

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

AUGUST 21, 2009

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 52 ISSUE 33

New Combat Center maps available

KIP OTIS-DIEHL
GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION AND SERVICES

Three new Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center military installation maps, at 1:100K and 1:50K, have been produced by the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency in coordination with the Combat Center's Geospatial Information and Services Office and G-3 Range Control.

Locally, maps will be available at no cost for pick-up beginning Monday at the GI&S Office in building 1130, room 18 on First and Brown streets, from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., to unit S-2, S-4, or equivalent authorized personnel. We have 9,000 of each map in stock; 8,000 folded and 1,000 flat.

Significant changes to the last maps, published in 1999, required an updated version. Changes include the addition of restricted airspace boundaries and Range Control checkpoints, new observation points, updated main service roads, Numbered Ranges, and Military Operations in Urban Terrain facilities, revised range/training area and installation boundaries, and defined Camp Wilson and the Strategic Expeditionary Landing Field complex as a separate range.

Previous editions of the map should be destroyed in accordance with Department of Defense Directive 5030.59 by shredding to preclude reconstruction or be brought to the GI&S Office for destruction.

The official transition date to the new map is Oct. 1

For additional information, please contact the GI&S officer at 830-7642 DSN (230-7642) or via email at smbplmsgis@usmc.mil.

Valor under fire earns 2/7 Marine Navy Cross

PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Famous French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte once said, "Valor is a gift. Those having it never know for sure whether they have it till the test comes."

In a ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Thursday, a Marine who was tested in the heat of battle received the highest award for valor given by the Department of the Navy, the Navy Cross Medal, and was meritoriously promoted to the rank of corporal.

Cpl. Richard S. Weinmaster, a Squad Automatic Weapon gunner with 3rd Platoon, Company E, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, received the award for his actions as a private first class in Afghanistan's Helmand Province on July 8, 2008 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

According to his platoon commander, 1st Lt. George Fenton, Weinmaster, a Cozad, Neb., native, was in front of a squad-sized patrol making its way through an eight-foot wide alley bordered on each side by 10-foot tall mud-brick walls, dubbed "ambush alley," when their patrol was attacked by enemy small-arms fire and grenades.

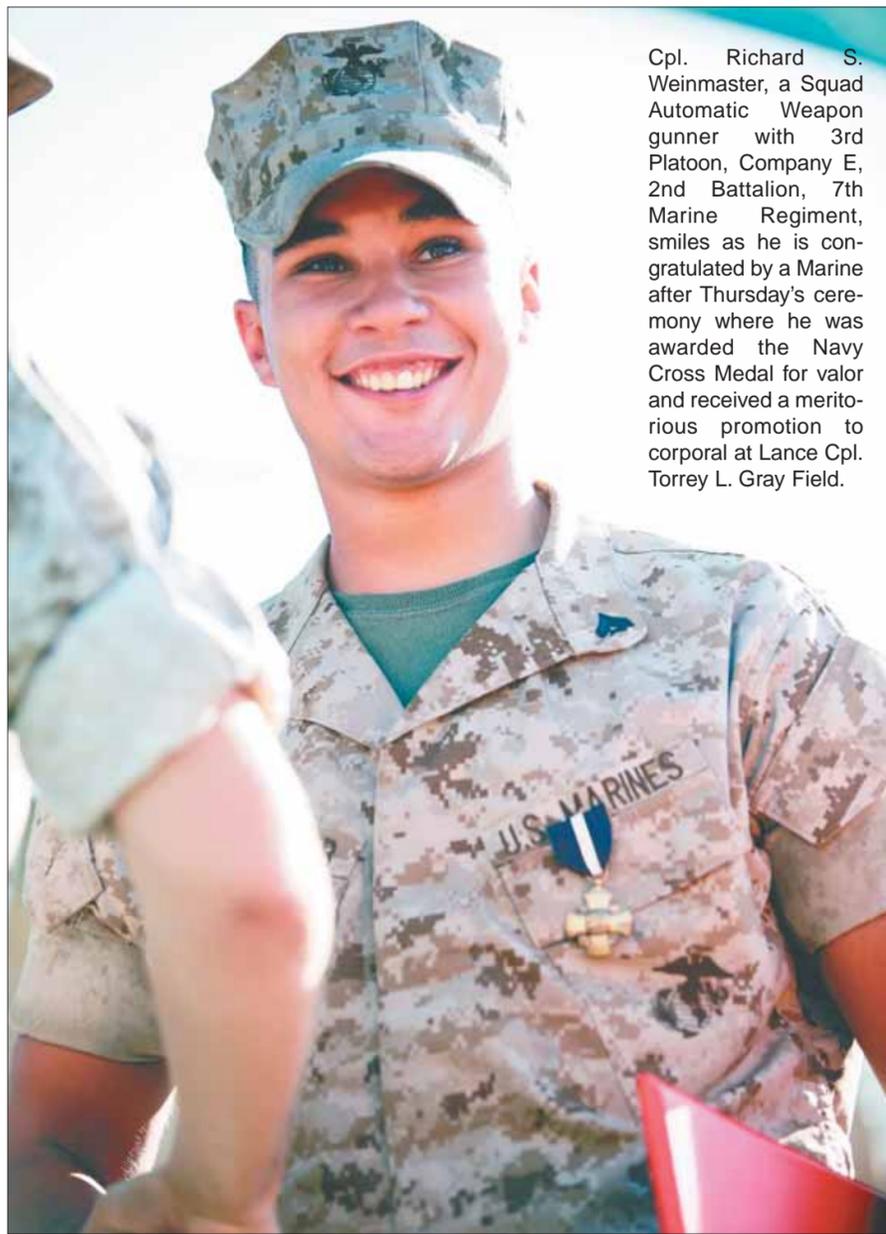
In the midst of the firefight, Weinmaster provided accurate suppressive fire with his SAW until he noticed an incoming grenade land near his team leader, Lance Cpl. Tyler Wilkerson.

Fenton, a Fredericksburg, Va., native, explained how Weinmaster shoved Wilkerson out of the way then jumped toward the grenade to try and smother the blast. As he jumped, the grenade exploded sending the majority of its shrapnel into Weinmaster.

Weinmaster effectively shielded his team leader from the blast and Wilkerson was spared from any shrapnel. Weinmaster, however, received serious wounds, including a piece of shrapnel that entered his left eye socket and traveled halfway into his brain, where it remains to this day.

Despite his grave injuries, Weinmaster re-mounted his SAW and continued to provide effective suppressive fire on the enemy positions 50 yards away.

Staff Sgt. Kyle Lockhart, Weinmaster's former platoon sergeant, said Weinmaster's heroic actions



LANCE CPL. KELSEY J. GREEN

See VALOR, A3



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Lance Cpl. Derrick McClendon, a rifleman with Animal Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, kisses his son during the unit's homecoming at Victory Field Tuesday.

Animal Company returns from Iraq

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

More than 160 Marines and sailors marched onto Victory Field Tuesday, where families sporting custom T-shirts and signs cheered and whistled at the prospect of their loved ones returning home from deployment.

Animal Company, 1st

Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, returned from their most recent deployment to Fallujah, Iraq, where the unit was responsible for supporting the Iraqi Security Forces, civil reconstruction and the draw-down of American forces in theater, said Maj. Jason Perry, the battalion's executive officer, and a Flat Rock, N.C., native.

Since Animal Co. was one of the last waves of 1/7 to return home, some supporters at the homecoming had already welcomed their heroes home, but also wanted to greet other friends in the battalion.

Nichole Hurst, wife of Sgt. Jacob Hurst, a machine

See ANIMAL, A4

3/7 hones survival skills at MCMWTC

CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

MARINE CORPS MOUNTAIN WARFARE TRAINING CENTER BRIDGEPORT, CALIF. – Marines and sailors of Company I, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, put their skills to the test during pre-environmental training in Landing Zone Dodo at Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center Bridgeport, Calif., Tuesday.

The training focused on several survival techniques such as water procurement, navigation, signaling for help and other things to consider while in a survival scenario.

"A lot of Marines are from the city and have never been to the mountains," said Sgt. Christopher Morgan, a mountain warfare training instructor with the Unit Training Group here. "As long as these Marines use the basic knowledge of the survival skills we teach, they should be able to survive if they are ever put into a survival situation."

The training started with a short hike from MWTC's

lower base camp. The trip was unusually tiring for some of the Marines of 3/7.

"It was a lot harder to breathe up there," said Pfc. Gordon Montroy, a rifle-

man with Co. I, 3/7. "It was kind of a shock to be out of breath. I guess we'll just have to get used to it."

Morgan said the Marines

See SURVIVAL, A4



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Marines of Company I, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, make their way to an expedient shelters class at Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center Bridgeport, Calif., Tuesday.



Explosive convoy training
See A3



Wired for combat ~ See A6



Marines at their Peak ~ See B1



O'Club pub 'n grub ~ See B3

Semper Moto

No fluff, no frills

BY JOHN FLEMING

Last week we discussed the features and the downside of sport bike ownership. Sport bikes are quick and nimble, but for the long haul, they're not comfortable.

Many riders assume that their only option is a cruiser. Low to the ground, with big bore, V-Twin motors and classic looks, they're built for leisurely riding.

Another option for the rider that wants comfort without sacrificing nimble handling and exceptional power is the "standard" motorcycle. Nearly every major manufacturer offers at least one and sometimes several different standard bikes.

These machines offer a more upright riding position - as opposed to the sport bike hunch - very little aerodynamic plastic or Plexiglas, a wide range of engine displacement and horsepower, a huge assortment of accessories including touring cases and windshields and seats that will accommodate a rear passenger.

There are dozens of models to choose from. Some of the most popular bikes would include the Suzuki Bandit, Katana or Gladius; the Kawasaki Versys; or the Yamaha FZ6 or FZ1. Strangely, Big Red doesn't currently offer a standard motorcycle, but I wouldn't be surprised to see Honda's offerings in the near future. And Triumph has a wide selection of standard machines, many of which are similar in appearance to their classic models from the '60s and '70s: the Bonneville and the Scrambler.

They're not as quick or nimble as a sport bike, but the fun quotient is still high. They'll handle better than most cruisers. They offer a comfortable day-long ride. And what many riders don't realize, they often cost less to insure than a true sport bike.

Check 'em out. You may be surprised at what great bikes they can be.

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

MCFTB CLASS CANCELLATION

The class "7 Habits of Highly Effective Military Families" scheduled for Aug. 24 and 26 from 4 to 8 p.m. is being canceled. For further information please contact Marine Corps Family Team Building at 830-3110.

NEW RELIGIOUS SERVICE AVAILABLE

A new inter-denominational and traditional Protestant Christian worship service will be available on base at Christ Chapel, beginning Aug. 23 at 10:30 a.m. All are welcome. Children's church and child-care are available. For more information, please call 830-6464.

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.

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.

This Day in Marine Corps History

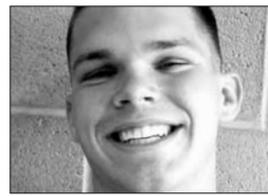
August 21, 1968

Pfc. James Anderson Jr., was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for heroism in Vietnam, the first African-American to receive the award.

Centerspeak

Who is your favorite president in American history and why?

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



CPL. DUSTIN FREY
SWITCHBOARD OPERATOR, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY, 7TH MARINE REGIMENT

"Franklin Delano Roosevelt because he new America was in trouble and he got us out of it."



LANCE CPL. JON LAWTON
RIFLEMAN WITH 1ST BATTALION, 7TH MARINE REGIMENT

"Ronald Reagan. He wasn't afraid to speak his mind, he didn't beat around the bush and his policies were a very positive influence for the country."



1ST LT. JEWEL HAND
EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF COMPANY C, 1ST TANK BATTALION

"Abraham Lincoln, he knew what he believed and stood by his beliefs even when they weren't popular because he knew they were right."

Back to school



School Liaison Tina Paulson sits behind her display for the Marine Corps School Liaison program at the Marine Corps Exchange Tuesday. The goal of the School Liaison Office is to help military families have everything they need to get back to school or to enroll in a home school program. For more back-to-school information, call 830-1574 or visit <http://www.morongo.k12.ca.us>.

School Liaison Question of the Week: Will the bus transportation be cut this year for children attending MUSD Schools?

Answer: Morongo Unified School District will continue to provide bus transportation for children attending their schools. However, there is a slight change in the distance which qualifies for transportation. Students who are eligible to receive home to school transportation are those students in grades Kindergarten through 6 who live at least two miles from the school of their enrollment, students in grades 7 and 8 who live at least two-and-a-half miles from the school of their enrollment, and students in grades 9 through 12 who live at least three miles from their school of enrollment.

Combat Center Spotlight

Name: Cpl. Daniel Chavez
Job Title: Review/Installations Law NCOIC with the Staff Judge Advocate
Job Duties: Review all courts-martial, fundraiser requests, officer tickets, debarment letters, appellant leave packages, magistrate hearings, help people with solicitation and set up the request forms for small businesses on base.
What do you like most about your job: "I'm always learning something new every day. It feels good when someone comes up to you and asks you a question, and you're able to answer every one of their questions without hesitation."
Significant Achievements: "Enrolling into school and getting my real estate licenses."
Hobbies: "Going to the gym, long walks on the beach and spending time with my daughter."
Military Service: More than four years
Time at Combat Center: Six months



SUDOKU #1538

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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2009 HOMETOWN CONTENT

PARTY!

[puzzle Solutions on A3]

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ACROSS

- Big chunk of an atlas
- Lily variety
- ___ Scotia lox
- Comfy shoes
- In the works
- Dentist's request
- Attica event of 1971
- Parti-colored
- Beehive State Indian
- Messy substances
- Fairy tale she-villain
- March 17 event
- Boulder down under
- Gym spheroid
- Slots fruit
- Krone spenders
- "You don't say!"
- Cookie maker
- Put to rest, as fears
- Prefix with bytes or bucks

DOWN

- Part of FWIW
- Mill output
- Slugger with 755 homers
- Alamogordo
- experiment of 1945
- Out of sorts
- Textile factory fixture
- Stanley Kowalski's cry
- "Green" sci.
- Frank's wife before Mia
- Place to trade
- Fuel for some city buses
- Twist the arm of
- Gov't-issued bond
- Polly, to Tom Sawyer
- Mo counterfeiter
- Moorehead of "Bewitched"
- Best of the early Beatles

DOWN

- Energize, informally
- In a way, slangily
- Not so genial
- Long-eared equine
- Went by dugout
- Bushy do
- Colleague of Clark and Jimmy
- London lav
- One at the bar
- "Piece of cake!"
- Radio hosts ___ & Anthony
- Hippies' gestures
- Added stipulations
- City of northern Utah
- Takes one's turn
- "Famous" cookie maker
- Thumb-twiddler
- Spy in Canaan
- Counting everything
- Golden-___ (senior)

- Building toy brand
- Mrs. Sprat's no-no
- Pork cut
- Rebuke to Brutus
- Catchall abbr.
- Fleet runner of myth
- Chess ending
- Fly off the shelves
- Safe havens
- Sang cheerfully
- Has a crush on
- Not clearly expressed
- ___-garde
- Focus of a supermarket test
- Self-pleased
- South Seas starch source
- Descartes' "therefore"
- School attended by 007
- Nice to look at
- "Hulk" director ___ Lee
- Indy 500 measure

OBSERVATION POST

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- Deputy Public Affairs Officer 1st Lt. Doy Demisick
- Public Affairs Chief Gunnery Sgt. Sergio Jimenez
- Press Chief/Editor Lance Cpl. Nicholas M. Dunn
- Layout, Design Leslie Shaw

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CLB-1 participates in unit's first EMV range

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines and sailors scheduled to deploy later this year participated in their first range training at Combat Center Range 215 Aug. 14 to learn how to effectively operate in a hostile environment during daylight and darkness.

The exercise, a three-stage evolution called Day and Night Urban Mobility Operational Course, or DUMOC and NUMOC, was the first range of Enhanced Mojave Viper, a 30-day pre-deployment package required for Marines and sailors deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan, for Combat Logistics Battalion 1 from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

The first stage brought the platoon through Wardah City, a small, mock Iraqi village near Range 215. Marines were critiqued on convoy operations, inter-unit communication, interaction with the local populace played by several Iraqi role players, and how they dealt with calling in a possible improvised explosive device, said Master Sgt. Steve R. Dennison, the range Corridor and Tactical Training Exercise Control Group motor operations chief staff noncommissioned

officer in charge.

The second stage brought Marines and sailors into the urban core of Range 215. There, a vehicle in the convoy was "blown up" by a mock rocket-propelled grenade, and attacked by mock terrorists with small arms weapons.

Marines and sailors dismounted their vehicles, searched the area, cleared buildings, gathered and cared for notional casualties, and neutralized the mock enemy.

The third and final stage took place in the outskirts of Range 215, where only hills could hide possible terrorists. As the convoy emerged over the ridge of a small clearing, a terrorists role player detonated a mock IED, notionally killing key players in the unit's operation.

As the unit set up 360-degree security with their vehicles and sent out Marines on foot to patrol the area, the triggerman denoted a second mock IED, notionally injuring several more Marines.

After the Marines located and neutralized the trigger man, they continued to an airdrop zone to notionally evacuate casualties before returning to their forward operating base for a debrief of the DUMOC and preparatory brief of the NUMOC that night.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Marines and sailors of Combat Logistics Battalion 1 from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., dismount a Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement to search the area for enemies after a notional explosion at Combat Center Range 215 during Enhanced Mojave Viper's Day Urban Mobility Operational Course Friday.

The tactics, techniques and procedures for the exercise were designed by the battalion's commanding officer and sergeant major, and the training scenarios were set up by Marines with TTECG, who trained the unit to respond to scenarios they may see in theater, Dennison said.

"This is their first time out of the wire [for training]," said Dennison, a Massillon, Ohio, native. "This exercise will help them be more combat ready. So far, they are very involved and very professional."

Lt. Col. Mike P. Rohlfs, CLB-1's commanding officer, said his Marines hit the ground running and took the training very seriously.

"This is a great learning opportunity not only for the individual Marine, but also for our staff to interact and make sure we keep communicating up the chain of command," said Rohlfs, a Virginia Beach, Va., native. "The sergeant major and I are trying to get our Marines as much training as possible because this is their opportu-

nity to make mistakes in a training environment, get immediate feedback and keep doing the same things until they get it right."

Dennison said he was impressed with the unit's performance, and purposefully threw curve balls at them to test their skills and knowledge.

"Sometimes when a unit is doing particularly well, we'll take out some of their key leaders to see how the Marine next in charge handles the situation and pressure."

After exercises like these, Dennison said he and other TTECG instructors take the unit aside and debrief leaders and junior Marines on how they did.

"We don't focus on what the unit did well," Dennison said. "We focus on and discuss a lot about their recovery tactics and refinement processes."

Lance Cpl. Mitchell McCaughan, a fiscal clerk with Security Platoon, CLB-1, said he learned a great deal about the importance of awareness and

working as a team.

"This [training] presents you with the worst case scenario, and I think that's the best part about it," said McCaughan, an Auburn, Wash., native. "Everything gets thrown at you. The coyotes [instructors] know exactly what you don't want to happen and they present it to you to see how you handle it. Anyone can talk about how they would do something, but being here actually doing it is a damn good thing."

The NUMOC portion of the training kicked off after dark, and presented Marines with scenarios similar to DUMOC, but rather RPG rounds were used instead of IEDs, said Sgt. Maj. Richard M. Charron, the CLB-1 sergeant major.

"The units typically score seven points or higher on the NUMOC, even with having the disadvantage of darkness," said Charron, a Blairstown, N.J., native. "I think that reflects how well the coyotes train the Marines."

"They want more training," said Charron about the

unit. "As soon as these guys were done, they wanted to do it again. They're really retaining the data and we're not going to leave until they master this."

Lance Cpl. Christian Sealock, a military policeman with Security Platoon, CLB-1, said although he has participated in training similar to this at Camp Pendleton, the DUMOC and NUMOC offered something the unit couldn't find elsewhere.

"We didn't have this heat and this range is on a much larger scale," said Sealock, a Cambridge, Ohio, native. "We're seeing how we work as a whole team and are starting to understand each individual's job within the team."

Charron said the training is challenging his Marines in a practical and beneficial way.

"It will help them look forward and build their confidence not only in themselves, but also in their teams," Charron said. "[The training] will bring unit cohesiveness, help us develop good habits and get us ready to go into the fight."



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

A notional rocket-propelled grenade round strikes a humvee while Marines and sailors of CLB-1 participate in the second stage of the DUMOC at Range 215 Friday.

VALOR, from A1

in the heat of battle are a true reflection of his caliber.

Lockhart said for a Marine two-and-a-half months into his first deployment who has been in the Marine Corps for just a year to show such heroism is proof real valor and selflessness remain in the heart of Marines everywhere.

"Valor has to come from the heart and soul," said Jim Weinmaster, Cpl. Weinmaster's father. "It has to come from within. Karen [Weinmaster's mother] and I raised him as best as we could, but actions like that go beyond parenting, beyond anything that can be taught."

Weinmaster remained

humble throughout the ceremony as well as afterward when he was greeted and thanked by scores of Marines, former Marines and grateful civilians.

"I didn't do anything special," he told everyone. "Everyone on my left and right would have done the same thing. I was just in the right place at the right time."

Fenton and Lockhart agreed, saying that their platoon was full of Marines who would have done the same if given the opportunity, but both also emphasized the fact Weinmaster was given the opportunity and he acted in total disregard for his own safety to save another Marine's life.



CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Lt. Col. John M. Reed, the 2nd Bn., 7th Marines commander, speaks about Cpl. Richard S. Weinmaster, a Squad Automatic Weapon gunner with Co. E, 2/7, who received the Navy Cross for valor at Gray Field Thursday.

His devotion and selflessness earned Weinmaster the Navy Cross, although he maintains he was "just doing his job."

Looking for local entertainment?

See page B2 for our **NEW LIBERTY CALL SECTION**

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

A	S	I	A	C	A	L	L	A	N	O	V	A
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SUDOKU SOLUTIONS

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Saturday September 5
11 a.m. until 7 p.m.

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1st Marine Division CG: 'You're the best of the best'

CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 7

Maj. Gen. Richard P. Mills, the commanding general of 1st Marine Division, visited the Marines and sailors of Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment, here Aug. 12, as the regiment entered the final days of its pre-deployment exercise.

The "Magnificent Seventh" is scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan as part of Regimental Combat Team 7, to conduct counterinsurgency operations as the ground combat element of Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan.

Before joining them for hot chow, Mills, spoke to the Marines and sailors of 7th Marine Regiment, here Aug. 12, as the regiment entered the final days of its pre-deployment training is to mission success.

"Over in Afghanistan, there is no rear. Everyone is on the front lines," said Mills, a native of Huntington, N.Y. "Everybody needs to be pro-

ficient in those basic skills. We talk about every Marine being a rifleman. Where you're going is where that's exactly important."

"No matter where you are, you're going to be exposed to the enemy. No matter where you are, you need to be prepared to engage. Do what Marines do, engage quickly, overcome the enemy and come away victorious," Mills said.

Mills also stressed the need for Marines of regiment to work as a team, follow the laws of war and positively influence the people of Afghanistan.

Throughout his address, Mills continued to express his and the nation's support for the regiment.

"I'm proud of what you are doing, your families' are proud of you, your country is proud of you," said Mills. "They aren't a whole lot of people in your age group that can do what you do. Carry this gear around twenty-four-seven, be proficient with

your weapon system and eat out of a little brown bag every once in a while. You're the best of the best."

Pfc. David A. Mantilla, a food service specialist with Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment, was grateful Mills took the time to visit the regiment.

"I appreciate it because it was motivation for everybody," said Mantilla, 24, from Washington Heights, N.Y. "When you've been out here training, working hard and then see the general appreciate your work, you feel good."

Mantilla, who was recognized by Mills for superior performance during the exercise with a hand shake and challenge coin, also said he feels more confident about the upcoming deployment after hearing Mills' re-affirm his support for 7th Marines.

"I really want to go [to Afghanistan], and now with his words it helped me feel better, and trust the Marines to my right and to my left," he said.



CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Maj. Gen. Richard P. Mills, the commanding general of 1st Marine Division, speaks to Marines and sailors of Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment, here Aug. 12, during their pre-deployment training exercise. The "Magnificent Seventh" is scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan with Regimental Combat Team 7 to conduct counterinsurgency operations as the ground combat element for Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan.

SURVIVAL, from A1

and sailors will gradually acclimate to the high elevation.

"We are sitting at nearly 8,000 feet above sea level right now," said Morgan, a Tacoma, Wash., native, after reaching the top of the incline. "Today's hike was with a light combat load. The hikes will progressively become harder over the next few days so the Marines can get used to the thin air."

After a quick water break and a change of socks, the Marines were ready to learn how to take on the wild while remaining tactical at the same time.

The Marines learned different ways to combat the various stressors one faces while in a survival scenario like hunger, isolation and the effects of weather on one's mind.

"My favorite class was the expedient shelters class," said Lance Cpl. Andrew Bloom, a rifleman with Headquarters Co., 3/7, and native of Nisswa, Minn. "I've always been interested in survival situations, and I've always kind of wanted to be put in one. The classes we had today will definitely help me out if that ever happens."

Morgan said the best way to survive is to keep a positive outlook on the situation.

"The biggest thing that will keep someone alive in scenarios like these is their attitude," Morgan said.

Those who give up mentally decrease their chance of survival, he said.

As the training session expired, the Marines and sailors were happy to hike downhill the whole way back to lower base camp.

"It's always better to walk downhill," said Montroy, a Lansing, Mich., native.

The battalion shuttled personnel from Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., to MCMWTC earlier this week and is slated to conduct several more training exercises before its departure in September.

ANIMAL, from A1

gunner with Animal Co., sat anxiously on a shaded bench while fellow spouses Paula Smith and Alejandra Hartwell kept her company.

"My husband came back a couple weeks ago and she stayed with me the whole time while I waited for him," said Smith, wife of Cpl. Andrew Smith, a rifleman with Animal Co., and native of Rowlett, Texas. "Now it's my turn. It's nice to have people here supporting you - people you can rely on to keep you calm."

Hurst said although her husband deployed in 2004, they had no children then and now they have two.

"I'm nervous and excited," said Hurst, a native of St. Erie, Colo. "You worry a little bit about the readjustments [the children] will have to make, but I'm more excited than nervous."

One of the Marines who returned to the Combat Center Tuesday, Lance Cpl. Kerry Bartholomew II, was greeted by his family at Victory Field. The 23-year-old Squad Automatic Weapon gunner said he was very thankful and excited to finally be home.

Capt. Ty Moore, the Animal Co. commander, was another Marine who returned home that day. He said his company began their operations out of Combat Outpost Viking, a Marine and ISF camp along a main supply route between Fallujah and Ramadi, Iraq.

"The ISF is at the point now where they have taken the lead and are providing their own security," said Moore, a Wasilla, Alaska, native.

Staff Sgt. Roger L. Thompson, 1st Platoon commander, deployed with

the battalion to Al Anbar Province, Iraq, during the earlier stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom and said much has changed since then.

"I think the biggest change since my last deployment has been the ISF's willingness to conduct operations on their own," said Thompson, a Lewisville, Texas, native. "We've been able to pull away our involvement more and more as they become more independent."

Thompson also said he is proud of his Marines for the positive changes they have made in Iraq, which will prepare the country for its sovereignty.

"Marines have been fighting for this since they pushed into Iraq," he said. "Seeing the ISF working like that is the biggest challenge our Marines have overcome. It's what the Marines who came before us have fought for."

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3/11 provides security to locals around Fiddler's Green

LANCE CPL. DANIEL A. FLYNN

REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 3

FIRE BASE FIDDLER'S GREEN, HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Walking through an empty field in the early morning on Aug. 13, the temperatures are already in the high 90s and every Marine is thankful for the relative cool.

The Marines conducting this patrol are not infantry; most of them are from Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 3.

These Marines, who usually work behind a computer, have been performing security patrols around Fire Base Fiddler's Green since early July.

"These patrols are to pave the way for the units who will come in here after us and start conducting counterinsurgency operations in the area," said Sgt. Christopher Colt Remington, the battalion color sergeant and a squad leader with 3/11.

"The patrols let the locals get used to coalition forces," added the Fort Worth, Texas, native.

This particular patrol went smoothly. The Marines were able to talk to some of the local villagers and attain an understanding of their concerns. These actions are crucial in a counterinsurgency struggle where the focus is on gaining the peoples' trust.

The patrol consisting of 11 Marines, one corpsman and one interpreter started at 6:30 a.m. and lasted about three hours. Pushing farther south than any previous patrol, the Marines were not sure exactly what they would experience.

"It was actually a lot



LANCE CPL. DANIEL A. FLYNN

Lance Cpl. Sean Allen, a radio operator with 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 3, participates in a security patrol Aug. 14 at Fire Base Fiddler's Green in Afghanistan's Helmand Province. The Marines of 3/11 are stepping up security to 24 hours a day having Marines patrol as a precautionary method for the upcoming elections.

more uneventful than I thought it would be," said Remington. He added that the reaction from the people varies by location.

"These patrols are a good thing," said Pfc. Alexander Gendreau, a mine sweeper with 3/11.

The Eloy, Ariz., native added, "We are providing security for all the locals."

In addition to providing security, the Marines of 3/11 are also engaging in a

civil affairs effort. Everywhere the patrols travel, they try to interact with the Afghan population. By understanding the needs of the people, the Marines increase their ability to help the community. Simple improvements to villages, such as establishing wells, can help show the locals that the Marines care about them and are

See 3/11, A7



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Martin Durette, an instructor for the Marine Corps Acculturation Program, teaches civilian employees the history of the Marine Corps during the acculturation class Aug. 14 at the Marine Corps Community Services Training Branch.

Base employees gain knowledge of Corps through Acculturation Class

CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Civilian employees from the Combat Center attended the first Marine Corps Acculturation Program class aboard the base at the Marine Corps Community Services Training Branch Aug. 14, designed to help them understand the history, culture and traditions of the Marine Corps.

"Civilian Marines are an asset to the Corps," said Martin Durette, the lead instructor of the acculturation class aboard the Combat Center. "Their support is essential for the success of the Marine Corps mission."

The class was held by two instructors who drove here from Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif.

"The culture and role of the civilian Marine, I feel, are the most important aspects of the training," said Rachel Abernathy, a civilian Marine who attended the class. "In addition, having experienced Marines – retired and active, enlisted and officer – share their personal experiences was instrumental to the program's success. Understanding the mindset of Marines is only the

beginning to better understanding them and enabling us to create programs and services to meet their needs."

The information the participants learned in the class will help them acclimate to their surroundings, and work with their Marine and sailor counterparts toward their main goal, said Danielle Heinze, an instructor for the acculturation class.

At the beginning of the class, everyone received a guidebook and pamphlets to help them along and to keep as references.

The class was taught in modules designed to help the attendees understand the mindset of an active duty Marine and the way they act and even speak.

The modules included a brief history of the Marine Corps, the culture of the Marine Corps, the organizational structure of the Marine Corps, the importance of civilian Marines, and Marine Corps workforce development.

During the history and culture of the Marine Corps modules, Durette also explained customs and courtesies to the class, and explored the language of

Marines.

"Marines have a completely different way of speaking – they have their own language," Durette said during the class. "You'll probably hear them talk in the office using an acronym after every other word."

The participants were given a quick quiz to determine how well they understood Marine Corps jargon – many finally got stuck when asked the meaning of the sentence "a Marine could repel off the Irish Pennant hanging from his uniform," which is when a Marine has a thread on their uniform.

"You'll see them outside smoking a cigarette and taking their lighter to their uniform," Durette explained to the class. "They are not trying to light themselves on fire – they're just getting rid of the IPs."

During the class, the students also learned about the structure of the Marine Corps, how a chain of command works and the importance of talking to the Marines in their office.

"They are also humans and they have wonderful stories to tell," Heinze said. "We need to take that time to talk to them, get to know them."



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Comm Marines train in mountainous environment

JENNIE E. HASKAMP
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

MARINE CORPS MOUNTAIN WARFARE TRAINING CENTER BRIDGEPORT, Calif.—To the untrained eye it's a picturesque meadow nestled away in the Humboldt Toiyabe National Forest. For the instructors and students of the Mountain Command and Control Communications Course it's a bit more than that.

The meadow, dubbed Landing Zone Cardinal by the Marine Corps, is part of the 47,000 acres of National Forest land which make up Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center Bridgeport, Calif., and the LZ, located at 8,700 feet, is part of 1st Lt. Todd Boese's classroom.

Boese, the officer in charge of MCCC, along with five enlisted instructors, teach a 12-day course which includes classes in basic mountain survival skills, land navigation

and a myriad of field expedient communications techniques. These include wave theory and propagation, field expedient antennas, and retransmission operations and the advantages/disadvantages of varied radio equipment.

The course is designed for Marines and other service members in a billet related to communications in all elements of the Marine Air Ground Task Force, according to the MCCC syllabus. Potential students should

know the course isn't easy, isn't static and isn't taught in air-conditioned classrooms.

"Some students are overwhelmed by the physical nature of the course, and we've had a few drop on request a few days into the practical application portion," said Boese, a Chico, Calif., native, and Marine Corps communications officer responsible for MCMWTC's future operations section.

Indeed, students assigned to communications billets in units across the Corps, arrive at the base camp understanding they're going to remediate in communication skills. Lost on them is the idea the LZ is 2,000 feet higher than base camp where they spend the first day on the mountain in-processing. Also lost, or perhaps initially overlooked, is the idea the best way to practice field-expedient communications techniques is in fact to head to the field – or, in this case, the hills.

Training day two reveals the field nature of the course as students hike from lower base camp to the Leavitt Training Area approximately three-and-a-half miles away. The hump, one of many planned for the students, takes about 90 minutes and includes an elevation gain of 600 feet.

By training day seven the students understand the intent of the course is to enable them to effectively operate high frequency radios in an elevated, mountainous terrain.

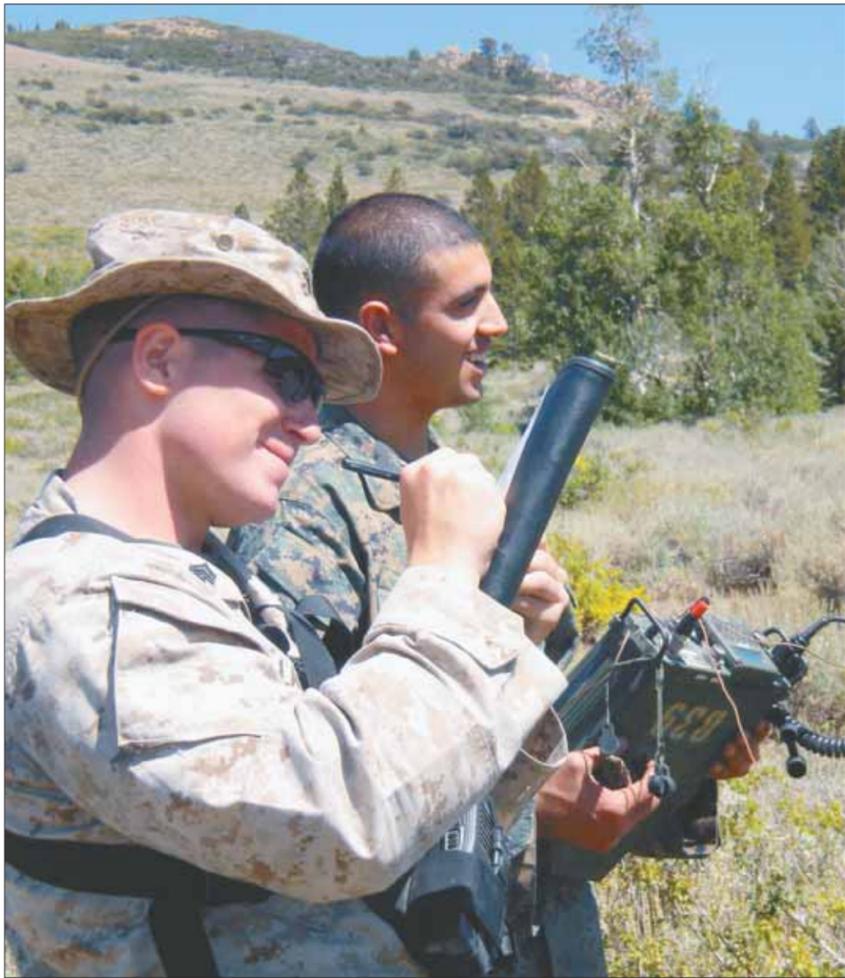
Bivouacked at LZ Cardinal, the students break up into small teams and spread out into the mountains to collect information from a land navigation course set up by Boese and his instructors.

Cpl. Sergio "Rod" Rodriguez, a 22-year-old Gainsville, Texas, native, set up a jungle 292, or field-expedient, Very High Frequency radio antenna to communicate with the students participating in the land navigation exercise.



JENNIE E. HASKAMP

Lance Cpl. Daniel Naranjo, a 19-year-old radio operator with 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, and native of Sealy, Texas, places radio wire in a tree at LZ Cardinal.



JENNIE E. HASKAMP

Grinning about the hit-or-miss nature of communications, Sgt. Dick Lagerquist, a Yakima, Wash., native, and instructor at the Mountain Command and Control Communications Course at MCMWTC, annotates the team's success at establishing communications with an unseen radio operator located at base camp. After 20 minutes of unsuccessful attempts, the team moved 20 feet and immediately completed the task.

"This is one of the VHF antennas we teach," he explained while tossing a rock wrapped in rope high into a pine tree. "It's important to be able to emplace an antenna without giving away your position. This method is quick and allows you to communicate without wires everywhere."

After elevating his antenna using the rope pulley he rigged in the tree, Rodriguez called the students in and addressed the teams before they set out on the navigation course looking for marked points in the forest.

"You have to do a comm check every 15 minutes while you're out there," explained the 2005 Gainsville High School graduate. "If you don't, and we try a comm check with you and can't get you on the radio – we're coming out there to find you."

After the teams are dispatched with only the promise of the pride in being first

to return with all of the points successfully navigated, fellow instructor Sgt. Dick Lagerquist evaluated students on establishing a field-expedient radio antenna similar to Rodriguez's.

Lagerquist, who asked to be stationed at MCMWTC after two combat deployments with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, is currently filling the role of chief instructor – a billet which has been gapped since the course's gunnery sergeant received permanent change of station orders in April.

After watching a student try and establish communications with a hasty antenna located about ten inches from the meadow floor, Lagerquist suggested the Marine might be more successful if he elevated the antenna.

"This is a unique duty station," said the 25-year-old

See COMM, A7

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COMM, from A6

Yakima, Wash., native, gesturing towards the tree line. "There is no better place to teach field radio communications skills than right here, no better place to be a comm instructor."

Lagerquist continued his evaluation after the team elevated their antenna by spreading out and holding the wires at shoulder length. After 20 minutes of unsuccessful attempts to establish communications with an instructor at lower base camp, he suggested they shift their location and try again.

"That's just the way it is with comm," he said, pausing to annotate on his clipboard the team had successfully completed the task. "One minute it works, the next it doesn't."

Moving 20 feet seemed to

be the trick and they were immediately rewarded with a positive response from the unseen instructor and a knowing smile from Lagerquist.

One of the three students assisting in elevating the antenna laughed at the slight change the shift in location brought about.

"That's typical," he laughed, helping secure the wire used to make the antenna. "Fifty percent of the time comm works all the time."

Boese said the inconsistencies and difficulties with High Frequency, and the varying terrains of the Corps' current and future deployments, make it imperative that Marines spend time refreshing and practicing HF and other field radio techniques if they're going to be successful in theater.

"In theater units heavily rely on [satellite communications],

but they receive a very limited number of SATCOM channels to use as nets. There are plenty of stories of Marines trying to call in for a casualty evacuation, but meanwhile a routine request for more batteries or chow is clogging up the net, and the CASEVAC has to wait. HF provides an alternative method to SATCOM, so that the SATCOM channels remain open for when they're vitally needed."

For the students in the class it wasn't the frequencies they used that caught their attention – it was the back-to-basics approach of the field techniques.

Sergeant Kevin Owen, a 32-year-old radio operator attending the course from 2nd Air Naval Gunfire Liason Company at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., recently transferred from Marine Air Control Squadron 1 at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., and said his last billet didn't involve any field exercises.

"I think all radio operators should attend this course," said the Boone, N.C., native. "Employing comm in a field environment is important and it's something we need to remember how to do no matter where we're stationed."

Classmate Sgt. Terence Sykes, a radio operator with 1st Air Naval Gunfire Liason Company at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., echoed that sentiment after admitting he was initially taken aback by the field portion of the class.

"I've been in the Corps for seven years and I've never made a field expedient antenna," he said. "This course is great for all communications Marines but especially those who haven't deployed to a mountainous terrain. We'll definitely employ these skills if we deploy to Afghanistan."

Sykes said he's compiling a list of junior Marines in his unit who he'd like to send to the next available course.

Across the board the students' comments indicated they were surprised by the



JENNIE E. HASKAMP

Sgt. Demetrice Fortson, a 1st Air Naval Gunfire Liason Company field radio operator, and Texarkana, Ark., native, holds up his corner of a field-expedient antenna while his teams attempt to establish communications during an evaluation phase of the Mountain Command and Control Communications Course Saturday at LZ Cardinal.

physical expectations the course involved but no one from this class dropped out.

After climbing a tree to string a radio wire at the highest elevation possible, field radio operator Lance Cpl. Daniel Naranjo, from 1st Battalion, 4th Marines at Camp Pendleton, said his time in the field course is better than any classroom instruction he's had since he joined the Corps.

"This is true practical application," said the Sealy, Texas, native. "You can't learn this in any other environment than right here."

It wasn't just enlisted radio operators who appreciated the course.

Second Lt. James Lomsdale,

an air support control officer from Marine Air Support Squadron 1 at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., was the only officer in the class.

"I was sent out here to evaluate the course to see if it's worth sending Marines from my unit," said the 25-year-old maintenance platoon commander from Olympia, Wash. "This course is valuable. Our mission is communications connectivity and everything we've learned so far pertains to that. Learning we can set up an antenna with eight ounces of wire and have a connection was incredible."

The staff is waiting for the Marine Corps Training and Education Command to

formalize the Program of Instruction, hoping it draws more students from across the Corps.

"Right now most of our students are from California-based units," he said. "Once the POI is formalized, it means TECOM will pay for the students to attend the course and the unit won't have to absorb the cost."

Marines from all military occupational specialties are welcome to attend. Previous students have included radio operators, maintainers, cross-trained infantry Marines and joint special operators. Course seats may be obtained by calling 760-932-1448 or 760-932-1457.



JENNIE E. HASKAMP

Cpl. Sergio Rodriguez, a 22-year-old Gainesville, Texas native and instructor with the Mountain Command and Control Communications Course, hangs a field-expedient Jungle 292 antenna Saturday as he prepares to launch MCCC students on a land navigation course at LZ Cardinal.

3/11, from A5

committed to gaining the trust of their community.

The Marines also want Afghan citizens to feel safe enough to participate during the Aug. 20 elections. While the Marines may not be taking a direct role in providing security for the elections since Afghan national security forces will be primarily responsible, they will be doing everything they can to support the ANSF in their security effort.

Continuing the patrolling effort here will not only help the Marines develop relationships with the Afghan people, it has the ability to disrupt the insurgents' attempts to create instability, according to Remington.

For some of these Marines, this is the first time they have conducted foot patrols since this deployment began, while many have experience from previous deployments to Iraq. While the terrain may be different, the Marines of 3/11 have shifted into the patrolling effort as if they had been doing them here all along.

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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.

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TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM
by Lou Gerhardt

One of the most absurd telephone calls I have heard about in years occurred August 7. A lady called David Donald, owner of Little Italy in Twentynine Palms and asked him if he was Italian. David said no and the lady then asked if the cook was Italian. David said no and the lady then stated that when she visited a Chinese restaurant the cook was Chinese and when she visited a Mexican restaurant the cook was Mexican. Then she slammed down the telephone. How ridiculous! Think about it.

My dear, sweet, sainted mother was 100% Irish and made the best Spanish rice I ever ate. My long-time friend JoJo Huntsinger of Yucca Valley is a proud Italian who makes the best Swedish meatballs this side of heaven. The late Scandinavian Jocko Johnson, a Hi-Desert cooking legend, made the best tacos the Morongo Basin has ever tasted. Finally, the best soul food I ever ate was not prepared by an African American but by a bunch of white guys in Burlington, Iowa.

We tough minded optimists are bigger than the rather sad comments articulated by a thoughtless, hurtful person.

In fact, David Donald is a fantastic cook of Italian food. He prepares absolutely delicious fettuccini, rigatoni, lasagna, pizza, antipasto salad. Davis is a 37 year old Scotsman with better than 20 years preparing Italian food.

Take my word and try his shrimp alfredo, his veal parmesan, or his spaghetti and meatballs. You'll love whatever choice you make.

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