glasses of champagne, an appetizer, salad, main entrée with a side and a dessert to finish the meal. The entire dinner will cost \$44.95 per couple, and wine will also be available for purchase throughout the dinner.

“It is going to be fantastic,” said Tracy Hatch, the general manager at the Officers' Club. “We already have a lot of people signed up to enjoy this Hallmark holiday with us, and we are going to make it special for all of them.”

A downside of Valentine's Day is when a loved one is away, either on

a deployment, or simply on temporary duty across the country.

Spouses who are left alone during the loving holiday should plan a get-together with friends or family, instead of staying home and being sad, said Jennifer Tossetti, the wife of Petty Officer 1st Class Jesse Tossetti, a corpsman with 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment who is currently deployed.

“Wives need to make sure they are taking care of themselves,” said Tossetti, a Temple City, Calif., native. “They should plan their own Valentine's Day and remember they have their own special relationship with their husbands who are still in their hearts, even if they are not home.”

Lindy Seto, the Marine Corps Community Services area coordinator who has dealt with her husband's constant deployments over Valentine's Day, agreed with Tossetti saying spouses should have fun on Valentine's Day, not be depressed.

“Invite some friends over to your house,” Seto said. “Make sure you are having fun, treat yourself to a girls-night-out, and enjoy the time you have to yourself.”

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