

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

AUGUST 7, 2009

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 52 ISSUE 31

Legacy lives aboard USS Jason Dunham

PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

BATH, Maine – Champagne sprayed, crowds cheered and tears flowed Saturday as the mother of the first Marine to be awarded the Medal of Honor since Vietnam christened the Navy's 59th Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, the DDG 109 with its new name, the USS Jason Dunham.

Deb Dunham, accompanied by her biological and Marine Corps family, witnessed not only a ceremony to launch a ship into the Kennebec River, but the beginning of a lasting memorial to the courageous act which earned her son the Medal of Honor.

The story of Dunham's selfless sacrifice was told and retold by a variety of prominent military men and members of congress including the Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus and the former Commandant of the Marine Corps retired General Michael Hagee, who presented Cpl. Dunham with the Purple Heart Medal and stood by his bedside as he died.

Hagee said the warship will serve as a reminder that freedom is paid for by the men and women who wear the cloth of this nation.

"They are willing to give up everything that is important: love, marriage, children, family and friends," Hagee said of the hero from Scio, N.Y. "I can tell you I've always stood in awe of that."

His sentiments were shared by many who attended the ceremony as one could look across the crowd and find it hard to

See **DUNHAM, A3**



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Flu could happen to you

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

As the nation deals with an increase of influenza cases, the Combat Center is not exempt. A recent surge in reports of flu-like symptoms from Marines assigned to the training areas necessitates commanders to again remind their Marines, sailors and family members to employ preventative measures and help stop the spread of the symptoms.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth – germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home if you are sick for seven days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is

See **FLU, A6**

Deb Dunham, the mother of Medal of Honor recipient Cpl. Jason Dunham and sponsor of the ship bearing her son's name, smashes the ceremonial bottle of champagne against the bow of the Navy's newest Aegis class destroyer, the USS Jason Dunham, after officially christening her during the Saturday ceremony at Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Sgt. Jose Esquivel, a communications chief with the Marine Corps Tactics and Operations Group, was killed in a car accident in Whittier, Calif., July 19. Service members, civilians and loved ones of Esquivel gathered at the Combat Center's Protestant Chapel to honor his life Friday.

MCTOG mourns loss of comms chief

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marines of the Marine Corps Tactics and Operations Group aboard the Combat Center joined the loved ones of a fallen Marine to honor his life and service at the Protestant Chapel July 31.

Friends, families and co-workers of Sgt. Jose A. Esquivel, a communications chief with MCTOG, gathered to honor a man who was killed in a car accident while visiting friends and family in Whittier, Calif., July 19.

Esquivel served three tours in Iraq.

A memorial was held for

his family at the Rose Hills Memorial Park & Mortuary in Whittier, Calif., July 27.

Marines and civilians of MCTOG were given the same opportunity to pay respects to a good Marine and family man during Esquivel's memorial.

"He was an excellent judge of character," said Sgt. Miguel Anderson, a data network specialist with MCTOG, and a close friend of Esquivel. "He had a way of making the best of a bad situation. He could always find a way to calm me down if I had a hot head, but I don't think I ever saw him lose his cool.

He was always so focused."

Kent Satterwhite, an information technology specialist with MCTOG, also worked closely with Esquivel and spoke a few words to the crowd about the man he knew.

"I'm not a Marine," Satterwhite said. "But I work with them every day, and I can tell you there is no brotherhood like it. Sgt. Esquivel's friendship was the best kind you could ever ask for."

Sgt. Fredy Esquivel, Jose's twin brother, and a senior drill instructor with Company A, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego,

See **FALLEN, A4**

Families celebrate as their Marines come home

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE AND CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

It was an exciting week for Combat Center families as more than 350 Marines and sailors returned to the Combat Center from deployments.

An advanced party of nine Marines from Combat Logistics Battalion 7 returned to the Combat Center July 30 at CLB-7's battalion headquarters. They were welcomed with banners, cold drinks, and boxes of pizza set up in a battalion conference room.

While operating in and around Al Asad, Iraq, CLB-7 delivered crucial supplies like drinking water and fuel to coalition forces, said Gunnery Sgt. Christine Britt, the operations training staff noncommissioned officer in charge and assistant camp commandant of Camp Korean Village.

Two main bodies of CLB-7 Marines and sailors are slated to return this month and in September.

Marines and sailors from 2nd Platoon, Company D, 1st Tank Battalion, came home after a seven-month deployment with the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit training with foreign military units.

Nearly 20 Marines and



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Marines and sailors of 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, are welcomed home by cheering friends and family during their homecoming ceremony at Victory Field Monday. More than 300 returned from Fallujah, Iraq.

sailors came home from the MEU, and were greeted by family members and fellow 1st Tanks Marines behind the battalion's headquarters building.

Melissa Saxman, the

wife of Staff Sgt. Larry Saxman Jr., said she has been counting down the weeks, days, hours and minutes of her husband's

See **HOME, A5**



Sights on deployment ~ See **A3**



Back to school crunch ~ See **A4**



Not for the weak ~ See **B1**



Grand splash opening ~ See **B1**

Semper Moto

Our bikes reflect our personalities

JOHN FLEMING

Most motorcyclists choose their bikes on the basis of the image they project. At first, that may seem like a pretty bold, even presumptuous statement. But it's true. Let me explain.

Each week, we meet and train at least a dozen beginning motorcyclists; most of whom have already purchased their bikes. Some prefer a cruiser style, built low to the ground with classic design. Others choose dual sports – motorcycles that are designed for legal street use and off-road riding. Still others prefer standard motorcycles. We've seen a recent resurgence of well-known classics from the 60's and 70's. And then there are the sport bikes, which are actually rockets on two wheels.

My co-ridercoach, Frank Santiago, and I are both convinced that before we learn about each student's motorcycle preference, we can, with some accuracy, predict what they'll say on the basis of their personality and temperament. (Bear in mind that these are generalizations. Of course there are exceptions.)

For example, a typical mid-career rider with a wife and kids will probably ride a cruiser. He's not a thrill seeker. He wants a bike that is somewhat "laid back" and comfortable. It has to look good, sound good, and might have bags and a sissy bar for passenger comfort.

A sport bike rider doesn't give a rip about comfort. He still wants a bike that looks good. It will often have an aftermarket pipe so that it sounds right. But the top priority is performance. If it's not fast, it's not worth considering.

And then there is the dual-sport rider. He wants a versatile machine that's suitable for a weekend in the desert or a daily commute. It probably also gets pretty good gas mileage, doesn't cost much, and is pretty simple to work on.

Unfortunately, each of these types of motorcycles has its limitations. They are not the things the salesman talks about on the showroom floor. Next week we'll begin to explore the drawbacks to each of the motorcycle types. If you haven't bought a motorcycle yet, perhaps we can prevent you from making a purchase you'll come to regret.

John Fleming is a rider coach with Cape Fox Professional Services, providing motorcycle safety training for Marines and sailors aboard the Combat Center. To submit your comments or contributions about motorcycling, his email is michael.j.fleming@usmc.mil.

Hot Topics

BLOOD DRIVE

The Community Blood Bank will host a blood drive at the Combat Center's Protestant Chapel Aug. 20 from 12 to 7 p.m. All donors will receive free tickets to Knott's Soak City in Palm Springs, Calif. For more information, call 830-7321 or 830-7394.

FOOTBALL OFFICIALS NEEDED

The local football leagues are looking for officials to help with Junior-All American, High School, and Marine Corps football officiating. Yearly dues of \$70 are required to get a game schedule, plus you must buy your own uniforms. You will receive a rule book, a mechanics manual and study guides. Most officials earn between \$1,000 and \$1,500 per season. Weekly meetings will be held every Tuesday night starting Sept. 1, and are mandatory for all officials. Interested parties should call Mike Harris at 880-0676.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT STUDY SURVEY

Protecting Marines and sailors from sexual assault and supporting those who have already been victimized is a high priority. The Navy and Marine Corps are conducting parallel, service-wide assessments on individual attitudes and experiences along with the insight of related program staffs by conducting an online survey. The key is to gain the best insight into protecting and taking care of our own. The survey will remain open until Sept. 1 at <http://www.manpower.usmc.mil/sas>.

TRAINING TANK CLOSURE

The training tank will be closed Monday through Friday from Aug. 10 to 28 until 5 p.m. for Marine Corps Instructor Water Survival training. Regular hours on the weekends. Lap swim lanes will be available from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Officers' Club pool. Water aerobics will still be at 5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday at the tank. Tuesday afternoon class will be at 1 p.m. at the Officers' Club pool.

Centerspeak

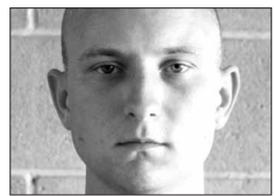
If you had to spend a week in any T.V. show, which would you choose?

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



LANCE CPL. MARCUS SUGGS
3RD LIGHT ARMORED RECONNAISSANCE BATTALION, COMPANY E

“Entourage. I like the camaraderie and they're all cool people living a lifestyle anyone would like to have.”



CPL. CHRISTOPHER EBERLEIN
2ND BATTALION, 2ND MARINE REGIMENT, HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE COMPANY

“Dexter. The guy's a genius and a killer, but he has a code and sticks to it strictly.”



SEAMAN WOODY GEORGES
1ST TANK BATTALION, COMPANY D

“The Real World. There's always crazy things happening and it seems like something pretty fun to experience.”



This Day in Marine Corps History

August 7, 1942

The 1st Marine Division lands unopposed at Beach Red on Guadalcanal as part of Operation Watchtower in World War II.

SUDOKU #1514

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		9				4	5
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	2	4				9	
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9		2		5			3

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2009 HOMETOWN CONTENT

HELLO FROM DEAUVILLE

[puzzle Solutions on A5]

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62						63							64		

ACROSS

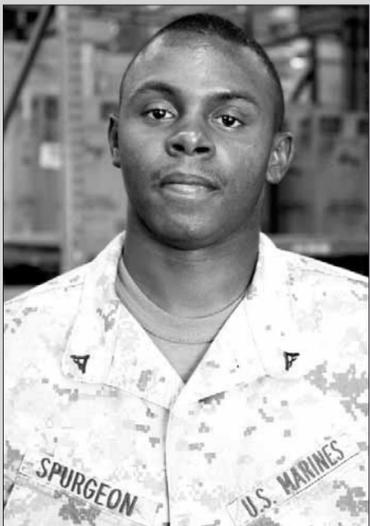
- John's running mate in 2008
- Takes the plunge
- Biblical verb with "thou"
- Egg-shaped
- Nobelist Wiesel
- Twistable snack
- "D'OH!"
- Come-__ (lures)
- Abysmal grade
- "SNL" skits, e.g.
- Word on a Realtor's sign
- Org chart level
- DOUGH
- Saintly glow
- Poetic nights
- Language suffix
- Aerobics class prop
- __ fats
- Teacher's deg.
- Farm brooder
- Unwanted stocking stuffer
- It can be upped
- DOE
- Times to call, in ads
- Pet collar victim
- Put out
- Entree that's ladled
- Comic's bit
- DO
- Canine visitor to Oz
- Playground cry
- Word before renewal or sprawl
- Wilson of "Wedding Crashers"
- "Great" detective of kid-lit
- Oater group

DOWN

- Artsy Big Apple area
- [ding-dong] "___ calling"
- Tries to sink, perhaps
- Did lunch
- Saul Bellow novel
- Nutbag
- Ticklish Muppet
- Chips go-with
- Congressional periods
- Novelist __ de Balzac
- Big name in oil
- Lowly laborer
- FAO Schwarz wares
- Narcissist's love
- Starts the business day
- Piece of cake
- Some feds
- Uniform adornment
- Mandolin's cousin
- Matador's workplace
- Royal domain
- Question variety
- Clockmaker __ Thomas
- Blissful spot
- Soften, in a way
- Sunbathers catch them
- Naked Goya subject
- Want badly
- Impulse transmitter
- __ I Sing" (Gershwin musical)
- Peter Fonda title role
- Clinches, as a title
- Ratio words
- Pack overhead
- Fill to the gills
- Manuscript marking
- Chews the fat
- Woeful word
- Spliced item
- Home loan agcy.
- __ Magnon man

Combat Center Spotlight

Name: Lance Cpl. Christopher Spurgeon
Unit: Headquarters Battalion
Hometown: Albertville, Al.
Job Title: Garrison Property Clerk
Job Description: Account for non-deployable property worth more than \$5,000 aboard MCAGCC.
What do you like most about your job? "The job allows me to interact with various groups of Marines and civilians from different backgrounds and units."
Greatest accomplishment: "Being part of the HQBN football team which won Best of the West in 2008."
Hobbies: Football, fishing and family
Military service: One year and 10 months
Time aboard the Combat Center: One year and five months



OBSERVATION POST

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Afghanistan-bound Marines sharpen warfighting skills

LANCE CPL. BENJAMIN CRILLY
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 7

The Marines cautiously patrolled the improvised explosive device-laden road, knowing that every step taken could set off a lethal explosion.

The squad patrolled along a guard rail defining the left side of the cracked, well-traveled road, as a rock-scattered burm towered over the right side. Every Marine scanned for any signs of an IED.

BOOM! An explosion erupted from the burm—Two Marines down.

The Marines reacted quickly, providing security for the litter team and moving swiftly into place, dragging casualties out of the kill zone.

Fortunately, for more than 100 Marines and sailors of Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment, this simulated attack was only part of the regiment's basic pre-deployment training, July 31 - Aug. 3 at the Combat Center.

The training, dubbed "Warrior Week," familiarized the Marines with the equipment and skills they will use while conducting mechanized, combined-arms operations and other expeditionary operations in order to support theater engagement plans and contingency operations.

After participating in a



LANCE CPL. BENJAMIN CRILLY

Lance Cpl. Milton Tubbs, a motor transportation mechanic with Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment, provides security as Cpl. William J. Broom, a driver with Headquarters Co., 7th Marines, crawls out of a humvee trainer during a roll-over drill July 31.

class, the Marines conducted IED patrol training. The practical application incorporated a variety of indicators and designs to give Marines the ability to locate the explosives during their upcoming and future deployments.

"You cannot simulate the real thing," said Staff Sgt. Daniel Rincon, the platoon sergeant for operations and training, Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment. "But this is as close as you can get."

Combat-hardened Marines

trained alongside the less experienced Marines, sharing their experiences and knowledge from both Afghanistan and Iraq.

"[Warrior Week] allows young Marines who have never experienced it, to get an idea of a real-life scenario and how to react if put in it," said Rincon, 27, from Los Angeles. "[All Marines] should take this training seriously."

With ongoing coalition operations in Afghanistan, these Marines may face both

remote-control and pressure-plate IEDs, and must be able to respond accordingly.

In addition to IED training, Marines participated in a Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer, known as HEAT, simulating a humvee rollover, and teaches Marines how to properly escape the disabled vehicle.

Mirroring the chassis of a humvee, the trainer showed students what a vehicle rollover would be like, and how to properly react. Each

Marine completed four exits, including aiding casualties and in-water exits.

The HEAT training was a first for some of the Marines, who have actually experienced a rollover in the combat zone.

"We almost rolled into a lake in Iraq," said 21-year-old Cpl. Jacque R. Eby, an intelligence analyst with Headquarters Co., 7th Marines, who served with 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2008. "I haven't had this training before, and now I feel that if I were in the same situation, we would have been able to evacuate quicker."

Following the HEAT training, the Marines and sailors completed the gas chamber portion of Warrior Week.

With the burning sensation of the crystalline gas on the back of their necks and hands, the Marines performed "don-and-clear" drills to ensure proper fit and use of their gas masks.

Staff Sgt. James D. Deselms, the chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear chief for Headquarters Co., 7th Marines, explained a gas chamber is designed to instill confidence in the protective equipment.

"While we aren't using

CBRN training as much as we were in Iraq, the threat is still there," said Deselms, 29, from Phoenix. "It's about being prepared [for an attack] and the confidence behind [the mask]."

The week also included live-fire weapons training with the M-16A4 service rifle, M-203 grenade launcher, AT-4 rocket launcher and fragmentation grenades.

"I would feel much more confident going into combat with these Marines knowing that they have been through Warrior Week," said Cpl. Andrew A. Richardet, the senior intelligence analyst for Headquarters Co., 7th Marines.

Regardless if this is their first or fourteenth deployment, Warrior Week enhanced the Marines' skills to perform their respective missions in Afghanistan, he said.

"You know, I went through Warrior Week about a month ago and for me personally, I looked at it and thought 'I have done all this in country,'" said Richardet, 22, from St. Louis, Mo., a former rifleman who has deployed twice to Iraq. "But it's that basic class that either teaches you what deployment is going to be like, or re-teaches or reiterates what it will be like."

DUNHAM, from A1

spot a dry eye.

"I've seen many destroyers built, christened and sail out of this place," said John McIlhinney, the dry-dock operating engineer with General Dynamics Bath Iron Works. "This one is special. Everyone I've met, everyone I know who's worked on her would say the same thing."

"The story behind the men behind the ships we build is what makes my job so worthwhile," said the Casca, Maine native.

For this destroyer's crew, the story holds extreme significance.

The day before the ceremony, Cmdr. Scott Sciretta, the warship's commanding officer, spoke directly to his crew and told them to think about the man behind the ship's name and seek inspiration in his story as they go about their daily work.

"Cpl. Jason Dunham gave everything for our country,"

he said to the crew. "Think about that and use it to motivate you to give that tiny bit more every day."

To help remind the crew of Dunham's sacrifice, Deb and Dan Dunham, the fallen hero's parents, decided to donate their son's dress blue uniform to be displayed on the ship's quarterdeck.

After the christening ceremony, Sgt. Maj. Michael Templeton, Dunham's former company first sergeant; Maj. Trent Gibson, Dunham's former company commander; and Sgt. Bill Hampton and Cpl. Kelley Miller, the two Marines whose lives were

saved with Cpl. Dunham's sacrifice, formally presented the ship's command with each item of Dunham's dress blue uniform.

Mabus summed up the day perfectly saying "though Jason is no longer with us, his name will live on in this magnificent warship that represents the best our nation has to offer."

"Jason's spirit — as a warrior, fighter, and one who never gave up, even in the face of great challenges — lives on to lead all of the men and women who will ever serve aboard USS Jason Dunham, in home waters

and abroad," he said.

"In the fighting spirit of its namesake, the men and women of USS Jason Dunham will never back down from any challenge put before them."

USS Jason Dunham will undergo months of construction and sea-trials before being officially commissioned into service in 2010.

JAMES M. RACHFORD O.D.

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Registration Information

Public Schools:

Morongo Unified Elementary Schools. All elementary schools will be registering the week of Aug. 17. Please call your respective school for more information.

- Condor Elementary School, 367-0750, 2551 Condor Road, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277
- Joshua Tree Elementary School, 366-8459, 6051 Sunburst Drive, Joshua Tree, CA 92252
- Landers Elementary School, 364-2382, 56450 Reche Road, Landers, CA 92277
- Morongo Elementary School, 369-6333, 10951 Hess Boulevard, Morongo, CA 92256
- Oasis Elementary School, 367-3595, 73175 El Paseo Drive, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277
- Onaga Elementary School, 369-6333, 58001 Onaga Trail, Twentynine Palms, CA 92284
- Palm Vista Elementary School, 367-7538, 74350 Baseline, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277
- Twentynine Palms Elementary School, 367-3545, 74350 Playa Vista, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277
- Yucca Mesa Elementary School, 228-1777, 3380 Avalon, Yucca Valley, CA 92284
- Yucca Valley Elementary School, 365-3381, 7601 Hopi Trail, Yucca Valley, CA 92284

La Contenta Middle School: New student assessments

will be held Aug. 12 and 17 at 8 a.m. Parents need to have completed enrollment packet prior to students taking assessments. New student orientation will be Aug. 21 from 12 to 2 p.m. Please call 228-1802 or 369-6325 for more information.

Twentynine Palms Junior High School: All new students will need to take an assessment for placement in math and English. Please call 367-9594 to make an appointment.

Twentynine Palms High School: All new students will need to call counseling to make an appointment at 367-9594

Yucca Valley High School: All new students will need to call counseling to make an appointment at 365-1138.

Private Schools:

Joshua Springs Christian Academy, Yucca Valley: Registration is taking place now. Parents will need to complete the application in advance. All new enrollments will need to make appointments. Please call the school for more details at 365-3599. School starts Aug. 24 for all grades.

Calvary Baptist Church School, Yucca Valley: School starts on Aug. 31. Please call 365-9731 to make an appointment.

Our Lady of the Desert School, Yucca Valley: Registration is taking place now. School starts Sept. 8. Call 366-2935 to receive enrollment application and to make an appointment.

Top 10 back-to-school questions

SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICE

1. When is registration for Morongo Unified School District?

Public Schools:
 • Morongo Unified School District elementary schools begin registration Aug. 17.

• La Contenta Middle School is enrolling now. All new students to MUSD will need to take an assessment for placement. Assessments are being held on Aug. 12 through 17 at 8 a.m. Parents will need to fill out enrollment packet prior to students taking the assessments. For questions, call 228-1802 or 369-6325.

• Twentynine Palms Junior High and High School have begun registration. All new students will need to take placement assessment for math and English. To make an appointment, call 367-9594. For the high school, call 367-9594.

• Yucca Valley High School has begun registration. All new students need to contact the counseling office at 365-1138.

Private Schools

• Joshua Springs Christian Academy, Yucca Valley's registration is taking place now. Parents need to complete an application prior to registration. For more information, call 365-9731

• Calvary Baptist Church, Yucca Valley's registration is taking place now. Call 365-9731 to make an appointment.

• Our Lady of the Desert School, Yucca Valley's registration is taking place now. To make an appointment or receive an enrollment application, call 366-2935.

2. What age can you start kindergarten?

• A child must be 5 years of age or older on or before Dec. 2 to attend kindergarten and must be 6 years old on or before Dec. 2 to attend first grade.

3. How many schools comprise of MUSD?

• There are a total of 17 schools in MUSD. There are 11 elementary schools, two middle schools, two high schools and two continuation high schools.

4. If we live off base, can our children go to Condor Elementary?

• Depending on where you live your child may or may not go to Condor. Schools are zoned by residential areas and where you live dictates which school you would attend.

5. What school supplies does my child need for the 2009-2010 school year?

• Suggested supplies for elementary students are: three-hole-punch paper, #2 pencils, glue stick, Elmer's glue, dry-erase markers and Kleenex facial tissue. Middle and high school students are recommended to attend the first day of school with a notebook and writing utensil for notes on specific supply items from teachers.

6. Where is the high school that

students who live on base attend?

• Twentynine Palms High School is located at 72750 Wild Cat Way, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277.

7. Where can I find information regarding MUSD schools test scores and ratings?

• Test scores and ratings for MUSD schools can be found at <http://morongo.usd-ca.schoolloop.com> then click on "schools" then "school accountability reports."

8. Where can I find information on homeschooling?

• There are several homeschooling options in the area. MUSD sponsors an Independent Continuing Education Program. Information regarding this program can be found at <http://icee-morongousd-ca.schoolloop.com/>. Additionally, the state of California provides the California Virtual Academy (<http://www.k12.com/cava/>) and the Home School Association of California (<http://www.hsc.org/>).

9. When does school start?

• Schools in MUSD start Aug. 24

• Joshua Springs Christian Academy starts Aug. 24.

• Calvary Baptist Church School starts on Aug. 31.

• Our Lady of the Desert School starts on Sept. 8

10. Where can I find more information about local schools?

• Call the school liaison at 830-1574 or visit <http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/schooliaison>.

FALLEN, from A1

expressed thanks to his brother's command and fellow Marines.

"I know you took care of him the same way he took care of his family," Fredy said. "And for that I thank you on behalf of our whole family."

While standing in front of the congregation and behind a wooden lectern, Fredy gripped

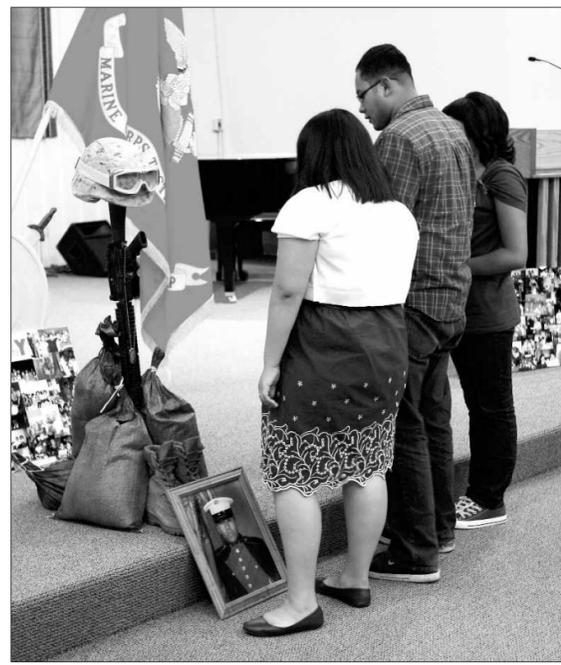
each side of the lectern and recalled memories of his brother's senior drill instructor allowing him to attend Fredy's boot camp graduation a few weeks before his own.

"When I graduated, my drill instructor came up to me and said 'you and your brother are not just brothers anymore,'" Fredy said. "You are Marines. For so long, I tried to be an individual, but then I

realized I can't because he will always be a part of me."

Esquivel is survived by

his wife Desiree and two daughters Jenivee, 4, and Janelle, 10 months.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Family members of Sgt. Jose Esquivel, a communications chief with MCTOG, pay their final respects at the Combat Center's Protestant Chapel July 31.

Evangelical Free Church
 Bill Wilcox, Senior Pastor Marcus McDaniel, Youth Pastor
 Sundays: Sunday School 9:00 AM
 Worship 10:00 AM
 Nursery and Children's Church Available
 Wednesday: Adult Bible Study 6:30-8:00 PM
 AWANA (during school year) 6:15-8:00 PM
 Youth Groups:
 Jr High Wednesday 6:30-8:00 PM
 High School Sunday 6:30-8:30 PM
 Refinery (young adults) Saturday 6:30-8:30 PM
 6804 Mohawk Trail, Yucca Valley, CA 92284 (760) 228-1747

Spirit and Truth Worship Center
 Perry L. Ford, Senior Pastor
 Service Times:
 Sunday Morning Worship 9:45
 Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00
 (760) 361-2450
 4751 Adobe Rd.
 29 Palms, Ca. 92277
 spirit_truthworshipcenter@yahoo.com

Joshua Springs CALVARY CHAPEL
 57373 Joshua Lane
 Yucca Valley, CA 92284
 (760) 365-0769
 www.JoshuaSprings.org
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 READING ROOM Tues.-Thurs. 12-3 PM
 Sat. 9-Noon (Except Holidays)
 56039 Santa Fe Trail • 365-4185
 Corner Apache Trail, Yucca Valley

Skyview Chapel Church of God
 Worship Service
 10:30 A.M. & 6:30 P.M.
 Wed. Bible Study 6:30 P.M.
 7475 Sunny Vista Rd., Joshua Tree
 Pastor Abe Casiano
 Church (760) 366-9119

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 Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM
 Sunday Evening Worship 5:00PM
 Wednesday Bible Study 6:00PM
 367-9400

St. Joseph of Arimathea Episcopal Church
 God Loves You As If You Were His Only Child.
 Holy Eucharist 10:00 A.M.
 Onaga at Church St., Y.V.
 365-7133

Yucca Valley Church of Religious Science
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 Reverend Ron Scott
 Sunday Celebration & Junior Church 10 AM
 7434 Bamcock Trail, Yucca Valley
 365-2205
 yvcrs.org

"The will of God will never take you where the grace of God will not protect you."

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
 (Missouri Synod)
 WORSHIP SERVICE 9:00 AM
 SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 AM
 LIVING UNDER THE SON
 59077 Yucca Trail, Yucca Valley
 CHURCH: 365-2548 Preschool & Daycare: 369-9590

Desert Hills Presbyterian Church
 56750 Mountain View Trail
 Yucca Valley • 365-6331
 1st Service 9:30 AM w/Sunday School
 2nd Service 11:00 AM w/Adult Bible Study
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 Pastor Joey & Carol Joseph
 6415 Outpost Road Joshua Tree
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 call (760)366-7420
 Website: JHOPCC.ORG

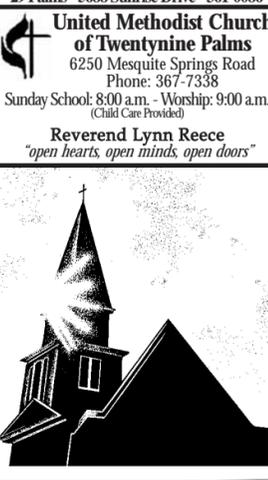
United Methodist Church of Twentynine Palms
 6250 Mesquite Springs Road
 Phone: 367-7338
 Sunday School: 8:00 a.m. - Worship: 9:00 a.m.
 (Child Care Provided)
 Reverend Lynn Reece
 "open hearts, open minds, open doors"

St. Martin-In-The-Fields EPISCOPAL CHURCH
 Sunday School 10:00 am • Holy Eucharist 10:00 am
 Sunday Bible Study 9:00 am
We're Here for Everyone
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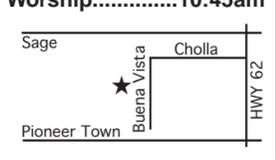
OASIS COMMUNITY CHURCH
 6631 Utah Trail, 29 Palms
 Service Times
 Sunday 9:00 am, 11:00 am
 Nursery provided at 9:00am & 11:00am
 367-7812
 www.oasiscommunitychurch.com

Two Mile Apostolic Tabernacle
 74301 Two Mile Rd., 29 Palms
 (Next to Lucky Park)
 "Where Jesus Embraces You"
 Sundays 10:00 am 6:00 pm
 Wednesdays 7:30 pm
 Website: TwoMileApostolic.com
 760-367-0080

First Baptist Church of 29 Palms
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 Sunday School 9:15 am, Morning Worship 10:30 am.
 Evening Service 6:00 pm.
 Wednesday Services
 Prayer/Bible Study 6:30 pm.
 Young Married Couples Ministry 6:30 pm.
 www.fbc29.org
 6414 Split Rock Ave., 29 Palms, CA 760-367-7561



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 Worship.....10:45am



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Naval hospital answers the call, fixes phone system

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERI
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital recently finished fixing their

new telephone system to alleviate appointment scheduling problems.

"The problem we solved with the new phone system was a two-part one," said

Cmdr. Sharon Kingsberry, a clinic business manager with the hospital, and a native of San Diego. "Phone access and clinic access. Getting past the machine or through

the wait was always a problem. After they got on the phone, getting an appointment scheduled was a problem as well."

Kingsberry explained what the hospital has done to move forward in patient satisfaction and care.

"We have reorganized our phone line so people can get off the phones and into the clinics," she said. "They can choose from eight options. The final one gives them another menu to dial directly to the clinics."

"We also have the ability for people to cancel an appointment 24 hours a day," she said. "We've had a big problem with no-shows for some appointments in the past. But now we have the power to keep in contact all day and night after work hours."

She said the new system should benefit the patrons of the hospital and add to their already admirable ability to care for patients.

"Patient care hasn't ever really been a problem like this has," she said. "We're very proficient in caring for our patients, and we want to

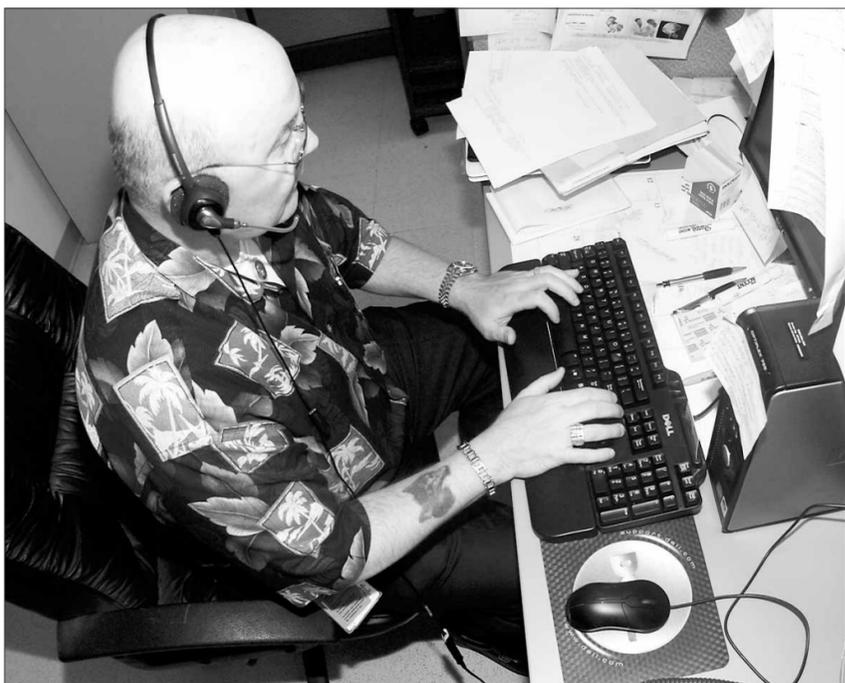
get them into our clinics.

"With the new, more reliable phone system we will be able to get the right patient with the right doctor at the right time and place for the right appointment," she said.

Lt. Arnold Fajayan, a clinic business manager, said other benefits will come because of the new system. "We can receive our

patients and make a rapid response to their issues now," said the Zambalez, Philippines native. "It's a lot simpler and should help us do our job easier."

Call 830-2752 to schedule an appointment with any of the available clinics. The call center is open every day from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. After hours calls are directed to the duty at the hospital.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERI

Eric Cruse, a Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital call center clerk, and a native of Morberley, Mo., enters information and schedules appointments for patients Monday in the newly re-vamped call center at the hospital.

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 (First 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)

HOME, from A1

homecoming.

"We have been married 10 years and I have been through three deployments, but I still get so excited whenever my husband is coming home," said Saxman, an Erie, Penn., native. "He has been deployed for seven months, but he had three months of training before he went so I didn't get to see him before he deployed."

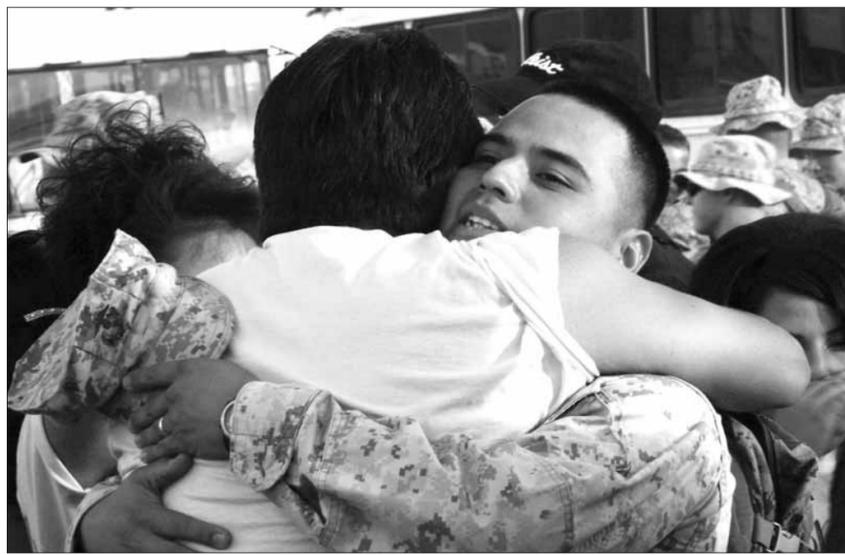
1st Lt. Brent Timmer, the executive officer of Co. D, 1st Tanks, said he was glad to be home with friends and family, but felt a MEU was a great way to explore the world.

"We stopped in a lot of places and conducted different types of training all around the world," said Timmer, a West Olive, Mich., native. "While we trained we were acting as a reserve unit. If anything flared up in our part of the world, our job as a MEU is to take care of it."

The 13th MEU traveled to Jordan, Djibouti, and other countries in Southern Africa, Hawaii, Guam and Malaysia, and was on standby if they were needed in Iraq or Afghanistan.

The men of Baker Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, and the 1/7 advanced party, also returned to the Combat Center's Victory Field Monday.

More than 300 Marines and sailors returned from their most recent deployment to Fallujah, Iraq, where the unit was responsible for three separate missions including providing support to the Iraq security forces, supporting civil reconstruction, and the draw down of American forces in theater, said Maj. Jason Perry, the battalion's executive officer. During civil reconstruction,



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Cpl. Marcus Chischilly, a fire team leader with Baker Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, and native of Phoenix, Ariz. embraces his family during the 1/7 advanced party homecoming at Victory Field Monday. Chischilly's family designed T-shirts to show their support and excitement for his return.

Marines took on projects such as helping build Iraqi schools and installing water purification systems in towns, said Perry, a Flat Rock, N.C., native.

The warriors of 1/7 were also responsible for drawing down forces by setting up the conditions necessary for American forces to reduce their presence in Iraq.

"The Marines did an outstanding job in one of the most rested areas in Iraq," Perry said.

For many friends and family members, knowing their heroes were in less danger in Fallujah than the city was known for at the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom came as a great relief.

"This is our son's first deployment," said Mary Miller, a Hoxie, Ks., native about her son, 20-year-old Lance Cpl. Brian Miller, a rifleman with Baker Company. "I feel more proud than anxious."

For others, their excitement

at their loved ones' return was no less despite it not being their first deployment.

"The first time he was deployed, we were engaged," said Erika Bryant, wife of Cpl. Jordan Bryant, a field radio operator with Baker Company. "This time we lived together, so when he left, it was more noticeable that he was gone."

"I'm so excited now - I have butterflies in my stom-

ach," said the Port Angeles, Wash., native.

Lance Cpl. Randon Atkinson, a rifleman with Weapons Company, 1/7, summarized the feeling many Marines and sailors had at that moment.

"It feels damn good to be back," said the Dallas native.

Nearly 600 more Marines and sailors with 1/7 are slated to return throughout the month of August.

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5	6	1	3	9	4	8	2	7
8	2	4	7	1	5	9	3	6
6	1	8	4	3	2	7	9	5
3	5	7	9	6	8	1	4	2
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TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt

My recent column about people and their pets resulted in my receiving many emails, telephone calls, notes and letters. I also received a beautiful essay from Trudi of Twentynine Palms and a fine poem from Claudia of Reno, Nevada. (I will send them to you at no cost if you contact me).

A wonderful example of a pet-loving home here in the high desert is the home of Gene and Randee Nelson, owners of Nelson Heating and Air Conditioning. Their home (both inside and outside) exudes true love for all of God's creatures. They provide love without reservation to and with great tenderness for horses, dogs, cats, peacocks, rabbits, and guinea hens, not to mention the wild birds and other living things that are attracted to the Nelson's 24 hour a day friendly Oasis of genuine love for all of life.

I am reminded of Dostoevsky's words in "The Brothers Karamazov:"

"Love all God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand in it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light.

Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things.

Once you perceive it, you will begin to comprehend it better every day.

And you will come at last to love the whole world with an all-embracing love."

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MWSS-374 Marine named Aviation Ground Marine of the Year

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

A heavy equipment operator platoon sergeant with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 was surprised when he was named the Aviation Ground Marine of the Year and the recipient of the Jack W. Demmond Award which is given to the best ground support Marine for an air wing unit in the Marine Corps.

Staff Sgt. Robert Leatherman, a Phoenix native, said he had no idea he would ever get this type of award when he made a last minute decision to join the Marine Corps 12 years ago under an open contract.

"I never planned to be a Marine, and had no plan for an MOS [military occupational specialty] when I joined," he said. "I just joined right after high school. I got this job after boot camp and just put in my best effort."

Leatherman said he was selected for the award after his platoon's outstanding support of Operation Iraqi Freedom during his last deployment.

"We ran 104 missions through-



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Staff Sgt. Robert Leatherman, a heavy equipment operator platoon sergeant with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, directs adhesive spray into a tank Thursday during a project at a landing pad at the Combat Center's Expeditionary Air Field.

out our last six-month deployment," he said. "We worked on HLZs [helicopter landing zones], runways and a bunch of FOBs [for-

ward operating bases] in Iraq.

"We normally would do 20 or so missions in a deployment like that," he said. "We ran so many - that's

probably why we got recognized."

Leatherman said he didn't earn this award on his own.

"If it wasn't for all the time my

NCOs [non-commissioned officers] and junior Marines put in, I wouldn't be here," he said. "Every time my Marines are outside the wire, I'm with them. They worked a lot last deployment, and I spent a lot of time with them," he said.

"My wife also supported me a lot throughout the years," he said. "I've been through five deployments in 12 years in the Marine Corps. Teresa has always been there to support me since we've been married."

Sgt. Adam Batchelor, a platoon sergeant who works under Leatherman, said he is a great person to work with.

"The entire time I've worked with him he has been an outstanding staff NCO," said the Hines City, Fla., native. "He's dedicated a lot of time and effort to his Marines. It really shows now that he's been recognized for his accomplishments."

Leatherman, who will be presented with the award in October, plans to make the Marine Corps a career. He said he plans to transition back to a duty station on the east coast when his duty assignment at the Combat Center is completed.

Double time for TRICARE authorizations and referrals

BONNIE THOMAS
TRIWEST HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE

As of Tuesday, TRICARE authorizations for care that include evaluation and treatment are good for 180 days. That's twice the 90 days that were allowed previously, giving you more time to complete your care and any follow-up visits. Remember, if you do not

receive care before the authorization expires, you will need to get a new authorization.

Please note that this change isn't effective for all authorizations. Some, like maternity authorizations, will be longer than 180 days, and some, such as physical therapy authorizations, will be shorter.

If you are registered at <http://www.triwest.com>, you

can receive QuickAlert notifications by e-mail or phone once your authorizations or referrals have been processed. That means you can schedule specialty care appointments 7 to 10 days sooner than if you wait for notification by mail.

To protect your privacy, no personal information will be included in the e-mail - just a notice of an authorization status change and a link to the secured login page on <http://www.triwest.com> for more information.

Not registered? It's easy. Just follow the prompts and start managing your health care online, anytime, from any Internet connection.

Visit the Authorizations and Referral page at <http://www.triwest.com/beneficiary/authRef.aspx> for additional information.

Combat Center scholars earn dollars



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Sarah Snow, 18-year-old daughter of Ann and Master Sgt. Robert Snow, was the only Combat Center recipient of the 2009 Scholarship for Military Children. Snow won the scholarship through an essay she wrote about military items she would place in a time capsule to tell future generations about what it means to have loved ones in the service. The scholarship, which totaled \$1,500, was sponsored by the Fisher House Foundation, a non-profit organization that supports military families, and presented by S & K Sales, a military commissary partner designated by the Fisher House Foundation to present the award. Snow was also awarded with a scholarship pin, presented by the Combat Center's commanding general Brig. Gen. Charles M. Gurganus.

FLU, from A1

longer. This is to keep from infecting others and spreading the virus further.

Navy Medicine will be monitoring the seasonal flu viruses carefully over the coming weeks and months, and will be proactive in developing contingency plans to address any public health issues if required. Force health protection is the responsibility of every commander and service member, and it is important for all of us to take the proper actions to protect personnel, beneficiaries, coworkers

and family members against the seasonal flu.

Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with the flu. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Mostly healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to five days after becoming sick.

The flu can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Symptoms of the flu include fever (usu-

ally high), headache, extreme fatigue, dry cough, sore throat, chills runny or stuffy nose, and muscle aches. Stomach symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea also can occur, but are more common in children than adults. Complications of the flu can include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions such as congestive heart failure, asthma or diabetes. According to the CDC, every year in the U.S., an average of five to 20 percent of the population experience the flu; more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications, and about 36,000 people die from flu-related causes.

If you believe you or a family member is ill, please consult your medical care professionals. More information is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu> or by calling the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital H1N1 Flu hotline at 830-2153.

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Registration will open at 5 p.m. EST
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The contest is open to active and
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BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS



SEARRA ANN DAVES

Daughter of Cpl. Troy Daves and Genna Daves

Born June 24, weighing 7 lbs. 2 oz. and measuring 20 inches

ZOE ELIZABETH HUMR

Daughter of 1st Lt. Scott A. Humr and Teresa Humr

Born June 25, weighing 7 lbs. 5 oz. and measuring 20 inches

SOPHIA TAEVY MAO

Daughter of Staff Sgt. Sam Mao and Jessica Mao

Born June 25, weighing 6 lbs. 10 oz. and measuring 20 inches

ALESSANDRA HEATHER CASTRO

Daughter of Michael Hernandez and Erika Hernandez

Born June 26, weighing 7 lbs. 3 oz. and measuring 19 inches

JULIA MARIE FRIEND

Daughter of Lance Cpl. Robert Friend and Sue Friend

Born June 26, weighing 6 lbs. 10 oz. and measuring 18 inches

IYLA JOANNA LYNN

Daughter of Staff Sgt. Bryce V. Lynn and Yuko Lynn

Born June 28, weighing 6 lbs. 10 oz. and measuring 19.7 inches

MADISON KAY CHAMPION

Daughter of Gunnery Sgt. William Champion and Reagan Champion

Born June 29, weighing 6 lbs. 11 oz.

MADLYNN MAE CRAWFORD

Son of Cpl. Nathaniel L. Crawford and Amber Crawford

Born June 30, weighing 6 lbs. 12 oz. and measuring 19.5 inches

BENJAMIN ALEXANDER ELLIOT

Son of Pfc. Kristofer Elliot and Rachel Elliot

Born July 1, weighing 8 lbs. 10 oz. and measuring 19.4 inches

BRYSAN BRADLY CRASS

Son of Lance Cpl. Devin Crass and Megan Crass

Born July 2, weighing 8 lbs. 1 oz. and measuring 20.7 inches

JAYDEN DALLAS MARTIN

Son of Lance Cpl. Bryce Martin and Jessica Martin

Born July 4, weighing 5 lbs. 11 oz. and measuring 18.4 inches

JASLYNN MARI MORENO

Daughter of Sgt. Joel Moreno and Nicole Moreno

Born July 5, weighing 5 lbs. 4 oz. and measuring 18 inches

CHARLI ELLA DIRKSEN

Daughter of Sgt. Chad E. Dirksen and Jennifer Dirksen

Born July 7, weighing 7 lbs. 13 oz. and measuring 19.8 inches

ABIGAIL KATHERINE KEEZEL

Daughter of Cpl. Bradley E. Keezel and Andrea Keezel

Born July 8, weighing 6 lbs. 15 oz. and measuring 19.9 inches

TREY DELAGARZA

Son of Lance Cpl. Roel DeLaGarza Jr. and Jennifer Lynn DeLaGarza

Born July 8, weighing 6 lbs. 6 oz. and measuring 19.1 inches

LEIAM KOEL LEONARD

Son of Sgt. Joel Leonard and Katie Leonard

Born July 8, weighing 7 lbs. 7 oz. and measuring 20.8 inches

CARMEN MARIE BARBADILLO

Daughter of Cpl. Daniel Barbadillo and Daisy Barbadillo

Born July 9, weighing 7 lbs. 9 oz. and measuring 20 inches

KAIDYNCE ELIZABETH DENSLow

Daughter of Justin Denslow and Lance Cpl. Christina Denslow

Born July 10, weighing 6 lbs. 6 oz. and measuring 18 inches

JOSHUA DAVID KRAUSE JR.

Son of Staff Sgt. Joshua Krause and Melissa Krause

Born July 11, weighing 7 lbs. 14 oz. and measuring 20 inches

ALEXIS REYANNA RODRIGUEZ

Daughter of Lance Cpl. Michael Ruiz Rodriguez and Sandra Rodriguez

Born July 12, weighing 6 lbs. 15 oz. and measuring 19 inches

EVEN WARREN CLARKE

Son of Sgt. Matthew Clarke and Chelsie Clarke

Born July 13, weighing 7 lbs. 3.8 oz. and measuring 20.5 inches

ANDREW RAY LARA

Son of Cpl. Andy Lara and Jeanette Lara

Born July 13, weighing 8 lbs. 8 oz. and measuring 21 inches

ATHENA MARIE BISE

Daughter of Dustin Bise and Sgt. Amanda Bise

Born July 14, weighing 6 lbs. 11 oz. and measuring 19.6 inches

JACOB RYAN ALTHISER

Son of Capt Chad Althiser and Tara Althiser

Born July 15, weighing 9 lbs. 1 oz. and measuring 21.6 inches

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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.

Helmets to Hardhats opens service members eyes to future careers



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Adrian Navarro, a general laborer with Reyes Construction, points out areas of concern to Glenn Redmond as he operates a backhoe Monday. The Helmets to Hardhats Program is designed to help transitioning service members find careers in the construction industry.

CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

With Marines and sailors constantly conducting pre-deployment training in the harsh desert landscape aboard the Combat Center, they may not have time to research what resources are available to help them find the perfect career outside the Marine Corps.

The Helmets to Hardhats program gives transitioning service members an opportunity to find careers by introducing them to building and construction businesses throughout the United States and helping them find jobs that are right for them.

Dan Lozano, the national field coordinator for Helmets to Hardhats, said the program is similar to an online job search, but "gives a little something more than expected."

"Let's say a Marine is interested in a job posted on our site and forwards his profile to apply for the job," said Lozano, a retired gunnery sergeant and San Clemente, Calif., native. "Instead of his application getting shoved into a different computer and him having to wait until he is on his death bed for a response, his application will go to an actual human being who will take him step-by-step throughout the rest of the application process to ensure they get a response from the employer."

The program makes sure every company that posts jobs on their

Web site, <http://www.helmets-tohardhats.org/>, is legitimate. The employers pay more than minimum wage and all their employees receive similar medical and dental benefits offered in the military, Lozano said. To sign up for the program, military members need a high school diploma or a general education diploma and an honorable discharge from the military.

The program does not just involve general construction and building companies. Postings are also accepted from various businesses specializing in roofing, plumbing, tile and brick-laying, electrical and carpentry.

"Helmets to Hardhats helps open service member's eyes to different career choices," said Jeff Fourier, the branch head of the Lifelong Learning Education Office. "Marines going through that transition from being in the military to becoming a civilian need to be familiar with the different avenues available."

Through the program, Marines can use the Montgomery GI Bill to help relieve the financial stress.

"Marines need to make sure they take the current GI Bill because the Post 9/11 GI Bill can't be used with our program," Lozano said.

When someone is trying to become certified within a certain trade, it normally takes five years to become a journeyman. During those five years as an apprentice, the GI Bill can be used.

Depending on the job, apprentices can receive up to \$900 a month until the employee gets a pay raise in six months. After the first pay raise, the amount will drop to approximately \$700 a month until the next pay raise. The disbursement will eventually even out at \$400 a month for the remainder of the five years. During this time, the apprentice will also be paid by the contractor as well.

For more information, visit their Web site at <http://www.helmets-tohardhats.org>.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Helmets to Hardhats Program is designed to help transitioning service members find careers in the construction industry.

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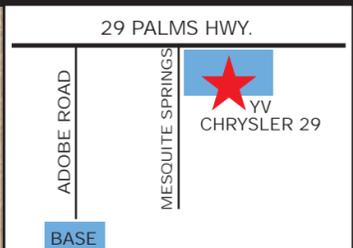
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B1

Crossfit helps Marines stay fit to fight



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines looking to get an extra edge in their workout or shorten it to fit into their long day don't need to look any further.

Crossfit is designed to give a great workout in a short amount of time, said Cpl. Jonathan Blake, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Crossfit Ripper Gym, and a native of St. Joseph, Mo.

"It's a quick, intense and hard workout for your whole body," Blake said. "It's not easy for anybody. We have puke buckets in the gym, and I've seen people use them before."

Blake described "Fight Gone Bad," one of the many gut-wrenching circuit workouts done by patrons of the gym.

"It consists of five, one minute stations. It can be any random ones and you do it three times. There's no break in between stations either," Blake said.

"Pull-ups, squats, crunches, wall balls, cowbell slings – those are just some of the stations I can

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Cpl. Jonathan Blake, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Combat Center's Crossfit Ripper Gym, works out during down time at the gym Thursday. Crossfit is an intense, full-body workout that many Marines use in addition to regular physical training.

See CROSSFIT, B3

Combat Center children make a splash at new water park

CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Nearly 70 children from the Combat Center's Child Development Center were the first to experience and play in the new Water Park and refurbished Dinosaur Park July 31 after a ribbon cutting ceremony.

The Water Park has two different sections of play. The first section is designed to accommodate younger children and toddlers up to 5 years old with smaller water spouts and softer water flow. The second is for children up to 12 years old and has larger water attractions which soak the children faster.

Mae Ford, the branch head for the Combat Center's Child Youth and Teen Programs, said the CDC would have to take children all the way to Palm Springs to play in a water park, and everyone is excited they now have access to one aboard the installation.

"My favorite part of the park was the spinning flower that dumped a bucket of water on you," said Dakota Henderson, a 10-year-old with the CDC. "But the entire thing was completely awesome!"

Seth Hurst, 10, said he was glad the park opened, since it gave the children aboard the base more fun things to do.

During the ceremony, Col. Wes Weston, the assistant chief of staff for Installation and Logistics, explained the importance of the current projects happening throughout the base.

"This is a special day for MCAGCC," Weston said. "We have completed something Twentynine Palms has not had in all of its history. This is going to make it a more pleasurable place."

The park is made of brightly colored, flower-like attractions, that are surrounded by large rocks and synthetic grass to make it

See WATER, B4



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Children jump in the way of water jets to stay completely soaked throughout their time at the new Water Park after a ribbon cutting ceremony July 31.



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Joe Rosselli, the Marine Corps Community Services Youth Sports director, helps a player during evaluations for the youth soccer program at Victory Field Aug. 22, 2008. This year, youth soccer is expected to have 350 to 375 children participating, depending on the number of coaches who volunteer.

Youth Soccer kicking into action

CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marine Corps Community Services Youth Sports program has begun accepting applications for children, ages 4 to 14 to participate in the soccer season from August to November.

The children participating in the soccer program will be able to play against other teams their age and skill level while learning the fundamentals of soccer and improving their proficiency.

"When the kids participate in this program they learn two things; fun and fundamentals," said Joe Rosselli, the MCCS Youth Sports director. "It is an age-appropriate program where

they learn the skills they need to go on to the next level."

This year, Rosselli is going to be creating a traveling team for children ages 12 to 14. The team will be participating in games with the soccer program in Yucca Valley, Calif.

Older children participating in the 10 and 11-year-old and 12 to 14-year-old leagues will use the fields at Lucky Park.

Courtney Chambers, an MCCS Youth Sports recreation assistant, works alongside Rosselli and a few volunteer coaches to put together the teams and schedules for all the age groups. Chambers, along with other recreation assistants, are present at every practice and game to ensure children's safety and to pass

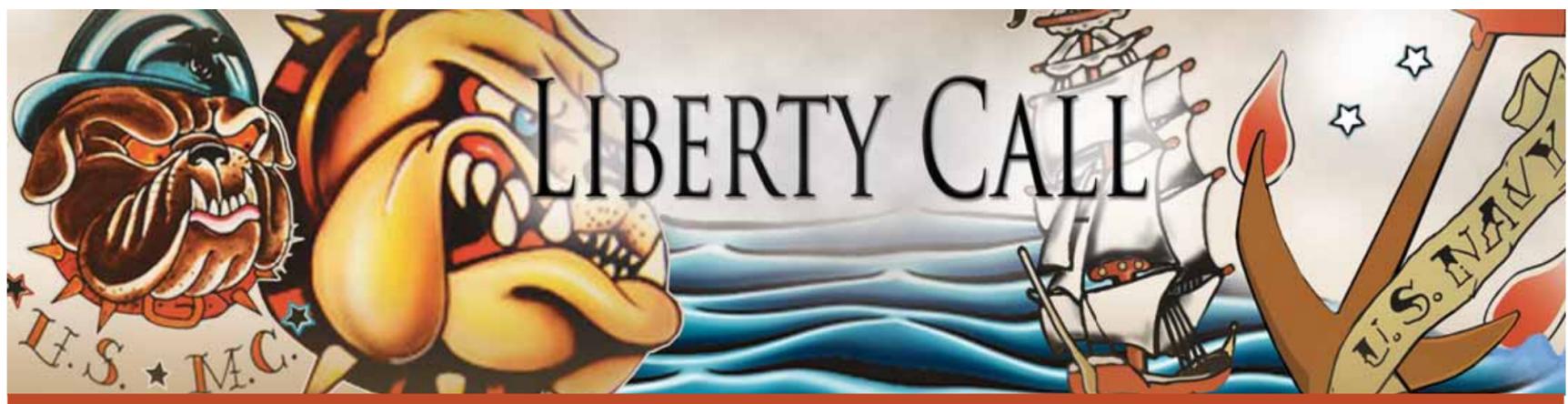
on any news about the season to the coaches and parents.

"Being out on the field is the best part of my job," said Chambers, a Twentynine Palms, native. "It's great to watch the kids have fun and learn new things."

The leagues consist of teams in the 4 and 5-year-olds, 6 and 7-year-olds, 8 and 9-year-olds, 10 and 11-year-olds and 12 to 14-year-olds. When the children are evaluated, they will be placed on a team in their league depending on their skill level to ensure each team is evenly balanced.

By making the teams even in skill level, the children have a chance to experience winning and losing games, which makes overall good

See SOCCER, B2



FRI. 8/7 C.W. Stoneking & Linnzi Zaorski Time: 7:30 p.m. Where: Pappy and Harriet's 53688 Pioneertown Road Pioneertown For more info, call 365-5956 or visit http://www.pappyandharriets.com	SAT. 8/8 Rock Yard tribute bands Time: 9 p.m. Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino 84245 Indio Springs Parkway Indio For more info call 342-5000 or visit http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com	SAT. 8/8 Mid Summer Multi-Mixer benefiting Desert AIDS Project Time: 7 to 10 p.m. Where: Crystal Fantasy Enlightenment Center 266-268 N. Palm Canyon Drive Palm Springs. For more info, call 323-2118 or visit http://www.desertaidproject.org/mixer	SAT. 8/8 The Shadow Mountain Band plus Gram Rabbit Time: 5 p.m. Where: Pappy and Harriet's 53688 Pioneertown Road Pioneertown For more info, call 365-5956 or visit http://www.pappyandharriets.com	SAT. 8/8 Art a la Mode Time: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Where: Dezart One Gallery 2688 S. Cherokee Way Palm Springs For more info, call 328-1440 or visit http://www.dezartonegallery.com
SUN. 8/9 Chris Walters acoustic old school blues with special guests Time: 7 p.m. Where: 29 Palms Inn 73950 Inn Avenue Twentynine Palms For more info call 367-3505 or visit http://www.29palmsinn.com	MON. 8/10 Yoga for bereaved persons Time: 5:30 p.m. Where: Hospice of Morongo Basin 61675 29 Palms Highway Joshua Tree For more info, call 366-1308	TUES. 8/11 Art and Science Tuesdays Time: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Where: Hi-Desert Nature Museum 57090 Twentynine Palms Highway Yucca Valley For more info, call 369-7212 or visit http://www.hidesertnaturemuseum.org	TUES. 8/11 Acoustic Old School Blues Time: 7 p.m. Where: 29 Palms Inn 73950 Inn Avenue Twentynine Palms For more info, call 367-3505	FRI. 9/4 The Pretenders Time: 9 p.m. Where: Agua Caliente 32-250 Bob Hope Drive Rancho Mirage For more info call (888) 999-1995 or visit http://hotwatercasino.com

Guinea pigs scurry to save the world in 'G-Force'

NEIL POND
AMERICAN PROFILE

G-Force
Rated PG

Well, here's a first. I can't recall another movie with talking guinea pigs, car chases and killer toasters. A Disney adventure comedy, "G-Force" combines computer-animation with live action in a yarn about specially trained guinea pigs — hence the "G" in the title — on a mission to thwart an appliance billionaire's diabolical plot. As they race — well, scurry is more like it — to save the world, they deploy teeny spy

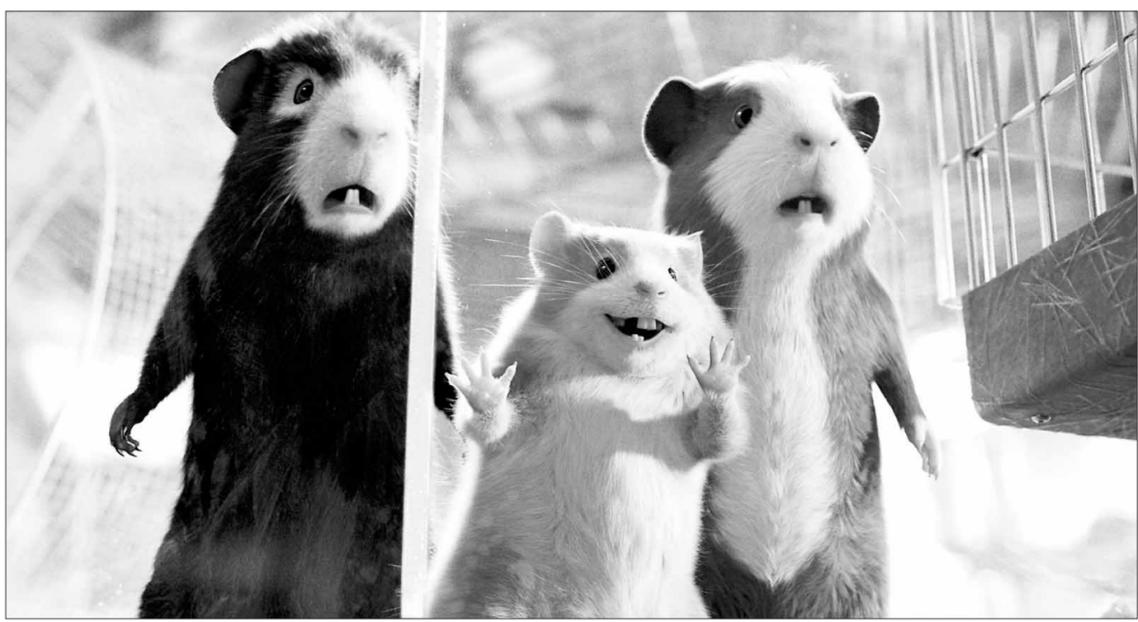
gadgets, toss off zingy one-liners and encounter a colorful supporting cast, including a trio of yes-men mice, a runty territorial ferret and a shaggy pet-shop hamster. The G-rodents are voiced by Sam Rockwell, Penelope Cruz and "Saturday Night Live" actor Tracy Morgan, who gets several good lines as Blaster, a jive-talking "munitions expert" who loves living on the edge. You'll have trouble recognizing Nicholas Cage, who doesn't sound much like we're accustomed to hearing him as Speckles, a nearsighted, computer-hacking mole. Interacting with the animals are real-life actors Zack

Galifianakis and Kelli Garner, who unfortunately aren't given much to do as the scientist-inventors behind the G-Force team. Will Arnett is likewise just passing through as a bureaucratic FBI agent, and stage and screen veteran Bill Nighy gamely smacks his classical-theater drama chops as the evil industrialist Saber. The plot is pretty ridiculous, but c'mon — how much plot realism can you demand from a movie about world-saving guinea pigs? But if grownups are paying atten-

tion, they can count the many spy movies, action flicks, sci-fi epics and other films on which "G-Force" riffs, including "Raiders of the Lost Ark," "Scarface," "Die Hard," "Ben-Hur" and "Apocalypse Now." A credit-roll dance sequence mimics the exuberant ending of "Slumdog Millionaire," and there's a toy-torturing teen that will remind you of the brat-next-door Sid in "Toy Story." Kids won't care about any of that. But they'll howl at the juvenile jokes about body functions, specifically farting

and pooping, and the sight of cute, furry little animals doing wildly adventurous things little animals don't usually do — and thanks to modern-day computer animation, looking quite realistic as they parachute, rappel or zoom around in rocket-powered plastic balls. It's not difficult to see the high-octane, big-bang touch of producer Jerry Bruckheimer, the kingpin of the summer blockbuster behind such box-office gold as "Top Gun," "Pirates of the Caribbean" and "National

Treasure." He brings a lot of the action-y DNA of those movies into play for "G-Force," which may be the first ever to imagine — in 3D! — the comedic crime-fighting possibilities of small mammals that usually spend their days on hamster wheels. "G-Force" won't end up on anyone's list of classic Disney movies. But younger children will enjoy it, and parents can tolerate it. That's not exactly high praise, but for a summer kid's flick, it's frequently more than you can expect.



From left to right, Blaster, Bucky and Darwin star in "G-Force" a new Disney Enterprises, Inc. and Jerry Bruckheimer, Inc. production.

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

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instructs the children on the fundamentals of soccer without the children worrying about scoring and winning. With the 4 and 5-year-olds, also known as the micro league, the children play on a small field with only three players per team playing at a time. On the 6 and 7-year-olds league, there are seven players on a field, but defensemen are not allowed to cross the mid-field line, which stops cattle soccer, Rosselli said. The coaches are required to rotate the children into different positions so they learn how to play the different areas of the field. The rest of the teams are played on a regular sized field in a semi-competitive league. Children ages 10 to 14

also play against teams of the same age from the Twentynine Palms Park and Recreation soccer program. Rosselli hopes to accept 350 to 375 children to play for the Combat Center's youth soccer league, but can only accept enough players to fill up teams that have coaches. "We hope to have two coaches per team," Rosselli said. "We really need coaches for this program." All coaches are required to fill out Youth Sports Volunteer Agreement Application and agree to a full background check. For more information regarding the youth soccer league or to become a coach, contact Rosselli or Chambers at 830-8421.

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CROSSFIT, from B1

think of off the top of my head," he said. "People do stuff like sumo squats, and overhead presses too, along with rowing to keep alternating as they go through their workout."

The gym and the equipment inside are easy to access, Blake said.

"Any military or civilians aboard the base can come in and work out," he said. "If any unit wants to come in, all they have to do is let the staff of the gym know the day prior and they'll have it reserved."

There are also more than free weights available to patrons, Blake said. Visitors will also find non-traditional equipment like gymnastic rings and punching bags.

"There's other stuff for cardio and lower body too," he said. "We have ab machines, plyometric boxes and jump ropes."

Crossfit enthusiasts agreed with Blake's statements on the intensity of the workout, and how it can benefit Marines.

"It's a good support for normal Marine Corps PT [physical training]," said Capt. Joshua Wells, the commanding officer of Support Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 7, and a native of Hendersonville, N.C., who frequents the gym. "It's functional fitness. It builds the strength and endurance you'd need in a combat environment."

Wells said Crossfit not only helps condition Marines for a possible hostile situation overseas, it is also con-



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Patrons at the Combat Center's Crossfit Ripper Gym work out Wednesday. The workout is an all-around and high-intensity, which many Marines use as an alternative form of physical training.

venient for someone who is very busy.

"It definitely helps with the PFT [physical fitness test]," he said. "You do a lot of pull-ups and use gravity as resistance in your workout."

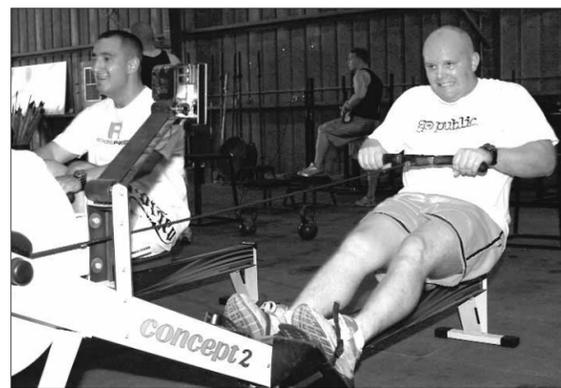
"It's only about an hour, so you can knock it out during your lunch too," he said.

1st Lt. Saba Safiari, the executive officer of Support Company, CLB-

7, agreed with his commander.

"It's a great anaerobic workout," said the Crossfit enthusiast who comes from Santa Cruz, Calif. "It's short, sweet and a butt-kicker."

For more information regarding the workout facility, or to schedule time for your unit, contact the Crossfit gym at 830-4234 or visit <http://www.crossfit.com>.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

1st Lt. Saba Safiari and Capt. Joshua Wells [right], both with Support Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 7, work out on rowing machines Wednesday at the Combat Center's Crossfit Ripper Gym.

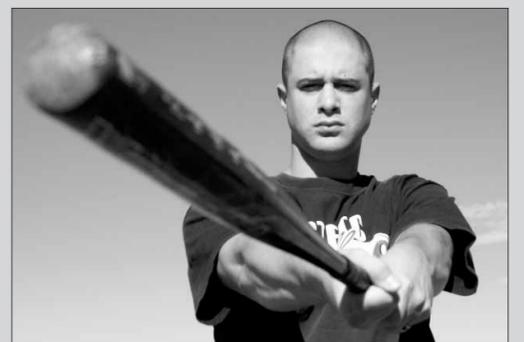
Cheer boot camp teaches team spirit



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Jolene Kullberg, a 22-year-old recreation assistant at the Community Center, shows children different steps to a dance routine during the Marine Corps Community Services Youth Sports cheer boot camp Wednesday at the Community Center. The camp lasted one week, and the children performed their newly-learned routine for their parents on the last day of camp. The children were split into two different groups depending on their ages. Children ages 5 and 6 were considered level one, and were in a beginners class. Children ages 7 to 14 were placed in level two, which is an intermediate class and taught more difficult moves at a faster pace.

Athlete of the Week



Name: Josh Goodman
Age: 24
Hometown: Longview, Texas
Job Title: Fiscal supply clerk, Headquarters and Service Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment
Recognition: Selected to play in at the West Coast Regional's with the base team and hit .667 this weekend in the varsity tournament.
Major sports accomplishments: Being selected for the base varsity team his first year playing softball.
Favorite aspect of the sport: "I like the team camaraderie. If a player gets down, another teammate can help him up. It feels like a brotherhood when we're out there."
Advise for aspiring players: "You can't coach bad hands. Good hands don't come naturally, you have to work at it by always working with them."

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CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

A flower-shaped, bucket dumping water attraction thoroughly soaks children at the Combat Center's new Water Park July 31 after a ribbon cutting ceremony officially opened the park to the public.



LANCE CPL. KELSEY J. GREEN

A child with the Youth Center enjoys the new Children's Water Park after the ribbon cutting ceremony aboard the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, July 31.



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

An unsuspecting child gets a face full of water when another child sprays him with a water cannon at the new Water Park. Children from the Child Development Center were the first to use the new park after a ribbon cutting ceremony July 31.

WATER, from B1

more appealing to the eye while cutting down the amount of dirt being

dragged in.

It was designed to be completely sanitary while giving the Combat Center a more urban look, said

Justin True, the project manager for Roy Mohammed Associates, the construction company that built the water park.

"The new water park is self-contained," said Lenny Owens, the superintendent for RMA. "There are filters so the water is purified when it goes through the drain, and we installed stones to help minimize dirt."

Also opening to the public was the improved Dinosaur Park. An extra jungle gym for younger children was added, along with benches and awnings for comfort.

Dinosaur Park was remodeled entirely from recycled material from Combat Center families and employees.

"If you guys remember to recycle we can build more wonderful projects," Weston said.

The Water Park is located behind the swim tank off Bourke Street. Dinosaur Park is directly across the street from the Water Park.



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CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Children huddle together under one of the attractions to get water dumped on them at the new Water Park July 31. The park was designed to be completely sanitary while giving the Combat Center a more urban look.