

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

MAY 28, 2010 SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957 VOL. 53 ISSUE 21

New BEQ promises better future for barracks life



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

People gather for the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, barracks Monday. The building and its surroundings were designed with more “curb appeal” than a traditional barracks.

LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines from 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, now have a modern, spacious and energy efficient place to call home after Brig. Gen. H. Stacy Clardy III, the Combat Center’s commanding general, officially opened building 1432 during a ribbon cutting ceremony Monday.

The new 192-room barracks, which includes a 400-vehicle parking structure, cost \$32.8 million, took 18 months to build and can house up to 382 personnel, said Mel Pickens, a facilities management specialist with the Combat Center’s Public Works Division.

During construction, the contractors achieved 57 percent energy cost savings, exceeding the requirement by 27 percent,

during construction. They also achieved 50 percent reduction in landscaping water usage and 30 percent in water reduction overall. They utilized recycled, low-emitting and renewable materials from regional sources and diverted more than 75 percent of construction waste from land fills, according to a paper on the buildings features.

The Marines, who are scheduled to start moving in next week, are in for a pleasant surprise when they do. Their new home features some major upgrades from what they are used to.

“It is not about the money, it is about getting a good product to the Marines,” Clardy said.

Pickens said the rooms have more space in them and feel more like a hotel than the

See BEQ, A9

U.S., Romanian militaries conduct night vision training

CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

BLACK SEA ROTATIONAL FORCE

BABADAG TRAINING AREA, Romania — U.S. Marines and sailors deployed with Black Sea Rotational Force 2010 conducted night vision training with Romanian Marines and soldiers, May 19.

The training was part of a two-week peacekeeping operations regiment the U.S. troops are conducting with their partners in the Romanian armed forces. For many of the Romanian troops, it was their first time to use night vision gear.

About 100 Marines are currently deployed to Romania as a Security Cooperation Marine Air-Ground Task Force. The task force has the mission of promoting regional stability, increasing the military capacity of partner nations and build enduring partnerships in the region.

For more stories about 1st Tank Battalion’s partnership with Romanian forces, turn to pages A3 and A11.



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Lance Corporals Joel Hindman [left] and David Johnson, both assaultmen with scout platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 1st Tank Battalion, issue night vision goggles to Romanian Marines and soldiers during a night vision familiarization exercise at Babadag Training Area, Romania, May 19. 1st Tank Battalion is deployed to the Black Sea as the core of a Security Cooperation Marine Air-Ground Task Force with the mission to promote regional stability and build the partner nations’ military capacity.

Combat Center kid wins big, represents Marine Corps at national art competition



PFC. SARAH ANDERSON

Isaiah Garcia, proudly shows off his award-winning picture at Felix Field Tuesday, which won him second place in the Armed Services YMCA art contest. His original picture is now displayed in Washington, D.C.

PFC. SARAH ANDERSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

As Isaiah Garcia received the Armed Services YMCA art competition award Tuesday at Felix Field, he looked proudly to his right, where he found his mother and grandparents. Isaiah looked at all who had gathered to support him in his achievement, but one important person was missing, the person who inspired Isaiah’s artwork and his achievement.

Staff Sgt. Mario Castaneda would have given anything to be at his stepson’s award ceremony, but his duties lie in Afghanistan.

Isaiah, a third grade student at Twentynine Palms Elementary School, won second place in the art competition. He is the first child from the Twentynine Palms area to earn the distinction.

The winning art piece was a drawing of Castaneda, his stepfather, with 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment; his mother, Crystal Castaneda; and himself.

“Since he’s in the military, I wanted to draw him, because he’s the one who fights for our

See ART, A5

NMCRS surprises active duty volunteers with awards

CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Active duty service members sometimes find it difficult to volunteer because of their full schedules. When personnel donate their time to the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society, NMCRS ensures the service members are recognized for their hard work.

Master Gunnery Sgt. William Cutrer, the operations chief for 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, was the first active duty Marine to volunteer more than 125 hours to the Combat Center’s NMCRS. He has been working on those 125 hours since

See NMCRS, A5



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Master Gunnery Sgt. William Cutrer, the operations chief for 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, speaks to his fellow Navy Marine Corps Relief Society volunteers during his awards ceremony May 20 at the Village Center as Sgt. Maj. Harrison L. Tanksley, the Combat Center sergeant major, looks on.



Helping hands ~ See A3



Roughin’ it ~ See A6



Sight for sore eyes ~ See A8



Patriot act ~ See B1

TRICARE maternity coverage explained

DIANE MAYER

TriWest Healthcare Alliance

TRICARE’s maternity benefits include prenatal care, labor, delivery and postpartum care. If you are eligible for TRICARE maternity coverage, here are three baby steps which will get you off to a running start:

- Step 1: Visit your primary care manager
- Step 2: Know your benefits*
- TRICARE covers:
 - An ultrasound or sonogram determined to be medically necessary. An ultrasound is covered only with diagnosis and management of conditions that constitute a high-risk pregnancy.
 - Services and supplies associated with prenatal care, labor, delivery and postpartum care
 - Anesthesia for pain management during delivery.
 - Emergency cesarean section
 - Subscription to free weekly e-mail parenting newsletter, “eCareConnect” via www.theparentreview.com/DoD.

TRICARE does not cover:

- Personal comfort items such as private rooms and televisions after delivery.
- “Routine” ultrasounds, including ultrasounds to determine gender. You may choose to pay for a routine ultrasound separately from your TRICARE benefits.

- Treatments, procedures and technologies related to artificial methods of reproduction including artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization, gamete intrafallopian transfer or the reversal of a prior surgical sterilization.

*NOTE: These lists are not all-inclusive. To determine if a specific service is covered, visit www.tricare.mil>benefit information>medical>covered services.

Step 3: Enroll within 60 days of birth or adoption

- If you and your spouse are both active duty, either of you may be designated as the baby’s sponsor.
 - Be sure to register your baby in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System as soon as possible.
 - Enroll your baby in TRICARE Prime or Prime Remote within 60 days. If the child is not enrolled in TRICARE Prime or Prime Remote within 60 days, coverage will revert to the TRICARE Standard program option. The child’s eligibility for TRICARE Standard ends 365 days after birth or adoption if not properly registered.
- Need more information? Visit <http://www.tricare.mil>, or call 1-888-874-9378.

Centerspeak

Where do you want to visit and why?

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



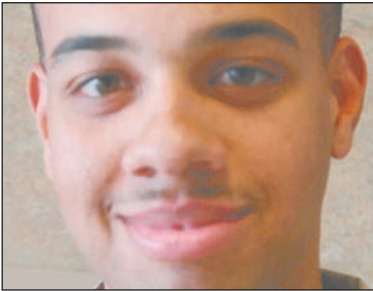
STAFF SGT. RICKY YOUNG
MATERIAL READINESS COMPANY, COMBAT LOGISTICS BATTALION 7

“Europe. I have a lot of friends from there.”



LANCE CPL. JORDAN HOWARD
TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT COMPANY, COMBAT LOGISTICS BATTALION 7

“Well I am really big into history, so it would have to be Rome.”



LANCE CPL. PRESTO GRAYS
COMPANY K, 2ND BATTALION, 9TH MARINE REGIMENT

“I would go back to D.C., because it is home, and there is no place like home.”

Hot Topics

“ONE MAN’S BATTLE” ALCOHOL SEMINAR

Dr. John B. “Black Jack” Matthews, a retired Marine lieutenant colonel, to speak about battling alcohol and how it affected his career from 9 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 3 p.m., June 9 at the base theater. The event is open to all military, MCCS employees, retirees and family members.

SCION BATTLE OF THE BUILDS

Scion, in conjunction with MWR and MCCS, is offering a car design contest for all active duty, reserve and National Guard personnel. The top designers from each base will be given money to build their dream cars and fly to Vegas for the final contest in November. Teams must have 5-8 people. Registration deadline is June 11. Go to <http://www.battleofthebuilds.com> for more details.

SIX FLAGS MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY & PICNIC

Six Flags Magic Mountain is hosting a Military Appreciation Day and Picnic July 3. Ticket price is \$29.75 and includes a fully-catered all-you-can-eat buffet style meal. For tickets, visit the MCCS ITT office at the exchange or call 830-6163 ext. 252.

GOLF SCHOOL

Desert Winds Golf Course is offering Golf School. Cost is \$100 for adults and \$50 for juniors. Adults start at 8:30 a.m. and juniors at 10:30 a.m. Cost includes use clubs, balls, greens fee and six weeks of instruction. For more information, call 830-6132.

Marine Corps History

May 29, 1991

Elements of a joint task force, which included the 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, departed the Bay of Bengal off the coast off Bangladesh after a cyclone tore up the coastline.



Eagle Eyes

Report any suspicious activity immediately which may be a sign of terrorism, including:

1. Surveillance
2. Suspicious questioning
3. Tests of security
4. Acquiring supplies
5. Suspicious persons
6. Trial runs
7. Deploying assets

830-3937

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SUDOKU #1824

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

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2010 HOMETOWN CONTENT

NO PUN INTENDED

[Puzzle solutions on A9]

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
14						15						16		
17						18						19		
20						21				22	23			
		24		25					26					
27	28			29			30	31						
32			33				34							
35						36	37					38	39	40
												41		
			42	43						44				
45	46	47						48	49			50		
51								52				53		
54						55	56					57		58
60					61	62					63			
64					65						66			
67					68						69			

ACROSS

1. Acted the expectant father
6. Commandments verb
11. Apply turf to
14. Lacking a mate
15. No-no
16. Soldier's fare, briefly
17. Wild uproar
19. "Alley ___"
20. Start a pot
21. Ultimatum ender
22. Antacid brand, for short
24. Eat away at
26. Supreme Court resignee of 2009
27. Night wear, for short
29. It may result in a goal
32. Desert green spots
34. Horton creator Dr. ___
35. Huge-screen format
36. Chichen Itza inhabitant
38. Cast-of-thousands film
42. In unison
44. Add fuel to
45. Player coming off the bench
50. MGM roarer
51. Fills with glee
52. Licorice-like flavor
54. Place for vows
55. Spumante source
57. Spain's longest river
60. Word with messor press
61. Seeker of the Fountain of Youth
64. U-turn from WSW
65. Mary of "The Maltese Falcon"
66. Name in ranges
67. 64-Across, e.g.
68. Exec's closetful
69. Slapped the cuffs on

DOWN

1. John's (pizza chain)
2. One of the Aldas
3. "The Barefoot ___" (Bogart movie)
4. Bitter-___ (die-hard)
5. "Fiddle-de-___"
6. Like hot merchandise
7. Kid-lit hero Brinker
8. Irish Rose's lover
9. Bud's comedy partner
10. Tree-climbing girls, e.g.
11. Like a recently shaved face
12. Start of a lament by Juliet
13. Kick out of the country
18. Iranian of old
23. Apple or potato variety
25. Photo ___ (camera sessions)
26. Knock for a loop
27. Luau fare
28. Jazz session
30. Up to now
31. ___ & Perrins
- Worcestershire sauce
33. Two-horse wager
36. Talc-to-diamond scale
37. Singer Di Franco
39. Trellis growth, perhaps
40. One of the Clantons
41. Corp. VIP
43. Himalayan guides
44. ___ Lanka
45. Reached a max
46. Big Ten's Fighting ___
47. Yak, yak, yak
48. Source of fries, slangily
49. Oklahoma city
53. 1965 civil rights march site
55. Prefix with war or hero
56. Tartan sporter
58. Rice-A-___
59. ___ even keel
62. Buckeyes' sch.
63. Shucked item

OBSERVATION POST

Commanding General

Brig. Gen. H. Stacy Clardy III

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Combat Center Spotlight

Name: Bettymae Koopman
Hometown: San Jose, Calif.
Job title: Education service specialist
Job duties: Provide educational services and programs.
What do you like most about your job? "Providing services, information and guidance to both military and civilian learners."
Significant achievements: Earning college degrees.
Hobbies: Music and painting.
Military service: None.
Time aboard Combat Center: Two years.



Marines, sailors volunteer to improve home for HIV-positive Romanian teens



Lance Cpl. John Lamecker, a radio operator with 1st Tank Battalion, applies paint during a civil affairs project May 19. More than a dozen Black Sea Rotational Force Marines and sailors volunteered to help renovate the living areas of a home for HIV-positive teens and young adults.



Gunnery Sgt. Thurman Cowan (left), the civil affairs staff noncommissioned officer in charge, discusses farm life with 'Nick,' one of the residents of the home for HIV-positive teens and young adults Marines and sailors from Black Sea Rotational helped refurbish May 18-20.



BLACK SEA ROTATIONAL FORCE

MIHAIL KOGALNICEANU, Romania — The house at Number 12, Primaverii Street isn't particularly remarkable from the outside. Like many homes in the Romanian village of Mihail Kogalniceanu, the white paint is aging and chipping. Like many homes in Mihail Kogalniceanu, a small picket fence encircles a garden in the back where residents grow their own produce.

But unlike any other homes in Mihail Kogalniceanu, the house at Number 12, Primaverii Street is a working farm aimed to provide teens and young adults who suffer from HIV and other diseases an opportunity to get back on their feet. The residents here learn to better provide for themselves by tending to the home's goats, chickens, ducks and pigs; but most importantly, they learn to be part of a family.

"When we first started in 1990, we didn't know if we could make it or not," said Dr. Rodica Matusa, the president of Asociata Speranta, or the Hope Association, a non-profit, non-governmental organization with the mission of providing a more normal life for HIV-positive children and young adults in Romania's Constanta county.

To do their part to help the mission of the Hope Association, Marines and sailors currently deployed to Romania's Mihail Kogalniceanu Airfield volunteered to help improve the home, May 18-20, by refurbishing the living spaces within the house.

"It gives us a chance to show that we're more than just rifles and marching," said Lance Cpl. Jonathan Depinet, an embarkation specialist with 1st Tank Battalion, which forms the core of the Security Cooperation Marine Air-Ground Task Force deployed for Black Sea Rotational Force. "We get to show them we're people, and good people, too."

For the Marines and Sailors, the main task at the house was removing mold growing on several interior walls of the house. In many of the home's living areas, including the living room, dining room and bathroom, the Marines scraped to remove the mold, applied an anti-fungal treatment, respackled any damaged parts of the wall, and repainted for a pristine look.

"I thought it would take a lot longer, but they finished in basically two days," said Marinescu Florice, who said she is called "Mama Flori" by the teens and young adults at the house. "[The Marines] were very good and very nice, and I'm appreciative of all of the Marines' work."



"I think we've done a good job here," said Depinet, a native of Flagstaff, Ariz. "We've really put some effort into working here, and it shows."

But sweat and sore muscles weren't the Marines and sailors only contributions to improving the house. Navy Lt. Russell Hale, the command chaplain for Black Sea Rotational Force, said the troops also had the opportunity to serve as role models for the house's residents.

"Predominantly, these Marines are the same age as the residents here," said Hale, who served as the lead officer on the project. "It demonstrates to them that there are other young people around the world who have compassion for their plight."

But, Hale added, like so many missions the Marines and sailors will accomplish during their time as the Black Sea Rotational Force, refurbishing the house was a partnership – and the troops stood to learn as much as they taught.

"The biggest thing they experienced was being able to demonstrate the 'No Better Friend' side of the uniform they wear," said Hale. "These Marines will never forget this."

"We want to thank you very much. We look at you as friends," said Rodica in an address to say goodbye to the Marines and sailors. "We want to thank you – not only for helping with the house, but for helping our kids."

Lance Cpl. Jonathan Depinent, an embarkation specialist with 1st Tank Battalion, paints a wall during a project to refurbish the living areas of a home for HIV-positive teens and young adults in Mihail Kogalniceanu, Romania, May 19. The project was part of Black Sea Rotational Force 2010, which promotes regional stability, increases the military capacity of partner nations and builds enduring partnerships in the region.

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2010-2011

Midweek

Valid Monday-Friday, Non Holiday**

	BEAR MOUNTAIN <small>Only</small>	SNOW SUMMIT and BEAR MOUNTAIN <small>Dual Mountain Pass</small>				
	On Sale Until May 31, 2010	On Sale June 1 thru Dec. 5, 2010	On Sale After Dec. 5, 2010	On Sale Until May 31, 2010	On Sale June 1 thru Dec. 5, 2010	On Sale After Dec. 5, 2010
Adult (22+)	Not Offered			\$249.00	\$299.00	\$349.00
Young Adult (13-21) and Senior (70+)				\$199.00	\$249.00	\$299.00
Child (7-12)				\$89.00	\$109.00	\$119.00

Midweek Plus Sunday (Valid Sunday-Friday, Non Holiday**)

Adult (22+)	\$299.00	\$339.00	\$399.00	\$349.00	\$399.00	\$529.00
Young Adult (13-21) and Senior (70+)	\$239.00	\$269.00	\$329.00	\$269.00	\$319.00	\$419.00
Child (7-12)	\$109.00	\$129.00	\$149.00	\$129.00	\$149.00	\$179.00
Family Plan† (13-16)	\$199.00	\$249.00	\$299.00	\$219.00	\$269.00	\$319.00

Anytime, Non Holiday (Valid Anytime, Non Holiday)**

Adult (22+)	\$379.00	\$429.00	\$499.00	Not Offered		
Young Adult (13-21) and Senior (70+)	\$299.00	\$349.00	\$399.00			
Child (7-12)	\$149.00	\$159.00	\$189.00			

Anytime (Valid Anytime)

Adult (22+)	\$449.00	\$499.00	\$599.00	\$599.00	\$699.00	\$799.00
Young Adult (13-21) and Senior (70+)	\$369.00	\$409.00	\$489.00	\$489.00	\$569.00	\$649.00
Child (7-12)	\$169.00	\$199.00	\$219.00	\$199.00	\$259.00	\$319.00
Family Plan† (13-16)	\$279.00	\$329.00	\$379.00	\$329.00	\$379.00	\$429.00

Night* Snow Summit Only (Valid Any Scheduled Night Session)

	SNOW SUMMIT			
Adult (13+)	Not Offered	\$129.00	\$149.00	\$169.00
Child (7-12)		\$59.00	\$79.00	\$99.00

*Not valid for mountain biking during the summer season. †Family Plan is only available with purchase of same type of pass for parent.

**Season Pass Holiday Blackout Dates: Nov. 25-27, 2010; Dec. 25, 2010-Jan. 1, 2011; Jan. 15 and 16, 2011 and Feb. 19 and 20, 2011.

Saturday Night Sessions will be held from Nov. 27, 2010 through Mar. 12, 2011.

Friday Night Sessions will be held from Dec. 17, 2010 through Mar. 4, 2011 (excluding Dec. 24).

Additional Night sessions will be held on: Nov. 26, Dec. 19-23 and Dec. 26-30, 2010; Jan. 16 and Feb. 20, 2011.

SCREAMIN' DEAL PASS SALE ENDS MAY 31, 2010



Weddings 101

Here are some tips to help plan your big day and help avoid wedding day blues.

Wedding Gifts

- It is considered rude to put "cash only gifts", or other wording meaning the same thing on the invitation.
- You're not supposed to put registry information on your wedding invitation. It's left up to friends and family to inform everyone. However, you can put gift information on an insert in your bridal shower invitations. *FB Says: If you have a personal wedding website with info for bridal party and guests (and gift registry info), you can include an insert with the link to your website in your wedding invitation.*
- You're not required to open your gifts at the reception or in front of anyone.

Source: www.frugalbride.com

Invitation Problems

If you don't want children at your wedding, you have 2 options:

- When addressing your invitations, leave the children's names off it and also don't mention them in the invitation.
 - Have friends and family pass the word around that you don't want children there.
- FB Says: How many people know or understand etiquette. In some cases you have to cut straight to the chase and say what you mean. We suggest adding one of these phrases to the bottom of your reply card:*

- Adult Reception
- We hope that the (# of) of you will be able to join us
- (# of) seats have been reserved in your names

Other invitation stuff:

- If someone hasn't responded to your invitation, 1 week past the "Reply by" date, call him or her and confirm over the phone.
- Children over the age of 16 get their own invitations. (*FB thinks 18 is sufficient*)
- Your officiant and their better half get an invitation
- Send your parents and wedding party invitations, as a keepsake. They don't have to reply.
- You have to put return postage on your RSVP's.

The Dreaded Reception Seating Plan

- Don't seat battling relatives together.
- So that everyone has a good time, seat teens together, aunts and uncles together, etc. Try seating groups either by their relationship to you or by their ages.
- As for the head table, the rule has changed so often that there isn't one anymore. You and your better half can sit at a raised table with your wedding party below you. You can have your own table with a table on either side of you with your wedding party. You and your husband in the middle of a long table with men on one side and women on the other, or boy, girl, boy, girl. Parents and grandparents at the table or not, it's up to you.
- Stick to table numbers.
- Reserved tables are all you need.
- It's a good idea to have a "Reserved" card at the parents seats. They are the only ones that need preferred seating.

Okay, The Really Big Question? Who Pays For What?

Bride's Family

- All Reception Costs
- Church Fees
- Groom's Rings
- Invitations
- Flowers for Church, Bridesmaids and Reception
- Music for Ceremony
- Transportation for Bridal Party
- Gifts for Bridal Party
- Groom's Gift
- Lodging for Bridesmaids, if necessary

Bridal Party

- Your Attire
- The Shower
- If you are from out-of-town, Transportation to the Town the wedding is in
- Gift for the Couple

Groom's Family

- Bride's Ring
- Clergy Fees
- Bride's Bouquet, Corsages and Boutonnieres
- Rehearsal Dinner
- Transportation for Groomsmen
- Gifts for Groomsmen
- Bride's Gift
- Lodging for Groomsmen, if necessary

Groomsmen

- Your Attire
- The Stag
- If you are from out-of-town, Transportation to the Town the wedding is in
- Gift for the Couple

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Camping out holds new meaning for 2nd LAR Marines

LANCE CPL. BENJAMIN CRILLY

REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM 7

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan — Cpl. Brandon T. Templeton, a team leader from Garden City, Mich., lived out of his vehicle for five months, conducting security operations in the deserts of Helmand province, Afghanistan.

Templeton, along with more than 140 Marines and sailors with Company A, 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, deployed in December and began desert operations in the cold Afghan winter. Their deployment took them through May, when they worked under the Afghan sun day in and day out.



LANCE CPL. BENJAMIN CRILLY

Marines with Company A, 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, carry on with their daily exercise routines, May 16. The vehicle was not only their home and gym over the battalion's five-month deployment, but it also served the battalion's combat operations center.

Living out of a vehicle sounds better than it was for the service members. For the Marines of 2nd LAR, it meant sleeping in the dirt on whichever side of their vehicles wasn't being pounded by the unforgiving desert winds. Their vehicles were laden with backpacks containing all their gear and everything they had while roaming the desert. The company combat operations center was housed in one vehicle and only had

three seats for Marines to sustain operations throughout the deployment.

"It was like a long family road trip," Templeton said.

Most family road trips include rest stops and nights spent in hotels. Templeton and his comrades had no showers or bathrooms. Baby wipes and a bottle of water were considered a good shower in the desert. The Marines had no running water sources, so their water was strapped to the side of a vehicle in makeshift crates. Resupplies were conducted internally every three to four days. This was when they received their Meals, Ready-to-Eat, mail, vehicle parts and more water until their

See 2ND LAR, A8

Moroccan soldiers, Marines on target during African Lion '10

ARMY SGT. WHITNEY HOUSTON

MARINE FORCES AFRICA

AGADIR, Morocco — The joint weapons training being conducted as part of Exercise African Lion 2010 continued at Moroccan Military Base Tifnit as Marines serving with Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion, 4th Marine Division, from St. Paul, Minn., and Co. F, Anti-terrorism Bn., 4th MarDiv, from Lafayette, La., conducted urban combat marksmanship training with Moroccan soldiers May 19.

The Moroccans showed particular interest in the training because much of their prior weapons training has involved targets at known distances as opposed to what one would encounter in real combat situations.

"What we're doing is

teaching them how to operate if a target appears at close proximity, how to engage that target and do it effectively," said Sgt. Christopher Schiff of New Orleans, an infantryman serving with Company F, Anti-Terrorism Bn., who conducted the training.

The Moroccan soldiers showed a lot of motivation as they received this up-to-date training incorporated from lessons learned by the Marines from almost a decade of experience in urban combat.

"We are using things now that we've learned in different theaters of operation like Iraq and Afghanistan," Schiff said. "We're teaching the Moroccans how to perform in an urban environment, and I find it really amazing they're so willing and able to subject themselves to any

training that we do."

Reciprocity is central to the training and to Exercise African Lion. Just as the Marines trained Moroccans in close-quarters marksmanship, the Marines received weapons familiarization training on the AK-47 from the Moroccans, which is their primary weapon of choice.

"A lot of the junior Marines have not used the AK's before, and knowing how it works and fires will make them more well-rounded Marines," said Staff Sgt. Jason Odit, from Baton Rouge, who serves with the Anti-Terrorism Bn. as an infantry platoon sergeant.

During the exercise, the commander of the 4th Marine Division, Brig. Gen. James Lariviere, from Springfield, Va., stopped by to see the training being conducted.

"It's a good mix as we learn from the Moroccans and the Moroccans learn from us," said Lariviere about the training. "They've been friends to the United States since we declared our independence, and it's very important we maintain that relationship so we can work together and be interoperable."



ARMY SGT. WHITNEY HOUSTON

Sgt. Christopher Schiff, from New Orleans, an infantryman who serves with Company F, Anti-Terrorism Battalion, 4th Marine Division, explains marksmanship fundamentals to Moroccan soldiers during urban combat marksmanship training conducted by U.S. Marines and Moroccan forces as part of Exercise African Lion 2010 at Morocco Military Base Tifnit May 19.

Positive attitudes on both sides have helped the Marines and Moroccan soldiers overcome the most difficult hardship encountered during their time together - the language barrier.

"The language barrier is the biggest challenge we're having," Schiff said. "But we've found soldiers in their ranks who speak English really well, and so we've been able to push through that."

As the Marines and Moroccan soldiers have overcome the communication barrier and shared common hardships together, the combined training has proved to broaden understanding on both ends.

"Every time I train with a foreign service I feel like I take something from it, and I've implemented things from foreign services as I've been coming up through the ranks," said Gunnery Sgt. Christopher Bradley, from Knoxville, Tenn., who serves with the Anti-Terrorism Bn. "It broadens their horizons as well as ours."

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Ford Motors, Goldberg head to Combat Center

CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines, sailors, retirees and their families are invited to “Operation Drive One,” June 4, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the main exchange parking lot. Participants will get a chance to test drive new Ford vehicles and meet former wrestling champion Bill Goldberg, while raising money for the National Military Family Association. The event includes attractions like driving challenges, classic car shows, interactive

vehicle displays and autograph signings with Goldberg. “I am so proud and excited to join Ford in support of Operation Drive One and recognize the men and women of the armed forces who serve our country every day,” Goldberg said. “If we can provide a break for our troops and their families while raising money for a great cause, there’s nothing I’d rather be doing.” Opportunities to win a private Toby Keith concert, one of two 2011 Ford Mustang vehicles and one of 12 trips to

Homestead Miami Speedway to attend Ford Championship Weekend Nascar races will also be available. “Family has always been at the core of Ford Motor Company, and through Operation Drive One, we’re not only honoring our military family but also providing their families with fun, interactive events to enjoy together,” said John Felice, a Ford general manager, in a press release. “Each event will raise money by making a donation for each attendee who takes a spin in one of our new vehicles.

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LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

The Combat Center Game Stop next to Charley’s Grilled Subs is now open to buy and sell video games. The store is open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. “The Marines can expect great service and a greeting at the door,” said Frank A. Johnson, Jr., the Game Stop district manager. “We will always be in stock with products and if we don’t have it we will order it for them.”

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9:30 a.m. - Children’s Liturgy of the Word
4 p.m. - Choir Practice
4:15 p.m. - Confessions+
4:30 p.m. - Rosary
5 p.m. - Catholic Mass
Christ Chapel
8:30 a.m. - Lay-led independent Baptist breakfast in the West Wing
Non-denominational: Calvary Chapel-AGC
9 a.m. - Contemporary Worship*
9 a.m. - Children’s Church
10:30 a.m. - Sunday School, building 1551*
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10:30 a.m. - Traditional Worship*
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Immaculate Heart of Mary
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Christ Chapel
Monday - Friday, noon - Daily Prayer
Tuesday
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9 a.m. - Christian Women’s Fellowship* (Sept. through May)
6:30 p.m. - “EKKLESIA” Assemblies of God Fellowship
Immaculate Heart of Mary
3:30-5:30 p.m. - Military Council of Catholic Women
Wednesday
Christ Chapel
Noon - Communion
Immaculate Heart of Mary
First Wednesday, 6 p.m. - Baptism preparation class
First Wednesday, 7 p.m. - Knights of Columbus
Thursday
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6 p.m.-Praise Band Rehearsal
Immaculate Heart of Mary
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6:30 p.m. - RCIA (September-April)
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Optics techs keep ‘Wolf Pack’ shooters on target

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Optics ordnance repairers are responsible for literally keeping units like the Combat Center’s 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion’s eyes open and in the fight.

The battalion’s warfighting capabilities depend heavily on various optical systems, said Sgt. Michael Hilton, the

optics chief, from Miami. This technology allows Marines not only to see in the dark, but also to engage unseen targets with thermal vision, and operate their light armored vehicles’ weapons systems proficiently in combat.

“We take care of any electra-optical equipment for 3rd LAR,” Hilton said. “We repair [Tube-launched Optically-tracked Wire-guided] systems, night

vision goggles, sensor units for [light armored vehicles] and their thermal sights.”

Without the trained technicians to properly maintain the gear, the Marines’ who depend on it would be that much farther away from accomplishing their mission.

Hilton said the 3rd LAR optics shop Marines are the first ones on scene when something goes wrong in one of their systems.

So the Marines are taking advantage of every minute to prepare for their upcoming deployment in the fall. They troubleshoot and fix as much equipment as they can to gain as much experience as possible.

Marines like Cpls. Darron Knight and Robert Ray, both 3rd LAR optics technicians, know very well the importance of being proficient while deployed.

“If you get sent out to a line company, things change a lot,” said Ray, an Akron, Ohio native. “You’ll still be doing your job of course, but you’ll be doing the job of an LAV crewman, or who knows what else.”

Marines must be very adaptable and be able to transition on the fly when facing challenges, Ray said.

“Being flexible in a situation like that is very important,” he said. “They train us to do a whole lot, that’s why they expect so much out of Marines. Doing your job, plus another one just makes optics look better in the long run.”

The optics techs said they look forward to using their skills to keep the battalion’s sights on target as they support Operation Enduring Freedom.



Cpl. Darron Knight, an optics technician with 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, makes adjustments on a Tube-launched, Optically-tracked, Wire-guided missile system Wednesday. The battalion, as well as their optics technicians, are scheduled to deploy this fall in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Sgts. Michael Hilton [left] and Phillip Perez, electra-optics repair technicians with 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion inspect a Tube-launched, Optically-tracked, Wire-guided missile system Wednesday at the battalion’s optics shop. The shop handles repair on all sight systems and optical gear in the unit.



Sgt. Phillip Perez and Lance Cpl. Cody McSpadden, electra-optics repair technicians with the Combat Center’s 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, inspect a Tube-launched, Optically-tracked, Wire-guided missile system Wednesday at the battalion’s optics shop.

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2ND LAR, from A6

next resupply. LAR came and left during an interesting timeframe.

They battled the winter chills for the first few months of their deployment. Then they rolled right through the spring and into the soaring summer temperatures. Insects became their closest friends and worst enemies, keeping them awake at night and

buzzing around them throughout the days. With just a vehicle in the middle of the desert, the Marines had to rely on camouflage netting and the vehicle to provide any shade.

“The living conditions were horrible, but it had to be done,” said Sgt. Peter T. McEntee, a section leader with Weapons platoon, who preferred the cold over the flies.

Marines are known around the world for physical and

combat fitness, and LAR was no exceptions. With no weights or equipment available, they found ways to work out off the side of the vehicles with Training Exercise Straps. Bicep curls were performed with ammunition cans on a pipe. Staff Sgt. Jose E. Garcia, the communications chief from Sweetwater, Texas, made his own medicine ball out of duck tape and had developed a workout regimen. Other Marines opened the back of the vehicles and used the entrance handgrips to perform pull-ups. For sit-ups, Marines sat on top of a tire and used the vehicle’s leverage to hold them in place.

The only time that the Marines were able to go back to Camp Dwyer to shower and use a computer was when their vehicles needed to be serviced beyond what their mechanics could do in the desert. This only happened once a month for the Marines of 2nd LAR.

The Marines turned over with Echo Co., 1st LAR, May 19, after five months and returned to Camp Dwyer caked in dirt as they readied to re-deploy to Camp Lejeune, N.C.

LANCE CPL. BENJAMIN CRILLY

Staff Sgt. Jose E. Garcia, the communications chief for Alpha Co., 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, uses Training Exercise Straps of the side of his vehicle the deserts of Helmand province, Afghanistan, May 16.

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typical Marine barracks.

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“Quality of life features provide comfortable and relaxing downtime for Marines, ensuring they return to the fight every day refreshed and ready,” said Lt. Cmdr. Allen Sullivan, the resident officer in charge of construction.

Hopefully, the upgraded housing will make Marines want to stay around during the weekends, Pickens said.

Besides the individual rooms, the barracks also has improved common areas to help Marines relax and socialize.

The lounge contains two separate movie viewing areas, pool table, computer workstations with wireless Internet and a fully-equipped kitchen. The laundry room is adjacent to the lounge and features a window for security.

Plans for three more state-of-the-art barracks are currently in the works.



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

The new 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, barracks includes a fully equipped kitchen near the common area. The kitchen is large enough to easily accommodate multiple Marines cooking at the same time and has plenty of space for occupants to move about.



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

The new 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, barracks aboard the Combat Center features a high-tech duty desk with live feeds from security cameras placed around the parking garage. Beyond the duty desk is a television area, equipped with movie theater-style seating, three TVs and wireless Internet access.

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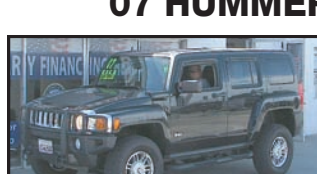
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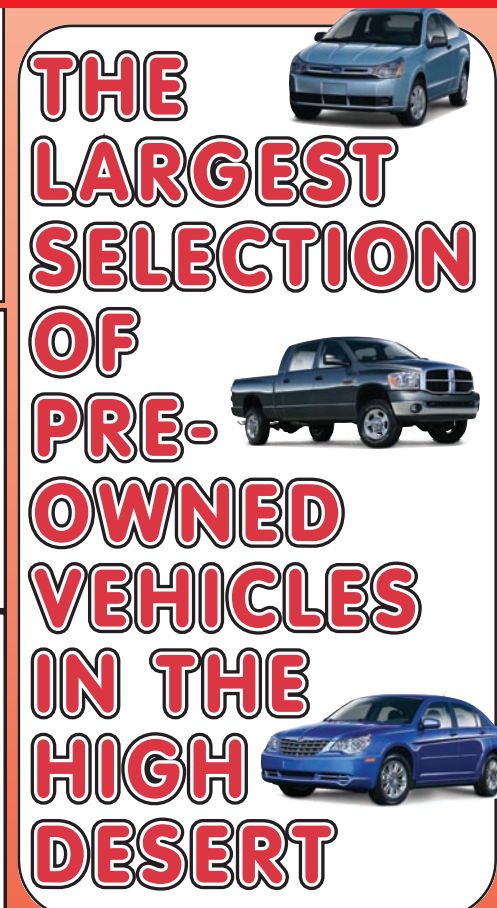
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U.S., Romanian Marines hone rifle, martial arts skills

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

BLACK SEA ROTATIONAL FORCE

BABADAG TRAINING AREA, Romania — U.S. Marines, in partnership with Romanian Marines and soldiers, honed their rifle and hand-to-hand combat skills May 18.

The Marines and sailors of scout platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 1st Tank Battalion, are currently training with the Romanian military in nonlethal weapons, combat marksmanship, noncommissioned officer development, the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program and other areas of military operations.

Scout platoon helped train Romanian troops by teaching

them the fundamentals of marksmanship and by developing a special course based on the MCMAP hand-to-hand combat regimen to help them better prepare for situations they may encounter while conducting peacekeeping operations.

First Tank Battalion, from Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., forms the core of the Security Cooperation Marine Air-Ground Task Force deployed to the Black Sea region. The U.S. Marines are training in partnership with Romanian Marines and soldiers to create a more fluid relationship between the two nations' military forces.



Cpl. Richard Chavez, a radio operator with scout platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 1st Tank Battalion, speaks with Romanian Marines about proper firing positions at Babadag Training Area, Romania, May 18. Scout platoon is working with the Romanian military to strengthen the nation's noncommissioned officer core and increase its military capabilities.



Romanian Marines practice U.S. Marine Corps Martial Arts Program techniques at Babadag Training Area, Romania, May 18. Marines and sailors with scout platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 1st Tank Battalion, are currently training with Romanians in an array of peacekeeping operations as part of the first Security Cooperation Marine Air-Ground Task Force, known as Black Sea Rotational Force 2010.



A Romanian Marine and Lance Cpl. Kevin Kuntshick, a tank crewman with scout platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 1st Tank Battalion, compete in a speed reload competition with AK-74 rifles at Babadag Training Area, Romania, May 18. First Tank Battalion is currently deployed as the core Security Cooperation Marine Air-Ground Task in support of Black Sea Rotational Force.




A Romanian Marine practices hand-to-hand combat techniques at Babadag Training Area, Romania, May 18. The Marines and sailors of 1st Tank Battalion are currently training with the Romanians in martial arts and other skills so both nations can have a more fluid partnership.



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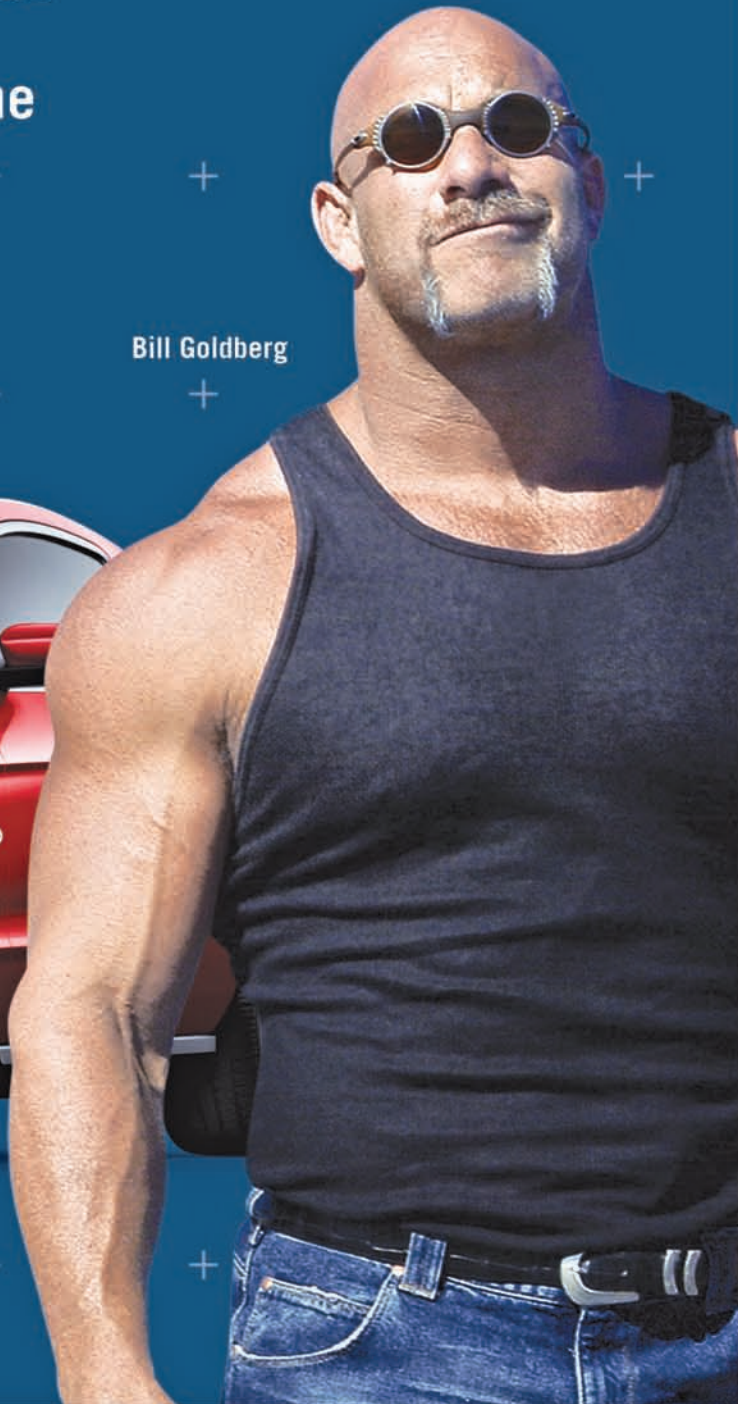
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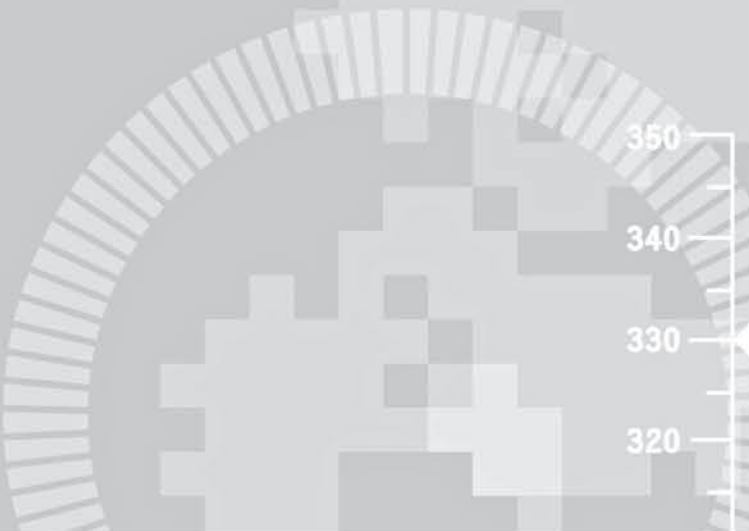
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SPORTS AND LEISURE

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MAY 28, 2010 SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957 B1

‘We Salute You’ rocks Combat Center

CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Combat Center personnel and families gathered for the 6th annual We Salute You Celebration Saturday at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

“This event began in 2005 to honor our Marines, sailors and family members,” said Kelly Coe, the special events program manager for Marine Corps Community Services. “The tradition of this event is to honor and recognize the continued sacrifices of those Marines and sailors who serve aboard Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center [Twentynine Palms]/Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command and their families during wartime.”

Service members from Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School, Headquarters Battalion and Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 volunteered to help with equipment set up and tear down.

One hundred and fifty volunteers from the California BBQ Association and Just Blowin' Smoke BBQ, kept the crowd well fed with 5,000 pounds of pork butt, 2,500 pounds of chicken, and 2,000



CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT

Country music star Julianne Hough performs before turing the stage over to country music star Joe Nichols during the “We Salute You Celebration” at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Saturday.

See SALUTE, B2

Combat Center takes on CG’s golf championship



PFC. SARAH ANDERSON

Golfers compete during the Commanding General's Intramural Golf League Tournament at the Desert Winds Golf Course Tuesday. Many golfers came out to enjoy the competition.

PFC. SARAH ANDERSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Desert Winds Golf Course hosted the annual Commanding Generals Intramural Golf League tournament Tuesday through Thursday.

The tournament was open to all Combat Center units and offered a chance for Marines to relax and build unit camaraderie, said Todd Wade, the manager and PGA professional at Desert Winds Golf Course. The tournament offered a relaxing sport mixed with that competitive edge Marines love, Wade said.

The first place winner for the tournament went to the MCCES 1 team, and second place was awarded to MCCES 2. The lowest overall individual score went to Austin Gray, a player on the Tanks team from 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, with a score of 287.

“It gets the Marines out, it creates competition against each other, camaraderie that they

develop near each other as they’re playing, keeps them off the streets,” said George Shadegg, a sports specialist for Marine Counseling Center Services.

It pits units against each other and gives the winners bragging rights, added Grant Meyer, from the Amphibious Assault Vehicles team.

Golf is known to be a relaxing sport, Wade said, but it can also be frustrating, especially in a tournament.

“You play a four-day event; one day is different to the next. You play really good one day, and you play bad the next, and you don’t know why,” Wade said.

“It’s ‘golf’, a four-letter word. It’s one of the sports where one day it seems so easy and the next day it seems like you’ve never played before,” added Schadegg.

For those tournament participants who

See GOLF, B3

MCCS makes summer fun with kids’ CAX, swim, golf programs

CAX for Kids

The Lifestyles, Insights, Networking, Knowledge, Skills group, sponsored by Marine Corps Community Services, will be hosting a Combined Armed Exercise for Kids June 16 from 8 a.m. to noon at Del Valle Field.

The CAX is an interactive workshop structured to deliver the tools needed for children, and parents, to positively and successfully cope with the military lifestyle.

Some of the activities will include:

- Lessons on Marine Corps history, traditions, uniforms and the Marine Corps mission.
- A demonstration of an official colors ceremony, including the Combat Center Band and the Color Guard.
- An obstacle course challenge.
- Relay races wearing uniform items like flak jackets, Kevlar helmets and camouflage utilities.
- A demonstration of the Provost Marshal’s Office military working dogs.
- Classes about coping with deployments, including Internet safety.
- A musical chairs game to help simulate Permanent Change-of-Station moves.
- Meals, Ready-to-Eat, for lunch to help give children a “taste” of the Marine Corps lifestyle.
- A squirt gun battle to help children beat the heat.

Space is limited to 40 children, so register soon. Space for this event is moving fast! Call 830-1696 to register.

Learn 2 Swim

Marine Corps Community Services is offering the Learn 2 Swim program for both adults and children.

- Sessions run two weeks long each and are offered from June 14 through August 20. A recommended orientation will be held June 1 and June 3 from 11 to 11:30 a.m. and 5 to 5:30 p.m. each day.
- Classes are scheduled to be held Mondays though Thursdays. Fridays are reserved for days missed due to inclement weather. Missed days for any other reason cannot be “made up.” Class lengths will not exceed 30 minutes for infants and preschool-aged children, or 40 minutes for all others.
- Registration will be at the Family Pool June 7-9 and June 28-30 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 5 to 7 p.m. each day.
- Cost is \$35 per session. Families enrolling more than one participant will be charged a discounted rate of \$32 per person, per session.
- Sessions offered include Parent and Child Aquatics for children ages 6 months to 3 years, Preschool Aquatics for children ages 4 to 5 years and Learn-to-Swim for children ages 6 years and older and adults.
- Registration is available at the MCCS Community Center, Bldg. 1004. Space is limited to 30 participants.

For more information, call 830-6212. For session details, visit <http://www.mccs29palms.com>.

Hook a Kid on Golf

The annual Hook a Kid on Golf camp at the Desert Winds Golf Course is scheduled for June 21-25 from 8 to 11 a.m. each day. This year’s camp will focus on driving, putting and iron play, as well as golf etiquette.

- Cost is \$75 per child, and includes a shirt, hat, balls, use of clubs and four days of instruction from a PGA pro.
- Participants will have the chance to play a limited number of holes with a parent or sponsor June 25.
- Registration is available at the MCCS Community Center, Bldg. 1004. Space is limited to 30 participants.

For more information call 830-8421.



SEE PAGE B3 FOR INFORMATION ON THE ISLAND VOYAGE SUMMER READING PROGRAM.



Liberty Call

Combat Center Clubs

Excursions Enlisted Club

Fridays: Salsa dancing, 7 to 8 p.m., ladies' night, 8 to 10 p.m. and DJ Vlad, 8 to 11 p.m.
Saturdays: Variety Night with DJ Bones 8 to 11 p.m.
Wednesdays: DJ Gjettblaque, 8 to 10 p.m.

Bloodstripes NCO Club

Mondays: Free food, chicken nuggets/nacos.
Wednesdays: Free food, Italian sausage with peppers, onions and green salad.

Hashmarks 29 SNCO Club

Fridays: DJ at 8 p.m.
All Hands Lunch, Monday-Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Mondays: Steak Night, 5 to 8 p.m.
Wednesdays: Karaoke, 5 to 7 p.m.

Combat Center's Officers' Club

Lunch served Monday-Friday, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Mondays: Steak night, 5 to 8 p.m.
For complete calendars, visit <http://www.mccs29palms.com>.

Local Events

Dave Gleason and the Golden Cadillacs

Description: Country music act
When: 7:30 p.m., Friday May 28 and 8 p.m., Saturday May 29
Where: Pappy and Harriet's Pioneertown Palace
53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown
For more information call 365-5956 or visit <http://www.pappyandharriets.com>.

Grubstake Days Parade and Community Fair

Description: Floats, marching bands, equestrian units and community entries.
When: Parade begins at 10 a.m. followed by fair
Where: Parade starts at Yucca Trail and Twentynine Palms Highway and ends at the Yucca Valley Community Center.

Grubstake Days 10K, 5K and 2K Runs

Description: The Town of Yucca Valley hosts the 20th annual event
When: 8 a.m.
Where: Yucca Valley High School Stadium
7600 Sage Avenue, Yucca Valley
Call 369-7211 for more information.

In the Rest Room at Rosenblooms

Description: A poignant contemporary comedy
Date: Saturday, May 22, 2010
When: 8 p.m. on Saturdays and 2:30 p.m. on Sundays through June 13.
Location: Groves Cabin Theatre
8768 Desert Willow Trail, Morongo Valley
For more information call 365-4523.

Lower Desert

Heart

Description: The rock 'n' roll sisters perform their hits
When: 8 p.m., Friday, May 29
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Boz Scaggs

Description: The rock legend icon performs
When: 8 p.m., Tuesday, June 1
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Donna Summer

Description: The disco star performs her hits
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, June 19
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, May 28

6 p.m. – The Last Song, Rated PG
9 p.m. – The Ghost Writer, Rated PG-13
Midnight – Hot Tub Time Machine, Rated R

Saturday, May 29

11 a.m. – Free Matinee, The Princess and the Frog, Rated G
2 p.m. – Clash of the Titans, Rated PG-13
6 p.m. – Why Did I Get Married Too?, PG-13
9 p.m. – Death at a Funeral, Rated R
Midnight – Kick -*ss, Rated R

Sunday, May 30

2 p.m. – The Last Song, Rated PG
6 p.m. – Back Up Plan, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – The Losers, Rated PG-13
Monday, May 31, Memorial Day
2 p.m. – Clash of the Titans, Rated PG-13
6 p.m. – The Ghost Writer, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – Date Night, Rated PG-13

Tuesday, June 1

7 p.m. – Hot Tub Time Machine, Rated R

Wednesday, June 2

7 p.m. – Death at a Funeral, Rated R

Thursday, June 3

7 p.m. – The Last Song, Rated PG

'Iron Man 2', blast of wit, whoosh and wallop

NEIL POND

AMERICAN PROFILE

"Iron Man 2"

Rated PG-13

Starting the summer off with a big, bright blast of wit, whoosh and wallop, "Iron Man 2" features Robert Downey Jr. and Gwyneth Paltrow reprising their original roles as the dura-shelled do-gooder and his gorgeous gal Friday.

The sequel to the 2008 blockbuster that retooled yet another Marvel Comics superhero for the big screen, it opens with Tony Stark (Downey), the playboy industrialist genius behind the metal mask, strutting in the now out-of-the-closet glow of his crime-fighting celebrity. He's a cocky media darling showered with kudos for ushering in a new era of global tranquility.

But there's big trouble brewing. A bitter Russian mad scientist, Ivan Valko (Mickey Rourke, looking like his character from "The Wrestler" marinated in vodka) wants to turn Iron Man into scrap metal – and may have just the fearsome, high-voltage get-up to do it. A competing weapons manufacturer (Sam Rockwell) has his own sinister reasons for



LANCE CPL.

Robert Downey Jr. returns as Tony Stark, the playboy industrialist genius who doubles as the metal masked crime fighting celebrity.

wanting to put Stark out of the wrong-righting business.

And Stark's ticker, the glowing, nuclear-reactor plug-n-play heart keeping him alive, is starting to show signs of meltdown.

Downey is in top wise-cracking, ladies-lovin', party-hardy form, and his high-tech Iron Man suit is even cooler this time around. You know it's mostly computer-generated, but that doesn't make it any less impressive as it engulfs him out of an "emergency" briefcase in the

middle of a melee on the Grand Prix racetrack.

As Pepper Potts, now the CEO of Stark's company, Paltrow is the brains (and beauty) behind Iron Man's brawn, and her scenes with Downey have a crisp, crackling chemistry that gives the movie some real emotional stakes when the elements conspiring to undo Stark begin to converge.

Director Jon Favreau (who also appears in the role of Happy Hogan, Stark's top aide) keeps things moving fast and gets the fun flowing early, juggling multiple subplots and a cavalcade of colorful supporting characters. A smarmy senator (Larry Sanders) hounds Stark to turn over his weapons technology to the government. Stark's new assistant (Scarlett Johansson) has a secret side that comes in handy outside the office. His old military friend Lt. Col. "Rhoddy"

Rhodes (Don Cheadle) becomes both a foe and an ally. One-eyed Nick Fury (Samuel L. Jackson) wants to recruit Iron Man for his elite crime-fighting collective.

While acknowledging its comic-book roots, "Iron Man 2" never overplays to the fan-boy crowd, keeping things close to the crowd-pleasing mainstream. Jackson and Johansson's characters, both sprung from comics, seem like teasers for roles to be fleshed out further in a subsequent movie.

And if you're interested in a sneak peek on the next pen-and-ink figure to make the leap onto the big screen, stay until the credits are over – and ask any comic-book fan if you don't get it.

There are a lot of options for your summer-movie dollar. But for some solid bang for your box-office buck, at least for the short-term, my advice: Invest in iron.

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SALUTE, from B1

pounds of Louisiana hot sausage were served free at the event.

"It was nice they took the time to do all of this. It was a great chance for families to come together," said Sgt. Meagan Hebert, a radio operator instructor for MCCES

The Combat Center Band performed at the event, followed by country singers Julianne Hough and Joe Nichols.

"I feel pretty good about being here today. We always love playing for the military," said Nichols before his performance Saturday. "We are all about any chance we get to play for the military and have a lot of respect and admiration for those who serve our country.

"The men and women who sacrifice every day, regardless of politics, deserve our support," he said.

Amber Caruso, a country music fan at the event, received a chance to meet the two performers and had a few posters signed for her daughter and brother.

"It was pretty nice of them to take the time to do that," she said, "What a great way to show their support for the troops."

The hard work from volunteers and staff made the event a success, Coe said, although the celebration is over and planning for next year's "We Salute You Celebration" is already underway.

Combat Center Sports



PFC. SARAH ANDERSON

Yesenia Vega, a player for MWSS-374, dribbles the ball through opponents during a Commanding General's Intramural Soccer League game against HQBN at Felix Field Tuesday. The game ended with an HQBN victory 1-0.



PFC. SARAH ANDERSON

There is mass confusion at the goal as goalkeeper Pruett Hugo [center], and Timmion Banton [left], players for the MWSS-374 team, struggle to protect the goal from Adam Haywood, a player on the HQBN team, during a Commanding General's Intramural Soccer League game at Felix Field Tuesday. The goal was saved by Hugo.

Intramural soccer standings

TEAM	WINS	LOSSES
MCCES	1	0
CLB-7	1	0
HQBN	1	0
MWSS-374	0	1
1st Tanks	0	1
NHTP	0	1

Intramural softball standings

TEAM	WINS	LOSSES
ESD	9	2
MCCES Red	9	1
3/11	6	1
Tanks	9	2
374 #1	8	3
PMO	7	2
ATG	8	3
MCCES C Co.	6	2
Mojave Viper	5	4
CLB-7	4	7
IPAC	5	6
AAV	5	5
MCCES White	4	6
MCTOG	3	7
3rd LAR	5	7
MCCES Maint	3	8
Hospital	2	9
374 #2	1	8
Dental	1	9
CMA	1	9



CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

Brian Brammer, the pitcher for the Mad Dogs, tries to keep his pitches low during a Commanding General's Intramural Softball game against the Shadows at Felix Field Wednesday night.

Athlete of the Week



Name: Ian Anthony
Unit: Installation Personnel Administration Center
Hometown: Seminole, Fla.
Recognition: HQBN intramural soccer team coach
Favorite aspect of the sport: “It is one of the most team oriented sports we play.”
Advice to any aspiring athletes: “Get involved early and often, in any sport, and remember only a small fraction of athletes achieve professional status; the rest of us play for the enjoyment of competition and camaraderie. Learn as much about the game as possible, so you have the skill set required to coach and mentor our youth.”

‘Voyage to Book Island’ encourages children to read

CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Lifelong Learning Library is hosting “Voyage to Book Island” to encourage children to keep reading during the summer months.

The program starts June 18 and runs every Friday from 10 to 11:30 a.m., until July 30. It is open to all Combat Center children in kindergarten through sixth grade. However, exceptions are always considered, said Megan Stewart, the library’s program coordinator.

Children will also have opportunities to hear from guest speakers, learn how to make balloon art, take a field trip to the fire department and plunge into the land of fantasy while learning about

medieval myths and legends. “It’s a way for children to come together during the summer months,” said Stewart, from Reno, Nev. “Our plan was to make sure they gain knowledge while having fun.”

Participants must read books checked out from the Combat Center’s library and will log the number of pages read each week. The child’s name and total pages will be displayed on the children’s board in the library.

There is no registration, but Stewart urges parents and children to be present on the first day to receive all information and instructions.

Prizes will be given away throughout the program and 10 names will be drawn for a grand prize at the end of the voyage.



SGT. ALVARO ARO

Librarian Barbara Giberson reads a book to children during a story session at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., last year. The Combat Center’s Lifelong Learning Library is hosting “Voyage to Book Island” to encourage children to keep reading during the summer months.

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GOLF, from B1

experienced the “four-letter word” side of golf this year, as they say, there’s always next year. The only thing left to do is keep hitting the green.

“For the guys with higher scores, the course is quiet during the week. It’s a great opportunity to learn to play, so if the guys are looking for something to do, come out here and play,” Wade said.

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The area is a Mecca for golf, tennis and sunbathing, sporting 115-plus golf courses, more than 600 tennis courts and 30,000 swimming pools. The recreational opportunities are endless. Travel by Jeep, Hummer, or on foot through historic Palm Springs Indian Canyons. Picnic by a peaceful running stream. Watch a polo match or see the valley, part of the Colorado Desert, from a hot air balloon. Plan a trip to attend the many world-class events such as jazz, arts and film festivals, the annual golf cart parade or

numerous professional tennis and celebrity golf tournaments. Rejuvenate with a spa treatment or soak in natural mineral waters. Visit the desert museums and art galleries. Sample a date shake and learn about the desert's second largest industry, agriculture, at a local date garden. Spend a day shopping trendy boutiques on historic Palm Canyon Drive or exclusive El Paseo, or in air-conditioned malls such as Westfield Shoppingtown Center Palm Desert, Desert Crossing Shopping Center or the Palm Springs Mall. Restaurants vary from formal and elegant to casual or poolside, with cuisine ranging from French, Mexican and Italian to seafood and California Bistro. Vibrant nightlife includes professional theater, piano bars, coffee house jazz and dance clubs. Fine amenities in the Palm Springs Desert Resorts add a special touch to every visit. Perfectly manicured landscape, public artwork, colorful flower beds and clean streets create a serene ambiance. Friendly poolside service, golf and tennis clinics for players of all levels, relaxing afternoon tea and customer-oriented staff help every visitor feel pampered. Spirits are kept bright with sunshine about 350 days a year. Year-round desert dwellers can attest that low

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5:00	5:25	5:30	5:40	5:45	6:00	6:10	7:00

15 MCAGCC-Palm Springs Friday							
Palm Springs Airport	Indian Canyon & Andreas (Casino)	Indian Canyon & Tacheva (Hospital)	Stater Bros WalMart	MCAGCC			
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			

*SUNDAY SERVICE BEGINS AT 29 PALMS COMMUNITY CENTER. All weekend service is for Saturday only except for the final return trip which includes both Saturday and Sunday service.