

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

MAY 22, 2009

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VOL. 52 ISSUE 20

Trial by live-fire; 3/4 christens new range

PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marines and sailors from Company K, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment swarmed the hills and bunkers of the Combat Center's newly-constructed Range 401 May 15 as the entire company tested the range.

The live-fire range was designed by the Tactical Training Exercise Control Group to support the enhanced Mojave Viper, a pre-deployment training package that units deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan must complete.

"We are providing Kilo Company to validate the range," said Maj. Rigoberto Colon, the battalion operations officer for 3/4 and a New York City native. "We worked closely with TTECG, and spent a great deal of time with the overall design and setup to ensure a challenging training evolution."

To successfully complete the evolution, Company K used 81mm and 60mm mortars, heavy machine guns, a scout sniper team, combat engineers and rifle platoons working as a team to effectively destroy three mock enemy positions.

The combat engineers first created a diversion breach in the enemy defenses while the heavy machine guns destroyed the enemy observation and listening posts.

The combat engineers then breached the enemy wire and mine fields with Bangalore torpedoes and Antipersonnel Obstacle

See RANGE, A8



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

A heavy machine gun team pours rounds down range as Company K, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, puts the Combat Center's Range 401 to the test May 15.

MCAGCC heroes on the highway

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

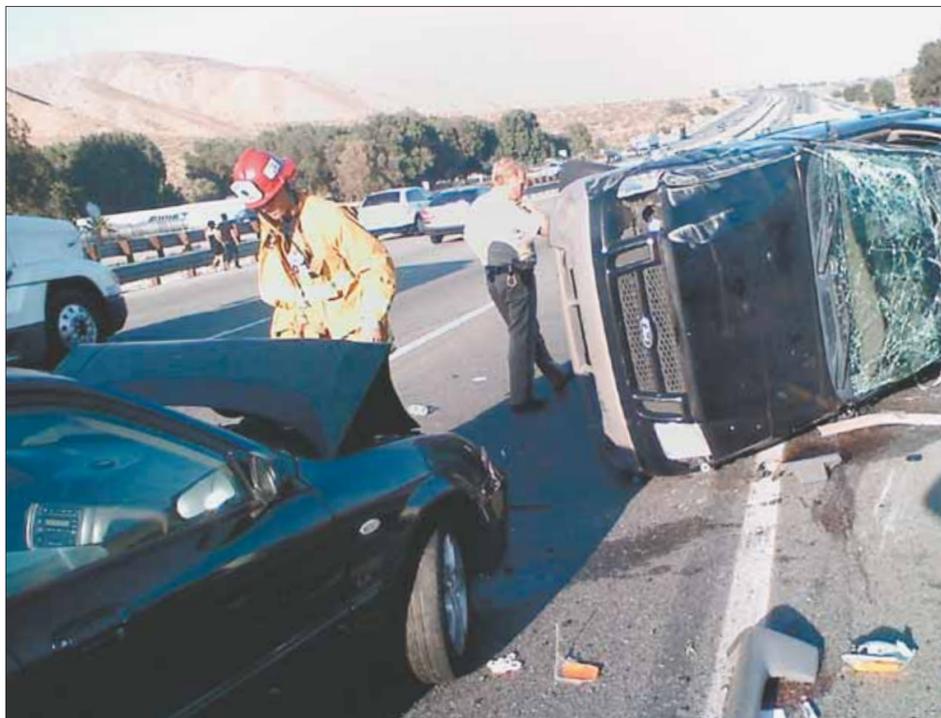
It was an average Sunday evening as two Combat Center Marines were traveling to the base after a weekend on the coast. However, as they neared the Whitewater rest area on Interstate 10 West, their lives came crashing together.

Capt. Thomas Schwabenbauer, a former platoon commander with Company C, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, was on his way to the Combat Center from San Diego after visiting some friends. He was en route to check in to his newly-assigned unit, the Advisor Training Group.

"It was about 5:40 p.m. and I was just driving down the road when about 100 meters up, I heard the crash and saw the [sport utility vehicle] up in the air," said the Franklin, Penn., native. "The first thing I remember thinking was I knew I had to get over there as fast as possible. It was go time."

The SUV belonged to a Palm Springs, Calif., resident working as a store manager in a Cabazon, Calif., shopping outlet, said Randy Dopp, the California Highway Patrol officer who responded to the accident. The rear left tire of the vehicle became separated and the driver lost control. As she attempted to pull over, the vehicle flipped and rolled several times before stopping upside-down in the far right lane.

After seeing the accident, Schwabenbauer weaved through



COURTESY OF CAPT. THOMAS SCHWABENBAUER

After witnessing a wreck, aftermath seen here, on Interstate 10 West Sunday evening, Combat Center Marines Capt. Thomas Schwabenbauer and Lance Cpl. James Nielsen both stopped to help, rendering first aid to the severely injured driver of the sport utility vehicle. No other motorists were hurt in the accident.

the traffic to try and help the driver.

"When I got to the side of the road, I saw there was a lady inside," he said. "I jumped inside and got her seat belt off, but I noticed her leg was stuck between the car and the ground. We had to rock the car up in order to pull her out."

Once the driver was outside of the vehicle, Schwabenbauer said that is when he noticed the full extent of the driver's injuries. "Her leg from about mid-shin

down was just gone," he said. "Another lady who had stopped to help was using her belt as a tourniquet."

Lance Cpl. James Nielsen, a rifleman with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, was also driving down I-10 at the time. He was returning to the base after spending his weekend in Carlsbad, Calif., visiting friends and family. Nielsen also saw the accident from the road.

"I was a little farther back, but I saw the car go airborne and

land," said the Carmel, Ind., native. "Once I got there, I went back to my car looking for medical supplies. The captain adjusted the tourniquet while I started applying gauze."

Both Marines continued rendering first aid and comforted the victim while they waited for emergency services to arrive.

"There were people helping, people trying to help and people who just pulled over to watch,"

See ACCIDENT, A7

Mabus sworn in as new Navy Secretary

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS

WASHINGTON — Ray Mabus, former Mississippi governor and U.S. ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, was sworn in today as the 75th Secretary of the Navy. Leading the Navy and Marine Corps, Mabus will be responsible for an annual budget in excess of \$150 billion and almost 900,000 people.

The secretary of the Navy is responsible for conducting all the affairs of the department of the Navy, including recruiting, organizing, supplying, equipping, training and mobilizing. Additionally, he oversees the construction, outfitting, and repair of naval ships, equipment and facilities and is responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies and programs that are consistent with the national security policies and objectives established by the president and the secretary of defense.

Prior to joining the administration of President Barack Obama, Mabus served in a variety of top posts in government and the private sector. In 1988, Mabus was elected governor of Mississippi where he stressed education and job creation. In 1994, he was appointed ambassador to Saudi Arabia, where during his tenure, the Kingdom officially abandoned the boycott of U.S. businesses that trade with Israel. Mabus also was chairman and chief executive officer of Foamex, a large manufacturing company, and also served as a Navy surface warfare officer aboard the cruiser USS Little Rock.

Mabus is a native of Ackerman, Miss., and received a bachelor's degree from the University of Mississippi, a master's degree from Johns Hopkins University and a law degree from Harvard Law School.



Combat Center Band blows-away Windy City ~ See A3



Erie makes em' count in MOUT See A4



MCAGCC gets country See B1



What's the catch? See B3

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 Rd. - 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 Crty.	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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Hot Topics

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.

REENLISTMENT BONUS ENDING

Per Marine Administrative message May 3, the fiscal year 2009 Selective Reenlistment Bonus will end effective June 8. The only exception to this policy is for the nine military occupational specialties listed, regardless of reenlistment zone: 0211, 0231, 0261, 0321, 0431, 0861, 2336, 2671, and 2834. Only eligible fiscal year 2009 or 2010 Marines who reenlist in these MOS's will receive the SRB until June 30 at which time all fiscal year 2009 SRB's will be suspended. See your unit Career Retention Specialist for further guidance and reenlistment opportunities. Releasing agent is the Base Career Retention Specialist office at 830-6171 or 7242.

Centerspeak

If you could have any superpower, what would it be and why?

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



GUNNERY SGT. RICHARD LANE
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MCCES

"I'd like to have the ability to generate cash so I could help others."



CAPT. JOSHUA WELLS
CLB-7

"I'd want the power to not have to sleep so I could get more stuff done."



CPL. ALEX RAMIREZ
MTU,
HEADQUARTERS BATTALION

"I'd want to be able to move things with my mind."

This Day in Marine Corps History

May 22, 1912

Lt. Alfred A. Cunningham reports for pilot training at the Navy's flying school at Annapolis, Maryland. This marks the birth of Marine aviation.

SUDOKU #1428

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	7	3			9		4
	6				5		2
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7		5			1	8	4

Combat Center Spotlight



Name: Erika Vega
Job Title: Marine Corps Community Services security
Job Duties: Making sure nobody steals anything from the exchange
What do you like most about your job? The work environment
Significant Achievements: Working for the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department
Hobbies: Snowboarding in the winter
Military Service: None
Time at the Combat Center: Since 2001

I'M TIRED

[puzzle Solutions on A5]

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- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 40. Tees off | DOWN | 30. Wire diameter measures |
| 1. Total failure | 42. Crown's makeup, in bible | 1. Kid-lit elephant | 31. Punch card bit |
| 5. Light bulb, in comics | 44. Tired freebie? | 2. In ___ (not yet born) | 32. Brobdingnagian |
| 9. Carb source, slangy | 47. Full of promise | 3. Tops the marquee | 33. Top draft level |
| 13. Easternmost Aleutian | 48. Desert delusions | 4. King found in 1922 | 37. Flock of quail |
| 14. Utter disdain | 52. Stick like glue | 5. Polar feature | 38. Georgetown athlete |
| 15. ___-mutuel betting | 55. Sampras of tennis | 6. Things to connect | 40. Stereotypical lab assistant |
| 16. Tired limericks? | 56. Detergent brand | 7. Blow it | 41. Meets, as a challenge |
| 18. Jason's ship | 57. Grazing grounds | 8. "___ home?" | 42. Country's Conway |
| 19. Sheet music abbr. | 58. Tired cash? | 9. Less meaty | 43. Spouses of a sultan |
| 20. Compass doodles | 61. "The War of the Worlds" planet | 10. Cow poke's pal | 45. Like formal attire |
| 21. Place for a patrol | 62. Late, on report cards | 11. Twist the arm of | 46. Makes right |
| 23. ___ Stone (hieroglyphic key) | 63. Lata, on report cards headlines | 12. Christian of fashion | 49. The "Homo" in Homo sapiens |
| 25. "Encore!" | 64. Word before ant or brat | 14. Combat pilot's flight | 50. One way to stand |
| 26. Tired dairy product? | 65. Cross to bear | 17. Ways through woods | 51. Final decision |
| 31. ___ up (select teams) | 66. Ratio words | 22. Black and white predator | 52. ___ mater |
| 34. Slangy greeting | | 24. Cuddly "Star Wars" creature | 53. Not cheap |
| 35. Keydets' sch. | | 25. Prime minister after Eshkol | 54. Rough up |
| 36. Macho man | | 27. Terrible twos, for one | 55. Silver-exporting land |
| 37. "A guy walks into a ___" | | 28. "As ___" (letter closing) | 59. Give two thumbs down to |
| 38. Crusty piece of bread | | 29. Call from the flock | 60. ___-Wan Kenobi |
| 39. The big 4-0, for example | | | |

OBSERVATION POST

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Combat Center Band gives grand finale for Marine Week

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Combat Center Band Marines wrapped up Marine Week through musical performances at one of Chicago's most famous locations, the Navy Pier, May 16 and 17.

The band performed two formal concerts at the Navy Pier as well as numerous small ensemble and jazz performances in the last two days of Marine Week, which lasted from May 11 to 17.

During Marine Week, the band made appearances at several Illinois high schools, dedication ceremonies and public events to help showcase the Marine Corps in a city not normally exposed to military members.

As the jazz bands and ensembles played their tunes along the waterfront May 16 and 17, passersby both young and old gathered to listen to and watch the Marine musicians display their skills.

Brig. Gen. Melvin G. Spiese, commanding general of the Training and Education Command in Quantico, Va., and a proud Chicago native, said events like these concerts and demonstrations help the city natives gather a better idea of who Marines are, what they do and how they do it.

"Chicago has strong ties with the Corps," said Spiese, referring to past Marines who claim Chicago as home. "This is a great city with broad shoulders, very similar to the Marine Corps."

Spiese and his wife, Filomena, joined dozens of Marine Corps veterans, including retired Gen. James L. Jones, the 32nd commandant of the Marine Corps, for the first full-band concert at the Navy Pier Skyline Theater May 16.

"The Commandant's Own" Drum and Bugle



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

The Combat Center Band performed a concert for Chicago natives, service members and veterans at the Navy Pier Skyline Theater in Chicago during Marine Week May 16.

Corps sounded the first notes of the performance and was followed by an impressive show from the Silent Drill Platoon from Washington D.C.

The Combat Center's party band then entertained the audience while the concert band set up behind the scenes.

After the curtain finally rose and audience members ceased their applause, the band kicked off its show. They played songs such as the "Superman" theme song, a compilation of Looney Tunes melodies, a special percussion piece, and an armed forces melody dedicated to all past and present service members, which left the audience giving a standing

See BAND, A7



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

(Left to right) Lance Cpl. Gabriel Gonzalez, Sgt. Steven Hofmann and Lance Cpl. Thomas Harris entertain an audience with a percussion solo during their final Marine Week performance at the Navy Pier Skyline Theater in Chicago May 17.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Members of the Combat Center's party band bust out a jazzy number during their final concert for Marine Week at the Navy Pier Skyline Theater in Chicago during Marine Week May 17.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Cpl. Isaac Salinas, a saxophone player in the Combat Center Band, joined other members of the jazz band section to perform for passersby at the Chicago Navy Pier during Marine Week May 16.

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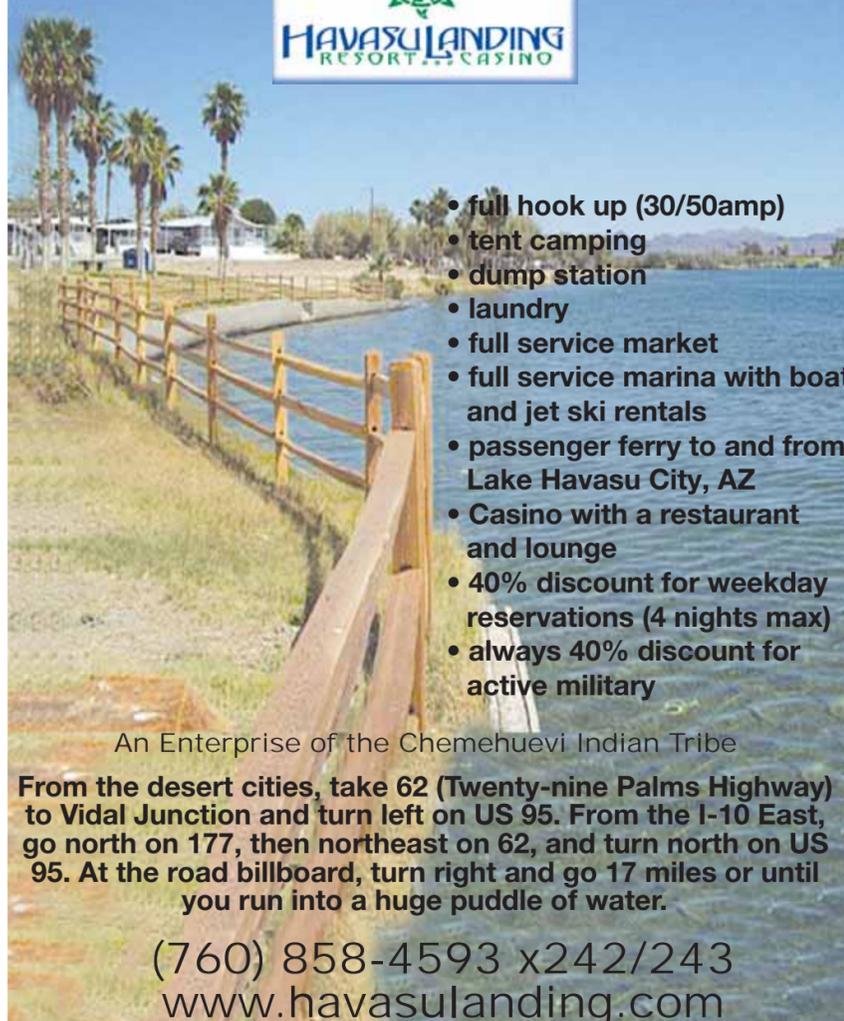
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ASYMCA continues legacy of helping children



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Rachel Hughes, a 3rd-grade member of the Kids Care Club takes orders during the club's silent auction and dinner May 15 at the community center.

PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The children of the Combat Center's Kid's Care Club gave base personnel and their families the chance to have a spaghetti dinner and to bid on donated items in a silent auction May 15 at the Community Center.

The club, sponsored by the Armed Services YMCA, put on the event to help fund next school year's KCC events and service projects.

The children in KCC start by taking a 10-month class called Operation Hero, said Ashley Gonzalez, a KCC Facilitator.

In Operation Hero, children learn to respect others and in KCC they learn to give

back to the community, she said.

"The children do a service project every month," said Anita Neu-Fultz, the director of the Combat Center's ASYMCA. "They have given Marines [and sailors] in Camp Wilson for Mojave Viper birthday cards and gifts for the Marine Corps birthday when they weren't able to celebrate with an actual ceremony. They also made pillow for the children at Loma Linda Naval Hospital with cancer."

Neu-Fultz said the children love having the opportunity to give back to the community.

"I like to see people smile when we do things for them — I like to make people's days," said Couy Harrington,

a 9-year-old member of the KCC. "The Kids Care Club lets me do that."

As families came to the Community Center, they were greeted by smiling children who escorted them to their tables.

From then on, they were waited on by children with the KCC, ordering drinks, salad, spaghetti and desert.

"It's really cool to help people," said Rachel Hughes, a 3rd-grader in the KCC. "I know I'm doing something good for people — I like that feeling."

The KCC plans to continue their legacy of helping children learn to respect others and give something back to their community at the start of the next school year, Neu-Fultz said.

Erie Company blasts through live-fire shoothouse

PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

At 11 a.m. May 14, the Combat Center's Range 111, designed to increase proficiency in Military Operations in Urban Terrain, exploded into action as Marines and sailors of Company E, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion turned off their rifle's safeties and blasted targets away.

For many of the Marines and sailors of the newly stood up Company E, or Erie Company, who participated in the week-long training evolution, this was their first opportunity to train in an

urban environment.

The range itself is unique, allowing Marines and sailors to fire 360 degrees in any direction inside of buildings. The walls of the buildings are made of three-foot thick shock-absorbing concrete, rated to withstand the impact of a .50 caliber round.

To prepare for the live-fire evolution, Company E spent the two days prior running through the range's buildings dry, or without ammunition, said Master Sgt. Scott Peterson, the company operations chief.

"We're starting out by developing and sharpening our skills clearing rooms in

two, three and four-man teams," he said. "Being an LAR company, we do a lot of mounted and unmounted patrols when deployed, so we need to be able to transition off of the vehicle and be able

to perform urban attacks."

The company is simply building their skills from the foundation up to proficiently perform full-scale assaults on enemy positions when they deploy sometime

this fall, he added.

"Being able to shoot in a live-fire range like range 111 is good for the Marines and sailors," said Lance Cpl. Matt Benskin, a scout team leader with 3rd LAR and a Salem,

Ind. native. "Most of them haven't ever done this type of training before."

The training helps the members of Company E gain confidence in themselves and in the men to the left and right of them, he added.

"I learned to slow down and pay attention to what is going on around me," said Pfc. Evan Blackburn, a light armored vehicle crewman with 3rd LAR. "We learned to work as a team and trust each other — people are firing live rounds literally feet from you."

The company did extensive dry runs through the range's buildings to help everyone gain confidence in what they needed to do when actual bullets were flying, he said.

In preparation for future deployments overseas, 3rd LAR will continue to train in situations which test the battalion's Marines and sailors from the individual to the entire battalion, Peterson said.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Lance Cpl. Juan Hernandezvalle, a rifleman scout with Company E, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, provides security for the other Marines in his fire team during the company's assault on the Combat Center's Range 111 May 14.

Spirit and Truth Worship Center
Perry L. Ford, Senior Pastor

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AWANA (during school year) 6:15-8:00 PM

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High School Sunday 6:30-8:30 PM
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Citizenship and Immigration Services to answer questions

CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Legal Assistance Office of the Staff Judge Advocate is hosting

Military Outreach, a program that provides service members and their dependents with answers and direction on immigration issues, aboard the base June 4 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Personnel with the Department of Homeland Security Citizenship and Immigration Services will provide the service to military members and their families regarding citizenship and other

immigration issues.

"We get a lot of people that come into the Legal Assistance office asking questions that we don't handle," said Amy Toryk, a paralegal with the SJA. "We handle only naturalization for

the service member and their spouse. This outreach provides a chance for them to meet with an officer without driving a long distance."

The officers with the department will be able to assist and give advice for general immigration questions, and explain the forms they need to fill out. The officer's cannot give legal advice, Toryk said.

The last outreach was in

November. "We assisted over 50 to 60 people," Toryk said. The base plans to have an outreach every five to six months. Approximately five officers will be on hand and available for appointments. Service members and dependents should bring their military identification card. To schedule an appointment call the Legal Assistance Office at 830-6111.



CPL. COREY A. BLODGETT

Indonesian native Lance Cpl. Hero Dengah (formally Wenur), a rifleman with Company G, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, recites the "Oath of Allegiance" with 23 other Marines and sailors from 16 different originating countries during the first ever naturalization ceremony held on base, at the Combat Center's Officer's Club Aug. 19.

School's out – local care options available

CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

As the summer months loom and schools let out for the long-awaited break, families are looking for summer camps or program options for their children before school starts up again in the fall.

There are many options available on base and around the local community in which all school age children may participate.

The Combat Center's Children, Youth and Teen Program provides a summer escape designed for children entering grades one through sixth starting June 15 and ending Aug. 21.

"It's a program that provides fun activities and keeps things interesting," said Montia Brown, a general clerk for the base's Bright Beginnings child care center. "They have movie days, hat days and pajama days. They craft art, go bowling, swimming and take trips to Soak City; it keeps them busy."

In conjunction with the base's summer program for little ones, they also provide a summer program for children entering grades seventh through twelfth. The program works in coordination with the Boys and Girls Club of the Hi-Desert. The teens go swimming, bowling, have barbecues and take many day trips throughout the summer.

"One of the benefits of using the on-base programs is the security," Brown said. "Children are required to sign in and out."

All children must be up-to-date on their vaccinations and have a current check-up to be allowed to enroll in the programs. Rates are based on hours per week the children attend and have flexible times. For information on rates, hours or to enroll call the resource and referral office at 830-3227 extension 230.

Another local option for summer care is the **Boys and Girls Club of the Hi-Desert**. The club has a current program called Mission Youth Outreach. The program provides free services, both after school and during the summer, for military dependent children through a joint military service initiative, said Susan Eckert, the executive director for the Hi-Desert club.

The summer program is available for children ages 6 to 18 starting June 22 through Aug. 14 with hours from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Activities include: arts and crafts, movies, sports tournaments and monitored access to a computer lab. They also take field trips to local parks and other exciting and educational destinations.

To benefit from the free service, complete a voucher

and turn it into the front desk at the local club in Yucca Valley. For more information or to get a voucher call 365-5437.

The Twentynine Palms Recreation Department also holds a summer camp. The camp activities include swimming and bowling, watching movies and taking trips to the city's library and other exciting locations. Transportation is provided for the activities and all staff members are certified in first aid and CPR.

The camp is divided into five two-week sessions. Children can be enrolled in all 10 weeks for \$480.00 or attend the sessions they want for \$115.00 each week. The first session starts June 15 and the last session starts Aug 10. Hours are from 7 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. For more

information or to enroll call 361-4629.

The Little School of the Desert provides a summer option as well. Their summer program is for children entering first grade through the age of 10 and starts June 15 and ends Aug. 19.

The activities are similar to the Twentynine Palms Recreation Department program, which includes bowling, swimming and trips to the library, said Wilma Porter, the director of the school. The hours are from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Prices vary depending on the hours used. For more information or rates call the school at 367-6616.

Registration is currently open for all summer programs, but space is limited so call ahead of time to reserve a spot.



TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt

I have tremendous admiration and profound respect for Jack Kemp who died May 2 at 73. He was not physically large yet he played professional football so well he lead the Buffalo Bills to two American Football League Championships and was the league's Most Valuable Player in 1965.

In 11 seasons he sustained a dozen concussions, two broken ankles and a crushed hand—which Kemp insisted a doctor permanently set in a passing position so that he could continue to play.

Pound for pound I don't believe any professional athlete ever gave more of himself in a competitive sport.

As most of you know, Kemp went on to be elected eight times a U.S. Congressman and served us all with complete loyalty to his constituents and love for his country.

Jack and I never traveled in the same circles and we belonged to different political groupings but we had one important thing in common. We both detested bigotry and prejudice of any kind. The people in the black community loved him. They knew he genuinely cared about them. His work as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in the early 1990's resulted in permanent gains for the underprivileged people of this nation.

Jack Kemp deplored any separation of people because of sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, ethnic background or economic condition. And so do I!

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9	4	1	2	6	8	7	5	3
7	2	5	9	3	1	8	4	6

MWTC hosts Mountain Warrior Training Challenge

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Service members, along with civilians from the surrounding communities, participated in the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center's fifth annual Mountain Warrior Challenge May 16, aboard the base.

The event has undergone changes from the last year,

making it larger than it has been before, said David Warden, the Marine Corps Community Services area coordinator and a Minden, Nev., resident.

"There are more venues for the children now than there were before," Warden said. "We still have the big race, but there's still the one for the kids too. This year there are a lot more booth attractions for kids and the

family to enjoy as well."

There were multiple competitions and activities for the 257 competitors and their children.

"The Youth Fitness Challenge costs \$5 to enter," he said. "The free events were a bounce house, a fishing pond, mule rides and multiple carnival games."

There were 34 booths with a variety of different

vendors and corporations for the patrons of the event to enjoy, he said.

Although the booths drew much attention, it all centered around the race.

"The race is 10 kilometers, but all over the place there are obstacles to make it even harder," he said. "There are two tunnel crawls, a low crawl, a hay bale climb, the five foot wall and the tire obstacle."

"The worst part, I think, is the climb at the beginning of the race," he said. "Heart Attack Hill, as it's called, is at the beginning of the race, and it's no small hill."

The race has been anticipated by both service members and civilians since last year, he said. It is a major event for the base and it attracts a large number of good runners from the community.

"We've never had a Marine win the race here," he said. "A lot of civilian runners with a lot of talent come every year."

This year was, however, a Marine won for the first time, he said.

"Sgt. Beal won the race this year," he said. "First time a Marine won it. He beat everyone by a good distance too."

Joshua A. Beal was crowned the victor of this year's race when he set a new record for completing the course, he said.

"Sgt. Beal had a time of 49 minutes, 52 seconds," Warden said. "He smashed whatever the old record was and set the bar very high for next year."

Beal, a Central City, Kan., native, attributed his success in the race not to his preparation, but his past



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Competitors charge up Heart Attack Hill Saturday during the fifth annual Mountain Warrior Challenge race at the Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, Calif.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

High up in the mountains at the Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, Calif., runners of the fifth annual Mountain Warrior Challenge prepare to enter one of two tunnel crawls along the course Saturday.

experiences as a distance runner.

"I didn't train too hard leading up to the race," Beal said. "I always ran as a kid. I did a marathon or two when I was growing up. I've just always been a good runner."

There were multiple other categories in which contestants could place, Warden said.

"Aside from Sgt. Beal, there were men's and women's age groups going all the way from 15 to over 80 in four year increments," he said. "The women's best was April Shonnard, who ran the race in 52 minutes 20 seconds."

"All the individual cate-

gories had their own winners," he said. "There were five team champions as well, for their own categories."

"The male team was the Johnson Summerville St," he said. "The mixed and female teams were Banks Banks' Brigade and Burke Jac."

"The military team was Team Gomez Hayward, Drap," he said. "And the final team, the corporate team, was the Green Da Dawgs."

With the festivities finished this year, the race coordinators will begin planning for the sixth annual race next summer.

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LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Leaving his competition in the dust, Joshua Beal, the winner of the fifth annual Mountain Warrior Challenge at the Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, Calif., flies over a hill on the way to the final obstacle Saturday.

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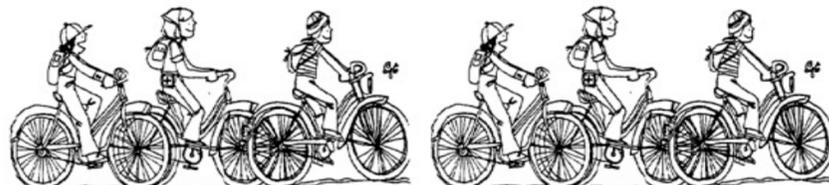


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As we head into the summer lets remember bicycle safety! The Combat Center is having a bicycle safety rodeo at Felix Field May 30 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. for riders between 5 and 12-years-of-age. Hosted by Cub Scout Pack 78, Girl Scout Troops 657 and 132, the Red Cross, the Provost Marshal's Office and Youth Sports. The event will teach riders basic bicycle safety, the importance of wearing helmets and allow young riders to participate in a series of obstacles and events to test their skill and agility. Parents, please plan to stay with your children while they attend the rodeo if they're 10-years-old or younger. All riders are welcome to attend, membership in the hosting organizations is not a requirement, helmets and bicycles are; so come prepared!

BAND, from A3

ovation.

"We absolutely loved the music, and I think the rest of the audience did, too," said Muriel Underwood, a Marine Corps veteran who served as a mammography machine operator from 1943 to 1945. "The Marine Corps is such a traditional fighting branch and it was great having you all here."

The Combat Center Band was selected from a list of outstanding Marine Corps bands to participate in the first-ever Marine Week this year.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Stephen B. Giove, the band officer, said he and his fellow band members felt Marine Week gave them a great opportunity to represent their beloved Corps.

"Marine Week was a tremendous success due to the outstanding talents of the band and the pride and honor each Marine feels knowing we not only represent the Combat Center, but the entire Marine Corps," Giove said.

He said the band hopes to be invited again for next year's Marine Week scheduled to take place in Boston.

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ACCIDENT, from A1

Schwabenbauer said. "I know the lady was grateful we were there. Nielsen and I were able to help her and keep her calm."

"Nielsen really knew what he was doing," he said. "He stayed calm through the whole thing. It made me feel more calm knowing there was another Marine there, and it was cool how we worked together and were on the same page."

Once emergency services arrived on scene, the two Marines remained behind to help any other way they could.

"When I arrived, there were two guys who looked like Marines directing traffic," Dopp said. "The two Marines both stayed until the tow truck arrived and they helped pick up debris

from the road. As far as I can tell, they did an excellent job.

"I've been to accidents before where Marines have shown up and helped," he said. "I guess they just react instinctively."

Nielsen and Schwabenbauer have both attended medical training courses beyond basic first aid. Schwabenbauer was able to use knowledge he gained in the Operational and Emergency Medical Skills course. Nielsen was a student in the Combat Lifesavers Course before his battalion deployed to Afghanistan last year, and worked with corpsmen frequently.

"I'm definitely grateful for the training," Schwabenbauer said. "I just remembered what I learned in OEMS and how they

taught us to wrap tourniquets. If I didn't have that knowledge, then I might have done something wrong."

Nielsen said medical knowledge was not the only part of his prior training he needed that day. The ability to work well under pressure also played a key role in saving the victim's life.

"Having this training definitely kept you calm," he said. "It slowed you down so you would be able to go in and think properly instead of just freaking out."

"I'm glad as many people stopped to help and that she was in as good of hands as she was," he said. "All I can say is I did my best, and I can only pray that next time I can do as good or better. I'm not perfect - I was just there to help."

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

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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.

Return of the Tanks



1ST LT. DOY DEMSICK

Droves of women wait in line to embrace their favorite Marine, 1st Lt Jared Rains, the 2nd Platoon commander of Company B, 1st Tank Battalion and a native of New Castle, Colo., at Co. B's homecoming Saturday morning at the battalion's Headquarters. The women making up the line are, in order of hugs, 1st Lt. Rain's mother, Sonia Rains, his daughters, Jae-lyn, Kiéle and Emmaleah, and his wife Amy Rains. Company B returned from a seven-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. While deployed, they conducted security operations in Sinjar, near the Syrian border, from October through January and worked as a quick reaction force out of Al Asad Airbase from February until the end of their deployment. The return of the 85 men completed Company B's re-deployment.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Marines and sailors with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, rush up hill with Coyotes as the company's combat engineers blow up obstacles as the Company put the Combat Center's Range 401 to the test May 15.

RANGE, from A1

Breaching Systems.

After the defenses were breached, the rifleman and machine gun squads were able to swarm the hills and enemy trenches successfully capturing enemy positions and strongholds.

While the riflemen and machine gunners neutralized the enemy on the ground, mortarmen set up positions to destroy more fortified positions in the hills.

"Training like this puts the pressure on the leaders in the compa-

ny," said Cpl. Geoffrey R. Moffet, a team leader with Company K, 3/4, and a San Diego native. "Every leader, from the platoon commanders to the team leaders, had their initiative and ability to plan for the future tested."

The training not only challenged the Marines and sailors mentally, it was physically demanding as well.

"It's hot out here," said Pfc. George Caswell, a machine gunner with the Company and a Fresno, Calif. native. "We're out in the sun with full gear, carrying ammuni-

tion and everything, running up and down hills, putting rounds down range—it gets hard."

Caswell said even though the training was hard, he felt it helped the Company prepare for what they may face in a combat situation. He also said that it was this type of field operation he joined the Marine Corps to do.

The company used the training to not only help TTECG verify the newly-created Range 401, but to help the company prepare for a combat deployment in the fall, Colon said.



2009 Spirit! of the Morongo Basin Award

Hi-Desert Publishing Co. is seeking candidates for its annual Spirit of the Basin Award honoring a Morongo Basin resident who epitomizes the generous spirit of our community. Nominations will be accepted through Oct. 31, 2009, with the winner announced with a story and photographs in the winter 2010 edition of Basin Wide Spirit. Mail entries to Spirit Award, P.O. Box 159, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277 or drop them off at the Hi-Desert Star or The Desert Trail. You also may e-mail nominations to osullivan@deserttrail.com with the words "Spirit Award" in the subject line.

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B1

Gretchen Wilson lassos the crowd

CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Victory Field was packed with lawn chairs and blankets as service members and their families crammed in to see a famous country music star perform.

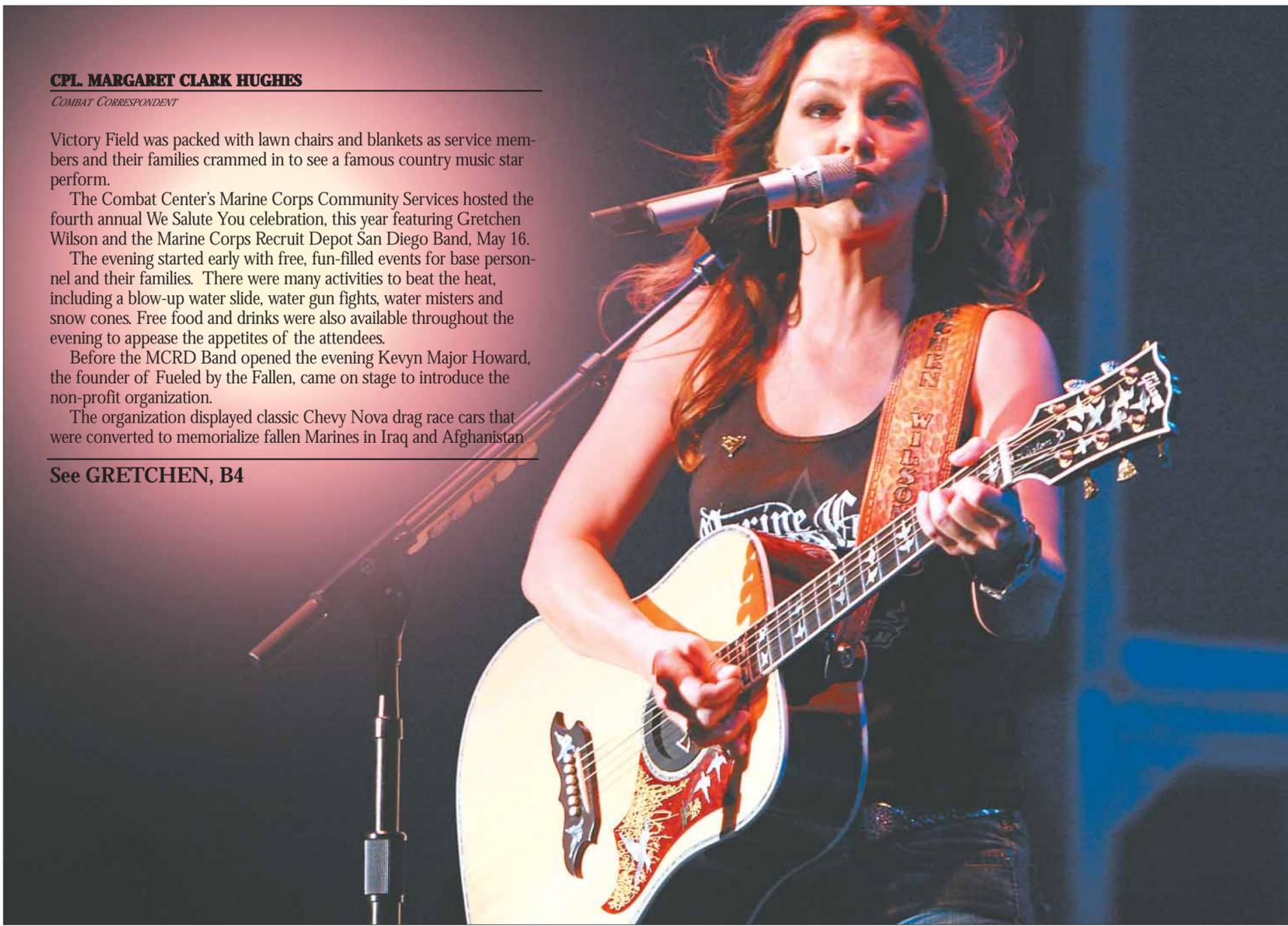
The Combat Center's Marine Corps Community Services hosted the fourth annual We Salute You celebration, this year featuring Gretchen Wilson and the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Band, May 16.

The evening started early with free, fun-filled events for base personnel and their families. There were many activities to beat the heat, including a blow-up water slide, water gun fights, water misters and snow cones. Free food and drinks were also available throughout the evening to appease the appetites of the attendees.

Before the MCRD Band opened the evening Kevyn Major Howard, the founder of Fueled by the Fallen, came on stage to introduce the non-profit organization.

The organization displayed classic Chevy Nova drag race cars that were converted to memorialize fallen Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan.

See GRETCHEN, B4



CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES
PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LESLIE SHAW

Gretchen Wilson performs during the fourth annual We Salute You celebration featuring Wilson and the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Band May 16 at Victory Field. This is the first time she has performed at the Combat Center.

Fight Club takes three gold, qualifies for national team

LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Three Fight Club 29 fighters dominated their opponents at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Saturday during the Armed Forces Pankration Invitational, a state competition open to all active duty and reserve military personnel.

James Clark, Omar Askew and Daniel Marquez all conquered the ring and qualified for the national team. Fight Club 29 also took second place overall in points, closely following the Camp Pendleton team.

"These are three of my most sea-

soned fighters," said Mark Geletko, the team's coach. "All three of them went undefeated in their weight brackets, winning gold medals mostly by point domination."

Clark dominated his opponents, and even whitewashed several of them, meaning he shut them out in points, Geletko said. Askew had a closer match, but defeated his adversary during a one-minute overtime.

"I found it was better to go against all military because the competition was in a lot better shape," Clark said. "It made it a bit more competitive because the guys weren't burnt out after only one round."

Despite the increase in competition,

Clark still remains undefeated in his weight class for pankration and submission grappling.

"I've got a lot of background in wrestling, so I was able to take my opponents to the ground and win by points," he said. "I've been grappling my whole life. I enjoy the competition and the fun. I'm just trying to stay in shape and have fun with these guys."

Askew also said the competition provided a challenge, but he feels his discipline and mindset helped him prevail over his foes.

"I go into a fight with the same

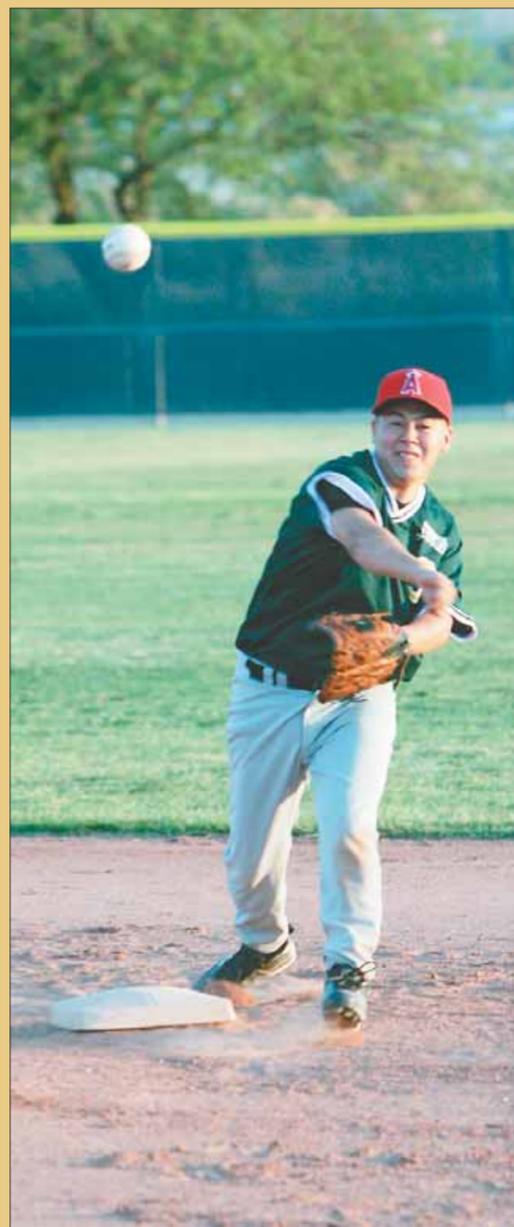
See FIGHT, B2



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Omar Askew and James Clark, two of the Fight Club 29 warriors who took home gold medals Saturday, practice sparring in preparation for their next tournament in San Bernardino, Calif., June 13.

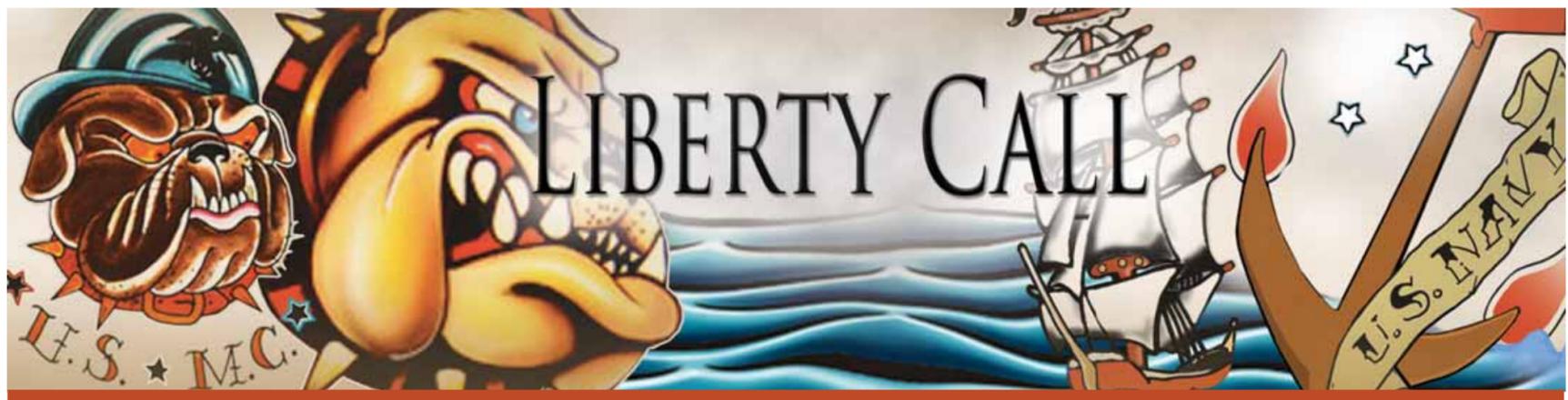
Felix Field of dreams



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Abraham Rodriguez, the second baseman with 2/7, throws the ball to first and attempts to make a double play during intramural softball league play Wednesday night at Felix Field.

~See B3 for more photos and standings



FRI. 5/22 Free summer movies at Luckie Park: "Ratatouille" Time: 8 p.m. or when it gets dark Where: Luckie Park soccer field at Two Mile Road and Utah Trail Twentynine Palms For more information call 367-3445	FRI. 5/22 Chris Isaak concert Time: 8 p.m. Where: Agua Caliente Casino 32250 Bob Hope Drive Rancho Mirage For more information call (888) 999-1995	SAT. 5/23 Staind Time: 8 p.m. Where: Spotlight 29 Casino Resort 46200 Harrison Place Coachella For more information call (866) 377-6829 or visit http://www.spotlight29.com	SAT. 5/23 Allman Brothers Band & The Doobie Brothers Time: 8 p.m. Where: Fantasy Springs Casino 84245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio For more information call (800) 827-2946 or visit http://www.fantasy-springsresort.com	THURS. 5/28 - SUN. 5/31 Palm Springs Film Noir Festival Time: All Weekend Where: Camelot Theaters, 2300 E. Baristo Road in Palm Springs For more information call 325-6565
SUN. 5/31 - FRI. 6/19 Palm Springs Restaurant Week 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	FRI. 6/5 Blues after hours Time: 5-9 p.m. Where: Cafe Potpourri at the Carriage Inn 901 N. China Lake Boulevard Ridgecrest. For more information call 446-7910 or visit http://www.carriageinn.biz	FRI. 6/5 Twentynine Palms Street Fair & Car Show Time: All day event Where: Twentynine Palms Chamber of Commerce 73660 Civic Center Drive Twentynine Palms. For more information call 367-3445	SUN. 6/7 Eagles of Death Metal with Head Lite View concert Time: 8 p.m. Where: Pappy & Harriet's 53688 Pioneertown Road Pioneertown. For more info call 365-5956 or visit http://www.pappyandharriets.com	FRI. 6/12 Jay Leno Show Time: 8 p.m. Where: Agua Caliente Casino 32250 Bob Hope Drive Rancho Mirage For more information call (888) 999-1995

'Star Trek' kicks summer movie-going into hyperdrive

NEIL POND
AMERICAN PROFILE

Star Trek — Rated PG-13
Starring Chris Pine and Zachary Quinto

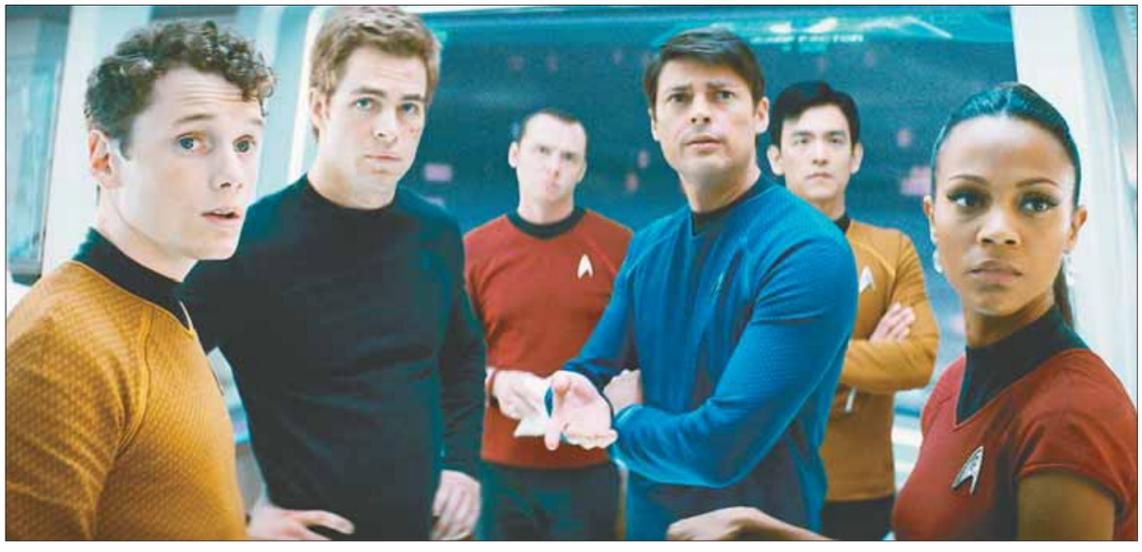
If you've been walking the Earth anytime since 1967, you probably have more than just a passing familiarity with "Star Trek," the futuristic television show that spawned an entertainment cosmos, a galaxy of pop-culture icons and a solar system's worth of spin-off merchandise.

Now the 11th movie based on the durable characters, space-age gadgetry and across-the-universe storylines created by Gene Roddenberry—a former B-17 bomber pilot and policeman before becoming a TV writer—hits the big screen with a massive summer splash. Simply titled "Star Trek," it tells the origins of the crew of the starship U.S.S. Enterprise and its noble intergalactic mission to "boldly go where no man has gone before."

We meet the younger ver-

sions of commander-to-be James T. Kirk (a risk-taking, smooth-talking ladies' man), the half-human, half-Vulcan Spock (wrestling with both sides of his conflicted personality), sharp and sexy space linguist Uhura, non-sense ship physician "Bones" McCoy, engineer "Scotty" Scott, navigator Chekov, helm officer Sulu and the other fresh-faced Star Fleet Academy grads whose fates intersect as they head out to answer a distant-space distress signal—one that turns out to be a trap involving black holes, time warps and a nasty Romulan baddie named Nero.

The young cast is terrific all around, especially Chris Pine and Zachary Quinto (best known as the villain Syler from TV's "Heroes") as Kirk and Spock, whose initially frosty relationship forms the movie's heated emotional core. Both actors bring fresh, colorful angles to their characters, all the while walking a fine line that stretches outward from four decades of hallowed "Star Trek" tradition—no easy



COURTESY PHOTO

The 11th "Star Trek" movie based on Gene Roddenberry's durable characters, space-age gadgetry and across-the-universe storylines, is enjoying a huge success at the box office.

task, by any stretch, and they pull it off with style.

But the real casting coup here is Leonard Nimoy, the original Spock, who appears in a pivotal role that bridges the "Star Trek" past, present and future.

Winona Rider all but disappears into her one-line role as Spock's mom, and come-

dian Tyler Perry pops up as a Star Fleet admiral who first has to discipline young Kirk, then later decorate him.

It's hard to imagine that diehard "Star Trek" fans won't absolutely love this flick, which salutes the rich history of the franchise while avoiding any hint of hokey, by-the-book starch. But it

also makes for a fine outing for non-Trekkies, with a strong, juiced-up, goosed-up jolt of everything that goes well with a tub of popcorn and a box of Raisinets—high-adrenaline action, screen-spattering special effects, a stirring, character-driven story, dashes of humor, and a vibrant, attrac-

tive ensemble of actors who embody the spirit (and sometimes the mannerisms) of the cast that came before them in their roles.

Another "Star Trek" movie is reported already on the launching pad. If it's anywhere near as feisty and full-throttle as this one, I'm there. Beam me up, Scotty!



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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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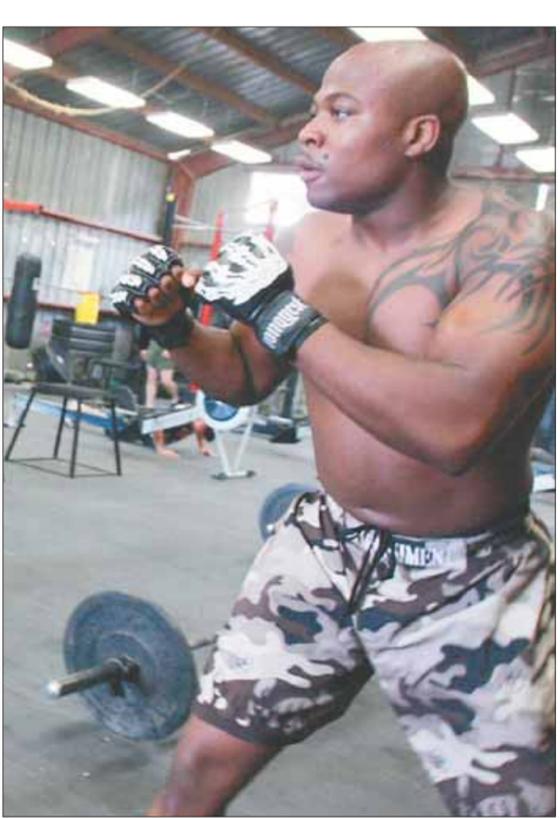
FIGHT, from B1

mindset every man has in battle – it's either him or me," Askew said. "It's all about having mental discipline, physical discipline and character discipline. Having that discipline is what drives me over the top to defeat my opponents.

"I look at this as an opportunity for future endeavors in [mixed martial arts]," he said. "I always fight mentally, physically, and with

character and bearing. Every day I wake up is a challenge for me to strive to be better."

Fight Club 29 will compete in their next tournament June 13 in San Bernardino, Calif. The three fighters who qualified for nationals are eligible to attend the National Pankration Team training camp in Milwaukee in July. The national team will compete in Lithuania against other teams from around the world in September.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Omar Askew, one of the Fight Club 29 warriors who took home gold medals Saturday, practices in preparation for their next tournament in San Bernardino, Calif., June 13.

Cinema 6

MOVIE TIMES 365-9633

Terminator Salvation (PG13) Fri-Mon: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00 Tues-Thur: 2:00, 4:30, 7:00	Night At The Museum: Battle For The Smithsonian (PG13) Fri-Mon: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00 Tues-Thur: 2:00, 4:30, 7:00	Star Trek (PG13) Fri-Mon: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00 Tues-Thur: 2:00, 4:30, 7:00
Angels & Demons (PG13) Fri-Mon: 1:30, 6:00, 9:00 Tues-Thur: 2:00, 7:00		Coming May 29 by Land of the Lost Coming June 12 Taking of Pelham 123 www.cinema6theatre.com

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Combat Center sports



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Michael Montiel, the IPAC third baseman, belts a line drive during intramural softball league play Wednesday night at Felix Field.



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Daniel Lord, the third baseman for 2/7, slides into second base during intramural softball league play Wednesday night at Felix Field.

Intramural Softball League

Standings as of Wednesday

Team	Wins	Losses
MWSS-374	7	0
Scrappers	7	0
CLB-7	7	2
Tanks	6	2
ESD Warriors	6	3
MCCES HQBN	5	4
Ripper	5	3
3rd CEB	4	3
VMU-3	4	4
IPAC	4	4
3/11	4	4
Hospital	4	5
CMA	3	4
PMO	3	4
NAVPERs	3	4
G-6	3	4
Dirty Dozen	2	6
Red Rocket	2	6
ESD	2	6
2/7	2	6
Dental	0	8



LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Ryan Guthrie, the catcher for 2/7, narrowly beats Naval Hospital first baseman Mark Anderson to the bag after hitting a single during intramural softball league play Wednesday night at Felix Field.

Athlete of the Week

Name: James Clark

Age: 31

Job Title: Communications Maintenance Chief, Communications Platoon, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment

Recognition: Since joining Fight Club 29, he has fought in six competitions, five tournaments and numerous pankration duels. He currently holds a 14-0 record.

Major sport accomplishment: Winning a gold medal in the Armed Forces Pankration Invitational and qualifying for the National Pankration Team.

Favorite sport aspect: "I love competition – I'm competitive with everything that I do. I've been involved in team sports, but with [Fight Club 29] it's all about pushing yourself and relying on only you."
Advice for aspiring athletes: "If you want to train and are interested in this team, it's not like you see on TV. The training is intense, and we don't slow down for new guys."



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GRETCHEN, from B1

by displaying each name on one of the vehicles. Howard said that he wanted to do his part in keeping their memories alive.

The MCRD Band opened the show by playing the National Anthem. As the colors were displayed, everyone on the entire field stopped and saluted, stood at attention, or placed their hand over their heart as they paid their respect.

The band serenaded the crowd with music, as children continued to play and families enjoyed each others company until Wilson took the stage.

As the sun was beginning to set, the audience grew to approximately 14,000 attendees, said Kelley Coe, the special events program manager for MCCS, and a native of Brooks, Ga.

As everyone anxiously awaited Wilson to perform, a lucky few attended a meet and greet before her performance.

About 30 Marines were able get an autograph and take a picture with Wilson at the base's West Gym.

After the meet and greet, Wilson took to the stage and the excited crowd cheered as she opened her act with "Here for the Party."

As Wilson played some of her well-known hits including "Redneck Woman" and "One of the Boys," she paused in between songs and said to the audience, "We appreciate all that you do."

As the audience cheered, Wilson continued to sing some new and cover songs, and her band played a rocked out guitar version of the National Anthem while a flag was raised on stage.

"The energy coming from the stage was just rocking my world," said Cpl. Pedro Baez, a missileman with TOW Platoon, 1st Tank Battalion, and a Miami native. "Thanks to her I can't wait for the next time country comes to town."

At the end of the concert, many people were headed home with smiles on their faces as they recapped their favorite events of the evening with their friends and family.

"This was a pretty good concert," said Staff Sgt. Brian Popp, the staff non-commissioned officer in charge of the Mojave Viper Support Detachment, and a native of Lancaster, Wis. "I love the fact that a non-political voice came out and said what she wanted to say."

The field emptied as people loaded up in their vehicles or took buses back to base housing. It was an event-filled evening that coincidentally helped celebrate Armed Forces Day and showed service members and families that people do recognize the sacrifices they endure for their country.



CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES

Gretchen Wilson receives a stuffed bear in dress blues for her daughter before the fourth annual We Salute You celebration featuring Wilson and the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Band May 16 at Victory Field.



CPL. MARGARET CLARK HUGHES

First Sgt. James Jackson III, Company B, Headquarters Battalion, poses for a photo with Gretchen Wilson during the fourth annual We Salute You celebration May 16 at Victory Field.

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