

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

SEPTEMBER 11, 2009 SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957 VOL. 52 ISSUE 36

CLB-7, 3rd LAR come home to warm welcome



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Capt. Justin Sharpe, the executive officer of Company C, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, holds his 8-month-old son, Julian, after returning home to the Combat Center's Victory Field Tuesday. Sharpe, a native of Mabton, Wash., was deployed to Iraq's Al Anbar Province for the past seven months in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

**CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON AND
PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENTS

It was a chilly, damp Sunday morning when the Marines and sailors exited the bus — a stark contrast to the sweltering climate the service members from Combat Logistics Battalion 7 had grown accustomed to during their eight-month deployment to Iraq.

Later in the week, nearly 80 personnel from 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion also returned home but weren't as lucky. They returned in the middle of the day to temperatures similar to those of they remembered from Iraq.

Nearly 100 Marines and sailors from CLB-7 returned to the Combat Center's Victory Field Sunday morning amid a sea of welcome-home banners, balloons and smiling faces. Tuesday afternoon found a similar crowd flooding the field as 3rd LAR Marines and sailors were welcomed home to the waiting arms of friends and families.

CLB-7 deployed in February with a mission to provide security to the area surrounding Camp Korean Village in Western Iraq until the Army could take control in early July, said 1st Sgt. Michael Miller, the senior enlisted Marine with CLB-7.

During their deployment, CLB-7 also provided logistical support for other deployed units, and supplied fuel, food and water to the camp, said Gunnery Sgt. Jeffrey Hardy, the family readiness officer for CLB-7.

The battalion then shifted its operations to Al Asad where they continued to provide security until their return.

"It feels great to be home," said 1st Lt. Vonn

See HOME, A8

Toys for Tots campaign kicks off early

CPL. SEAN P. CUMMINS

MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO

MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, Va. — The Marine Corps' Toys for Tots program kicked off early this year at the WFLS Fest/Craig Morgan concert at the Mercedes Pavilion in Fredericksburg on Aug. 21.

Members of the 4th Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, the collecting unit for the Quantico campaign, greeted concertgoers and mingled with the crowd before the show accepting donated toys.

Sgt. Terri L. Kopetzke, a 29-year-old clarinet player from the Quantico Band, started the concert by singing the National Anthem. Quantico's ceremonial platoon presented the colors to the crowd as she sang.

Following the opening ceremony, Lt. Gen. H. Pete Osman, president and CEO of the Toys for Tots Foundation, presented a special memento to radio personality Jessica Moore, thanking WFLS for their support of Quantico's campaign. WFLS radio provides public service announcements throughout the holiday season and broadcasts live from Spotsylvania Town Center, resulting in the collection of several hundred toys. This year's broadcast is scheduled for Dec. 12.

The program, which normally collects toys from

See TOYS, A6

LAR uses sniper's eye to counter smuggling



LANCE CPL. JASON HERNANDEZ

Two Marines with 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion's designated marksman team watch the sunset north of Sahl Sinjar, Iraq, Aug. 4. The designated marksmen have been attached to 3rd LAR in order to assist them in counter-smuggling and counter-insurgency operations.

**LANCE CPL. JASON
HERNANDEZ**

MULTINATIONAL FORCE-WEST PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SAHL SINJAR, Iraq — Marine snipers and designated marksmen have been operating across the vast Iraqi deserts since the outbreak of hostilities in 2003. As with all units operating in Iraq, past and present, they have found themselves evolving to meet the changing needs of the Iraqi military and political landscape.

Small teams of snipers are finding reasons to venture into the constantly shifting environment that exists in a place simply referred to as "out-

side the wire."

"Working with previously gathered information, we gather additional intelligence and conduct operations watching over possible insurgent hot spots, caches or [improvised explosive device] cells," said Sgt. Neftaly Estremera, a chief scout with Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion. "We provide surveillance and [reconnaissance] capabilities for areas of interest."

As their larger parent unit, 3rd LAR, moves around the desert, relying on its combat power by

See SNIPERS, A8

3/7 wraps up training at MCMWTC with FINEX

CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

MARINE CORPS MOUNTAIN WARFARE TRAINING CENTER BRIDGEPORT, Calif. — The Marines and sailors of 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, wrapped up their training evolution at Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center Bridgeport, Calif., with a final exercise Sept. 1 through Sunday.

The FINEX was a culmination of the past three weeks of training the battalion conducted here, which included mountain mobility training and Afghan culture classes.

Each company in the battalion was assigned to areas of operations throughout the training center.

Company K was assigned to cover six-kilometer area of operations filled with fields,

streams and thick woods, known as Landing Zone Penguin.

The company was responsible for the security and well-being of the inhabitants of a small, simulated village located in the heart of the LZ surrounded by enemy insurgent activity, and faced several issues like construction and water needs.

First Lt. Gustavo Martinez, the commanding officer of Co. K, said the villagers did not welcome the Marines' presence at first, but quickly grew to understand his company was there to help.

"The biggest thing I learned from this training was the cultural aspects of the Afghans, and the do's and don'ts with the Afghan role players, said Martinez, a Stockton, Calif., native.

Martinez took part in several



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

First Lt. Gustavo Martinez, the commanding officer of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, talks with Afghan role players at a key leader engagement during their final exercise at Landing Zone Penguin here Sept. 4. Each company in the battalion was assigned different areas of operations during the four-day FINEX and was responsible for the safety and well-being of each area's village.



Back for seconds ~ See A3



What the doctor ordered ~ See A5



An oasis of murals ~ See B1



Move the chains! ~ See B1

Combat Center mess hall named one of best in Corps

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

A Combat Center mess hall has been recognized once again as one of the best in the Marine Corps.

Phelps Hall, which is named after the late Lance Cpl. Chance R. Phelps with Battery L, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, is a runner-up for the management and mess attendants contract category of the annual Maj. Gen. William Pendleton Thomas Hill Award.

Phelps Hall became eligible for the W.P.T. Hill Award, which is divided into garrison and field mess categories, after claiming the title of Best of the West Award July 6, a similar competition limited to installations on the continental West Coast.

The award is granted to any Marine Corps mess hall after examinations of the facilities determine its cleanliness, management, administration, and overall function, said Gunnery Sgt. Alfredo Salgado, a quality assurance evaluator with Company B, Headquarters Battalion.

Phelps Hall was a runner-up for the W.P.T. Hill Award in 2006 for the same reason they are now; their superior performance in food preparation and sanitation, safety, administration, training, and quality service.

Now, they have another chance to claim the award after beating out Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., MCAS Yuma, Ariz., Marine Corps Depot San Diego, and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

"We'll be getting a formal inspection at the end of October to determine if we win the award," said Salgado, an Aurora, Ill., native.

Salgado said he believes the Phelps Hall "machine" runs so smoothly due to exceptional team work.

"There's great teamwork between our Marines and the contractors," he said. "They come together and do what they need to in order to produce good food for Marines."

Gunnery Sgt. David Young, a fellow quality assurance evaluator, said he feels confident about the upcoming inspection in October since he believes the facility's day-to-day operations would satisfy inspectors.

"During [the inspection], they'll continue to do what they have been doing," said Young, a Lordsburg, N.M., native. "They pay attention to details."

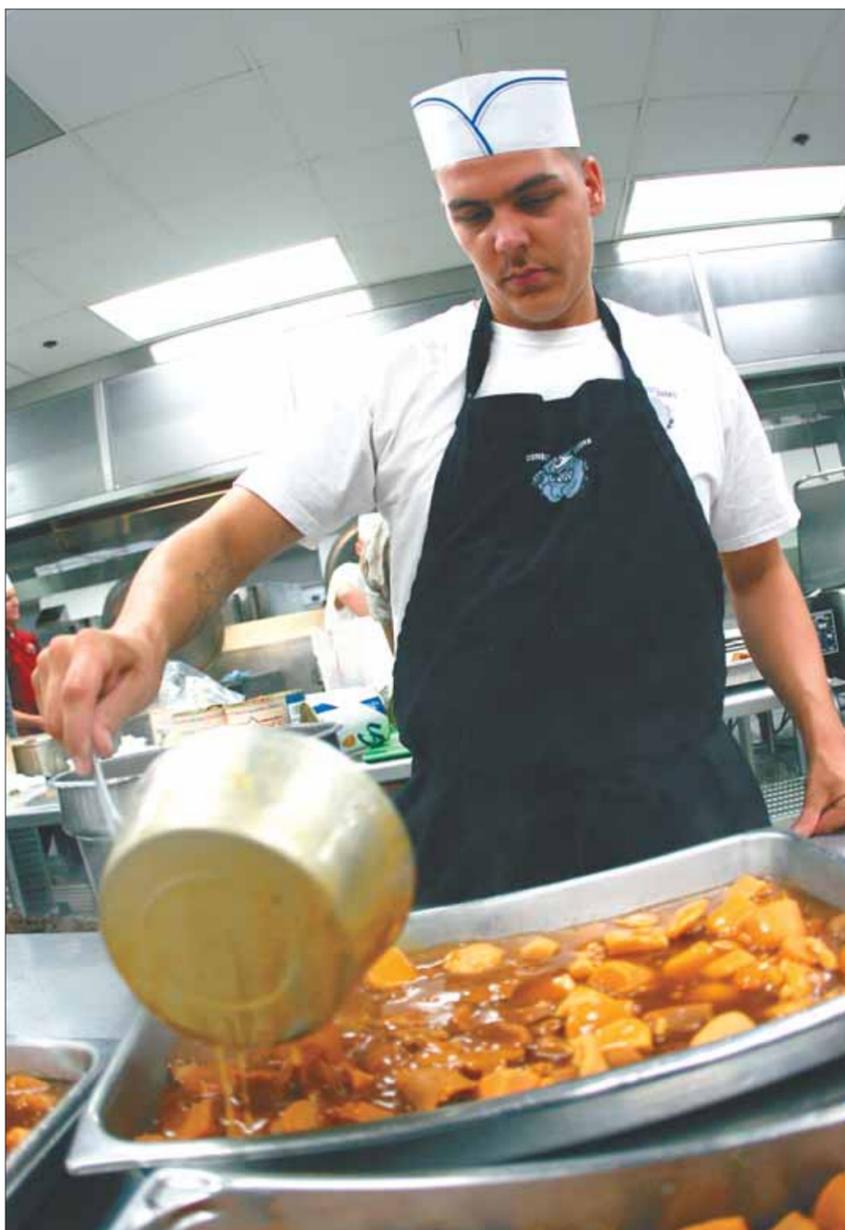
Tim Fortik, the Phelps Hall general manager, said he has not had the pleasure of preparing the facility for this type of competition since his arrival to the Combat Center.

"I'm looking forward to advancing this place to the next level and securing that title," Fortik said. "There's so much consistency here, and great ownership of work between the Marines and Sodexo contractors. There's a nice ambiance and spirit of teamwork."

The Marines seem to feed off the competition just as much, if not more, than their superiors.

Sgt. Steven Ramsey, a chief cook with Co. B, Headquarters Bn., said all the Marines could feel the impact of a little healthy competition and recognition.

"It's really good to know that all the hard work we put in every day does pay off," said the Stockton, Calif., native. "As a cook, you don't always get bank for the work you do, and getting this award lets us know we are doing a good job. This is our chance to shine."



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Lance Cpl. Matthew Zajac, a food service specialist with Company B, Headquarters Battalion, prepares yams for lunch at Phelps Hall Wednesday. Phelps Hall is a runner-up for the Maj. Gen. William Pendleton Thomas Hill Award for superior performance in sanitation, food preparation, and overall quality.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Cpl. Austin Nelson, a food service specialist with Co. B, Headquarters Bn., prepares food for lunch at Phelps Hall Sept. 2. The Combat Center mess hall was recognized as one of the best in the Marine Corps for performing day-to-day tasks so well.



LANCE CPL. JEREMIAH HANDELAND

A Sodexo employee serves submarine sandwiches to hungry patrons at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Chance R. Phelps mess hall Sept. 2. Phelps Hall was recognized as a runner-up for the W.P.T. Hill Award because of the facility's overall efficiency.

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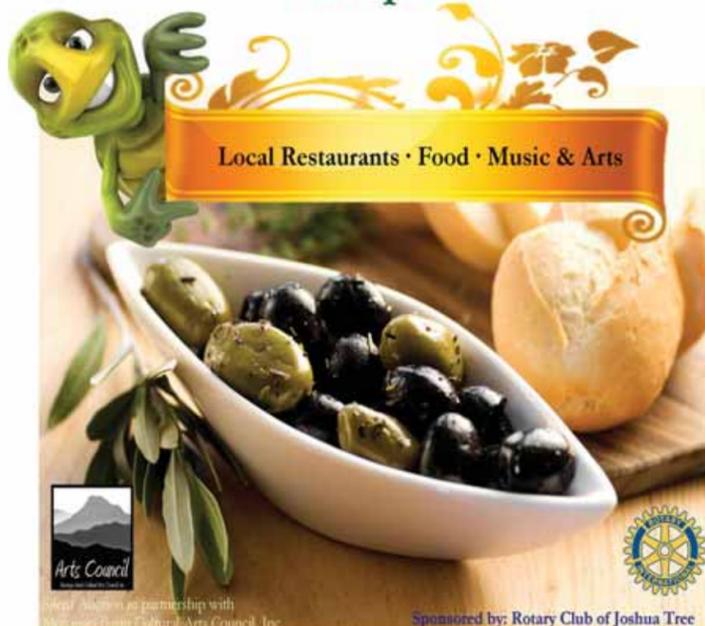
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Upcoming commissary sale promises bulk savings

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Commissary will host a case lot sale event from Thursday to Sept. 19 lasting from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sept. 20 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. to give Combat Center personnel a chance to buy more goods for less money.

This sale, which is the second one this year, takes place at other Defense Commissary Agency installations worldwide twice a year, said Cindy Fultz, the store director.

"We typically call these sidewalk sales," she said. "These sales are a chance for companies to sell bulk items of their products."

Sale items such as canned goods, vegetables, health and beauty products, cleaning supplies, bottled water and carbonated drinks, breakfast items, condiments, pet food and more can be bought in

bulk anywhere between 17 to 50 percent off the regular prices while supplies last, said Andrea Largent, the commissary general manager and outreach coordinator.

This year, the commissary will take a different approach to its "sidewalk" sales so customers will not have to endure long exposure to the desert heat to benefit from the limited-time savings.

Bulk items that are normally staged outside the building on the sidewalks in front will now be set up under the shaded area outside the commissary doors, with display items of all products set up on tables with price tags.

"Customers can just walk around taking note of what they want in the comfort of the shade," Fultz said. "Then they approach the cashier with their list and they are charged right there. While employees are off pulling

down the things they requested, the customer can pull their car around to the curb."

Erika Simmons, wife of incoming 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment commanding officer Lt. Col. Todd Simmons, said she would gladly take advantage of the upcoming sale.

"I would go for the convenience of buying in bulk here instead of having to travel further away to a Sam's Club or Costco," she said. "Plus, it's great savings."

The commissary is scheduled to offer the sale again around May and September of next year, Fultz said.

For more information about upcoming commissary events and sales, visit the Web site <http://www.commissaries.com>, view the commissary quarterly newsletter posted near the entrance of the store, or call 830-7572, extension 3006.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Hygiene products are only a few of the several commissary items which will be sold in bulk during the upcoming Combat Center Commissary case lot sale Thursday to Sept. 19 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sept. 20 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

September dubbed Retirees Month at Combat Center

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

America recognizes Sept. 18 as Retiree Appreciation Day, but one day of honoring America's retirees won't cut it at the Combat Center.

The Combat Center has set aside the month of September to honor military retirees through various events aboard the installation beginning Aug. 27 and lasting through Oct. 2.

During this month, retirees and their spouses and widows are invited to participate in events and activities such as shopping week, golf week,

bowling week, and a closing ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

Larry Stratton, the personal readiness and community support branch head for Marine Corps Community Services and a retired master sergeant, said he is glad to provide this opportunity to other retired military members.

"We, MCCS, exist to support our active duty personnel, and it is only right to also serve those who made the military a career and sacrificed so much for all of us and our country," said the Marysville, Calif., native. "Retirees are a large part of our community here in Twentynine Palms and they continue to serve in many different capacities - serving our community, our service members and our country."

A meeting was put together by MCCS director Kathy Catlin and MCCS marketing director Kathryn Crank to exchange ideas for the retirees' activities and events, Stratton said.

The first event, a kickoff brief held at building 1707 Aug. 27, gave retirees opportunities to explore what events they can expect during the month.

"As a retired Marine, it makes me feel appreciated and lets me know that I am not forgotten," Stratton said about the events.

First, retirees were given a 10 percent discount on any one purchase from the Marine Corps Exchange this week.

For those who enjoy gambling, a Texas Hold 'em Poker Tournament was offered at Hashmarks Staff Noncommissioned Officers'

Club Thursday.

Next week, retirees can take a swing at the Desert Winds Retiree Golf Tournament, complete with snack bar coupons good for the entire week. The golf week event will come to an elegant close Sept. 18 with an evening dance.

Retirees can then roll into a free night of bowling at Sandy Hill Lanes Sept. 22. Participants will also receive coupons for buy one game, get two free, as well as snack bar discounts.

A closing ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field will take place Oct. 2, featuring an evening colors ceremony, a concert by the Combat Center Band and a scheduled welcome brief from the new Combat Center Commanding General (select) Brig. Gen. Herman S. Clardy III.

Louis Green, a retired

Navy master chief petty officer who volunteers at the Combat Center's Village Center Retired Activities Office, said a few events have really caught his eye.

"I'm a golfer, so the coupon and social event at the golf course definitely interests me," said Green, who retired in 1987, and moved to the Twentynine Palms area to be with family and near a military installation. "I think this is the first time I've seen a month-long retiree appreciation month in any military service. I think it's wonderful to have something that hasn't really happened as much in the past. There are a lot of retired people in the area who are here for the same reason I'm here."

Retired colonel Philip Cisneros, a volunteer for the Retired Activities Office, and a president of the Twentynine Palms Water

District board of directors, retired from the Combat Center in 1993. He has since stayed very active in the military community, he said.

"I already got an envelope with the month's schedule in it, and I really appreciate this," he said. "I know the other retirees in the community appreciate it also."

Cisneros said in the past, retiree appreciation events at the Combat Center were limited to one day aboard the installation and included a few events off-base.

"The command would do an opening ceremony with the band, the general would speak and they would have equipment set up on display," Cisneros recalled.

Cisneros said he remembers how the event was canceled one year, and continued in that fashion until now.

"Retirees are a part of the

See RETIRED, A9

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Corpsmen help increase Iraqi Army medical capabilities



LANCE CPL. MELISSA A. LATTY

Petty Officer 3rd Class Jennifer Ybarra, a hospital corpsman with Combat Logistics Battalion 7's battalion aid station, observes as a member of the 7th Iraqi Army Division's medical staff practices wrapping an ankle sprain at Camp Mejid, Iraq, Aug. 24. Corpsmen from CLB-7's BAS have been conducting training with the IA medical staff since the battalion's arrival in February.

LANCE CPL. MELISSA A. LATTY

COMBAT LOGISTICS REGIMENT 27
(FWD)

AL ASAD AIR BASE, Iraq — Corpsmen from Combat Logistics Battalion 7's battalion aid station, have been conducting medical training with the 7th Iraqi Army Division at Camp Mejid, Iraq, the IA base which is located aboard Al Asad Air Base since the battalion arrived in February 2009.

Once a week, Petty Officer 3rd Class Jennifer Ybarra and Petty Officer 3rd Class Vincent Hernandez, two hospital corpsmen with CLB-7's BAS, and Senior Chief Petty Officer Rey De La Cruz, the senior enlisted leader at the BAS, conduct classes with the IA medical staff.

The purpose for the medical partnership is to upgrade the knowledge and skills of the Iraqi army medical personnel and prepare them for

the departure of U.S. forces, said De La Cruz.

Classes have been taught on a range of topics, such as swine flu, sports injuries, burns, battle wounds, fractures, mass casualty drills and sexually transmitted diseases.

Each training session is conducted in a standard classroom environment using manuals that are translated into Arabic and with the assistance of an Arabic interpreter, who ensures the Iraqi soldiers comprehend the information being presented.

Following the classroom instruction, Iraqi soldiers conduct practical application to make sure they are fully grasping the basic concepts and can also apply it to a real-life situation.

"A lot of times [the Iraqis] will be able to explain to you how to perform a specific task, but when we actually practice the procedure and physically do it,

they are not able to perform," Ybarra said.

Although there are still some areas in need of improvement, the corpsmen said the Iraqi soldiers are making a great deal of progress.

"When we were teaching a class on primary and secondary assessment of a casualty, there was an Iraqi soldier who, we could tell, knew what he was doing and was able to explain each step as he did it," De La Cruz said. "We were impressed with all the things he remembered. Those are the guys we really know want to learn and want to do well in this field."

One of the major points the corpsmen stress to the Iraqis is the importance of having a standard procedure for every situation.

"In the U.S., medical is universal," De La Cruz said. "Anywhere you go the procedures will be done almost exactly the same. Here they are each taught a different

way of doing things."

To help the Iraqi soldiers accomplish standard operating medical procedures they are given pamphlets translated into Arabic to keep on file for reference.

"We hope that as we leave the country, they will be a more organized military and will be able to operate on their own," De La Cruz said. "They need to develop a self-dependency as they look to improve their military. Without a good medical system that will be difficult to accomplish."

Combat Logistics Battalion 46 intends to continue the medical partnership when CLB-7 completes their deployment.

FINEX, from A1

key leader engagements with the village elders to discuss the issues facing the village and said he admired the way Afghans conduct meetings.

"One thing I found interesting was how the elders never cut straight to business," he said. "We always asked about family, friends and other things before we talked about the village's problems."

Sgt. Nick Brandau, an instructor with the Unit Training Group here, said Martinez and the rest of the company stood out from other companies in the battalion.

"Everything went well with [Co. K]," said Brandau, a Topeka, Kan., native. "They set up security well in and around the village, and worked really well with the villagers to establish teamwork."

Not everything went so smoothly for other companies in the battalion.

In another village, a fire-

fight broke out, which ended in civilian casualties. Word of the incident quickly reached the villagers in LZ Penguin, but was put to rest by Martinez during an early morning meeting with the village elders.

"You can't apologize for the actions of war," said Martinez after the meeting. "You can only justify your actions. If we apologized for our mistakes we'd never get anywhere."

Pfc. Eric Harsy, a rifleman with Co. K, said he enjoyed the different types of training he received here.

"I really liked learning the subtle differences between the Iraqi and Afghan people," said Harsy, a Madison, Wis., native. "The survival classes and mountain mobility classes were all good training, but I'll be happy to be back in Twentynine Palms."

The battalion made its way back to the Combat Center Wednesday, and is slated to continue training for an upcoming deployment next year.



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Marines with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, set their rifles and helmets aside, but within reach, during a key leader engagement Sept. 4.

MARINE CORPS CIVILIAN POLICE

TWENTYNINE PALMS, CA



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TOYS, from A1

October through December, began collecting toys early this year in an attempt to provide more toys to those in need. The extra month of collection should help encourage more donations since more children will likely be in need due to the economic recession.

Those who would like to donate a new, unwrapped toy should contact Staff Sgt. Christopher Gordon. Business owners interested in making their business a Toys for Tots drop-off location should also contact Gordon. He can be reached at 703-784-4247.

Marine Corps Reserve units have been collecting

toys since 1947 with the support of the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, an IRS-approved, non-profit public charity.

For more information about the Toys for Tots Foundation, or to make a cash donation by way of credit card, visit <http://www.toysfortots.org>



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LOOKING for local entertainment?

See page B2 for our **LIBERTY CALL** section

CG bids fond farewell to NCOs



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Maj. Gen. Charles M. Gurganus, the commanding general for the Combat Center, chats with a Marine during his final farewell to Combat Center noncommissioned officers at the Combat Center's Bloodstripes NCO Club. Gurganus is scheduled to relinquish command of the Combat Center to Brig. Gen. Herman S. Clardy III, during a change-of-command ceremony Sept. 24.

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Combat Center recognizes Hispanic heritage, contributions to nation

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

September 15 to Oct. 15 has been recognized by the nation as Hispanic Heritage Month, a time for America to reflect on the impact and importance of the country's Hispanic-Americans.

In the Marine Corps, Hispanic Americans have long played major roles during historical battles in World Wars I and II, the Korea Conflict, Vietnam, and now in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

A total of 13 Hispanic Marines have received the military's highest award, the Medal of Honor, beginning with Pvt. France Silva in 1900 for his actions during the Boxer Rebellion, according to the Marine Administrative Message 0467/09.

"Hispanic Marines have, and continue to, proudly serve and protect American values in the face of danger during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom," according to the MARADMIN. "They carry with them the Corps' values of honor, courage and commitment."

Hispanic Marines represent 15 percent of the Combat Center,

according to a 2008 Marine Corps Community Services installation demographic survey.

Hispanics are expected to be the fastest growing ethnic group over the next 20 years, having represented more than eight percent of the Department of Defense in 2004, according to statistics from the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute. Since 1993, the DoD has seen a 19 percent increase in Hispanic Marines growing from 140,000 to 170,000.

"The reason we do special observances is to give opportunities to smaller ethnic groups to be recognized for their contributions to the U.S.," said Master Sgt. Al Rose, the Combat Center and Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command equal opportunity advisor. "I strongly encourage Marines to learn about other cultures. That knowledge is a very useful tool in understanding diversity, preventing stereotypes and giving perception to those differences."

Rose said he believes inclusion of all Marines and sailors is the secret to maintaining and promoting unit camaraderie.

He said a Corps made of diversity-

tolerant Marines is one which will successfully focus on missions and enemies instead of petty differences within the same brotherhood.

Pvt. Omar Cortez, a traffic management specialist with Company B, Headquarters Battalion, said he felt honored his heritage was recognized and celebrated.

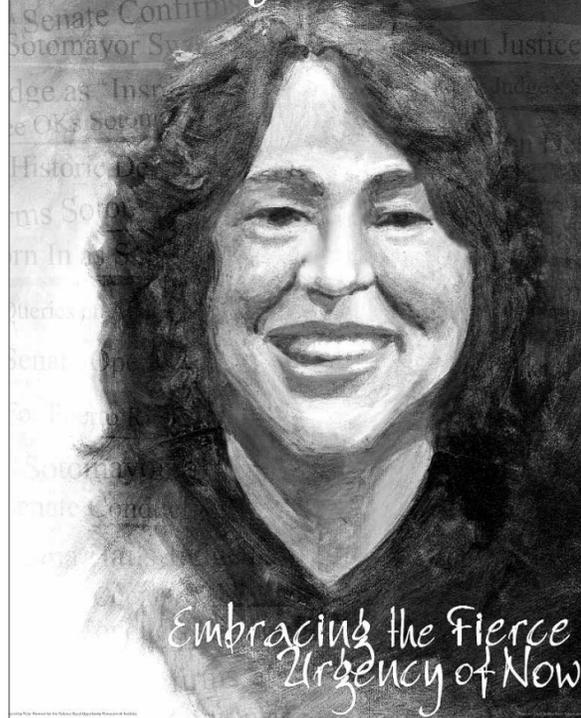
"I think it's awesome that they gave us the whole month," said the Sheboygan, Wis., native. "I'm glad they actually recognize that we all come from different backgrounds. This helps us remember where we come from and who we are so we don't lose our roots."

First Sgt. Nelson A. Hidalgo, the first sergeant for Co. B, Headquarters Bn., said he believes it is important to remind Marines and sailors who may feel left out that they are a crucial part of the warfighting team.

"It's important we as an institution recognize and appreciate those of different cultures," said Hidalgo, a Long Island, N.Y., native. "Those individuals also need to never forget that we are all Americans and Marines foremost."

To learn more about Hispanic Heritage Month, refer to MARADMIN 0467/09, or call Rose at 830-4567.

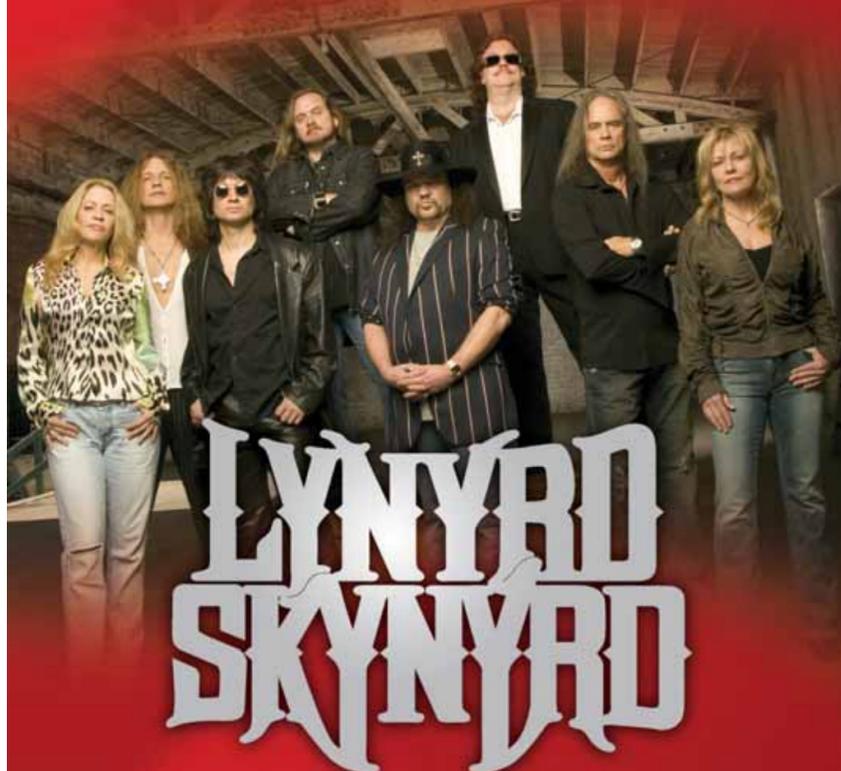
HISPANIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH



COURTESY PHOTO

A poster, created by the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, depicts the nation's first Hispanic Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor.

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2001 DODGE DURANGO. 119,000 miles, new brakes, DVD stereo system, runs strong. \$5,000. 266-1193. 8/28/09

2002 32-FOOT FIFTH WHEEL.

\$10,500. one superslide and one bedroom slide. Immaculate shape, sleeps four, two TV's, stereo, microwave, oven, dining table and chairs. Two rockers. Located on lemon lot on base, call Bo 819-1677. 8/14/09

2006 YAMAHA RAPTOR.

White and grey. Five speed with auto reverse. Low hours. Looks great. \$3,500. Call Tammy 285-1603. 7/24/09

1997 WHITE DODGE RAM 1500

CLUB CAB. 2-Door, 4x4 with a 6" suspension superlift, 35" off-road oversized tires and a paging truck alarm. Many more extras. Asking \$8,000 OBO. (cell) 819-3578 or (home) 367-5443. 7/10/09

MISC.

SEARS KENMORE REFRIGERATOR. 2001 white. \$300. 369-7306. 9/4/09

SNCO EVENING MESS DRESS

WITH GUNNERY SGT. CHEVRONS 42R. Trousers 34, all accessories included. Like new; worn only twice 1/2 price \$400 OBO. Blues jacket 41R anodized buttons. Two trousers one 33R/30L. \$50 for all three. Call 208-899-3021. 9/4/09

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35 years old. Asking only \$1,000. Marine Corps challenge coins, different prices. Olympic coins. Large entertainment center. Oak. Must sell. \$100. 367-6030. 8/7/09

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.



PCF. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Sgt. Greyson Escareno, a loadmaster with Combat Logistics Battalion 7, leaves Victory Field with his family after he and nearly 100 Marines and sailors returned to the Combat Center Sunday morning from an eight-month deployment to Iraq.

HOME, from A1

Deguzman, the third platoon commander for Support Company with CLB-7. "It doesn't even smell like Lake Bandini this morning"

While deployed, the Marines and sailors of 3rd LAR conducted security patrols throughout the Al Asad region in Iraq while ensuring all the light armored reconnaissance gear and equipment was returned state-side.

"We are the last LAR battalion to be deployed to Iraq," said 1st Sgt. Raymond Clark, the staff noncommissioned officer in charge of 3rd LAR's remain behind element. "It is important that as the war in Iraq winds down the Iraqi people see the Marines in a non-attacking, supportive role to their nation."

As the family members and friends waited for their loved ones, they made a sign with the printed names and traced handprints of all the children of the Wolfpack Marines. Above the handprints was a message that read, "Welcome home Wolfpack, from the Wolfpups."

There were also 21 newborn babies in the crowd who were waiting to meet their fathers for the first time.

During the deployment, family members received support from Jillian King, 3rd LAR's family readiness officer.

"We started preparing for their homecoming before they even deployed," said the Rapid City, S.D., native. "We held monthly meetings, support groups, legal briefs, and informational briefs that covered everything a wife may

need to know. We set up a mass communication tool where I contacted the families once a month throughout the deployment—and as we started getting dates for their arrival, I started contacting them weekly."

King said the families were more prepared for this deployment than any other previous one due to the hard work of the Family Readiness Office volunteers.

When the Wolfpack Marines and sailors stepped off the buses, more than 100 family members flooded toward them, crying with happiness as they hugged their loved ones and took them home.

The first thing Lance Cpl. Emmanuel Flatto did when he got off the bus was grab his pregnant wife and two-year-old daughter in a bear hug. He said he couldn't wait to eat a home-cooked meal, but most importantly, to spend time with his family.

SNIPERS, from A1

combining force with local military and public support, the designated marksman teams operate in the shadows, far from the public eye.

"The sniper's job is different," said Lance Cpl. Russell Injerd, an assistant team leader with 3rd LAR "While the team leader plans the missions, the assistant team leader is the supervisor. Having a job like this means that not only do you operate in the shadows, but you also work to ensure that when others are busy, you're filling in the gaps."

It is these qualities that Marines within the DMTs have found themselves liking most.

"I love operating; I mean really, what is there to not like," said Estremera. "I mean yes, the sand fleas tear you up, but at least you know you're actually making a difference. We've been able to stop [people trying] to come [across the border] illegally. It's getting to the point now where it's mainly just illegal cigarette smuggling. We've come a long way."

One of the more interesting facets of the marksman life is the ability to take creative approaches to mission accomplishment. This is something members of the team feel is not only essential, but also one of the more unique elements of the job.

"The guidance is pretty general," said Injerd. "It's a good line of work because you get to be creative with your mission planning; that's something not many units ever truly get to do."

A large part of mission planning is location. Snipers



LANCE CPL. JASON HERNANDEZ

Marines with 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion's designated marksman team go over last-minute mission planning before conducting operations north of Sahl Sinjar, Iraq, Aug. 4. The designated marksmen have been attached to 3rd LAR in order to assist them in counter-smuggling and counter-insurgency operations.

have the luxury of choosing where to establish themselves and how best to insert. While other, larger formations are limited by their loud engines and shouted squad commands, the DMTs can slip in and out once they've decided on where to conduct their work.

"We usually insert anywhere from one to two kilometers from the operating zone," added Injerd. "We'll go over the plan, mount up and then move to wherever it is that we feel we can accomplish the mission most effectively."

While many movies and books tend to emphasize the marksmanship skills of the Marine sniper and designated marksman, the men of 3rd LAR DMTs find that their true skills are in not having to fire a shot at all. Much like policemen around the world, the snipers are there to gather evidence and gain a visual

while keeping themselves unseen.

After the 'insert', described as the trickiest part by Injerd, the team goes back to one of the fundamentals of infantry operations: communications.

"Once we have communications established, we check out the area and move in to our selected [position]," explained Injerd. "From there we set up and watch out. If we catch the bad guys committing crimes like smuggling, we call in for ground units, and we're their eyes until they get to the area."

And so, as the needs of Operation Iraqi Freedom change, so do the Marine snipers that are deployed in support. For even though the deadliest weapon in the world may very well be a Marine and his rifle, the most versatile weapon could quite possibly be a Marine sniper.

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This exciting 3 day event starts with a Friday Night BBQ and instruction meeting, Includes: Golf "down the mountain" on Saturday from Big Bear to Pioneertown, Saturday night BBQ, Poker Run Fun, with prizes and reviewing stories of the day! Then, on Sunday 18 holes of "real" golf on the Marine Corps Base in 29 Palms, lunch, awards, and more prizes! Each day and evening filled with fun and golf - all for charity! Sunday Only Golf is a 4-person Scramble format - Check in at 8 am - tee off at 8:30 - fun food and prizes!!

TWO TOURNEY CHOICES!

All 3 Days \$120 per person
Registration after Sept. 10, price will be 130.00 ea.
This includes 2 dinners and 2 lunches, PLUS the pioneering golf down the hill, topped off with 18 holes on Sunday
Active Duty Military only \$90

OR

Sunday Only \$65 per person
Active Duty Military \$50
\$10,000 Hole in one prize!

For more information call Cindy at (760) 365-3315 or Laurie at 363-6681

"Sunday Only" at the Marine Corps Base will be a best ball tourney for those of us who love golf, but are less "pioneering"!

Proceeds to benefit MB Historical Society and Rotary
Thank you to event co-sponsors: Hi-Desert Publishing Co., Z107.7 Radio, Desert Winds Golf Course, Morongo Basin Historical Society, and The Rotary Club of Yucca Valley

TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM
by Lou Gerhardt

I am a tough minded optimist who is also a realist. I mean that I have an understanding with my soul as to what realism means to me.

For one thing, realism is degraded when it slips down into the idea that only ugly things are real. Some people are so afraid of being sentimental and idealistic that they manage their thinking and their living as some people write their novels, as though sewers were the only real things and mountain streams were not real too.

Sewers are real but so are our seemingly timeless San Gorgonio mountains and so is the majestic snow capped San Jacinto peak.

Slums, of course, are real but so are the thousands of humble and love-filled homes that populate our High Desert.

The late Sydney Harris wrote: "Reality is sitting on a moonlit pier at midnight and dangling your feet in the water. Reality is toasting marshmallows over an open fire and singing the old, almost forgotten songs of camp days."

Finally, my friends, remember that while the mighty Goliath was real, so was young David with his sling shot. And while Adolph Hitler was real so was Winston Churchill. And while teenagers who use illegal drugs and form street gangs are real, so are the many hundreds of bright and wholesome young people who attend our schools in the Morongo Basin.

If people are going to be realists, they should go all the way.

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What is Constitution Day?

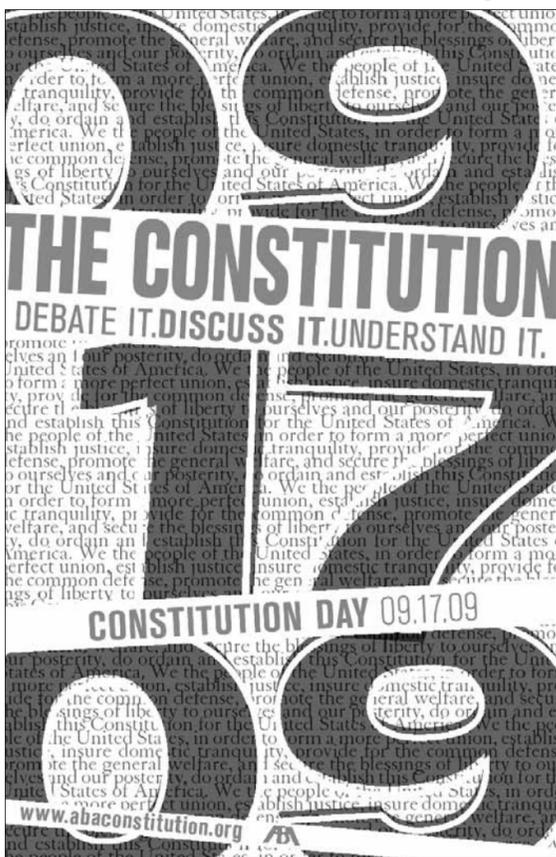
HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

Most Americans know the Fourth of July is our nation's birthday. Far fewer Americans know Sept. 17 is the birthday of our government, the date in 1787 when delegates of the Philadelphia Convention completed and signed the U.S. Constitution.

The ideas on which America was founded—commitment to the rule of law, limited government and the ideals of liberty, equality and justice, are embodied in the Constitution, the oldest written constitution of any nation on Earth. Constitution Day is intended to celebrate not only the birthday of our government, but the ideas that make us Americans.

Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia accomplished a long-standing goal, passing a law designating Sept. 17 as Constitution Day. Schools and federal agencies are required to hold educational programs on the Constitution on this day.

Through Constitution Day,



our hope is that a deeper appreciation and understanding of our nation's founding document will spread through families, organizations and communities.

Constitution Day, Citizenship Day observance examples

- Download, reproduce and post promotional posters, flyers and handouts to provide visibility:
 - Poster: <http://constitutionday.cpms.osd.mil/docs/USConstPoster.pdf>
 - Handout: <http://constitutionday.cpms.osd.mil/docs/flyer.pdf>
 - Bookmark: <http://constitutionday.cpms.osd.mil/docs/Bookmarks.pdf>
- Direct employees to complete online training provided at <http://constitutionday.cpms.osd.mil/course-choice.htm>
- Purchase and provide pamphlets to employees from the Government Printing Office or other sources such as C:\WINDOWS\Temporary Internet Files\OLK178\pocketconstitution.html for a free pocket U.S. Constitution.
- Schedule an organized event (i.e. re-cite the Pledge of Allegiance or Oath of Office as a group). For a copy of the oath of office, contact: http://www.opm.gov/constitution_initiative/oath.asp.
- Have a speaker discuss a Constitution Day or Citizenship Day related topic.
- The following Web sites provide useful resources and information about the U.S. Constitution and the commemoration of Constitution Day and Citizenship Day:

The document:

- The National Archives: <http://www.archives.gov/>
- The Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Constitution.html>

The day:

- The National Archives: <http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/constitution/constitution-day.html>
- The White House: <http://www.whitehouse.gov>

Historical context:

- Founding Fathers: http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/constitution_founding_fathers.html
- A century of lawmaking for a new nation: <http://www.memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html>
- American treasures of the Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/exhitiits/treasures/>

In action:

- Executive Branch: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>
- Legislative Branch: <http://www.senate.gov/> and <http://www.house.gov/>
- Judicial Branch: <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/>

RETIRED, from A1

community here and we do provide mutual support in a sense," he said. "The retiree is a consumer and that means money in the register that goes to fund active duty recreation programs."

Stratton said he expects the events this year to be successful and looks forward to continuing the tradition next year.

Participants are asked to bring their retiree identification cards to every event. To learn more, call the Retired Activities Office at 830-7550, or Stratton at 830-8456.

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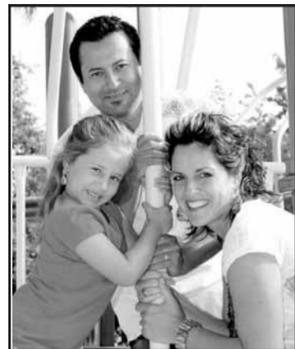
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8	5	1	7	9	4	6	2	3
6	9	2	8	5	3	1	4	7
3	7	4	6	1	2	5	8	9
5	6	7	1	4	9	8	3	2
2	8	3	5	7	6	4	9	1
1	4	9	2	3	8	7	6	5

STOP



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Come listen to their story of how in less than 1 year they were able to turn it all around. Jim and Darla travel the country sharing their story of Hope and Opportunity.

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57090 29 Palms Hwy.
Yucca Valley, CA 92284
7-8 p.m.

September 19
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SEPTEMBER 11, 2009

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

B1

15th anniversary of historical Twentynine Palms murals brings community together



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Local residents line up near the Mojave Desert Wildflower Mural for free refreshments offered by the Action Council for Twentynine Palms during the 15th Anniversary Mural Tour and Chuckwagon Progressive Dinner Saturday.

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

TWENTYNINE PALMS –Retirees, military service members and local patrons came together to learn and reflect on the history and heritage of Twentynine Palms Saturday.

Attendees of the 15th Anniversary Mural Tour and Chuckwagon Progressive Dinner took a journey across the city,

stopping to enjoy free hor d'oeuvres at eight of the city's 21 painted murals.

This first tour marked the 15th anniversary of the murals' origin in October 1994, said Mel Berlin, the president of the Action Council for Twentynine Palms, who sponsored the tour.

The tour began at the Bill and Francis Keys Mural, painted on the Plaza Furniture building off

Highway 62, and continued down Adobe Road. Patrons enjoyed a champagne toast and boarded trailers covered with hay stacks to travel to the next mural.

Dr. Rita Ramirez-Dean, the treasurer for Copper Mountain College here, said she attended the tour because she thought it was important to recognize the city's history.

"I love the history of Twentynine Palms," she said. "The murals make

the town's history unique. I really admire the pioneers who came here and did what others couldn't do."

Ramirez-Dean was referring to the man and woman painted on the mural – Joshua Tree pioneers Bill and Frances Keys who settled in the area in 1910 and made a living as cattlemen, gold prospectors and homesteaders, according to the biography on the mural.

Murals like these and other patri-

otic paintings depicting Marines and sailors returning home from deployments can be found scattered on buildings throughout the city.

Moe Pegorelli, a Twentynine Palms native, and constructor of a new Twentynine Palms steel sculpture, brought his 3-year-old daughter, Mia, along for the ride, hoping she would gain more appreciation

See MURALS, B4

Oktoberfest to raise funds for OSC scholarships, grants

CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Officers' Spouses' Club is inviting everyone ages 21 and older to come party for a good cause Sept. 19 at the Officers' Club from 7 to 11 p.m.

All the proceeds from Oktoberfest, a beer and wine tasting event, will be put toward

educational scholarships for eligible spouses and children of military personnel. The money will also be used to provide grants to local organizations throughout the community.

The club normally hosts Roll Out the Barrel, OSC's annual wine and beer tasting event, but decided to change things around and make the party more exciting by giving it a German theme and providing well-known

German beers for tasting.

"This year we wanted to add a little bit to our normal Roll Out the Barrel," said Beth Lewis, the OSC's unit representative for 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment. "We decided to make this year's beer and wine tasting an Oktoberfest with costumes, and live music with a dance floor."

Participants are encouraged to dress up

for the occasion and bring their own steins. Tickets are \$25 through advanced sale and \$30 at the door.

Hazmat, a local cover band, will perform throughout the night, and the OSC will hold raffles for patrons to win prizes.

The prizes include an authentic Jim Beam

See OKTOBERFEST, B3

Teams line-up for football season opener



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

The VMU-1 Watchdogs square up to the HQBN Bulldawgs during Wednesday's opening game of the Commanding General's Intramural Football League at Felix Field. The Bulldawgs stomped VMU-1 38-6.

For standings, schedule and more photos see B3

MCCS to host luau at Officers' Club

LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Grass skirts, Hawaiian shirts and swim suits will be the popular attire Saturday at the annual summer closeout event Operation Enduring Families Pool Party Luau at the Officers & Staff Noncommissioned Officers Pool from 3 to 7 p.m.

Everything in the event will be provided free of charge, and all base personnel are invited to come and enjoy the party. There will also be a disk jockey playing various forms of music throughout the party.

"I think that it is going to be a great event," said Jennifer Marple, the Officers' Club supervisor. "We are looking forward to

celebrating the end of summer."

The club and pool area will be decorated with grass around the tables, floating candles, fish nets, plastic fish and tiki torches. Beach balls will be allowed in the pool for the duration of the party.

Kelley Coe, the special events program manager, said there will be competitions like coconut racing – participants run with coconuts between their legs, best Hawaiian shirt, and limbo and hula hoop contests where participants can win prizes. There will also be crafts available for kids to enjoy.

Even patrons who do not win anything during the contests will still have a chance to leave with a prize. Everyone

See LUAU, B3



Local Events

Theater: "Nunsensations!"

Description: A hysterical musical show
When: Friday, Sept. 4 through Saturday, Oct. 3, Friday and Saturday shows at 7 p.m. with a Sunday matinee at 2:30 p.m. on Sept. 27
Where: Theatre 29, 73637 Sullivan Road
Twentynine Palms. For more information call 361-4151 or visit <http://www.theatre29.com>.

Art show: Desert Land and Sky

Description: An exhibit of paintings by Chuck Caplinger and star photography by Wally Pacholka
When: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday
Where: Twentynine Palms City Hall
6136 Adobe Road, Twentynine Palms
For more information call 367-6799.

Karaoke Night at PJ's hosted by Troy Michaels

Description: A sophisticated computerized system
When: 8 p.m., every Tuesday and Saturday nights
Where: PJ's Pub, 57564 Twentynine Palms Highway
Yucca Valley. In the Von's Shopping Center
For more information call 228-1199.

Music: Cracker-Camper Van Beethoven Camp Out

Description: A two-day music festival with camping areas available
When: 6:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday, Sept. 11 and 12
Where: Pappy and Harriet's
53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown
For more information call 365-5956 or visit <http://www.pappyandharriets.com>.

Cuisine: Taste of Morongo Basin and art auction

Description: Many of our favorite local restaurants provide samples of their cuisine followed by a fund raising auction featuring artwork created by local artists.
When: 5:30 p.m., Friday, Sept. 18
Where: Joshua Tree Community Center
6171 Sunburst Road, Joshua Tree
For more info call Jimmy Biggerstaff 365-3315 ext. 236.

Lower Desert/Nearby

Music: Tribute to Led Zeppelin

Description: They sound just like the original band
When: 8 p.m., Friday, Sept. 11
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more info call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Music: Daryl Hall and John Oates

Description: The rock and roll band's "Up Close and Personal Tour"
When: 9 p.m., Friday, Sept. 11
Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
49500 Seminole Dr., Cabazon
For more info call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinosresort.com>.

Music: The Sing in Swing

Diane Schuur and Bobby Caldwell and "The Big Band"
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 12
Where: Agua Caliente
32-250 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage
For more info call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Comedy: Cheech and Chong

Description: The hippie comedy duo is coming to town
When: 9 p.m., Friday, Sept. 18
Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon
For more info call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinosresort.com>.

Music: Crosby, Stills and Nash

Description: Classic rock and roll
When: 8 p.m., Friday, Sept. 25
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more info call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Sept. 11

6 p.m. – Aliens in the Attic, Rated PG
9 p.m. – Orphan, Rated R
Midnight – The Ugly Truth, Rated R

Saturday, Sept. 12

11 a.m. Free Matinee – Ink Heart, Rated PG
2 p.m. – Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, Rated PG
6 p.m. – G-Force, Rated PG
9 p.m. – Funny People, Rated R
Midnight – A Perfect Getaway, Rated R

Sunday, Sept. 13

2 p.m. – Aliens in the Attic, Rated PG
6 p.m. – G.I. Joe: Rise of Cobra, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – The Hurt Locker, Rated R

Monday, Sept. 14

7 p.m. – The Ugly Truth, Rated R

Tuesday, Sept. 15

7 p.m. – Funny People, Rated R

Wednesday, Sept. 16

7 p.m. – Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, Rated PG

Thursday, Sept. 17

7 p.m. – Orphan, Rated R

'Adam' a sweet, subtle, character-driven gem

NEIL POND

AMERICAN PROFILE

Adam

Starring Hugh Dancy & Rose Byrne
Rated PG-13

With all the noise, flash, slash and special-effect stomp of this summer's "big" movies, "Adam" is a small oasis of character-driven calm.

Hugh Dancy, a British actor who starred previously in "Confessions of a Shopaholic," plays Adam, a New York electrical engineer with Asperger syndrome, a form of autism. Although he's able to hold down a job, Adam finds social interaction with others difficult. He doesn't understand subtleties of conversation and he often says exactly what he's thinking. He doesn't understand why everyone else isn't as obsessed with astronomy as he is.

Not surprisingly, Adam doesn't have many friends.

As the movie opens, Adam's father has died, leaving him totally, achingly alone in the small Manhattan apartment they used to share. When an attractive new schoolteacher neighbor, Beth (Rose Byrne, from TV's "Damages"), moves into the building, Adam is smitten. But he doesn't know how to



COURTESY PHOTO

"Adam" is a sweet, melancholy love story which avoids sugarcoating its characters or its subject matter. Hugh Dancy's sensitive, never-showy portrayal of the autistic Adam reminds us there's a real person behind every behavioral disorder, psychological condition and personality quirk that often comes off as "strange."

respond appropriately to what he's feeling.

As Beth warms to Adam and eventually learns why he's so "strange," she finds herself drawn to him and his idiosyncrasies. She, we learn, has some things of her own to work through, including daddy issues with her accountant father (Peter Gallagher, in a solid supporting performance), who tries to convince her she's too good for the childlike Adam.

Dancy carries the movie, making us feel his frustration and his struggle to cope with his affliction—without ever reminding us of the actor behind the role. Byrne makes Beth equally believable as a wary, emotionally wounded young woman cautiously guarding her heart as her feelings deepen—and her world is rocked by a turn of events involving her father.

"Adam" is a sweet, melancholy love story that avoids sugarcoating its characters or its subject matter. Dancy's sensitive, never-showy portrayal of the autistic Adam reminds us that there's a real person behind every behavioral disorder, psychological condition and personality quirk that often

comes off as "strange."

And Adam's interest in astronomy isn't just a random detail. As he explains to Beth, the stars in the cosmos are separated by unfathomable distances, and moving across spatial expanses that boggle the mind. As Adam and Beth work to connect across the seemingly great void that initially separates the two of them, the process prepares them for their own journeys of professional growth and emotional maturity.

With an ending that will come as a surprise, "Adam" is a little gem of a movie that will leave you feeling good about life—and understanding that the heart, when it tries, can cross great divides.

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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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COURTESY PHOTO

Adam doesn't understand why everyone else isn't as obsessed with astronomy as he is.

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Combat Center sports



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Drew Hurst, the VMU-1 Watchdogs' strong safety, leaps into the air to intercept a pass during the opening game of the Commanding General's Intramural Football League against the HQBN Bulldogs at the Combat Center's Felix Field. The Bulldogs ran over the Watchdogs to win 38-6.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

HQBN Bulldogs' fans scream and cheer in support of their team in a game against the VMU-1 Watchdogs Wednesday in the opening game of the Commanding General's Intramural Football League at Felix Field. The Bulldogs used the support to their advantage to win 38-6.

Commanding General's Intramural Football League

Team	Wins	Losses
HQBN -	1 W	0 L
MCCES -	1 W	0 L
VMU-1 -	0 W	1 L
3rd CEB -	0 W	1 L
Tanks -	0 W	0 L
CLB-7 -	0 W	0 L

Next week's games

Monday
6 p.m. - CLB-7 vs. Tanks
Wednesday
6 p.m. - 3d CEB vs. VMU-1
8 p.m. - HQBN vs. MCCES



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

HQBN Bulldogs' running back Daniel Franke pushes through the VMU-1 Watchdogs' defense during the opening game of the Commanding General's Intramural Football League Wednesday at the Combat Center's Felix Field. The Bulldogs eventually broke through to win 38-6.

Athlete of the Week



Name: Donald J. Tolbert, Jr.

Age: 49

Hometown: Canton, Ohio

Job Title: Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School logistics specialist

Recognition: Five-year co-captain and team member of the Twentynine Palms Triathlon Team, and a member of the Combat Center Cycling Team.

Major sports accomplishments: 2003 State of Virginia Age Group Champion short course, nationally-ranked "All-American Honorable Mention" for three consecutive years in his age group, three consecutive years in first place at the Age Group Las Vegas Half Ironman, 22 podium finishes in 100 races, and first place overall in a six-hour mountain bike endurance race.

Favorite aspect of the sport: "The more challenging the course, the more interested I am in competing there."

Advice for aspiring triathletes: "Define who you'll become - ask yourself three questions. What is my expectation? Is it a short or long distance course? How much time can I devote to training?"

OKTOBERFEST, from B1

black acoustic guitar, a Canadian club pub table, baskets of beer and wine and several German steins.

All the alcohol featured at the event will be available for purchase and all purchases will come with a raffle ticket. If participants purchase a case of alcohol, they will receive 15 tickets for the guitar or pub table. Tasters can buy tickets for the guitar or pub table without purchasing alcohol for \$5. All other raffles will be \$1.

"This is a spiced up version of Roll Out the Barrel," said Debra Jordan, the OSC's unit representative for Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1. "Everyone will be able to enjoy an evening out with having to go down the hill."

To ensure everyone stays safe, the OSC has arranged a free shuttle to drive people from the O'Club to on-base housing. Free child care will also be provided throughout the evening.

The Officers' Spouses' Club raises money every year to award scholarships to military spouses and dependents who will graduate from high school and who are local residents. They also provide grants to local organizations throughout the base and community such as the Combat Center's Lifelong Learning Library and the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund.

For more information or to purchase tickets for Oktoberfest, call 760-910-9027 or e-mail osc29palms@hotmail.com. To schedule free child care call 830-3227, extension 272.

LUAU, from B1

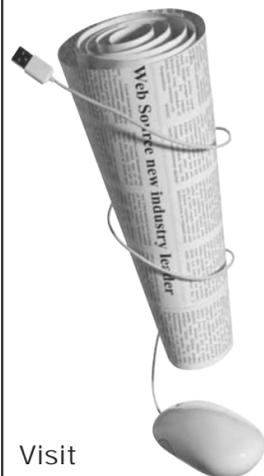
who attends the party will be entered in a free raffle drawing.

Tracy Hatch, the Officers' Club manager, said there will be mini corn dogs, pulled pork, white rice, fruit trays and teriyaki chicken inside the Officers' Club and on the veranda. There will also be popcorn and cotton candy machines. For the adults there will be two full quarter bars.

Although the party ends at 7 p.m. people are invited to stay longer and have a few drinks at the Officers' Club.

"I never turn people away who are having fun or are enjoying themselves," Hatch said.

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MURALS, from B1

for a hobby she already loves. "I wanted to bring her out here to see what's going on and to get her a little more involved with art," Pegorelli said. "She loves to paint. She'll make me do paintings with her sometimes, so I brought her here to show her

the 'bigger' paintings." Retired sergeant major Ray Wilburn and his wife, Irma, also attended the tour to learn more about the city they have lived in since Wilburn's retirement from the Corps in 1971. "It's the background of the murals that really interested us," Wilburn said. "We try

supporting all the local events that go on here and it's great to meet new people." Suzann Mitchell, another local citizen, recently lost her husband and said events like the mural tour helps her get out of the house and socialize. "This is fabulous," she said. "Now that I'm a widow, I need to get out. The 15th

anniversary happens to also be the 15th year since I got to Twentynine Palms, and I love it here. But I have never really stopped to look at the murals like tourists do." At the end of the tour, attendees gathered at the Our Neighbors in Nature II mural to enjoy a bagpipe musical salute to the armed forces by

Gunnery Sgt. Joel Daniel with the Marine Corps Band at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., the tour culminated with a posting of the colors ceremony, raffle prize give-away, speeches and a sit-down desert for all. "It was really an eye-opening experience," Berlin said. "There has been so

much interest established about this that we'll need to come up with more ideas in the next six months in order to capitalize on that interest." Berlin said the council has talked about hosting a similar event in October next year. To learn about other Action Council for Twentynine Palms events, call 367-4477.

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CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Citizens of Twentynine Palms enjoy refreshments offered at the Mojave Desert Wildflower Mural during the city's 15th Anniversary Mural Tour and Chuckwagon Progressive Dinner Saturday.

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