

# OBSERVATION POST

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

MAY 15, 2009

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 52 ISSUE 19

## 2/7 sets sights on squad certification

**CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

As Marines make their way through rocky, uneven terrain and close in on simulated enemy bunkers, fire teams open-fire and take out each position.

Marines with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment spent a week squad rushing their way to obtain the battalion's squad live-fire certifications in the Combat Center's Gays Pass Training Area.

To receive their certifications, each squad is evaluated on their ability to react to an enemy engagement through offensive maneuvers, said Capt. Carlos Cuevas, the commanding officer for 2/7's Company G.

"We will remediate until they pass," said Gunnery Sgt. Simon Sandoval, the Co. G gunnery sergeant. "We train to standards, not time."

Although the training involves the whole squad, it is mainly to evaluate the squad leaders, their ability to lead their squad and how they break them down to achieve the

See 2/7, A4



Lance Cpl. Todd Bohacik, an automatic rifleman with 1st Squad, 2nd Platoon, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, aims-in during the battalion's squad live-fire certifications in the Combat Center's Gays Pass Training Area Monday through Sunday.

CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES

## Combat Center showcases clean energy



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

A Mercy Air pilot talks with Congressman Jim Costa and Congresswoman Cynthia Lummis Saturday before their aerial tour around the Combat Center.

**LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Jim Costa, a congressman with California's 20th Congressional District in San Joaquin Valley, along with other representatives and members from the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, visited the Combat Center Sunday to see how the base's plans and procedures align with past, present and future alternative and renewable energy resources.

The visit was a new experience for the representatives and the rest of their staff. It served as a curiosity fulfillment for them about what goes on aboard the base, said Cynthia Lummis, a congresswoman representing

Cheyenne, Wyo.

"It's a very good operation, and the programs are all very conscious of the environment and wildlife," she said. "It's good to see the military setting an example by doing things this well for the earth."

The tour was also the first of its kind for the Combat Center as well.

"The visit is the first one we've ever dealt with like this," said Adam Clancy, a protocol specialist for the base. "The congressmen and woman, along with all the others in their staff, really took a lot from seeing the base and how we run things."

The representatives took an aerial tour of the Combat Center, visited geothermal drilling sites, examined future

locations for planned meteorological towers and wind turbines, and looked over the numerous current and future solar panel projects on base.

Clancy said the base is the leader in the Marine Corps for energy conservation, as well as an outstanding place for the preservation of wildlife.

"We're at the top of the Marine Corps as far as energy conservation and clean energy production," he said. "We also have an extensive program leading to the rehabilitation and preservation of species such as the desert tortoise."

With the visit over, the base is still planning and preparing to take further steps to keep its power consumption and production environmentally friendly.

## Motorcycle riders say goodbye to reflective vests

**LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

As of May 8, motorcycle riders Corps wide are no longer required to wear reflective



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Some riders aboard the Combat Center still choose to wear their reflective vest, even though it is not required, the riders may choose to wear or not wear the reflective vest both during the day and at night.

vests according to the 21st Executive Safety Board's message which amended the order for the equipment.

Dave Horn, the Combat Center's safety director said the change did not come because it was a huge necessity, but because the vest did not make a huge impact on the rider's safety.

"People are going to get into accidents either way," he said. "While the vests do make the rider more visible, they were not really preventing accidents by being shiny."

"The equipment that really does the rider the most good is the protective gear," he said. "Riders will benefit more from a helmet or other gear like that than a vest."

All other proper protective gear, such as approved helmets, long-sleeve and long-legged clothing, full-fingered gloves, and hard-soled shoes must still be worn.

Even though they are given the choice, some riders, such as Lance Cpl. Pejhomme

See VEST, A7

## After 7 month deployment, Watchdogs, 1st Tanks return

**OBSERVATION POST**

STAFF

Family, friends and fellow service members gathered at the Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 hangar and 1st Tank Battalion's headquarters building, to welcome approximately 35 Marines returning home from a 7-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom May 7.

Twenty Marines returned from VMU-1 and the 15 returned from 1st Tanks' Company B advanced party.

The VMU-1 Watchdogs deployed to Al Asad, Iraq, where they supported intelligence operations by utilizing

See RETURN, A10



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Sgt. Nathan Marple, an unmanned aerial vehicle operator with Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1, laughs with his son, Grayson, at the VMU-1's headquarters May 7. Sgt. Marple and the rest of VMU-1 returned to the Combat Center after a deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Combat Center Band hits high note in Chicago ~ See A3



I want to ride my bicycle See A6



Gooooaaaaaa! See B1



Aaron gets his kicks See B1



**BUS SCHEDULE**

Morning Route	1st Run	2nd Run
Two Mile Rd. - Two Mile Rd.	5:15 a.m.	6:30 a.m.
Two Mile Rd. - Desert Knoll Ave.	5:17 a.m.	6:32 a.m.
Desert Knoll Ave. - Joe Davis Dr.	5:20 a.m.	6:35 a.m.
Joe Davis Dr. - Luckie Ave.	5:25 a.m.	6:40 a.m.
Condor Rd. - Argos Rd.	5:30 a.m.	6:45 a.m.
Condor Rd. - Rainbow Canyon	5:32 a.m.	6:47 a.m.
Condor Rd. - Saddleback	5:35 a.m.	6:50 a.m.
Agate Rd. - Desert Ave.	5:38 a.m.	6:53 a.m.
Plant St. - Cactus Dr.	5:40 a.m.	6:55 a.m.
De Valle - 3rd St.	5:45 a.m.	7 a.m.
De Valle - 12th St.	5:50 a.m.	7:05 a.m.
De Valle - 11th St.	5:55 a.m.	7:10 a.m.
Griffin Rd. - 10th St.	6 a.m.	7:15 a.m.
Brown Rd. - 7th St.	6:05 a.m.	7:20 a.m.
Brown Rd. - 5th St.	6:07 a.m.	7:22 a.m.
Brown Rd. - 3rd St.	6:08 a.m.	7:23 a.m.
Brown Rd. - 1st St.	6:10 a.m.	7:25 a.m.

Afternoon Route	1st Run	2nd Run	3rd Run
De Valle - 3rd St.	3:15 p.m.	4:30 p.m.	5:45 p.m.
De Valle - 12th St.	3:17 p.m.	4:32 p.m.	5:47 p.m.
De Valle - 11th St.	3:20 p.m.	4:35 p.m.	5:50 p.m.
Griffin Rd. - 10th St.	3:25 p.m.	4:40 p.m.	5:55 p.m.
Brown Rd. - 7th St.	3:30 p.m.	4:45 p.m.	6 p.m.
Brown Rd. - 5th St.	3:32 p.m.	4:47 p.m.	6:02 p.m.
Brown Rd. - 3rd St.	3:35 p.m.	4:50 p.m.	6:05 p.m.
Brown Rd. - 1st St.	3:38 p.m.	4:53 p.m.	6:08 p.m.
Two Mile Rd. - Two Mile Rd.	3:40 p.m.	4:55 p.m.	6:10 p.m.
Two Mile - Desert Knoll Ave.	3:45 p.m.	5 p.m.	6:15 p.m.
Desert Knoll - Joe Davis Dr.	3:50 p.m.	5:05 p.m.	6:20 p.m.
Joe Davis Dr. - Luckie Ave.	3:55 p.m.	5:10 p.m.	6:25 p.m.
Condor Rd. - Argos Rd.	4 p.m.	5:15 p.m.	6:30 p.m.
Condor Rd. - Rainbow Cny.	4:05 p.m.	5:20 p.m.	6:35 p.m.
Condor Rd. - Saddleback	4:07 p.m.	5:22 p.m.	6:37 p.m.
Agate Rd. - Desert Ave.	4:08 p.m.	5:23 p.m.	6:38 p.m.
Plant St. - Cactus Dr.	4:10 p.m.	5:25 p.m.	6:40 p.m.

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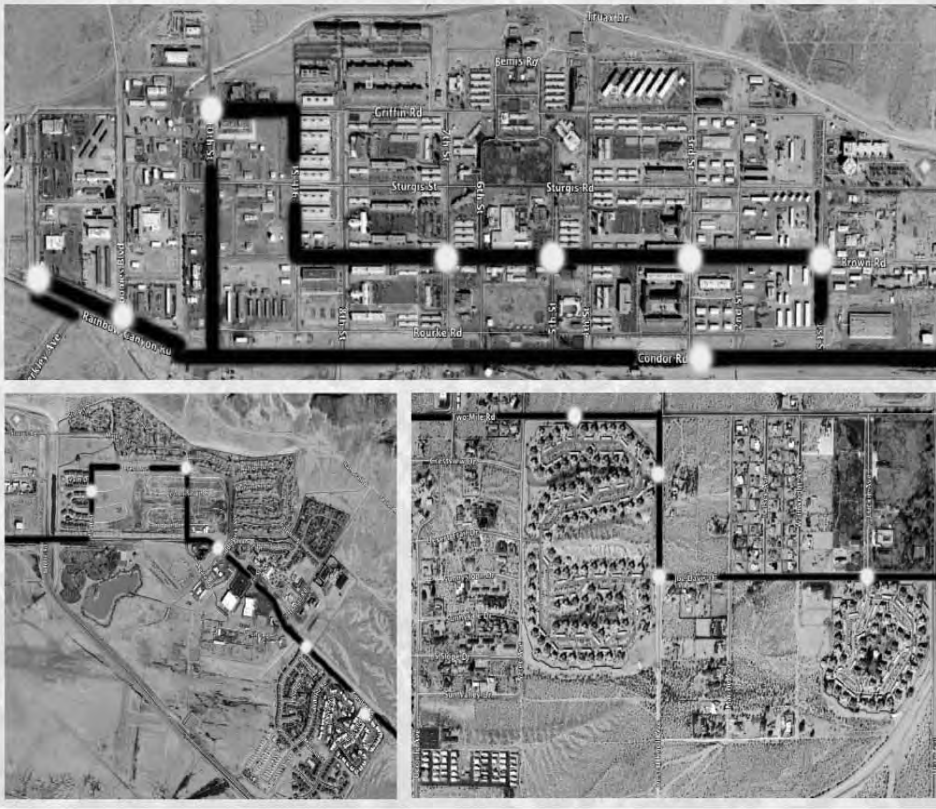
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American Profile Hometown Content

04/19/2009

**BUS ROUTES**

The purpose of this program is to provide no cost transportation to and from work for Marines and sailors residing in 801, Adobe Flats, Shadow Mountain, and Palm Vista housing areas. The shuttle will run Monday through Friday during scheduled morning and evening hours. Schedule of pick up and drop of times are listed above.



**ACROSS**

- 1. Assigned a PG to, say
- 6. Assume as a fact
- 11. Hydro power source
- 14. Sachet's quality
- 15. Sillily imitative
- 16. Soccer cheerword
- 17. Noted World War II-era pinup
- 19. Dyer's vessel
- 20. Suffix with elephant
- 21. Yastrzemski in the Hall
- 22. Way out
- 24. Tell the tale of
- 26. One way to travel
- 27. Actor and 2008 presidential candidate
- 33. Vampire hunter's need
- 36. Ford a shallow stream, say
- 37. Substance with an -ite suffix, perhaps
- 38. Trucking unit
- 39. Exert, as influence
- 41. Bar topic
- 42. Web address ending

- 43. Walk like an expectant father
- 44. Took part in a bee track star
- 50. Mr. Potato Head piece
- 51. Mr. \_\_\_ (classic candy)
- 55. Pigskin's spin
- 58. Golden Fleece transporter
- 59. Victorian \_\_\_
- 60. Surfacing stuff
- 61. Massachusetts congressman since 1981
- 64. Swelled head
- 65. Sleazed bags
- 66. Like howls in the night
- 67. Sword vanquisher of proverb
- 68. \_\_\_ Park, Colo.
- 69. Gave medicine to

**DOWN**

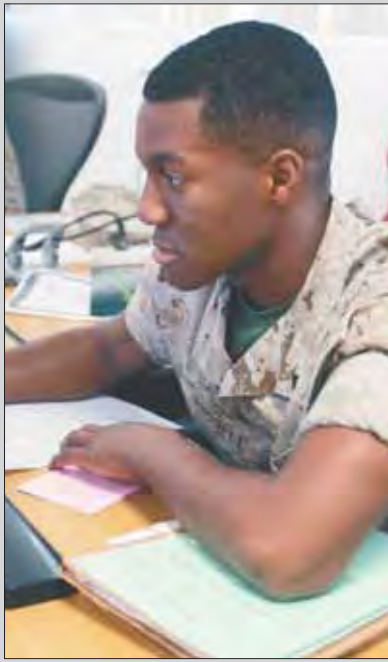
- 1. Yitzhak of Israel
- 2. Wrestler's workplace
- 3. Caddie or bellhop
- 4. CPR pro
- 5. Service for children of two-income families
- 6. Scored a 4 on, maybe
- 7. Gem from Australia
- 8. Bro or sis
- 9. Land in the ocean
- 10. 1997 thriller with Michael Douglas and Sean Penn
- 11. Flatfish on menus
- 12. Word said with a sigh
- 13. Team with a new stadium in 2009
- 18. Scandal suffix
- 23. Headstone letters
- 25. Monogram of a '60s attorney general
- 28. Tammany Hall's "Boss" \_\_\_
- 29. Talking computer of sci-fi

- 30. Without a match
- 31. Passed on by storytellers
- 32. Politico Gingrich
- 33. Pack in the overhead
- 34. Spelling or Amos
- 35. L-shaped brace
- 39. Subject of many campus protests
- 40. Post-op hosp. area
- 43. Story with a moral
- 44. Lampooned
- 45. Deg. for many profs
- 47. Scratch up
- 48. Hideous woman
- 49. Lethargic
- 52. Market pessimists
- 53. Golfer Palmer, to his fans
- 54. Did an October chore
- 55. Bit of choreography
- 56. Congressional gofer
- 57. Vientiane's land
- 58. Start the pot
- 62. Dirt-road track
- 63. Rock's \_\_\_ Speedwagon

[puzzle Solutions on A10]

**Combat Center Spotlight**

**Name:** Lance Cpl. Steven Russell  
**Job Title:** Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School Clerk with the Installation Personnel  
**Administration Center Job Duties:** I run the unit diary, customer service, help students with pay problems, add dependants and change basic information.  
**What do you like most about your job:** Helping Marines get paid what they're supposed to get paid.  
**Significant Acheivements:** We received a certificate of commendation for our inspector general inspection.  
**Hobbies:** Basketball, making music and taking care of my kids.  
**Military Service:** Two years active duty Marine Corps  
**Time at Combat Center:** One year



**Hot Topics**

**IMMIGRATION**

The Legal Assistance Office, building 1514, assists all active duty (no fee) and their spouses (\$675) with becoming a U.S. citizen. Pick up a packet. Schedule an appointment when forms are complete. A military outreach by U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services is scheduled for June 4. Immigration officers will assist active duty & family members with all types of immigration issues, including naturalization, permanent resident status, visas, petitions, applications, immigration forms, and answering questions. For more information and to schedule an appointment call 830-6111.

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ESTABLISHES H1N1 HOTLINE**

As part of California Department of Public Health's efforts to provide updated information to Californians on what they can do to protect themselves and their families from the H1N1 flu outbreak, CDPH has activated a toll-free H1N1 hotline in English and Spanish. Assistance in other languages is also available. The phone number is 1-888-865-0564 and the hotline is available Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., and on weekends from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**This Day in Marine Corps History**

**May 15, 1862**

Cpl. John Mackie, the first Marine to earn the Medal of Honor, was commended for service in the USS Galena during action against Confederate shore batteries at Drewry's Bluff which blocked the James River approaches to Richmond.

SUDOKU #1427

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**Centerspeak**

**If you had three wishes what would they be?**

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



SGT. LUCAS WALLEK  
FOREIGN WEAPONS INSTRUCTOR WITH HEADQUARTERS BATTALION

**"L**ots of money, time off and a nice, new truck."



GUNNERY SGT. JAMES SCHNEEWEIS  
S3 CHIEF WITH HEADQUARTERS BATTALION

**"T**he economy to get better, to be rich and to be able to go fishing whenever I want."



PFC. NICK PATRICK  
MORTARMAN WITH 3RD BATTALION, 7TH MARINE REGIMENT

**"F**or my end of active service date to come faster, a million dollars and a Ferrari."

**OBSERVATION POST**

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

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- Deputy Public Affairs Officer 1st Lt. Doy Demsick
- Public Affairs Chief Gunnery Sgt. Sergio Jimenez
- Press Chief/Editor Cpl. Corey A. Blodgett
- Layout, Design Leslie Shaw

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# Combat Center Band's biggest gig this year

**CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

CHICAGO – Marines with the Combat Center Band are showcasing their musical talents to reach out to the Chicago community during the 2009 Marine Week, which started Monday and lasts until Sunday.

The Combat Center Band was selected as the only band to represent the Marine Corps during Marine Week, which is a seven-day community outreach effort very similar to its older sibling, Fleet Week.

Since 1935, Fleet Week has been a joint community outreach effort by sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen to educate the public about the military through demonstrations, concerts and events, according to the Marines Corps Times Web site <http://www.marinecorpstime.com>.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Stephen Giove, the band officer, said it was an honor to be selected for such a unique event.

"Music is an international language," Giove said about reaching out through music. "Everyone understands it. I think it brings out the patriotism and pride in who people feel they are. For some, music brings back memories or helps make memories."

The band kicked off its first event by performing an opening for a Chicago proclamation ceremony on Grande Ave., for military and city officials like Maj. Gen. Melvin G. Speise, the commanding general of the Training and Education Command, and Richard M. Daley, the mayor of Chicago.

Tuesday, the Combat Center's "Big Band" or jazz band, kicked off their first one-on-one community event by buttoning up their dress blues uniforms and busing their way to Highland High School in Highland, Ill., to put on a show for the local students.

"I think you guys should come here more often," said 17-year-old Mike Spevack, a senior at Highland High School, who has decided to enlist in the Marine Corps after his senior year. "This is a pretty liberal town and I think it could help raise awareness about the military in general."

Wednesday, the whole band made their way to Bremen High School in Midlothian, Ill., for a duel clinic and concert. First, the band showed high school musicians how they warm up, sight read and perform. After a concert was performed for the students during school hours, the parents had their opportunity to enjoy a concert of their own later that night.

Sgt. Andrew Newby, the assistant drum major, explained why interacting with children and young adults through music can

See BAND, A9



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Marines of the Combat Center Band performed a clinic with students and two concerts at Bremen High School in Midlothian, Ill., in honor of Marine Week Wednesday. Marine Week started Monday and will last to Sunday.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Cpl. Andrew Newby, the assistant drum major of the Combat Center Band and a trumpet player, talks with some interested students at Highland High School in Highland, Ill., after a jazz concert Tuesday.

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# Military cracks down on identity theft

**CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Identity theft is a growing problem across the country. Military members are a prime target of identity theft due to the accessibility of important information, specifically their Social Security Numbers printed on identification cards, which are used on a daily basis.

The Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Dr. David Chu recently established a policy to help reduce the unnecessary use of SSNs throughout the Department of Defense by implementing a plan to take the numbers off Common Access Cards and dependent identification cards.

According to Marine Corps Administrative Message 0263/09 signed April 21, the

use of SSNs was to enable systems and processes to transfer information with a greatly reduced chance of errors, but the threat of identity theft has rendered this an unsafe business practice.

"An estimated 10 CAC cards a day have to be reissued here because they were lost," said Carla Lanza, the site security manager for the base's Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System office. "Due to the large number of lost ID cards, [the change] will have a positive effect on controlling identity theft."

The plan to eliminate SSNs from the visual display and barcodes of CAC and dependent identification cards are broken into three phases, Lanza said.

Phase one is already in affect, which replaced the printed dependent SSN from their identification cards with

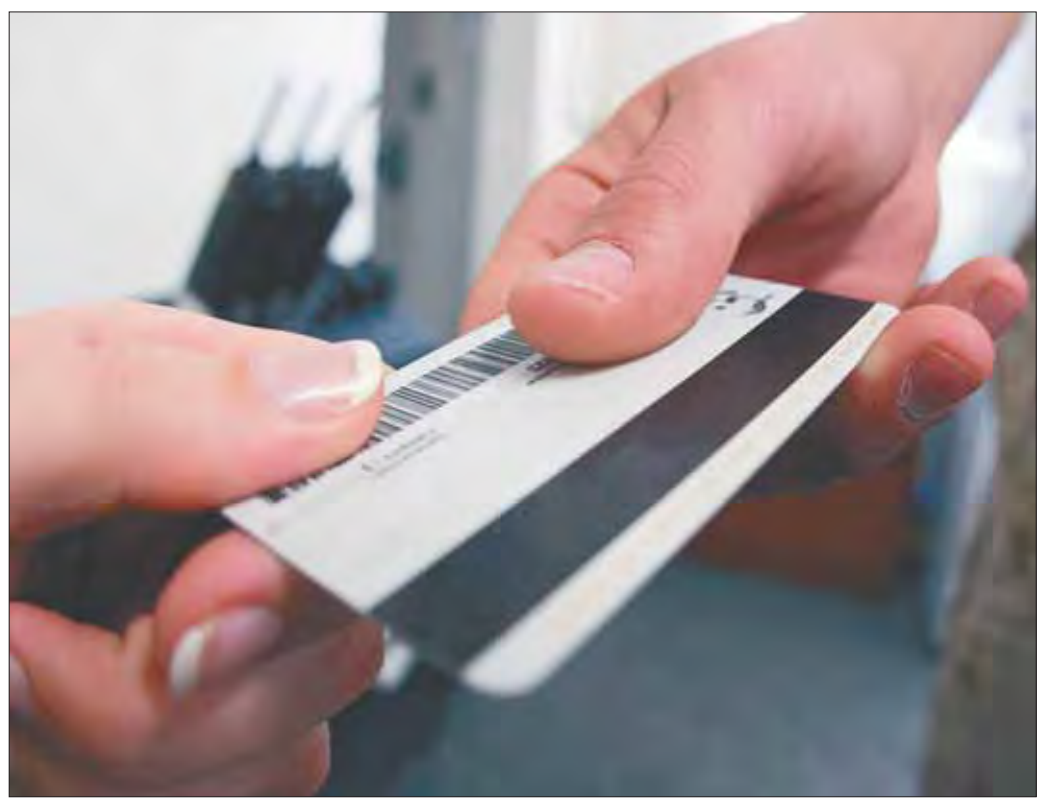
nine "X's." The sponsor's SSN will remain visible on the card during phase one.

Phase two is scheduled to begin by the end of 2009. The printed SSNs from all DoD ID cards will be removed, with the exception of Geneva Conventions identification cards, which will retain the last four digits of the SSN for Geneva Convention purposes.

Phase three will remove SSNs from barcodes on all cards and is scheduled to begin in 2012. There is currently no plan for removal from the Integrated Circuit Chip Contact Interface of the CAC.

The phases are a way for a smooth transition, Lanza said. The process is not a mass reissuance; they will be reissued through attrition only.

For more information on the process contact the DEERS office at 830-5365.



CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES

Identity theft has become a growing problem throughout the country. Many criminals target military members because of their frequent use of their social security number.



CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES

Pfc. Charles Highley, an automatic rifleman with 3rd Squad, 3rd Platoon, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, takes aim during a squad rush.

## 2/7, from A1

mission at hand, said Sandoval, an El Paso, Texas native.

Marines are evaluated in three lanes during the course of the training. Each lane has different environments and situations to help the squad think quick on their feet and apply the best offensive tactics to each situation, Cuevas said.

The first lane is focused on terrain and was meant to be physically exhausting, Sandoval said. The squad had to move together as they took over multiple simulated enemy bunkers while

they maneuvered through uneven, rocky terrain.

The second lane focuses on security patrolling where the enemy has the advantage of the terrain, Cuevas said. The squad leader must break down his fire teams and decide what further action is required according to the scenario.

The third lane consists of a cross compartment danger area. This is when the enemy has complete advantage of the terrain. This is where the Marine's only avenue of approach is through a kill zone.

"The cross compartment danger area is the greatest challenge of all," Cuevas said. "This could disrupt their ability to maneuver."

Each squad maneuvers through one lane each day. They conduct dry runs and then live-fire runs, both day and night for each lane before moving on to the next.

"This has been challenging," said Cpl. James Flores, the squad leader for 1st Squad, 2nd Platoon, Co. G. "This is the first time most of my squad has ever done a squad live-fire range. For this being their first time, they are doing better than expected."

This training is vital for the Marines to learn before they go into any combat environment so they can react to the best of their ability in any situation.

"It creates squad cohesion and helps internal communication within the squads," said 2nd Lt. Ryan Alt, the platoon commander for first platoon, Company G. "If we have strong squads, than we have a strong battalion."

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# MARSOC hits the ground in 29 Palms

**CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marine Special Operations Screening Team will screen Marines aboard the Combat Center June 3 for potential assignments as combat skills operators.

Marine Corps Special Operations Command recently expanded its recruiting guidelines, allowing male Marines in every military occupational specialty to be potential candidates for assignment, said Staff Sgt. Xavisus Gayden, the Headquarters Battalion career retention specialist.

Marines stationed here were pre-screened by MARSOC recruiting. Those that met the requirements have been directed to attend the screening. For Marines who were not flagged, they can still complete a checklist and attend, Gayden said.

Although MARSOC is now open to all MOSs,

only male corporals and above are sought to become special operations Marines. Lance corporals are accepted in some cases.

MARSOC is only looking for high caliber Marines, Gayden said.

"He has to be one of the Marines that really wants to

do something continuously challenging," Gayden said. "They should be well trained, have a high-first class physical fitness test

and be enthused about it."

MARSOC is not only looking for the best Marines on paper, it should also emanate from their character.

"He doesn't need to brag about his abilities," said Maj. Matthew Ceradini, the command's officer in charge of recruiting, while

describing the ideal candidate in a recent news article in Marine Corps Times. "He's humble, but confident. ... These are people that seek excellence in everything they do."

With a larger pool of Marines to choose from,

See MARSOC, A7



LANCE CPL. STEPHEN C. BENSON

A Marine from 2nd Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command is the first to jump out into the sky as the rest of his team wait to jump in line behind him. Marines and Sailors conducted jump operations to refine their capability at Reno, Nev., April 3.



CPL. RICHARD BLUMENSTEIN

Commandos with a Dominican Republic counterterrorism unit rappel out of a UH-1 "Huey" helicopter at Ciudad Del Niño, Santo Domingo March 9. A team of Marines with U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, trained the commandos as part of U.S. Southern Command, Special Operations Command-South's Exercise Fused Response.

## CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

### Sundays

**Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel Roman Catholic Services**

8 a.m.-Faith

Formation/CCD

September through

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

8:30 a.m.-West Wing

**Non-denominational:**

Calvary Chapel-AGC

9 a.m.-Worship\*

9 a.m.-Children's

Church

10:30 a.m.-Sunday

School\*

6 p.m.-Youth Group

**Lay-led Gospel Service**

11:30 a.m.-Worship

building 1707

**Pastor-led Assemblies**

**of God worship**

9:30 a.m.-Sunday

School

10:30 a.m.-Worship

**Legend**

\* Indicates Child Care

Provided

+ Appointments can be

made for Confessions by

calling 830-6456/6482

### Weekday Events

#### Monday-Friday

Immaculate Heart of Mary

11:45 a.m.-Catholic Mass

(except holidays)

#### Tuesday

Christ Chapel

9 a.m.-Christian Women's

Fellowship\*

September through May

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

7 p.m.-Lay-led Gospel Bible

Study

Immaculate Heart of Mary

9:30 a.m.-Military Council of

Catholic Women\*

September to May

6 p.m.-Youth Teen

7 p.m.-Knights of Columbus

(1st Wednesday each month)

#### Thursday

Christ Chapel

6 p.m.-Praise Band Rehearsal

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)



## TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt

"Now or Never" is the title of a new book by Jack Cafferty, popular CNN commentator. "The Cafferty File" is viewed by more than two million people every afternoon. He provokes thousands of emails each week and his blog receives more than three million hits a month.

While I found his book to be honest, frank, hopeful, and even inspiring that is not what I want to share with you. I want to write to you about Jack, the man.

Cafferty's struggle to get his act together was a titanic one. Both of his parents were alcoholics and both of them virtually abandoned him and then each of them died a lonely and miserable death.

Cafferty, too, became an alcoholic at an early age. He lost job after job, destroyed two marriages, and was an extremely poor father to his daughters.

Then the miracle happened. Cafferty connected with his Higher Power and his life was immediately transformed. He stopped drinking. He stopped smoking. He became a thoughtful and caring father of his four daughters and established himself as a reliable and productive person.

That momentous moment in Cafferty's life occurred more than 20 years ago. He has not had an alcoholic drink or smoked a cigarette since that day.

The Bible describes such a man. He gets into an apparently hopeless situation. He hits bottom. Then a miracle occurs. In a sudden flush of insight (The Bible says "He came to himself.") he began a new life.

To whom am I writing?.....

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PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Samantha Burke, a Junior Girl Scout with troop 132, reads the symbolic meaning of one of the colors of candles that she lit during the ceremony at the Protestant Chapel where she and three other girls bridged to Cadette Girl Scouts Wednesday.

## Girl Scouts step up to next level

PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Sixteen Combat Center Girl Scouts were promoted in an annual bridging ceremony Wednesday at the Protestant Chapel.

The ceremony was the first opportunity for the four Girl Scout troops to get together, and promotes Brownie Girl Scouts to Junior Girl Scouts, Junior Girl Scouts to Cadette Girl Scouts and Cadette Girl Scouts to Senior Girl Scouts.

The ceremony kicked off with Daisy Girl Scout Troop 823 bringing in the colors and leading the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

After that, the 11 Brownie Girl Scouts were brought on stage to receive their green sashes and the title of Junior Girl Scout.

Next, the 4 Junior Girl Scouts were bridged to Cadettes and the single Cadette, Morgan Young, was given the title Senior Girl Scout.

After the colors were retired, Melissa Young, the troop leader for Brownie Troop 657, gave the closing remarks, saying the ceremony recognizes all the hard work the young ladies put into the scout program.

"They set goals, and they worked very hard to meet these goals," she said. "I'm so proud of each of them."

Natasha Durette, the troop leader for Brownie Troop 618, agreed, saying that stepping up into the higher levels of scouting shows the girls their hard work pays off.

"The girls do a lot of community service," she

See SCOUTS, A9

# Bicycles; a more cost effective way to patrol

PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Eight Marines from the Provost Marshal's Office trained this week to conduct mounted patrols on bicycles throughout the Combat Center.

The three-day program, which trains four officers at a time, will be an ongoing process to keep military policemen on the streets providing community oriented policing.

Bicycle patrols allow MPs to be in closer contact with crowds during large events and in housing areas on base, said Jason Dickson, a civilian law enforcement officer and instructor for the course.

"This is a more cost-effective way to get police involved in the community," he said. "It also provides yet another way for the base to go green."

Pvt. Gary Liles, a student in the course, agreed, saying mounted patrols offer law enforcement agents more options to go off road and be able to get places vehi-

cles can not.

The bicycle patrols are also faster than a walking patrol, he added.

In order to provide the Combat Center with professional, capable bicycle-mounted MPs, students who participate in the course are given instruction

in proper handling of their bicycles and ride a total of 10 to 12 miles in a training day, Dickson said.

"By the time they graduate the course, the riders are trained to be able to handle themselves professionally on patrol," he added. "They learn the tools to be able to

provide the community with another tool to provide a safe place to work and live."

The newly graduated bicycle MPs will be put to the test as they work to protect the crowd at Saturday's We Salute You Tour at Victory Field.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

A student in the Provost Marshal's Office course to provide the Combat Center with bicycle mounted law enforcement agents, navigates through a series of cones as he learns how to maneuver his bicycle through crowds and around obstacles Monday.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Law enforcement agents with the Provost Marshal's Office trained throughout the week to provide the Combat Center with bicycle mounted patrols. These patrols are more cost-effective than other methods of patrolling and give officers more options when keeping the Combat Center's streets safe.

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#### MARSOC, from A5

the standards are going to be even more rigorous than before. The command accepts those with a first-class PFT, but according to Ceradini, the average score is 279 for special opera-

tions Marines. To be competitive in the selection process, Marines should maintain a score of around 280 or higher.

For those Marines pre-selected to attend the screening next month and are serious about becoming

a "silent warrior," Gayden suggests bringing spouses to the screening and brief as well so they can obtain information about the process and what to expect.

For more information or to obtain a checklist contact Gayden at 830-7242.

#### VEST, from A1

Williams, a maintenance management specialist with Exercise Support Division and a native of Worthington, Ohio, chose to wear the vest. "The vest still helps me

to feel safe," Williams said. "The vest I have has places for me to put my license and other papers."

Williams said he personally will continue to wear it, just because it gives him more than what he needs in

terms of safety.

"ATGATT [all the gear all the time], it's pretty simple," he said. "I think I'm better off having everything with me if I need it, so I'm going to keep wearing the vest."



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Some riders aboard the Combat Center have exercised their option to not wear the effective vests seen on service members when riding their bikes on and off base.

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## BAND, from A3

be such a great influence.

"I think we have to present a good face for the Marine Corps to the public," said Newby. "The first and most influential part of the public is the youth. The best part about teaching them about music is that they want to learn."

The Marines continued to split into groups and perform numerous concerts and events across the city throughout the week.

Giove said although he has been pleased thus far with the band's performances, he feels the best is yet to come.

"It's still early in the week, but we have more work to do," he said Wednesday. "The culmination of Marine Week will crescendo to its max by Saturday and Sunday."

The Band will perform several concerts at Navy Pier, a popular and historical sight in Chicago, at 8 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

The Combat Center Band drum line wowed audience members at Bremen High School in Midlothian, Ill., during a free concert in honor of Marine Week Wednesday. Marine Week will finish Sunday.

## SCOUTS, from A6

added. "It's a great opportunity for them to help the community and make friends."

Samantha Burke, a Cadette Girl Scout with troop 132, said she is very excited about being a cadette, it gives her a chance to do more as a Girl Scout.

"I really like being in the scouts," she said. "Girl Scouts is fun and it gives me the chance to try new things."

The Girl Scouts of the Combat Center look forward to another fun year helping the community and helping children have fun.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

The Brownie Girl Scouts of Troops 657 and 618 bridged to Junior Girl Scouts in a ceremony at the Protestant Chapel Wednesday.

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

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

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.





CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Sgt. Frank Blake, an imagery analyst with Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1, is welcomed home by his girlfriend at the units hanger aboard the Combat Center May 7. VMU-1 spent 7 months in Al Asad, Iraq, where they supported intelligence operations.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Lance Cpl. Travis Williamson, a Marine with Company B, 1st Tank Battalion, embraces his wife, Stephanie, and daughter upon his return from a 7-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom May 7.

RETURN, from A1

UAVs to gather information to better inform troops on the ground. 1st Tanks deployed to Western Iraq where they defended the borders on mounted patrols during the first half of their deployment and dismounted to perform foot patrols during the second half.

Both units were extremely successful during their overseas tours, with both units returning every Marine and sailor home safely.

For most, waiting for the Marines' arrival for a few more hours was but a drop in the ocean compared to waiting for them to return from their deployment.

Ron and Delores Hebron, the parents of Sgt. Christopher Hebron, an imagery analyst with VMU-1, said their son didn't know they were going to be at the homecoming.

"We haven't seen him since August and I am excited," said Delores before the Marines returned. "Being able to have him home for Mother's Day is unreal."

She said while her son was deployed, it was intense for her. She said she was constantly hearing about people dying in the news and she always worried, but her faith helped her get through the hard times.

Sgt. Hebron, an Upper Marlboro, Md., native, said he didn't think his parents even knew he was stateside.

"I was very surprised when I saw them standing there," he said. "I didn't think anyone would be here, but it's definitely good to see my family again."

For some Marines, the simple fact of putting on civilian clothes again was the best part of being home.

"The deployment went very well," said Sgt. Jonathan Frakes, a UAV mission commander with VMU-1 and a Henderson, Nev. native. "It's good to be home; I just want to relax and get out of these cammies."

Lance Cpl. Eloy Lopez, an administration clerk with 1st Tanks, agreed, saying the one thing he could not wait for was a long, hot shower and spending time with his wife, Regina.

Regina couldn't hold back her excitement as she and Eloy renewed their marriage vows later that day.

"Having him home means so much to me," she said. "It means having my other half back."

After a period of well earned rest and relaxation with their friends and families, the warriors of VMU-1 and 1st Tanks will begin training in preparation for future deployments overseas.

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<p><b>2007 NISSAN ALTIMA 2.5 S</b></p> <p>4-Cyl 2.5L., CVT Auto, AC, PW, PDL, Tilt, CC, MP3/CD, P/Seat, M/Roof. VIN 442743 / STK P1690</p> <p><b>\$17,982</b></p>	<p><b>2009 MERCURY GRAND MARQUIS LS</b></p> <p>V8 4.6L Flex Fuel, Auto, AC, PW, PDL, Tilt, CC, CD, Leather, Alloys. VIN 605366 / STK P1709</p> <p><b>\$18,982</b></p>	<p><b>2007 JEEP WRANGLER X 4WD</b></p> <p>V6 3.8L, Auto, 4WD, Stability Control, AC, PS, Tilt, MP3/CD, Premium Sound, Alloys. VIN 178745 / STK 9T095A</p> <p><b>\$18,982</b></p>	<p><b>2009 FORD MUSTANG CONVERTIBLE</b></p> <p>V6 4.0L, AC, PW, PDL, Tilt, CC, CD, Alloys, Very Low Mileage Only 15K. VIN 108199 / STK P1699</p> <p><b>\$20,982</b></p>
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2	9	8	6	1	4	3	7	5
7	6	4	3	8	5	9	2	1
4	2	7	8	5	6	1	9	3
6	1	3	4	9	2	5	8	7
9	8	5	7	3	1	6	4	2

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# SPORTS AND LEISURE

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

MAY 15, 2009

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B1

## 29 Palms slides in an undefeated weekend



CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES

Joe Cavins, the second baseman for 29 Palms Varsity Softball Team attempts to complete a double-play against Camp Pendleton during the last match of the day May 9 at the Combat Center's Felix Field. Both teams went into the final game for the evening with a 3-0 record.

**CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

At the bottom of the second inning with only five innings remaining for the 29 Palms Varsity Softball Team to seal the deal for an undefeated weekend during the MCI West Varsity Softball League May 9 at the Combat Center's Felix Field.

The league is in its sixth year running. It consists of

five teams, 29 Palms, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, said Skip Best, the athletic director for Marine Corps Community Services. Each team hosts a Saturday event at their installation and rotates games throughout the day so each team can play one another.

Going into the final

game of the evening, both 29 Palms and Camp Pendleton had a 3-0 record for the day, 29 Palms takes to the field, while Camp Pendleton swings at the home plate in the top of the first.

As bat after bat found the holes, Camp Pendleton brought in six runs before 29 Palms could get the final out. 29 Palms tied the game in the bottom, 6-6, before going into the second.

29 Palms kicked the defense up a notch in the second by allowing only one run in the top. After moving to the plate with two men on the bags, Matt McCaskill, the first baseman for 29 Palms, slammed a big one out of the park and brought in three runs. Next at bat, T.C. Gray, the catcher for 29 Palms, walloped another ball over the fence and helped to bring the game to 11-7 in the top of the

third. In the third, Camp Pendleton added two more runs to the board, but 29 Palms continued to kill and added four more runs, which brought the score to 15-9.

Camp Pendleton got shut down in the top of the fourth, three up, three down, and gave 29 palms another advantage to pull ahead even more in the bottom. As two more players crossed the plate,

29 palms continued with the lead, 17-9. In the fifth both teams played equally as hard, each only allowed two runs, which brought the score to 19-11 before going into the last two innings.

29 Palms allowed one run to get through in the top of the sixth, but Camp Pendleton fought back after they caught three outs in four at-bats, which held

See **SOFTBALL, B4**

## Soccer season kicks off

**PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

As the sun set over the Combat Center's Felix Field Tuesday, 44 feet pounded the turf fighting over a soccer ball as they played pre-season games

for the Commanding General's Intramural Soccer League season. The regular-season games start Tuesday and will be played on every Tuesday and Thursday during the two-month season.

Once the regular season is over, the six teams, from Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital, 1st Tank Battalion, Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School, 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion and Headquarters Battalion, will participate in a double-elimination tournament to decide the final standings and who will be crowned the season champions, said Skip Best, the athletic director with Marine Corps Community Services.

In prior years, there have only been three or four teams to sign up for intramural soccer due to deployments and other obligations, he said.

"We're very lucky to have six teams this year," he added. "It should give us a great season of good soccer."

Hansel Morrow, a middle forward with Tanks' team, agreed, saying after they won their first practice game 8-3, he looks forward to a good season and promised that 1st Tanks would take it "all the way" this year.

He also explained what made the game so fun for him, saying, "It's aggressive, and to play well you need stamina and skill. It lets you interact with Marines [and sailors] around the base."

The league gives the players a unique chance to socialize outside the workplace, said Terence Harrell,

See **SOCCER, B2**



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Hansel Morrow, the middle forward for 1st Tanks, prepares to blast the ball into the goal during the first practice game of the Commanding General's Intramural Soccer League Tuesday night at Felix Field.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Lance Cpl. Aaron Kristopik, a paralegal clerk with the Combat Center's Staff Judge Advocate and a native of New Britain, Conn., feels the hood of a vintage police car from a movie recently shot in Amboy, Calif., Saturday.

## Aaron's Exploits; end of an era

**LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Since he has finished his sightseeing and had many personal discoveries, along with some soul searching, Lance Cpl. Aaron Kristopik, a paralegal clerk with the Combat Center's Staff Judge Advocate and a native of New Britain, Conn., decided to take a break from his journeys Saturday and focus on what he has learned, after traveling down the famous Historic Route 66.

Kristopik journeyed up and down the historic road, taking in all the stuff he passed by on a regular basis during his journeys, just to see what was going on out there, he said.

"I've seen this stuff a lot," he said. "I've passed by it time and time again.

The thing is, I never really noticed any of it, except, maybe the shoe tree and some other small stuff.

"This is kind of like wrapping up on a personal level for me," he said. "I guess you could say it's time to backtrack over it all."

Kristopik said some of the stuff caught his eye, not because of what it was, but where it was.

"This stuff just pops up out of the desert at you," he said. "The Salt Evaporation Plan, Roy's Cafe, all the Route 66 signs painted on the ground. You just don't know what to make of some of it."

Kristopik said he remembered hearing a movie was being shot in Amboy, Calif., and wanted to check it out.

"I heard a friend one

day say he heard they were shooting some kind of movie in Amboy," he said. "I went there to good old Roy's Cafe, but apparently they're done with it."

"There were still some props there," he said. "A really old cop car and some car they made look like it had an accident. If I see the movie when it comes out, I'm going to tell everyone I know about what I saw, unless the movie sucks."

Kristopik said he finally went on the long walk to see the Amboy Crater, but got tired and never went all the way up.

"Too big, way too big," he said about the climb up. "I was wearing sandals and ate it face—first too many times. I got revenge on the

See **EXPLOITS, B4**





<b>FRI. 5/15 – SAT. 5/16</b> <b>7th Annual Joshua Tree Music Festival</b> Time: All weekend Where: Joshua Tree Lake Campground 2601 Sunfair Rd., Joshua Tree For more information visit <a href="http://www.joshuatreemusicfestival.com">http://www.joshuatreemusicfestival.com</a>	<b>FRI. 5/15 – SUN. 5/17</b> <b>15th Pioneertown Pony Express Reenactment</b> Time: All day event Where: Mane Street at Pioneertown Rd., Pioneertown For more information visit <a href="http://www.mbha.us/pony-express.htm">http://www.mbha.us/pony-express.htm</a>	<b>FRI. 5/15</b> <b>The comedy of Lisa Lampanelli</b> Time: 9 p.m. Where: Agua Caliente 32250 Bob Hope Dr. Rancho Mirage For more information call 888-999-1995	<b>SAT. 5/16 - SUN. 5/17</b> <b>4th Annual Pioneertown Wild West Encampment</b> Time: All weekend Where: Mane Street Pioneertown Frontier Army battle demonstrations in Civil War uniforms. For more information call 367-2550	<b>SAT. 5/16</b> <b>Thunder From Down Under</b> Time: 8 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino Resort 46200 Harrison Pl. Coachella. For more information call 866-377-6829 or visit <a href="http://www.spotlight29.com">http://www.spotlight29.com</a>
<b>THURS. 5/21</b> <b>Salute to America Concert</b> Time: 7:30 p.m. Where: Palm Springs Convention Center A free concert to pay tribute to all who have served. For more information call 323-8272	<b>SAT. 5/23</b> <b>Stained</b> Time: 8 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino Resort 46200 Harrison Pl. Coachella For more information call 866-377-6829 or visit <a href="http://www.spotlight29.com">http://www.spotlight29.com</a>	<b>SAT. 5/23</b> <b>Allman Brothers Band &amp; The Doobie Brothers</b> Time: 8 p.m. Where: Fantasy Springs Casino 84245 Indio Springs Pkwy., Indio For more information call (800) 827-2946 or visit <a href="http://www.fantasy-springsresort.com">http://www.fantasy-springsresort.com</a>	<b>THURS. 5/28 - SUN. 5/31</b> <b>Palm Springs Film Noir Festival</b> Time: All Weekend Where: Camelot Theaters, 2300 E. Baristo Rd. in Palm Springs For more information call 325-6565	<b>SUN. 5/31 - FRI. 6/19</b> <b>Palm Springs Restaurant Week</b> Time: 20 days Where: Palm Springs to Indio Taste the finest culinary restaurants in the valley at discount prices. For more information call 200-4235

## 'Ghosts of Girlfriends Past' neither very romantic, nor very funny

**NEIL POND**  
AMERICAN PROFILE

**Ghosts of Girlfriends Past**  
Starring Matthew McConaughey & Jennifer Garner  
Rated PG-13

A womanizing cad is forced to reconsider his wanton ways in "Ghosts of Girlfriends Past," a romantic comedy that re-imagines the classic Charles Dickens' tale of "A Christmas Story"



COURTESY PHOTO

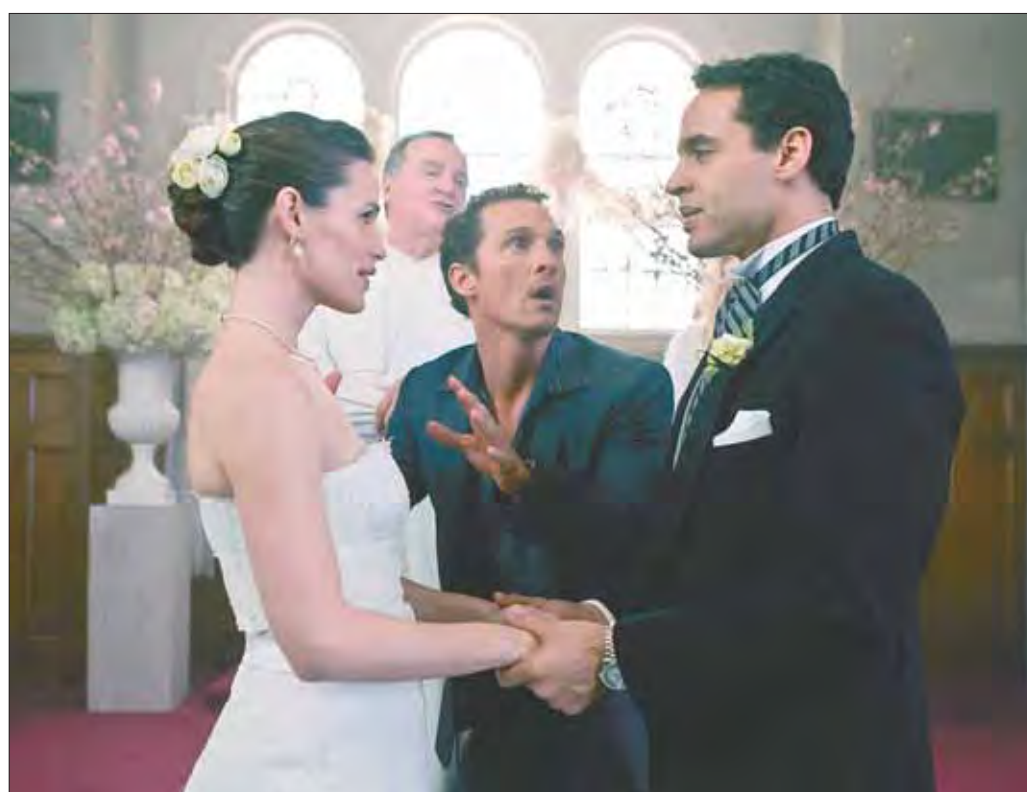
A womanizer is forced to reconsider his rakish ways.

with Matthew McConaughey in the Ebenezer Scrooge role as a celebrity photographer who can't keep his mind—or his hands—off the ladies.

Self-absorbed shutter-bug stud Conor Mead loves 'em and leaves 'em, sometimes in bulk. Early in the movie, we watch as he breaks up with three women at the same time via videoconference, taking a brief time-out from his latest half-undressed conquest to do so.

Going back home to the posh family estate in Rhode Island for the wedding of his younger brother, Conor gets drunk at the rehearsal dinner, gropes the mother of the bride (Ann Archer), tries to talk little bro' out of walking down the aisle and makes plans to bed the one bridesmaid that hasn't already been between his sheets.

That evening, he's visited by a succession of spirits representing his past, present and future to show him the error of his wild-oats ways. One of the



COURTESY PHOTO

"Ghosts of Girlfriends Past" is a romantic comedy that doesn't live up to the reputation of its stars. Jennifer Garner and Matthew McConaughey don't share any real chemistry so it becomes difficult to imagine them as a couple.

ghosts is Uncle Wayne (Michael Douglas), the family playboy, who warms Conor about the empty consequences of lifelong partying. Another specter

is an eternal '80s teen (a peppy Emma Stone) who transports Conor back through a gauntlet of former girlfriends.

When all the spookin' is done, Conor realizes that he really belongs in the arms of his childhood sweetheart, Jenny, played by

See MOVIE, B3

**Cinema 6**  
**MOVIE TIMES 365-9633**  
 Showtimes Effective 5/15/09 - 5/21/09

Angels & Demons (PG13) Fri-Sun: 1:30, 6:00, 9:00 Mon-Thur: 2:00, 7:00	Star Trek (PG13) Fri-Sun: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00 Mon-Thur: 2:00, 4:30, 7:00	X-Men Origins: Wolverine (PG13) Fri-Sun: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00 Mon-Thur: 2:00, 4:30, 7:00
Crank: High Voltage (R) Fri-Sun: 4:00, 9:00 Mon-Thur: 2:00, 7:00	Ghosts Of Girlfriends Past (PG13) Fri-Sun: 1:30, 6:30 Mon-Thur: 4:30	Coming May 22 Night At The Museum: Battle For The Smithsonian Terminator Salvation Coming May 29 Up

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5:00	5:25	5:30
29 Palms Community Center	29 Palms Staters	Joshua Tree Park Blvd.
5:40	5:45	6:00
Stater Bros WallMart	Palm Springs Airport	
6:10	7:00	

<b>15</b>	MCAGCC-Palm Springs	Friday
Palm Springs Airport	Indian Canyon & Andreas (Casino)	Indian Canyon & Tacheva (Hospital)
7:00	7:10	7:15
Stater Bros WallMart	MCAGCC	
7:50	8:30	

<b>15</b>	MCAGCC-Palm Springs	Saturday/Sunday
Base Post Exchange	Building 1664	Subway
10:00	10:25	10:30
4:00	4:25	4:30
29 Palms Community Center	29 Palms Staters	Joshua Tree Park Blvd.
*4:40	*4:45	*5:00
Stater Bros WallMart	Palm Springs Airport	
*5:10	*5:45	

<b>15</b>	MCAGCC-Palm Springs	Saturday/Sunday
Palm Springs Airport	Indian Canyon & Andreas (Casino)	Indian Canyon & Tacheva (Hospital)
12:00	12:10	12:15
*6:00	*6:10	*6:15
Stater Bros WallMart	MCAGCC	
12:50	1:35	
*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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### SOCCER, from B1

the coach for MCCES. This is a great opportunity to get players working together as a team and provides a good outlet for players with talent, he added.

Talent is just what Jose Hernandez, the coach for the Combat Center's varsity soccer team, said he is looking to find. He uses the intramural league to scout for talented players to add to the reigning two-year champion varsity team.

For the next two months, players and fans alike will be able to enjoy watching the sun set over Felix Field as the intramural soccer teams fight it out for the number-one spot.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Hansel Morrow, the middle forward for 1st Tanks, stretches to receive a pass from one of his teammates during Tuesday night's first pre-season game of the Commanding General's Intramural Soccer League season.

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# Combat Center sports



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

A player for 7th Marine Regiment's Rippers takes off toward second base after his teammate cracked a hit into the outfield. The Rippers lost 6-0.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Matt Fleming, puts everything he has behind a swing during the Commanding General's Intramural Softball League game Monday night at Felix Field. The Bandits dominated 7th Marine Regiment's Rippers 6-0.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Miguel Hernandez, the Bandits, slams one into the outfield in their 6-0 shut out over the Rippers.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

The Bandits' Jesus Nunez prepares to slam the ball over his opponents, the Rippers, during the Commanding General's Intramural Softball League game Monday night at Felix Field. The Bandits won 6-0.

## Intramural Softball League

Standings as of April 29

Team	Wins	Losses
MWSS-374	6	0
Scrappers	6	0
CLB-7	6	1
Tanks	5	3
ESD Warriors	4	2
CMA	3	2
Hospital	4	3
MCCES HQBN	4	4
VMU-3	3	2
PMO	3	3
3rd CEB	3	3
Ripper	3	4
IPAC	3	3
G-6	2	3
NAVPERs	2	4
Dirty Dozen	2	4
Red Rocket	2	5
ESD	1	5
2/7	1	5
Dental	0	6

## Athelete of the Week

**Name:** Matt McCaskill

**Age:** 22

**Job Title:** An armorer with Combat Logistics Battalion-7

**Recognition:** Played four games with the 29 Palms Varsity Softball Team April 9 ending the evening with four homeruns and a .765 batting average.

**Major sport accomplishment:** A player on the base's 2007 intramural championship team. He has won two homerun derbies in his Marine Corps career.

**Favorite sport aspect:** "Mainly the competition and hitting. But it's fun and it's about having a good time."

**Advice for aspiring athletes:** "Practice, practice, practice."



## MOVIE, from B2

Jennifer Garner.

Despite McConaughey's natural fit for lightweight fare, his Conor comes off as an emotionally stunted sleazebag. He sells that element of his character so well, in fact, that you can't believe he could possibly do a turn-around, no matter how many spooks come out of the love closet to try to hocus-pocus him off his hedonistic path. And you want to question the sanity of any woman, especially Garner's classy, professionally minded Jenny, who would ever think the slimy Conor would be a catch worth reeling in, much less keeping.

The biggest problem, though, is that this so-called "romantic comedy" is neither very romantic nor very funny. The gags are predictable, unoriginal and sometimes just plain gross (like a torrential

downpour of used condoms—yes, you read that correctly). McConaughey and Garner have no real chemistry; you never understand why either of their characters would be attracted to the other.

This flawed fractured fairy tale fails to scare up many chuckles or much charm. As Ebenezer Scrooge himself might say, "Bah, humbug!"

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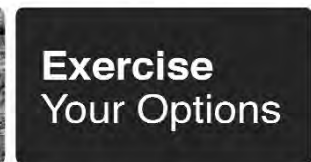
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**EXPLOITS, from B1**

crater for hurting me. I stole a rock as a souvenir, I know it can't think, but if it could, it would think twice before making me fall next time." Kristopik said the trip helped him answer a lot of questions about himself, and also about the desert. He said he is going to take some time to recover and try to become a Marine

Security Guard to see more of the world, not just Southern California. "I've learned from all of this that life is what you make of it," he said. "I've made use of my time at the Combat Center. Now, I want to branch out, get a feel for the rest of the Marine Corps and the world." After taking a run through the desert, and sitting on the banks of crystal

clear water at the Salt Evaporation Plant, Kristopik called it quits, heading back to base for some sleep. To visit all the places Kristopik has, take a left on Amboy Road after leaving the Combat Center. Follow Amboy all the way to Amboy, Calif., and make a right onto Historic Route 66, all the places visited are visible while traveling down the roads.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Lance Cpl. Aaron Kristopik, a paralegal clerk with the Combat Center's Staff Judge Advocate and a native of New Britain, Conn., takes in the desert scenery around the Salt Evaporation Plant and their famous clear water Saturday off of Amboy Road.



CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES

Chris Petty, the pitcher for 29 Palms Varsity Softball Team, prepares to release the ball while pitching to the Camp Pendleton softball team during the last match of the day May 9 at the Combat Center's Felix Field. 29 Palms went undefeated for the evening with a 4-0 record.

**SOFTBALL, from B1**

29 Palms to their score, 19-12. The last inning ended rather quickly as 29 Palms shut down Camp Pendleton and maintained their undefeated 4-0 record for the evening. McCaskill, Gray and Joel Dominguez, the third baseman for 29 Palms,

were the heavy hitters for the games. McCaskill ended the evening with a .765 batting average and four homeruns. "We played really well as a team today," said Debra Sullivan, the 29 Palms varsity softball coach. "We have a great combination of young talent and a few veteran players. We are becoming

a strong, competitive team." The varsity team's current record is 5-3. After each team has hosted a league weekend, all teams will all go to regional's at Camp Pendleton, where individual players will get to show off their skills and may get invited to the All-Marine Softball Team, Sullivan said.

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