

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

JANUARY 8, 2010

SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957

VOL. 1 ISSUE 1

Marine Forces Pacific bans spice, salvia as drugs

GUNNERY SGT. BILL LISBON

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. — Marine Forces Pacific issued a punitive order Dec. 1 to its personnel explicitly banning both possession and use of two of the nation's newest designer drugs: spice and salvia divinorum.

The order closes a loop hole in previous regulation that didn't prohibit possession of the drugs.

According to MarForPac Order 5355.2, Marines are prohibited from "the actual or attempted possession, use, sale, distribution or manufacture of spice, salvia, or any derivative, analogue or variant of either substance."

Commands were able to charge Marines testing positive for spice or salvia under the December 2005 Secretary of Navy instruction on military substance abuse prevention and control, which prohibited use of controlled substance analogues.

However, SecNavInst 5300.28D did not address possession of spice or salvia, leaving a gray area in how to punish Marines who were caught possessing the substances, but who tested negative for use.

"This new order eliminates the ambiguity," said Capt. Levi Larson, the station legal assistance officer.

Now Marines can be punished under the

Uniform Code of Military Justice for violation of a lawful general order under Article 92, said Larson.

"The use of spice and salvia directly compromises the safety, welfare, security and good order and discipline within this command," states the order.

Spice is a mixture of medicinal herbs laced with synthetic cannabinoids or cannabinoid mimicking compounds known to cause decreased motor function, loss of concentration and impairment of short-term memory.

Spice is also known as Genie, K2, Skunk, Spice Diamond, Spice Gold, Spice Silver, Yucatan Fire and Zohai.

Salvia divinorum is an herb is known to cause hallucinations, changes in perception, body or object distortion, loss of coordination, dizziness and other psychological and physical effects.

Salvia is also known as Diviner's Sage, Magic Mint, Maria Pastora, Sage of the Seers and Sally-D.

Salvia divinorum and most spice variants are not currently controlled under the federal Controlled Substances Act, according to a Department of Justice Web site. As of Oct. 14, states have enacted legislation placing regulatory controls on salvia divinorum.

The new order also states it will be periodically updated to ban other substances used with the sole intent of generating a "psychotropic high."



COURTESY PHOTO

Salvia divinorum and spice are now illegal for service members.

Marines help develop Afghan security force discipline



CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Cpl. Jose L. Soto, a scout sniper with Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, and Afghan national security force members engage their targets during combat marksmanship practice in Now Zad, Afghanistan, Saturday.

CPL. ZACHARY NOLA

REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 7

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan — The shooter, one of many Afghans who have joined the Afghan National Security Forces, prepares himself as he's been taught. He bends at the knees, torso square to his target, elbows squeezed tight against his body. The grimace on his face shows discomfort, a sign he's positioning himself correctly. He isn't supposed to feel comfortable.

The command comes from the line.

"HAMMER PAIR! FIRE COUP!"

The shooter squeezes off two shots in the direction of the green silhouette down range. The command comes again and two more shots ring out. The process continues two more times.

When the shooter approaches his target the disappointment is clear and he mumbles to himself. The shots are low and did not strike within the circle, which represents a potentially fatal wound. The comrade next to him points at his own target where the shots are also low but near or within the circle's circumference.

The accuracy of the shooter's comrade only frustrates the shooter more.

When one of his instructors, Sgt. Tyler Brown, approaches the target. He's silent, but when he addresses the shooter he points out the shooter's shots are low, but in a tight group.

Brown explains the shooter is already improving from minutes earlier when his shots merely peppered his target. With a little work, the tight group can be raised so

the shooter hits his intended target dead center.

"The majority of them have progressed very well," said 1st Lt. Christopher M. Doty, a platoon commander with Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, and liaison to the ANSF. "They've gone from not being able to do anything in the prone position to being able to shoot controlled pairs within a diameter of 10 inches."

For weeks Marines like Doty and Brown, from 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, have partnered with ANSF members to help educate Afghan troops on basic combat marksmanship fundamentals.

"Since we are working alongside [the Afghan National Security Forces] they have to be as effective at engaging a target as we do,"

said the 25-year-old Brown. "They're training should be valued just as much as any Marine's or soldier's [training] in Afghanistan."

ANSF soldiers are taught zeroing techniques, engaging targets at increasing distances, shooting hammered pairs, and conducting failure-to-stop drills.

While the communication barrier and learning techniques make the marksmanship program here a sometimes slow and frustrating process, the Marines have not been deterred and use the course not only to instruct on shooting but to teach professional soldiery.

"The whole idea of the marksmanship program was to increase the proficiency of the Afghan soldiers," said Doty, a native of Longwood,

See SECURITY, A9

Eagle Eyes: Everybody can help prevent criminal and terrorist acts

Law enforcement and security personnel can't always see what you see. The Eagle Eyes program provides a means by which you can be an extra set of eyes and ears.

Eagle Eyes is a program designed to encourage and enable all military and non-military personnel to assist law enforcement and security authorities with preventing terrorist and criminal acts. By encouraging people on and off base to be cognizant of the observable planning activities of an attack and providing a simple and anonymous reporting process, terrorist or criminal acts can be

deterred, detected or defeated.

The following activities are associated with deliberate attacks and should be reported to the Eagle Eyes hotline:

- **Surveillance:** Photography or observation of access points, buildings, equipment and aircraft.
- **Elicitation:** Solicitation of information from phone calls, emails and in person.
- **Acquiring supplies:** Uncharacteristic collection of weapons, ammunition, explosives and fuel.
- **Tests of security:** Attempting to access

restricted areas, wandering in buildings and through remote areas.

• **Dry runs:** Rehearsing terrorist or criminal activity.

• **Deploying:** People who "don't belong," are armed, wearing tactical gear, or in a suspicious vehicle.

• **Act:** Erratic driving, loud threats or demands, or physical assault: call 911.

To report suspicious activity, call the Eagle Eyes hotline at 830-3937.

For more information, contact your installation's Provost Marshal's Office or your mission assurance officer.

Combat Center units leave for 31st MEU

PVT. MICHAEL T. GAMS

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of Marines and sailors from 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment and their augments said goodbye to families and friends this week as they boarded buses, to begin a journey which will take them through the South Pacific as part of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Also deploying from the Combat Center as supporting elements of the MEU are Kilo Battery, 3rd Bn., 11 Marines; 1st Platoon, Company D, 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion; and 1st Platoon, Co. A, 3rd Light

Armored Reconnaissance Battalion.

Second Bn., 7th Marines and its augments will become Battalion Landing Team 2nd Bn., 7th Marines, and serve as the ground combat element for the 31st MEU; a first in the regiment's history said Lt. Col. John Reed, the commanding officer for 2nd Bn., 7th Marines.

Reed said as part of the 31st MEU, his Marines, sailors and augments from other battalions will be forward deployed as a force in readiness and serve as the

See MEU, A4



PVT. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Lance Cpl. Ryan Barber, a team leader with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, holds his girlfriend, Jessenia Borroel's, hand before deploying with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit.



New life in Now Zad ~ See A3



A look at yesteryear ~ See A6-A7



New Year, new you ~ See B1



Dodging boredom ~ See B1

School Liaison Information



Question: What can I do as a "single" parent to help my children make the most of school when my spouse is deployed?

Answer: There are a couple of proven techniques to help your children be successful despite a change in the household. When children are doing well at home, they are much more likely to do well in school.

1. Consistent discipline. Children may balk at rules and consequences, but a firm and fair approach actually makes children feel safer. They need to know an adult is in control and can take care of them. While they may wish they were the boss of the family, they really do not want and can not handle that responsibility. Making sure your child understands that you care enough about them to keep them safe and secure with boundaries and limits will help your child's emotional well being.
2. Positive attitude. "Bestow" rather than "dump" chores on children. Talk about the pride of new responsibilities. Have a can-do attitude. Even if you don't feel so secure in your abilities, try portraying confidence to your children and see how they respond. Their positive reaction will feed your need for a calm and controlled home. The positive attitude at home will spill over into school.

For more tips on helping your children through deployment, check out: http://www.cfs.purdue.edu/MFRI/pages/military/Supporting_Children_of_Deployed_Parents.pdf.

For more information, please contact smbplmsmccsschoolliaison@usmc.mil or call 830-1574.

Hot Topics

MCCS STORE CLOSURES FOR ANNUAL INVENTORY

Due to annual inventory, please note the following closures for retail facilities aboard MCAGCC Twentynine Palms:

- C&E Exchange will be closed Friday
- Hospital Exchange will be closed Friday
- Home Store will be closed Saturday
- Marine Palms Exchange will be closed Saturday
- Main Exchange will be closed Sunday
- Seven Day Store will be closed Wednesday

HI DESERT PONY LEAGUE

Signups for the Hi Desert Pony League for baseball and softball are set to begin Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Luckie Park in Twentynine Palms. Additional signups will occur Jan. 16 and 23, and Feb. 6 and 13 at the same time and location. Call 424-6329 or 910-787-2175, or log on to <http://29hdpl.clubspaces.com> for more information.

H1N1 VACCINE STILL AVAILABLE AT HOSPITAL

The Naval Hospital is now providing H1N1 vaccination to all who are 6 months to 49 years old who are dependents or work aboard the installation. Individuals over 49 years old with chronic health conditions can also receive an inactive vaccine. Contract workers can receive the vaccination at the commissary later this month. For more information call 830-2626 or 830-2002.

COMBAT CENTER BAND LOOKING FOR MARINE PIANO PLAYER

The Combat Center Band is looking for a Marine from private first class through staff sergeant who can read music and perform in various styles like Latin, swing, rock, and pop. An audition is required. For more information, contact Gunnery Sgts. Yesenia Rodriguez-Hower or Richard Nunley at 830-6635 or 830-6404.

Marine Corps History

Jan. 4, 1991

Marine helicopters evacuate 281 people from U.S. Embassy in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Centerspeak

What is your New Year's resolution?

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



SGT. CARLOS VALDERAS
MOJAVE VIPER TRAINING, MOTOR TRANSPORTATION

"Not to spend so much money on my truck."



GUNNERY SGT. KEVIN TUOHY
FIELD SUPPLY AND MAINTENANCE ANALYSIS OFFICE

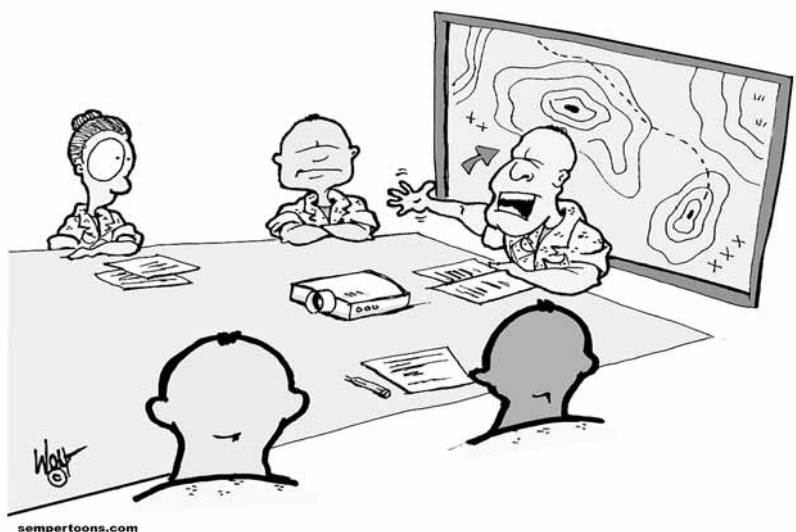
"Quit smoking."



LT. J.G. PATRICK GREENWOOD
JOINT IMPROVED EXPLOSIVE DETECTION ORGANIZATION

"To get in better shape through P90X."

"This is my enlisted advisor fellow commanders. He will listen to all of our ideas till we're finished. He will then ask one profound question that will bring us all in from left field and go back to the drawing board!"



SEMPERTOONS: CREATED BY GUNNERY SGT. CHARLES WOLF, USMC/RET.

Combat Center Spotlight



Name: Richard Hardman
Hometown: Massillon, Ohio
Job Title: Logistics chief for Headquarters Battalion
Job Duties: Logistics, battalion ammunition ordering and tracking, expenditures, environmental, safety, chow, defense travel system, vehicle dispatching, budget, blood drives and supplies for the battalion.
What do you like most about your job? "Working with the Marines because I am a retired Marine."
Hobbies: Photography.
Military Service: 26 years in the Marine Corps.
Time at the Combat Center: Nine-and-a-half years at this job, but also served here in 1979 and 1989.

SUDOKU #1681

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8	9	2						5	
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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2010 HOMETOWN CONTENT

COW HIDES

[puzzle Solutions on A4]

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63						64					65			

ACROSS

1. Long-eared bounders
6. From the top
10. Gets firm
14. Horace or Pindar
15. Pineapple brand
16. 10-Down's show, for short
17. Vodka concoction
19. Sorvino of "Summer of Sam"
20. "Able was I ____"
21. Nonfactor at domed stadiums
22. Like pine paneling
24. Novocain administrant
26. Think ahead
27. Cynical laugh
28. Wraps up, as a pennant
32. __ in (yielded)
35. Quaker's pronoun
36. Diamond Head island
37. Grid great Dickerson

DOWN

38. Divas' solos
39. Defeat, a la Ali
40. O'Brien's predecessor
41. River sediment
42. Abacus parts
43. __ to (totally destroy)
45. Alice's sitcom boss
46. __ 'Pea ("Popeye" kid)
47. Navy's underwater habitats
51. Class clowns, e.g.
54. Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Free ____"
55. Call from the flock
56. Satan's doing
57. Some wall finishes
60. Diner-basket freebie
61. Word on some euros
62. Flood protection
63. Singletons
64. Prefix or suffix meaning "skin"
65. Lecherous looks

DOWN

1. __ in (neared)
2. Be mad for
3. Out of the sack
4. PC bailout key
5. Of legend
6. Let in
7. Proper name, say
8. Shelf bracket shape
9. Many small newspapers
10. Longtime panel-mate of Paula Abdul
11. Cut and paste
12. Cause for a lawsuit
13. Do in
18. Hamper filler
23. A Bobsey twin
25. Group with the 1969 hit "Hair"
26. Skirt fold
28. Santiago's land
29. "Very funny!"
30. Israel's Barak

31. Has a late meal
32. Terrorist unit
33. Carpet computation
34. Overgrown with ivy
35. Cliched
38. Sized up
42. "Please, sweetie?"
44. Knock the socks off
45. Chicago exchange, for short
47. Command to a guard dog
48. Ranking higher than
49. Less adorned
50. "Land __ alive!"
51. Abysmal grade
52. Bell-ringing cosmetics company
53. Khartoum's river
54. Dueler with Hamilton
58. Dead heat
59. Pint-size

OBSERVATION POST

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Marines participate in the resurgence of Now Zad

CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 7

NOW ZAD, Afghanistan – In early December, the Marines of Company L, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, breached Now Zad and rid the second largest city in Helmand province of its Taliban presence during Operation Cobra's Anger.

The Marines are now bearing witness to the results of an effective combat operation – Afghan children are back in school, markets are reopening and people are slowly returning to their homes.

Just a few years ago, Now Zad was a thriving city, home to 30,000 Afghan residents, complete with health clinics, schools, electricity, paved streets and adequate water supplies.

The city's residents fled in 2006 due to a Taliban takeover, and were forced to pay rent to live in other villages. Constant fighting between coalition forces and Taliban fighters to lay claim to the city quickly turned the area into a no man's land. The collateral damage associated with such fighting, coupled with neglect resulted in the city slipping into ruin.

Nevertheless, in the recent weeks the mood in this once somber area has been lifted, as citizens from the Now Zad area have returned to reclaim and rebuild.

Businessmen have returned to their shops, residents to their homes and children to school.

"Cobra's Anger gave us the chance to displace Taliban leadership, locate and destroy Taliban supply storages, [improvised explosive devices] and weapons, as well

as the opportunity to further push out and secure the local populace," said Capt. Jason Brezler, the team leader for the 3rd Bn., 4th Marines' civil affairs group. "In conjunction with that, we started going out and leveraging folks to return, because we know the greatest source of instability is them being displaced for such a long period of time, with really no economic means and really no economic opportunity."

Shortly after sunrise, men of all ages arrived at the Now Zad district center with shovels in hand and swept sidewalks, removed dirt from drainage ways, salvaged bricks, cut down overgrowth and hauled trash away.

"They get paid daily 250 [Afghan dollars], which is a very good day's salary for them," said Brezler, 31, from Bronx, N.Y. "They have a legitimate means of income to put food on their tables for their families and take care of their basic needs without having to resort to working for the Taliban."

While their fathers are busy removing the stains of Taliban repression, the younger Afghan generation is busy receiving an education at the Now Zad District Center.

"The first day we put up a school, got some kids to come, told some workers we'd pay them to help start cleaning up the bazaar and district center, and then it started to build," Brezler said. "We went from 30 workers a day to upwards of 500 a day and having 30 kids a day in school to having 160 kids a day in school."

"In the last few weeks, everything that has happened has far exceeded my expecta-



CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Cpl. Alex Ivy, a mortarman with Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, observes the surrounding area as Afghans throughout the Now Zad area work to rebuild their shops in Now Zad, Afghanistan Dec. 15. Ivy is a 21-year-old from St. Louis.

tions," Brezler said. "I thought even just the things that have happened to date would take potentially months."

The reconstruction effort received a greater momentum with the arrival of Sayed Murad Agah, the Now Zad district governor, who recently toured the district center, school and bazaar.

"It's a great thing that reconstruction is going on in the Now Zad district," said Agah, through an interpreter. "We are showing the people that we are helping them. We can show them that the enemy, the Taliban, never helped them this way and we

are here to rebuild and return them back to their own areas."

While progress has been made, more is still to come. The future holds a continued effort to clean up the market and repair shops, homes, the schoolhouse, mosques, health clinic and basic life services.

Much work still remains ahead in order to return Now Zad's market and district center back to its former condition, but local villagers seem patient and determined to not only restore the area, but make it better than it was before. With the help of Afghan national security forces and a few Marines, the people of Now Zad are walking in the direction of peace and prosperity and setting an example for all of Afghanistan to follow.

"We still have a lot of limitations and a lot of challenges we need to overcome," Brezler said. "But every day we're finding ways to leave the city a little bit better at the end of that day, than it was previously."



CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

An Afghan boy flips through a book while attending school at the Now Zad district center in Now Zad, Afghanistan, Dec. 15. In the days following an operation, led by Company L, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, to remove Taliban influence from the area, children from the Now Zad area have returned to school, while their fathers work to rebuild the district's bazaar.



CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Afghan youths remove debris from the market place in Now Zad, Afghanistan, Dec. 15. In the wake of a recent offensive to rid the area of Taliban influence, local Afghans have returned to the area to reclaim their homes and businesses they abandoned in 2006, when the Taliban forced thousands to flee.

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 WAR VIOLENCE AND LANGUAGE



PVT. MICHAEL T. GAMS
 Marines and sailors with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, load onto buses to catch a flight overseas to join the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit in Japan. The battalion is the first in the regiment to deploy with any MEU as a ground combat element.

MEU, from A1

primary contingency force in the Pacific theatre.

According to the Commander's Message on the MEU's official Web site, they are slated to make stops in Thailand, Singapore and the Republic of the Philippines.

Reed said the MEU will work with partner nations in training exercises throughout the six-month deployment and serve as a rapid response force in the Pacific.

The MEU will work with Marines from Thailand during Exercise Cobra Gold, and then with Marines from the Republic of the Philippines in Exercise Balakatan.

The units faced distinctive challenges preparing for the amphibious deployment, namely adjusting to a new environment.

"Training for an amphibious deployment while stationed in the desert posed logistical problems as there was no water in which to train," said Reed. "We overcame this by traveling to [Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.] and to [Coronado, Calif.] to do training which required water."

Training in the desert did have its advantages and opportunities, mainly in the form of the kinetic, live-fire ranges which dominate the Combat Center's landscape, he added.

Many of the Marines and sailors deploying from the Combat Center said they were looking forward to getting the opportunity to deploy and see other parts of the world.

"I'm really excited to go," said Lance Cpl. Sam Engebose, an artillery mechanic with Battery K, 3rd Bn., 11th Marines, from Lake Oswego, Ore., who has never deployed before. "I want to see other cultures in other parts of the world — I can't wait."

"It is an absolute privilege to be deployed as an amphibious force," Reed said. "Given the history and traditions of the Marine Corps, it's an honor."

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

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SUDOKU SOLUTIONS

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<p>2008 FORD RANGER XL SUPER CAB</p> <p>4-Cyl. 2.3L, 5-Speed, 2WD, AC, PS, Tilt, Sliding Rear Window, Custom Bumper. VIN A38197 / STK P1776 \$12,995</p>	<p>2009 FORD FOCUS SE</p> <p>4-Cyl. 2.0L, Auto, AC, PW, PDL, Tilt, CC, MP3/CD, Alloys. VIN 101099 / STK P1785 \$12,995</p>	<p>2006 CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY</p> <p>7-Passenger KELLEY RETAIL OVER \$16,000 V6 3.0L, Auto, Power Sliding Doors, AC, PW, PDL, Tilt, CC, Multi-CD, Quad Seating, Alloys. #VIN 713736 / STK P1823 \$13,995</p>	<p>2008 FORD F-150 STX</p> <p>V6 4.2L, Auto, AC, PS, PDL, Tilt, CC, CD, Bed Liner, Custom Bumper, Premium Wheels. VIN B62008 / STK P1788 \$15,995</p>
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CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 7

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Recently during Operation Cobra's Anger, a multi-day operation led by Company L, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, to rid the Now Zad area of Taliban control, members of the company's severe trauma platoon extended an invitation to members of the battalion's civil affairs group to take cover from the rain in their mobile severe trauma bay.

Within the security and warmth of the STB, the members of the two parties began talking about the day's events.

"We started talking about stuff on the battle front," said Cmdr. Tom Craig, the officer in charge of the emergency medical facility, Severe Trauma Platoon 3. "What CAG said was that there were a lot of females who needed to voice complaints and that if we could get a female in the battle zone to talk to these people, we could probably help a lot of folks."

CAG's observation about the female population was correct. In the Now Zad area medical treatment is scarce, often out of reach and varies in level from town to town.

Memories of Taliban repression still cause women to second guess leaving their home in search of help. For any type of surgical treatment, women must travel many miles to Lashkar Gah, where they receive no post-operational care and due to cultural practices women in the area are often uncomfortable seeking treatment from men.

"There is no doctor in the villages of [Khwaja Jamal], Changwalak, and Dehanna who the women feel comfortable going to," said Navy Lt. Amy Zaycek, the severe trauma platoon nurse with the FCT.

The end result of this scarcity, fear, long distance and potential embarrassment is the women of the Now Zad suffering unnecessarily.

It is because of this reason, upon returning to his forward



CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Navy Lt. Amy Zaycek, the severe trauma platoon nurse with the Female Corpsman Team holds an Afghan child during a recent patrol in the area of Now Zad, Afghanistan. The FCT recently returned to Now Zad, Jan. 3, to assist members of the Female Engagement Team, Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan, with their effort to further the process of treating, educating and engaging the women of Now Zad. Zaycek is a native of Wall, N.J.

operating base, Craig relayed this message to his command at Combat Logistics Regiment 2 and requested female support at his position.

The response to this request was the Female Corpsman Team, an all female medical team consisting of a nurse and three corpsmen.

"I was on a twelve-hour notice," Zaycek said. "Cobra's Anger had ended, people were coming to the villages, and from what Dr. Craig had gauged, female medical care was needed."

In the wake of Cobra's Anger the team visited surrounding areas, including the village of Changwalak, which reflected how valuable it was to have female medical personnel on hand.

"We saw approximately 40 patients there; 27 women and 13 children," said Zaycek a native of Wall, N.J.

"Something to gain from that, was that I was told we were seeing women, but the women brought their children. So, that was an unusual circumstance. In addition, it's something that's never gone on before."

The FCT eventually had to move on to different operations but recently returned to Now Zad Jan.3 to assist members of the Female Engagement Team, Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan to further the process of treating, educating and engaging the women of Now Zad.

"The FET is really riding shotgun on this but they

only have one female corpsman with them so that is why we requested more help," said Craig from Chesapeake, Va. "Of course seeing how Zaycek and her team were tried and true in the past, the command element picked them."

Based on the teams last visit to the area, the FCT will be confronted with numerous medical conditions ranging from dehydration, to joint and dysentery problems.

Another area the FCT is tackling is creating instructions for FET members on how to educate Afghan women about

basic hygiene principles.

Ideas include creating a flip book for FET members which will include instructions on how to teach dental hygiene, hand washing, the importance of three meals a day and practices which will prevent clean water from becoming contaminated.

FCT members are also helping with the effort to re-establish those medical teaching aids which were once in place in Now Zad.

"Right outside the wire there is a public health area and we were able to find scrolls that had been used four or five

years ago as teaching aids," said Zaycek. "The [medical] education was here in this country. It needs to just come back."

Basic medical assistance is not the only the service the FCT provides. While Now Zad's male population is forthcoming about their physical medical concerns, the area's female population has shown an anxiety about emotional concerns. FET and FCT members have shown the ability to provide the female population an emotional outlet where they can voice mental issues and concerns.

"What [the FCT] has been able to provide is really, truly an open door. When we've gone out into the villages to see people, [the female population] tend to open up to the female providers," said Craig. "When I looked at the list of complaints that the females were providing to the [FCT] it was fear of Taliban, fear that my son is going to be brought into the Taliban, fear for my family, fear for my home. A lot of fear components which the guys don't say at all."

Another secondary effect of the FCT is giving female medical personnel valuable field experience and knowledge, through working with the FET, which can be passed to others.

"It's a good opportunity. A lot of corpsman will never get to come here and will never get to experience this," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Latase Smith, a hospital corpsman with FCT from Chicago. "I'm looking forward to teaching [the women] to better take care of themselves and their families."

"We'll take all our lessons learned, our knowledge gained, and give it to [other

See BANDAGES, A10

TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM by Lou Gerhardt



Perspective -- 2010

In recent Days I have officiated at several weddings in love filled homes where family members of all ages gathered to share precious moments.

Among those getting married were Bobby and Destiny Kruse, Twentynine Palms, Austin and Lisa Price, Yucca Valley, and Randy and Janice Young, Flamingo Heights. Incidentally, Bobby will be deployed to Afghanistan very soon.

I also had the privilege of officiating at the baptism of Michael Anthony Victorio Boyer in the family home with his proud parents Anthony and Rosita Boyer sharing in the service. Michael's loving and attentive grandmother Anne Cooley was also present. Rosita had erected an altar in a corner of the living room with brightly lighted candles. It was a precious moment to be treasured always.

So as we begin a new year I give you the words of a world-renowned historian Will Durant speaking from the pulpit of the Church I served in Los Angeles.

"I was once challenged to sum up civilization in a half hour. I did it in less than a minute. Civilization is a stream with banks. The stream is sometimes filled with blood from people killing, stealing, shooting and doing things that historians usually record. While on the banks, unnoticed, people are building homes and making love, raising children, singing songs, writing poetry and even whittling statues. And the story of civilization is the story of what happens on the banks. Too often historians are pessimists because they ignore the banks and write about the rivers."

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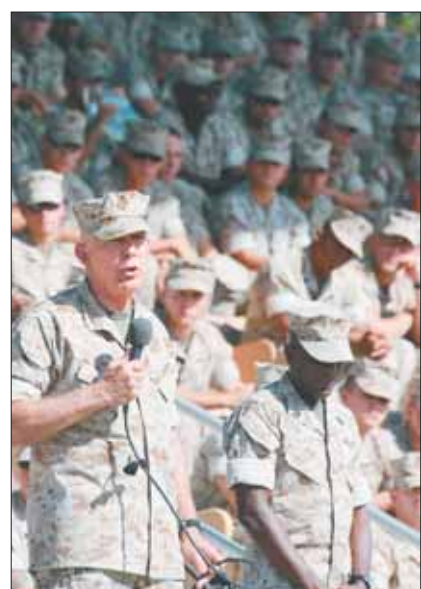
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Marine Corps participants in the 56th Presidential Inaugural Rehearsal march in front of the Capitol Jan. 11 during a walkthrough of the inauguration ceremony.

MARCHING INTO A NEW YEAR

SGT. MICHAEL S. CIFUENTES



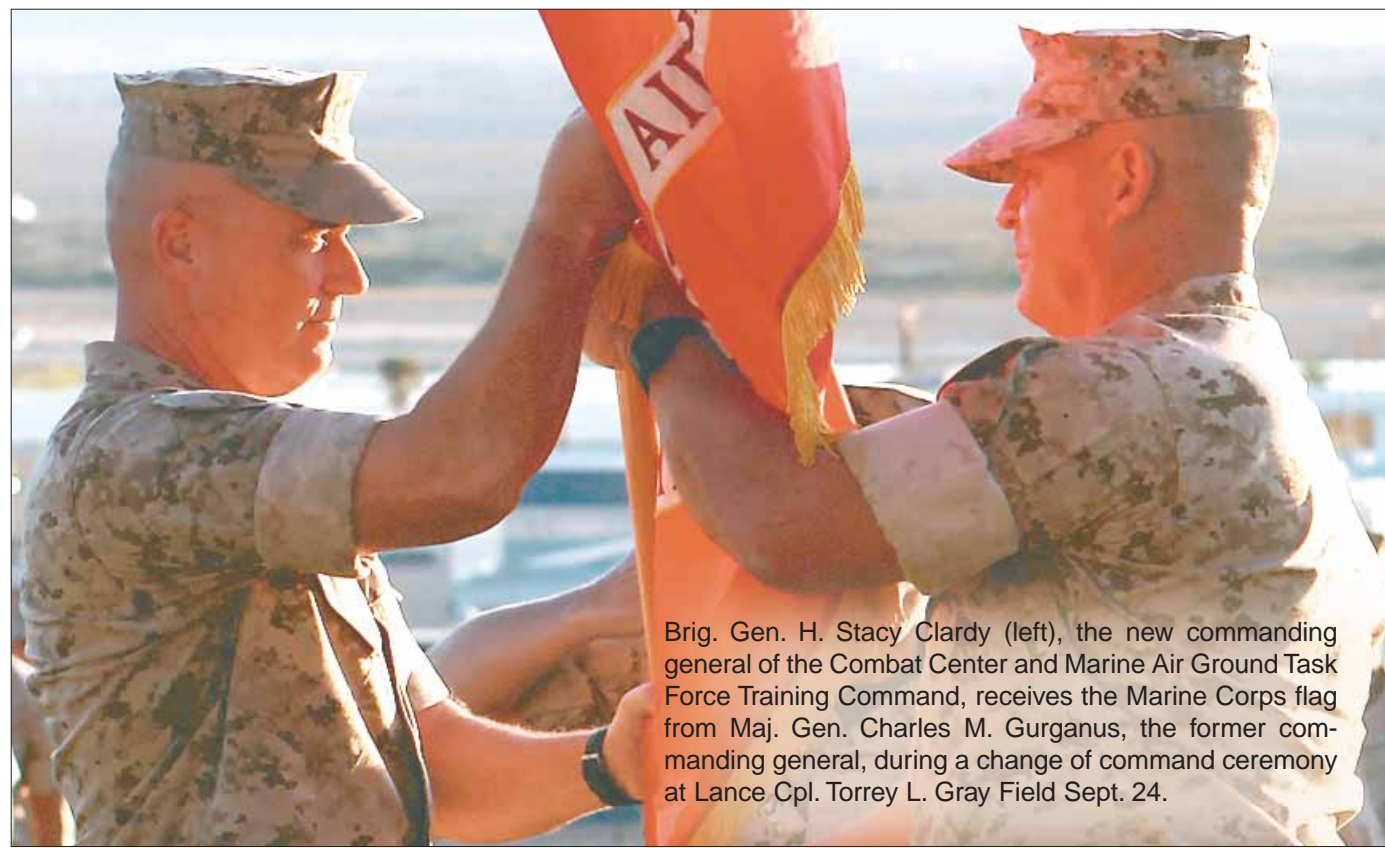
CPL. ERIN A. KIRK-CUOMO
Gen. James T. Conway, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, speaks to Marines and sailors at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Oct. 9. Conway was joined by the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Sgt. Maj. Carlton W. Kent.



LANCE CPL. JEREMIAH HANDELAND
Arnold Schwarzenegger, the governor of California, signs legislation annually declaring March 30 as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" throughout the state of California at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Sept. 25.



SGT. CHRISTOPHER R. RYE
Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 8 attach an M-777-A2 Lightweight Howitzer from 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, to a CH-53E Super Stallion at Fire Base Fiddler's Green in Afghanistan's Helmand Province.



Brig. Gen. H. Stacy Clardy (left), the new commanding general of the Combat Center and Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command, receives the Marine Corps flag from Maj. Gen. Charles M. Gurganus, the former commanding general, during a change of command ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Sept. 24.

LANCE CPL. JEREMIAH HANDELAND



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Players with the MCCES Mustangs celebrate at midfield after knocking off the HQBN Bulldawgs 24-6 during the Commanding General's Intramural Football League Championship game Nov. 25 at Felix Field. The Mustangs went on to defeat the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Falcons 21-14 in the annual Best of the West Competition at Felix Field Dec. 12.



LANCE CPL. WALTER MARINO

Marines with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, clear an enemy stronghold in Now Zad, Afghanistan, during Operation Cobra's Anger Dec. 4. The assault was one of the first major offensives of their deployment.



LANCE CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Marines from Company C, 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, carry members of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, during an exercise off the coast of Del Mar Beach at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 9.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

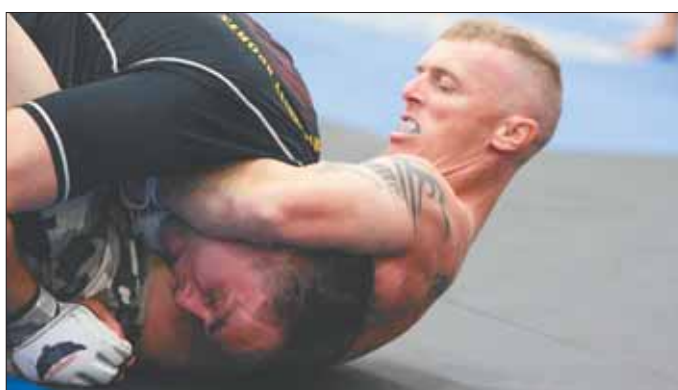
Gary Sinise, the bass guitar player for the Lt. Dan Band, reaches out to one of his newest fans during their show March 28 at the Sunset Cinema.



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

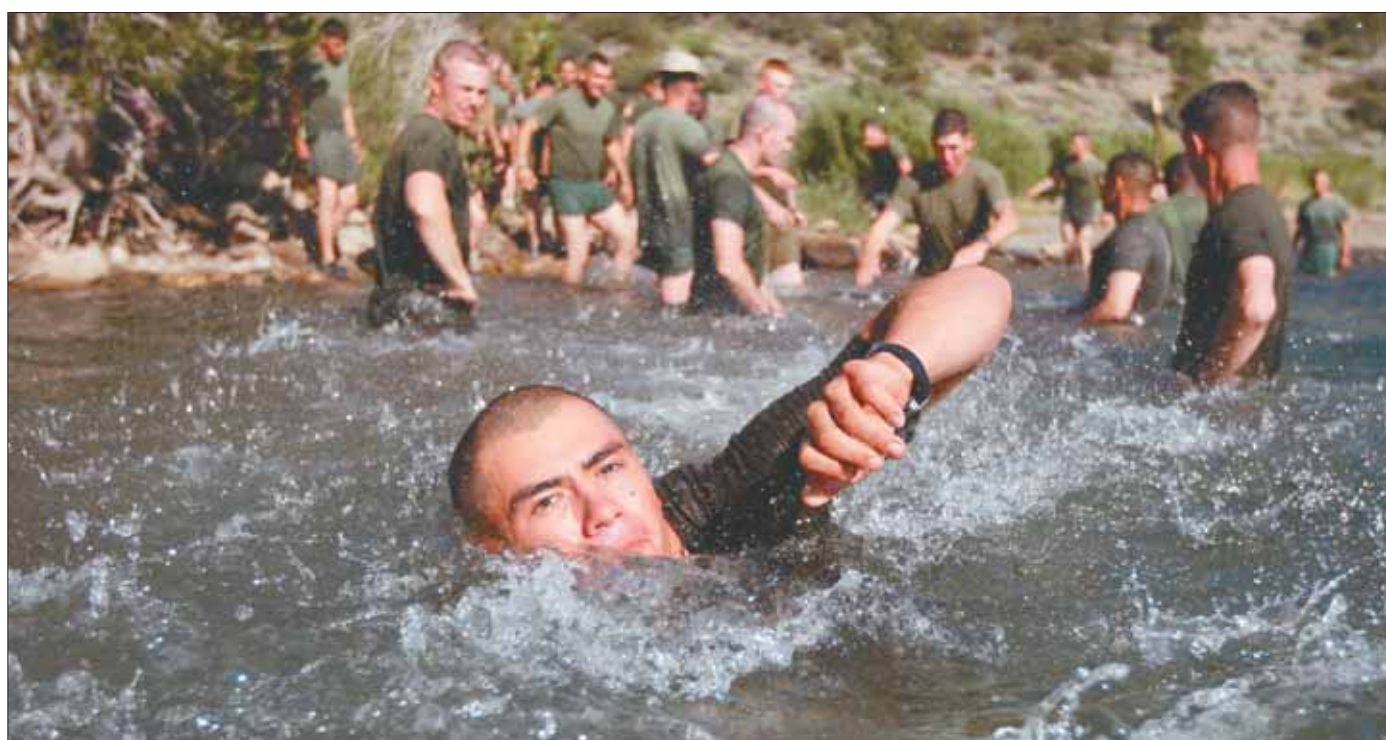
Marines from the Combat Center Band perform a clinic with students and two concerts at Bremen High School in Midlothian, Ill., in honor of Marine Week May 13. Marine Week began May 11 and lasted until May 19.

2009 YEAR IN REVIEW



CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE

Light heavyweight Fight Club 29 member Allen McBroom applies a guillotine choke to his rival during the Fight Expo pankration tournament in Del Mar, Calif., March 21.



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Lance Cpl. Rafael Ramirez, a rifleman with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, swims across a stream during a training exercise at Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center's Leavitt Training Area Aug. 20. The exercise focused on moving fire teams across streams and rivers as safely as possible.



LANCE CPL. KELSEY J. GREEN

Cpl. Richard S. Weinmaster, a Squad Automatic Weapon gunner with Company E, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, smiles after he was awarded the Navy Cross Medal for valor and received a meritorious promotion to corporal at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Aug. 20.



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Deb Dunham, the mother of Medal of Honor recipient Cpl. Jason Dunham and sponsor of the ship bearing her son's name, smashes the ceremonial bottle of champagne against the bow of the Navy's newest Aegis class destroyer, the USS Jason Dunham, after officially christening it during the Aug. 1 ceremony at Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine.



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Children beat the heat at the new Water Park, which opened July 31.

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ComCam helps create training video



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Lance Cpl. Ricky Holt, a videographer with Combat Camera, films Capt. Richard Shinn, an instructor for the Advisor Training Group, and Afghan National Army role players perform a greeting of the officers and senior enlisted at Combat Center Ranger 220 Dec. 18. The purpose of the filming was to create an instructional video to show Marines and sailors training at ATG how they should and should not interact with role players and foreign militaries.

LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Early in the morning, under a pitch black sky, Marine instructors with the Combat Center's Advisor Training Group headed out to Range 220 to film a training video for their students Dec. 18.

"The purpose of this video is to help train the new students on the right and wrong ways to work with other militaries," said Gunnery Sgt. James Robertson, the academics and training chief for the ATG.

"We have taken video of students doing their tests before and then we show

them the video so they can see their errors," Robertson said.

Filming began shortly after first light with a meet and greet between the Marine advisors and their Afghan counterparts and continued by capturing examples of common situations students can expect to

encounter when interacting with role players and foreign militaries.

Lance Cpl. Ricky Holt, a videographer with Combat Camera, filmed Marines interacting, correctly and incorrectly, with civilian role players posing as members of the Afghan National Army.

With the footage, we will be making a series of videos focusing on different advisory techniques, said Lt. Col. Dan Benz, the operations officer for the ATG.

The Marines and role players were not given scripts - only ideas of what to say and how to handle different situations, which added to the realism of the training.

"We are supposed to do things both the right and wrong way so the students can critique us," said Capt. Richard Shinn, an instructor for the ATG. "They need to act normally and know mistakes will happen and handle them as they do."

The ATG plans to implement the videos into their training curriculum upon completion.



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Lance Cpl. Ricky Holt, a videographer with Combat Camera, films Advisor Training Group instructors and Afghan role players Dec. 18 at Combat Center Range 220.

Looking back at new millenium's first decade

CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

American poet Robert Penn Warren once said, "History cannot give us a program for the future, but it can give us a fuller understanding of ourselves, and of our common humanity, so that we can better face the future."

As the first decade of the new millennium comes to a close, it's important for service members and all Americans to look back at a vastly eventful time in our nation's history.

The decade has been marked by a colossal string of events: the tragedies of 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, the election of America's first black president, the Bernie Madoff scandal, the largest recession since the Great Depression era - the list goes on. Even the Boston Red Sox, who had been haunted by the Curse of the Bambino since 1919, won the World Series - twice.

However, one thing this decade doesn't have is a name. When people refer to the '60s, '70s and '80s, an albeit image of each era comes to mind. For the first ten years of the 21st century, several names have been suggested by bloggers to include the "Zens," the "Oh-Ohs," and the "Aughties." Perhaps this decade should remain without a name. It's been too eventful to garnish just one title.

As for the Marine Corps and the Combat Center, the decade proved the long line of men and women willing to fight for their country has not shortened since the wars of yesteryear.

Despite the lack of a name, Marines and sailors of this generation

will look back at this decade with pride; pride in knowing they once again answered America's call; pride in suffering hardships so others could continue to live free; and pride in proving this generation of Marines was just as "hard" as generations past. Historic names like Nimitz and Basilone have been joined by a new line of heroes like Cpls. Jason Dunham and Brady Gustafson.

Throughout the decade, the Combat Center has played an intricate role in maintaining combat readiness in the ever-changing fields of battle. Nearly a third of the fleet Marine force traveled through the Combat Center each year on their way overseas, resulting in the combat training of hundreds of thousands of Marines, sailors and other military members.

The Corps took the fight to Iraq in 2003, ousting Saddam Hussein's regime with a powerful resolve never before witnessed in modern warfare. In 2008, the focus of the Corps' effort shifted back to an insurgent-infested Afghanistan to root out Taliban and Al Qaeda forces hiding in the mountainous terrain and along the Pakistani border.

As a new decade arises, so does another chapter in the legacy of the Marine Corps. Marines will continue to fight our nation's foes in Afghanistan and other places around the world, and the personnel who make up the Combat Center will continue to support units training in preparation of deployments, epitomizing our reputation among the world as the fiercest fighting force on Earth.

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<p>St. Joseph of Arimathea Episcopal Church God Loves You As If You Were His Only Child. Holy Eucharist 10:00 A.M. Onaga at Church St., Y.V. 365-7133</p>	<p>New Beginning Community Church Pastor Lynn Gary Thompson Christ Centered Church Sunday School - 9:30 am Adult & Youth Worship Service - 10:30 am Music & Fun - 6:00 pm 55922 29 Palms Hwy., Yucca Valley 760-910-5261</p>		<p>DESERT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Call for free van ride Sunday 10:00 A.M. - Worship Sunday School ages 4-10 yrs Visitors Welcome Sunday Concert Series • Call for info 29 Palms • 5688 Sunrise Drive • 361-0086</p>	<p>United Methodist Church of Twentynine Palms 6250 Mesquite Springs Road Phone: 367-7338 Sunday School: 8:00 a.m. - Worship: 9:00 a.m. (Child Care Provided) Reverend Lynn Reece "open hearts, open minds, open doors"</p>
<p>OASIS COMMUNITY CHURCH 6631 Utah Trail, 29 Palms Service Times Sunday 9:00 am Nursery provided at 9:00am 367-7812 www.oasiscommunitychurch.com</p>	<p>Yucca Valley Church of Religious Science Healing Lives & Building Dreams Reverend Ron Scott Sunday Celebration & Junior Church 10 AM 7434 Bannock Trail, Yucca Valley 365-2205 yvcrs.org</p>	<p>Truth Tabernacle Apostolic Church 73493 29 Palms Hwy. 29 Palms, CA 367-4185</p> <p>Pastor Titus R. Burns Sunday Service: 10:00 AM Wednesday Night Bible Study: 7:00 PM</p> <p>Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."</p>	<p>FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 365-4014 SUNDAY Bible School.....9:30am Worship.....10:45am</p>	
<p>Two Mile Apostolic Tabernacle 74301 Two Mile Rd., 29 Palms (Next to Lucky Park) "Where Jesus Embraces You" Sundays 10:00 am 6:00 pm Wednesdays 7:30 pm Website: TwoMileApostolic.com 760-367-0080</p>	<p>First Baptist Church of 29 Palms Childcare Available Sunday Services Sunday School 9:15 am. Morning Worship 10:30 am. Evening Service 6:00 p.m. Wednesday Services Prayer/Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Young Married Couples Ministry 6:30 p.m. www.fbc29.org 6414 Split Rock Ave., 29 Palms, CA 760-367-7561</p>	<p>Map: Sage Buena Vista Cholla Pioneer Town HWY 62</p>		

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CPL. ZACHARY J. NOLA

Brass is ejected from an M249 Squad Automatic Weapon fired by an Afghan National Security Forces member during combat marksmanship practice in Now Zad, Afghanistan, Saturday.

SECURITY, from A1

Fla. "Marksmanship ties into being an infantryman. So it ties into how you conduct yourself, what your appearance is, how you look on patrol and how the [Afghan] people view their soldiers."

One of the key things Doty and others focus on when teaching professionalism, is teaching the ANSF noncommissioned officers how to act, obedience to orders and other basic military disciplines.

"[Marksmanship] ties into how you wear your gear, weapons maintenance and gear maintenance, and that all ties into discipline," Doty said.

The Marines have already seen such discipline in ANSF members with whom they are currently working.

"They're maintaining their weapons, their maintaining their gear and their fundamentals of marksmanship," said Brown from Lebanon, Mo.

Although being able to accurately engage a target is important, the affect of ANSF members engaging in professional soldiery may prove more significant in securing the Now Zad area.

"I would say the discipline is more important than their marksmanship ability," said 25-year-old Doty. "If they can shoot someone from 300 meters away, awesome.

However, if they aren't disciplined and treat the citizens here with less respect then they deserve, that's going to lead to secondary and tertiary affects, which will be negative."

With ANSF members acting as more than just foot soldiers but as representatives of the Afghan government, the need for discipline and professionalism is extremely vital to the country's stability.

"[The Afghan people] see the [Afghan National Police] and [Afghan National Army] as instruments of the government of Afghanistan," Doty said.

"So I always tell [the ANSF] the way the public

perceives you is how they are going to start respecting the government," he said.

Amongst the ANSF, bearing of the country's flag over vehicles and command posts is a common sight, however, the banner is seldom seen flying over homes in the Now Zad area.

As the battalion continues to build professionalism amongst the ANSF, it is hoped the flag will soon represent not just ANSF proficiency, but the proficiency of the government.

Until then, Marines like Doty and Brown, and ANSF members, will continue their efforts to improve the Now Zad area one shot at a time.

D.A.R.E. to be different



CPL. NICHOLAS M. DUNN

Carey McElroy, a Drug Abuse Resistance Education officer for the Combat Center's Provost Marshal's Office, and Daren the Lion, the D.A.R.E. program's mascot, congratulate a student at Landers Elementary School on her graduation from the school's 10-week D.A.R.E. program Dec. 18 in the school's cafeteria. Each school year, PMO sends D.A.R.E. representatives to all the elementary schools within the Morongo Unified School District to teach fifth and sixth-grade students the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, and how to say no to peer pressure.

Combat Center Trader Ads

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2002 DODGE VIPER GTS. Red with white stripes, 16,500 miles. \$40,000 OBO. 408-9088. 11/20/09

5 RIMS. Size 15, 6 lug, off-road heavy duty. \$180 OBO. Four Wrangler tires, worn only 7,000 miles. \$80 OBO. Call Jose 361-3509. 11/13/09

1994 KAWASAKI KLR DUAL SPORT BIKE. \$2,000. 910-9071. 11/6/09

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GERMAN SHEPHERD PUP. Female, 6 months old, purebred, house trained, all shots and spayed. \$100. 364-1133 or 774-0586. 1/8/10

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WANTED-PISTOL 45 Caliber, military. 367-6030. 10/20/09

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The deadline for submitting Trader Ads is noon Wednesday, for the upcoming Friday's newspaper.

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.

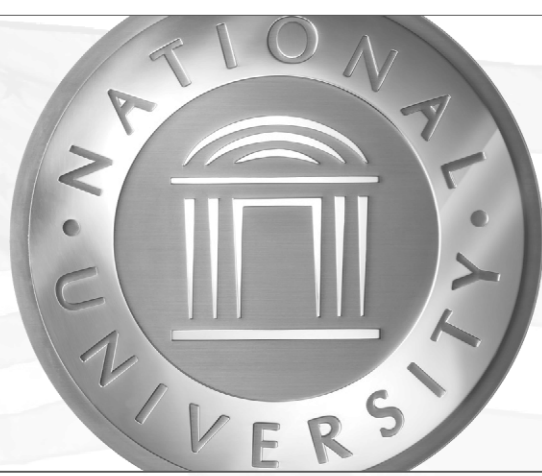
To have a "House For Sale" ad run in the Observation Post, applicants must provide Permanent Change of Station orders and have the ad approved by Base Housing. This ensures the Combat Center Trader is not used for commercial real estate endeavors.

Ads are run on a first-come, first-serve, space available basis. If you have questions please call 830-3762.

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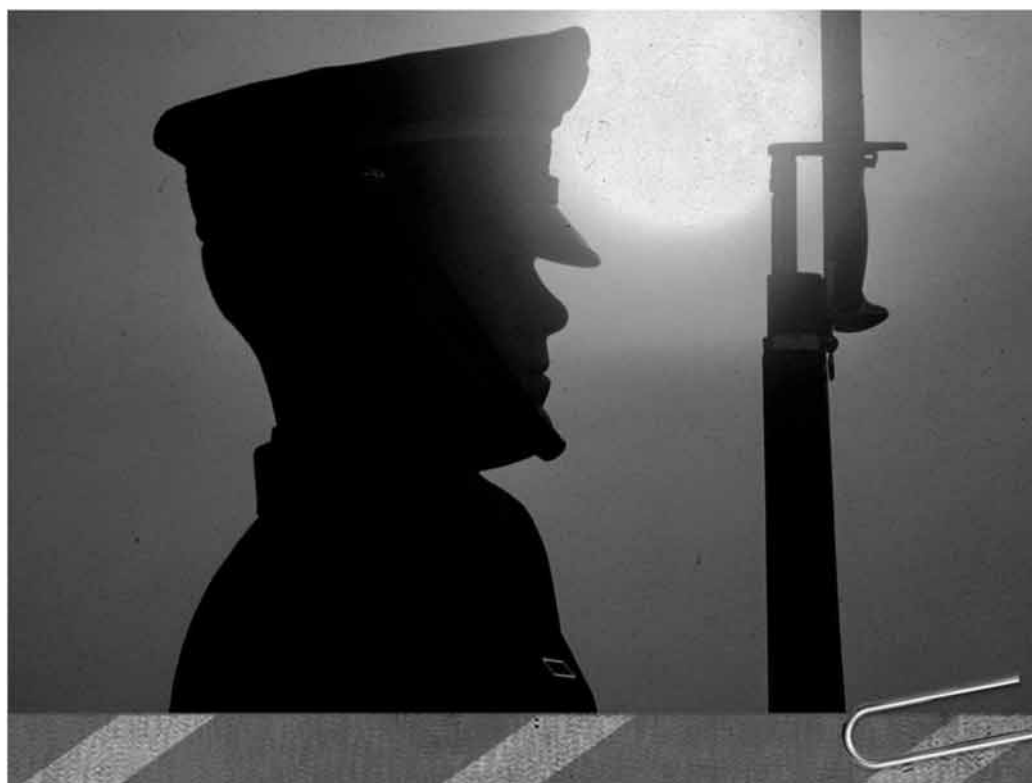
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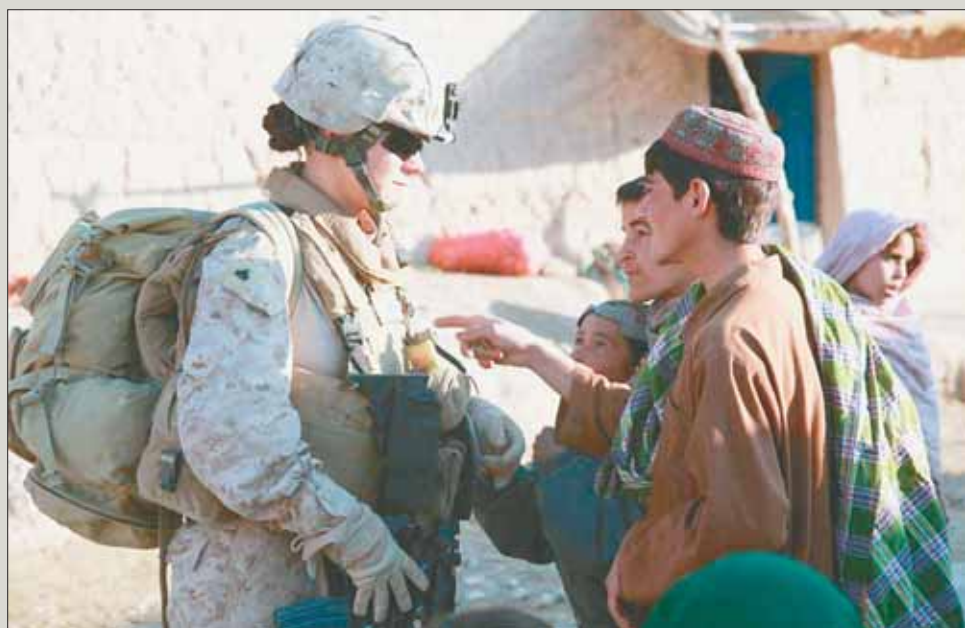


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PHOTOS BY CPL. ALBERT F. HUNT



above, Cpl. Susana Craig, an electrician attached to the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment's Female Engagement Team, talks to Afghan children during a patrol in Khwaja Jamal, Afghanistan, Dec. 29. Afghan women and children may be more comfortable speaking with Marines in the FET.

left, Master Sgt. Julia Watson, an enigneer equipment chief attached to 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, walks with Afghan girls in Khwaja Jamal, Afghanistan, Dec. 29.

BANDAGES, from A5

corpsman].” said Zaycek. “The plan is to train up other corpsmen and nurses so they feel comfortable doing these missions in different locations.”

While smaller than most units operating in the Now Zad area, the FCT is showing size doesn't matter. It's not just the impact they are

having on the insurgency but the means they are using to make that impact. They are fighting the insurgency with knowledge and band-aids. Not bullets.

In recent weeks the mood in Now Zad has changed from one of constant tension to one of reconstruction. The area still presents challenges and dangers to both civilians and military forces but the

positive results that Afghan national security forces, Lima Co., the FET and FCT have made are undeniable.

“It touched my heart while we were out in Dehanna seeing the kids come up us,” said the 51-year-old Craig. “Knowing they're actually coming to us, trusting us without fear of retribution from the Taliban, lets me know that's a blow for freedom.”



CPL ZACHARY J. NOLA

An Afghan man holds his child while waiting for the child to be assessed by the Female Corpsman Team during a recent visit by the team to villages in the area of Now Zad, Afghanistan. The FCT recently returned to Now Zad, Jan. 3, to assist members of the Female Engagement Team, Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan, with their effort to further the process of treating, educating and engaging the women of Now Zad.

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B1



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- Recruit a support team
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CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Keeping an eye on calorie intake is a good way to eat healthier as part of a New Year's resolution. Fitness trainers, aerobics classes and other semi-competitive events are available aboard the Combat Center through the fitness centers and Community Center.

The healthy way to lose weight

CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Traditionally at the beginning of each year, many here at the Combat Center vow to start the year off right by making New Year's resolutions to improve themselves.

While some vow to learn how to budget, start college, or participate in more charity programs, one of the most popular resolutions is to get in shape for the new year.

Sometimes losing weight in a healthy way can be a difficult and slow process. Fortunately, the Combat Center provides many options from fitness centers to a dietician, to help patrons keep their resolutions throughout the year.

Lynda Rummel, the fitness manager at the East Fitness Center and Gym, said those who exercise on a regular basis, normally three days a week for a minimum of 30 minutes, will be healthier people.

"Exercise is essential to weight control and prevention of obesity and obesity-related disease," said Rummel, a self-proclaimed military brat. "Lifting weights increases the metabolism at rest, and cardio helps expend calories consumed."

"It is also important to train in the fitness center for the sports you may

play; those who tailor their workouts to their sports are less likely to have sports-related injuries," she said. "Fitness is for everyone, and it's important to exercise to be a more efficient Marine or sailor."

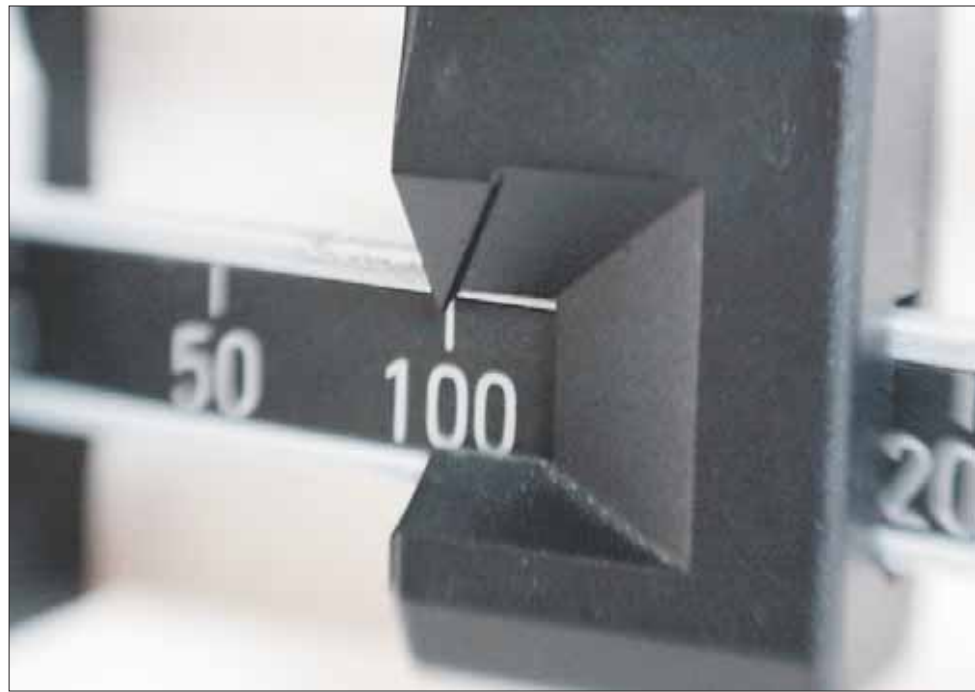
Fitness trainers, aerobics classes and other semi-competitive competitions are available aboard the Combat Center through the fitness center and Community Center.

People can spend money and jump on widely-known diets like the South Beach Diet, Weight Watchers or Jenny Craig, but Rummel said simply keeping a food journal will help people monitor their calorie intake and lose weight.

Martha Hunt, a certified anger management facilitator for the Health Promotion & Wellness Center at the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital, said in an article to the Enquirer, that people need seven skills to make the change happen. Those skills are: Set a course for success, don't bite off more than you can chew, arrange for success, not failure, watch what you are doing, reward your actions, recruit a support team and have a plan to stay on track.

"You need to have all of these skills to have the best chance of success," Hunt said. "Sometimes we start with a

See WEIGHT, B3



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Maintaining a healthy weight is essential in the Marine Corps, and as many Combat Center personnel take on a healthier lifestyle as their New Year's resolution. There is a wide variety of information which can obtain through the gyms, fitness trainers and the dietician aboard the installation.

Local bodybuilder qualifies for Miss Olympia, Universe

JOHN GAVIN

HI-DESERT STAR

YUMA, Ariz. — In her second bodybuilding event, Nicole Simien of Twentynine Palms struck gold again, winning the "tall" class in the National Federation of Natural Bodybuilding held Nov. 21 here.

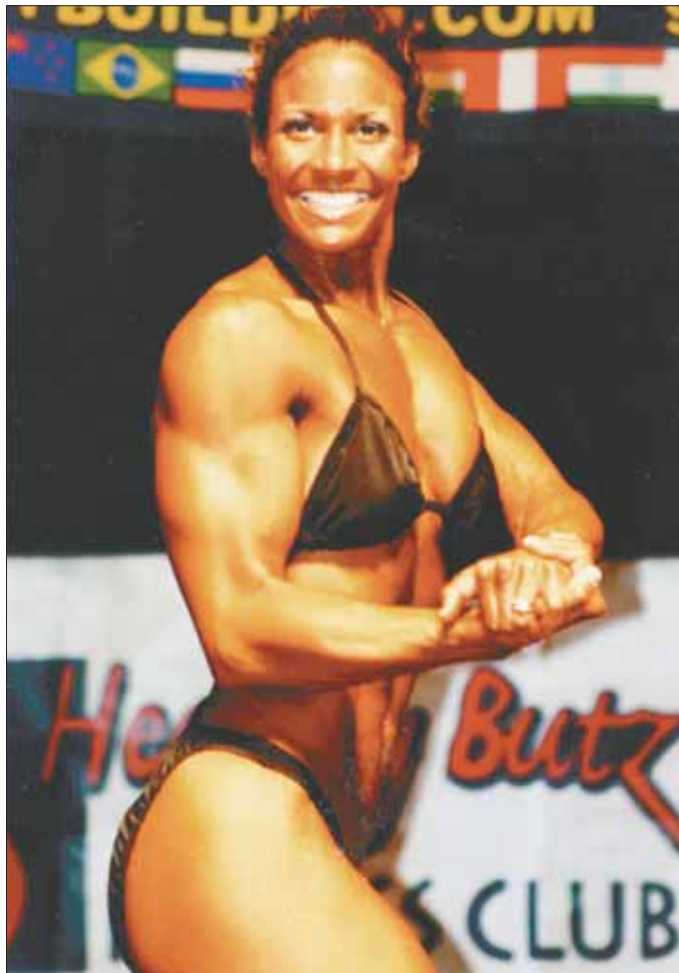
The competition is open only to bodybuilders who have not used performance-enhancing drugs for at least three years.

Simien's win qualifies her to compete in the Miss Olympia competition to be held in Los Angeles in August and in Miss Universe, also in Los Angeles, in November.

"This is a testimony to her commitment," Simien's trainer, Shane Friederich, said.

"She went the extra minute of cardio, did the extra set of weights and was rewarded with a win."

In the four months before



COURTESY PHOTO

Nicole Simien strikes a winning pose at the National Federation of Natural Bodybuilding competition in Yuma, Ariz., Nov. 21.

See QUALIFY, B4

Happy newborn



DAN BARBER

The first baby born here at the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital in 2010 is the son of Cpl. Aaron Gott and Brooke Gott of Dexter, Mo. Also present with mom and dad to welcome his new brother was 2-year-old Caleb Gott. The parents named their son Nolan Michael Gott, who was born at 2:06 a.m., Saturday. Nolan weighed a healthy seven pounds nine-and-a-half ounces, and measured 20 inches in length. Gott is assigned to 1st Tank Battalion as a field radio operator.



Local Events

From Austin: Brennen Leigh

Description: Performs new release "Devil's on My Trail"
When: 7:30 p.m., Friday
Where: Pappy and Harriet's
53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown
For more information call 365-5956 or visit
<http://www.pappyandharriets.com>.

Jann Browne

Singer/songwriter performs retro-style honky tonk
When: 8 p.m., Saturday
Where: Pappy and Harriet's
53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown
For more information call 365-5956 or visit
<http://www.pappyandharriets.com>.

Art: Winifred Johnson Brewer

Description: Acrylic and collage artwork
When: Wednesday to Sunday from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. through Jan. 24
Where: 29 Palms Art Gallery, 74055 Cottonwood Drive Twentynine Palms
For more information call 367-7819 or visit
<http://www.29palmsartgallery.com>.

Sound Check at Joshua Tree Celebration Center

Description: Local musicians performs live
When: 6 to 9 p.m. on Tuesday
Where: Joshua Tree Celebration Center, 6393 Sunset Road, Joshua Tree
For more information call 902-9366 or visit
<http://www.jtcelebrations.com/Events.html>.

Sunday Brunch Music with Michael Callan

Description: Acoustic old school blues with special guests
When: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Where: The 29 Palms Inn
73950 Inn Avenue, Twentynine Palms
For more information call 367-3505 or visit
<http://www.29palmsinn.com>.

Lower Desert

Palm Springs International Film Festival

Description: Over 400 screenings, of over 200 films
Date: Now through Jan. 18.
For information call the PSIFF headquarters at 322-2930 or 800-898-7256 or visit
<http://www.psfilmfest.org/index.aspx>.

Jack Jones sings music of Alan & Marilyn Bergman

Description: Two-time Grammy winner performs
When: 8 p.m., Saturday
Where: McCallum Theatre
73000 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert
For more info call 340-ARTS or visit
<http://www.mccallumtheatre.com>.

Music: Lionel Richie

Description: The rhythm and blues superstar performs
When: 8 p.m., Jan. 15
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: Styx

Description: The rock and roll legends perform
When: 9 p.m., Jan. 22
Where: Agua Caliente
32-250 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage
For more info call 888-999-1995 or visit
<http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Harry Connick Jr.

Description: Grammy winning singer and pianist
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 23
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more info call 800-827-2946 or visit
<http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Comedy: Martin Lawrence

Description: The comedic actor performs standup.
When: 8 p.m., Friday, Feb. 12
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

The Sunset Cinema is getting an upgrade

The theater will be closed from Jan. 8 through Feb. 12 for a lighting project which will enhance your movie experience. We apologize for any inconvenience. The Lifelong Learning Library has movies for check out. New releases, classic titles and everything in between. Call 830-6685 for more details or stop by building 1524 to check them out.

Clooney soars with no strings attached 'Up in the Air'

NEIL POND

AMERICAN PROFILE

Up in the Air

Rated R

As a smooth solo traveler in "Up in the Air," George Clooney glides through his role as a hatchet man whose job is to tell other people they don't have one anymore.

Clooney's character, Ryan Bingham, likes to think he delivers the bad news with a reassuring, personal touch that dampens the devastation. That's why he's constantly flying across the country to bring the hammer down at big companies where the bosses don't want to get their own hands dirty – or set off any loose cannons.

Bingham is an airport warrior, on the road for more than 300 days a year. He packs tight, travels light and only feels alive when he's on the go. "The slower we move," he says, "the faster we die." Unmarried and unattached, he has nothing to tie him down to the ground, or to anything – or anyone – else. His unadorned apartment is a bare, sparsely furnished base camp for repacking and turnaround.

Bingham's on-the-go lifestyle is a cocoon apart from the everyday rhythms that make the world go 'round for most folks – cer-

Curbside Bag Check-in



COURTESY PHOTO

Ryan Bingham, played by George Clooney, is a hatchet man who delivers bad news with a personal touch and only feels alive when he is on the go.

tainly for the ones he axes. Real people are hurting, healing and feeling their way down there as he zips overhead at 20,000 above the fray where the air is clear, clean and uncluttered.

Things take an ironic turn when a couple of females enter the picture and make him reconsider his life and his career. One is the sexy fellow traveler (Vera Farmiga) with whom Bingham has an on-the-road fling, only to find himself – against his keep-moving instincts – falling for her. The other is the young hotshot (Anna Kendrick) hired by Bingham's head-chopping firm to implement a computer program that will do the firing via videoconference, making travel – and Bingham's own job – obsolete.

Director Jason Reitman juggles all the pieces with a precision that syncs perfectly with these troubled times. There are several ways this story could have gone – dark comedy, quirky drama, romantic romp. But Reitman takes it somewhere else entirely, to a place where it captures the collective queasiness of an American workforce rocked by rampaging recession, record unemployment and a sense of detachment from any sense of security that a job once offered.

That feeling is amplified by the use of many non-actors, real people who'd recently been told they'd lost their jobs, in some of the "termination" scenes. If the emotions they express seem particularly honest, raw and real – they are. So is the movie's theme

song, which plays over the closing credits. Stick around and you find out it's written and performed by a musician who'd recently joined the ranks of the unemployed.

"Up in the Air" is being promoted as a comedy, but that's misleading. It packs more punch than a punch line. It has humor, but its heart is really with its characters – why they're who they are, what makes them tick, and who they turn out to be.

It concludes the way it starts: up in the air. But between those aerial bookends is a grown-up journey that unfolds on the ground, where life is complicated, and fraught with emotional risk as well as reward. And sometimes, it suggests, you can fly 10 million miles but never really go anywhere at all.

Cinema 6
MOVIE TIMES 365-9633 Showtimes Effective 1/8/10 - 1/14/10

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Alvin And The Chipmunks: The Squeakel (PG) Everyday: 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00	Coming Jan. 15 The Book of Eli The Spy Next Door	• ADULTS \$8.00 • SENIORS \$6.00 • CHILDREN \$6.00 www.cinemax6.com

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COURTESY PHOTO

Director Jason Reitman complicates Bingham's life by adding a young hotshot, played by Anna Kendrick, who tries to implement a program to make his own job obsolete.

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Winter Dodgeball League ducking, diving to Combat Center

CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Marine Corps Community Services Sports Department will host its fifth annual Winter Dodgeball League starting Jan. 12 with pre-season games at the East Fitness Center and Gym at 5:30 p.m.

The Winter Dodgeball League began as just a tournament until the turnout of teams and players wanting to participate swarmed the sports department.

"Everybody always says they have really enjoyed playing dodgeball in our league," said Randy Husted, an MCCS sports specialist, and a Twentynine Palms native. "It's great because you don't really have to be athletic; it is more camaraderie and fun," Husted said. "To play football and baseball you have to have some sort of skill and be a decent player. With this, you just have to be able to duck around."

During a match, two teams will compete in five

games against each other. The team that wins three of the five games wins the match. Each game will last four minutes.

A dodgeball team consists of four players and one substitute. Five other players can be added to a standby list in case one of the main team members cannot make a match. However, if one of the standby players participates in one game of the match, they must compete in all their team games that night.

Brant Dowd, an instructor for Company A, Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School, has played in previous leagues and tournaments aboard the Combat Center, and has put together a team for the upcoming season.

"It's just fun to have a sport to compete in with a group of guys who all have a common goal," said Dowd, a St. Petersburg, Fla., native. "I have played a lot of sports on base, and when I tried

See **DODGE, B4**



PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Members of MCCES A team stand proudly with their first place trophy after their hard fought victories. Six teams participated in the dodgeball double-elimination tournament held March 17 at the East Gym. This year a number of teams have signed up to compete in the league. Preseason matches are scheduled to begin Jan. 12.

WEIGHT, from B1

goal, which is too general, and become overwhelmed. Start with a general goal, and then specify what you have to do to achieve it."

Cmdr. Kristin N. Klemann, the dietician at the Clinical Nutrition Department at the Combat Center's Naval Hospital, said the Web site <http://www.eatright.org> has loads of information for people wanting to lose weight.

The Web site has nutritional information for different age groups and genders and provides articles on how to understand body mass index, the cause of obesity and tips for eating in a restaurant, she said.

For more information regarding proper eating or maintaining a proper weight, contact Klemann at 830-2274.



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Cpl. Brian McPhail, (right), an operations clerk with 7th Marine Regiment, 'sprints' on a stationary bike during a spin class at the East Fitness Center and Gym Nov. 3. Cardiovascular exercise is one way to burn calories and fat.

Athlete of the Week



Name: Andrea Shapiro
Hometown: Rochester N.Y.
Unit: Company B, Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School
Job Title: Student
Recognition: Member of the Varsity Women's Basketball Team.
Favorite aspect of the sport: "The competitive nature and being part of something bigger than yourself."
Advice for aspiring players: "No goal is too hard to reach with the proper effort."



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Pvt. Matthew Dejiacomo, a mechanic with Co. A, 3rd LAR, lifts 45 pounds of iron as he builds muscle during a routine workout at the East Fitness Center and Gym.



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

By using lighter weight with more repetition, Pvt. Matthew Dejiacomo, a mechanic with Company A, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, creates different types of workouts at the East Fitness Center and Gym.

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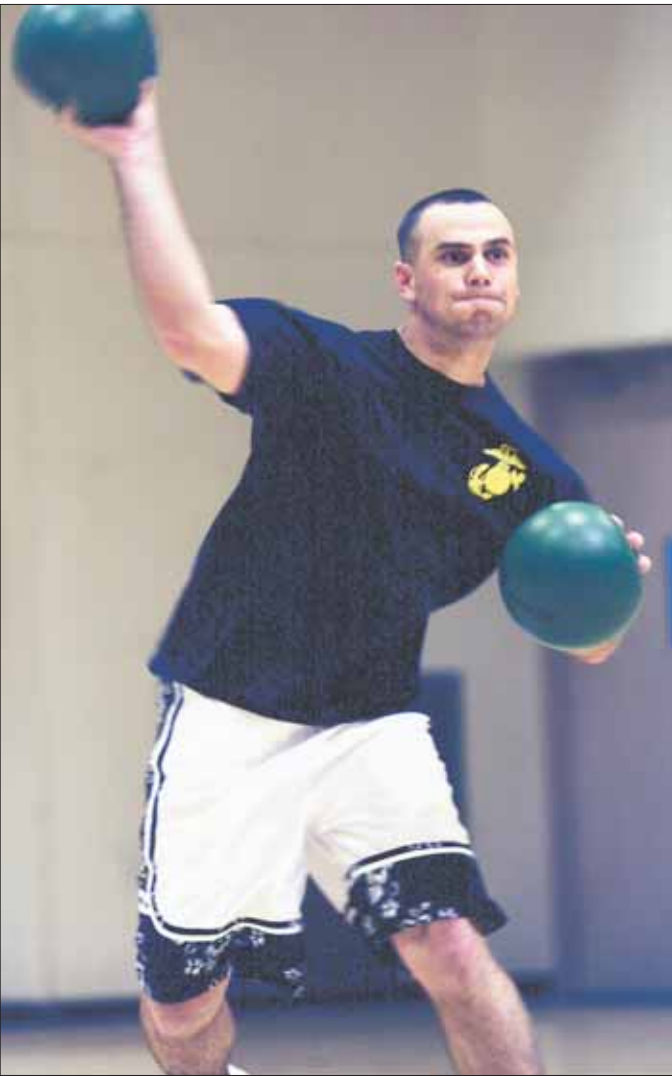
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PFC. MICHAEL T. GAMS

Colby Thompson, a Fainting Goats player, hurls a ball at his opponent.

DODGE, from B3

[dodgeball] out, it turned out to be a lot of fun."

Husted said since the matches go by really fast, he wants to have each team participate in two matches throughout the week.

At the end of the season, the first and second place teams will receive a trophy, and individual awards will be given to the players on those teams.

"I have played dodgeball

since I was 12, but this is my first year playing on base," said Chad Muhlenbruck, an instructor for Co. A, MCCES, who is participating in the winter league. "Our team should be pretty strong and pretty competitive."

All Combat Center personnel and military family members over the age of 18 are eligible to participate. Husted said he will accept team submissions until Friday. For more information call Husted at 830-4092.



COURTESY PHOTO

Nicole Simien, who trains in Yucca Valley and works as a dental hygienist at the Combat Center, won the "tall" class to qualify to compete in the Miss Olympia and Miss Universe competitions next year.

QUALIFY, from B1

the competition, she arrived at the Five Star Gym in Yucca Valley at 5 a.m. and worked out for two hours.

After each workout, she drove back to the Combat Center, where she works as a dental hygienist.

"The final two days prior to the events, she restricted her water intake to almost nothing and ate dried fruits. Competitive body-builders do this to shrink their skin and enhance their cuts for the show," Frederich said.

"It's not easy, but Nicole adhered to the regimen," he said.

Frederich reported his trainee was happy to win, but she was looking forward to eating regularly again.

Simien will take a couple weeks off to give her joints and muscles time to repair. Training will begin again in January as she ramps up for the Miss Olympia and Universe events.

In a previous interview, Simien said, "It takes a lot of self-discipline to compete and keep to a training schedule.

"You have to push your body to limits it's never reached before. I've learned that it takes an inner strength to gain the outer strength that shows through in competition," she said.

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