

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

SEPTEMBER 24, 2010 SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957 VOL. 53 ISSUE 38

Family receives posthumous Purple Heart



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Amy, Anthony, Sarah and Travis Galvez view their son and brother's, Purple Heart Medal after it is presented to them by Lt. Col. Ken Kassner and Sgt. Maj. John J. Elliott, the commanding officer and sergeant major of 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion. Corporal Adam A. Galvez was killed by an improvised explosive device in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2006.

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

September 17, 2010 – The Galvez family traveled to the Combat Center to meet with their extended family, their son's former unit, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion to receive the Purple Heart Medal awarded to him posthumously during a ceremony Friday at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

Corporal Adam A. Galvez was killed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Aug. 20, 2006, by an improvised explosive device, but was not awarded the medal sooner due to an administrative oversight.

"As we like to say in the Wolfpack, he was truly one of our gray wolves, because he led the pack," said Lt. Col. Ken Kassner, the battalion's commanding officer, about Galvez. "Although this ceremony is long overdue, your son, our fellow Marine, Adam, has never been forgotten.

"He has always been in our thoughts, as have all of our fallen Marines from the Wolfpack," said the Coupland, Texas, native. "On behalf of all the Marines and

sailors of 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, it's our honor to share this moment with you, your family and friends."

Anthony Galvez, Adam's father, said the Marines' devotion to each other was mesmerizing.

"I know now that all of you understand the words Semper Fi. Semper Fidelis is more than just a motto, more than just a slogan, more than just words," he said, fighting back tears. "Everyone here has proven that you guys will never forget, that you'll always be faithful. Four years later, you guys are still remembering and still being faithful."

Amy Galvez, Adam's mother, echoed her husband's words and also extended her best wishes to the battalion during their upcoming deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom later this year.

"As you all prepare to head off on your deployment, there is a nation behind you, and people who will be praying for you," she said. "We love and appreciate you, and just know that we're here, keeping it going on this end."

Yucca Valley mourns, honors fallen sailor

LANCE CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

YUCCA VALLEY, Calif. – It was a solemn evening for the Yucca Valley community as they gathered to mourn one of their own, a fallen sailor who made the ultimate sacrifice serving his country.

Petty Officer 3rd Class James Swink, a Yucca Valley native, died Aug. 27, while supporting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. Swink was a hospital corpsman assigned to 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, based out of Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, N.C. Swink was laid to rest Sept. 8th on his 21st birthday at the Arlington National Cemetery.

"Petty Officer 3rd Class James Swink was a dedicated sailor who gave his all while serving our country," said California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in a press release dated Aug. 31. "His service and sacrifice in the name of freedom will forever be appreciated and remembered. Maria and I extend

our deepest condolences to James' family, friends and community as they mourn this terrible loss."

The Yucca Valley High School Gym filled up slowly as family and friends waited for their hero's memorial service to start.

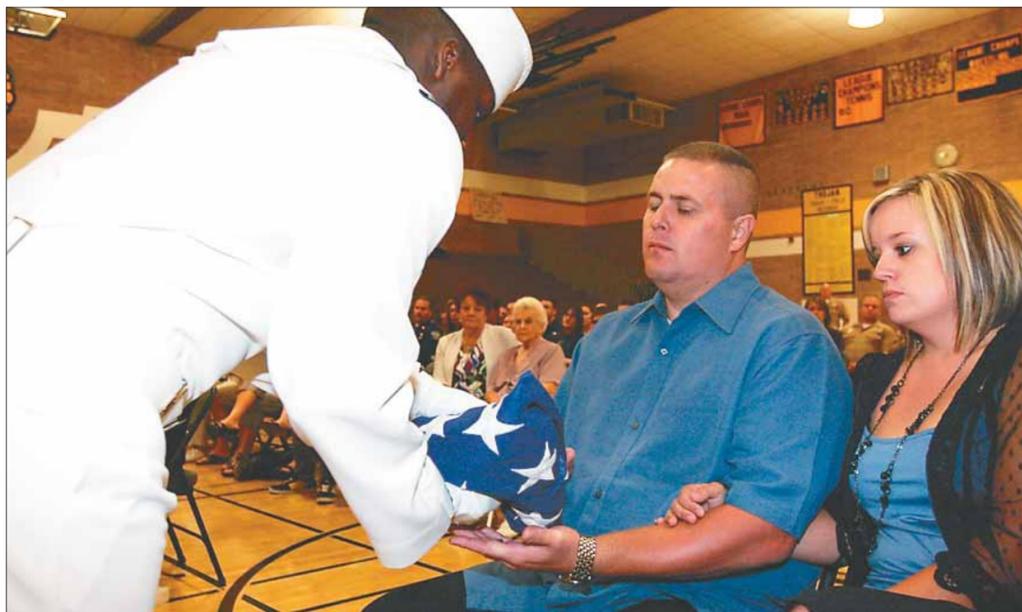
"I'm sorry I didn't get to know the man, but I know the type," said Navy Cmdr. Steven Unger, the Combat Center's command chaplain of the religious ministries department, during the invocation. "I'm proud of him."

Soon after, the stage was set for Brian Mullins, Swink's brother, who spoke on his family's behalf.

"August 27, 2010, is the day my brother [Petty Officer 3rd Class] James Michael Swink laid down his life for the country he loved," Mullins said.

Mullins went on to paint the picture of his brother as a man who always had an extra pair of hands and a compassionate heart for those who needed help.

He volunteered with Project See MOURNS, A5



LANCE CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON

Brian Mullins and his wife, Brandi, receive the American Flag in honor of Mullins' brother Petty Officer 3rd Class James M. Swink, a Yucca Valley native who gave his life while serving as a hospital corpsman with 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, in Helmand province, Afghanistan. Swink was laid to rest on his 21st birthday at the Arlington National Cemetery, Sept. 8.

MCI West offers sexual assault prevention/response course

LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marine Corps Installations West is providing a seminar on sexual assault prevention and response for senior Marine and Naval officers, senior enlisted

Marines and sailors and civilian leadership. Two four-hour classes are scheduled for Oct. 6 at 7:30 a.m. and at 12:30 p.m. in the Officer's Club Mesa Room.

"The purpose of the seminar is to provide senior leaders with the tools to address Sexual Assault Prevention and

Response issues and how to promote a positive SAPR command climate," said Jennifer L. Husung, the Combat Center's Sexual Assault Response Coordinator. "Leaders will understand the different reporting options available to sexual assault victims who are

active duty service members and will be introduced to the Marine Corps bystander intervention strategy."

Attendees can expect something a little different than the usual narrated slide show.

To put a human face to the issue, a junior enlisted

Marine has agreed to share her very personal story of sexual assault and the effect the experience had on her.

"We have to get away from 'check-in-the-box' training. We have to make this a significant emotional event," urged Maj. Gen. Anthony L. Jackson,

commanding general at MCI West in an article on Camp Pendleton's seminars, which were held Sept. 29.

There is limited room for participants. Contact Husung no later than Oct. 4 for a reservation at jennifer.husung@usmc.mil or by calling 830-4997.

Combat Center voter assistance office open for business

COMPILED BY THE OBSERVATION POST STAFF

The new Installation Voter Assistance Office (IVAO) aboard the Marine Air Ground Combat Center opened for business on

Monday. The IVAO is located in room 48 in the Village Center, building 1551, and exists for the sole purpose of providing voting assistance and resources on a walk-in basis for all military personnel, family members and civilians

aboard MCAGCC. Hours of operation are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8 a.m. to noon. Customers can also call 830-7441 for assistance.

The November 2 general election is approaching quickly. The Federal Voting

Assistance Program has designated Sept. 27 to Oct. 4 as "Absentee Voters Week."

Voters are highly encouraged to mail in their absentee ballots. Voters who have not received their ballots by Sept. 27 can utilize the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot as a

back-up ballot. Go to <http://www.FVAP.gov> and use the automated assistant to complete the FWAB. If you receive your state ballot after submitting the FWAB, vote and return the state ballot as well. The state will only count your FWAB if your

state ballot is not received by the established deadline. For more absentee voting information, visit the FVAP's website, contact your Unit Voting Assistance Officer or stop by the IVAO. We are here to help. Vote and let your voice be heard!



New Phantom in town ~ See A3



Timeless lessons ~ See A4



Waterlogged NCOS ~ See A7



Scion battle update ~ See B1



Visit the official MCAGCC facebook page by searching "The Combat Center at Twentynine Palms" at <http://www.facebook.com>

Don't take a chance, get a flu shot

SHARI LOPATIN

TriWest Healthcare Alliance

If nine out of 10 people who played the lottery actually won, who wouldn't want to try their chances?

When it comes to flu shots, it's the same odds. Nine out of 10 healthy people who get a seasonal flu shot, don't get the flu, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

With flu season right around the corner, trying that "lottery" could keep you from getting sick. Seasonal flu vaccinations are available as a shot or nasal spray and are a TRICARE-covered benefit.

The flu shot this year, according to the CDC, will protect against the three most common forms of flu, including the headline-hogging H1N1 virus from last year.

Where to get a flu shot

Active duty service members will need to visit their assigned military clinic to receive a flu shot. The shot will be at no cost to them. Additionally, a TRICARE beneficiary may visit his or her military clinic for a flu shot at no cost; however, they should call the facility first to find out when the shots are available.

All individuals with TRICARE Prime who choose not to receive a shot from their military clinic will need to visit a TRICARE network provider - such as their primary care manager or a pharmacy - to have the shot at no cost. Some network doctors' offices may still charge a small co-pay for the visit, though. The same rules apply for those using TRICARE Standard and Extra, or enrolled in TRICARE Prime Remote, as long as the vaccine is administered by a TRICARE-authorized provider.

CDC recommendations for flu shots

Everyone, 6 months or older, should receive a flu shot the moment it's available, as recommended by the CDC. Additionally, receiving a flu shot is especially important for certain high-risk groups to decrease their risk for severe flu illness. These groups are:

- Young children
- Pregnant women
- People with chronic health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease
- People 65 years and older
- Health care workers
- Caretakers who live with people at high risk (such as those listed above)

Prevention methods to stifle the flow of flu

One of the best methods to prevent the spread of flu is adequate hand-washing. Individuals should wash their hands often with soap and water, properly scrubbing their hands together. A quick, fast rinse will not do the trick. Additionally, covering one's nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing, then throwing the tissue away will help keep others from getting sick.

A few other tips from the CDC are:

- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
- Avoid close contact with sick people
- If sick, remain home for at least 24 hours after the fever has stopped, except to receive medical care
- If sick, limit contact with others as much as possible.

For more information on the flu and TRICARE-covered flu shots, visit <http://www.triwest.com/flu>. You can also follow TriWest on Facebook and Twitter for updates on flu shots at <http://www.facebook.com/triwest> or <http://www.twitter.com/triwest>.

Centerspeak

Who is your personal hero?

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



PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS KENT ESPINOZA

HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE Co., 2ND BATTALION, 7TH MARINE REGIMENT

"Barrack Obama, because he did it when everyone else thought he couldn't, and he is still doing it even though they say he can't."



1ST LT. TYLER ANTHONY

WEAPONS Co., 3RD BATTALION, 4TH MARINE REGIMENT

"My mother, because she raised three boys who roughhoused a lot, and she is the hardest working outgoing woman I know."



GUNNERY SGT. ROBERT RAMIREZ

EXERCISE SUPPORT DIVISION, HEADQUARTERS BATTALION

"My parents, because they started with nothing and worked hard to give their kids a better life than they had."



PFC. VIANEY LOPEZ

COMPANY B, MARINE CORPS COMMUNICATION-ELECTRONICS SCHOOL

"My father, because he went out and worked hard for his children."

Hot Topics

COLLEGE FOOTBALL DEAL

San Diego State University is offering prime tickets for their home games to military personnel and their families for \$5 a seat. They may be purchased through MCCC ticket offices. The seats are located between the 30 yard lines at the Plaza level. Retail value is \$26/seat.

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

Saturday is National Public Lands Day. Show your support for our public lands by taking part in volunteer activities at Joshua Tree National Park. Help beautify the park and improve wildlife habitat by aiding in trash pickup along trails or lend a hand at the park's native plant nursery. For more information, call Lauren Lentz at 367-5524.

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

In honor of the many contributions of the Hispanic community to the United States, our nation observes Hispanic Heritage Month from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15. These dates are observed with respect to the anniversary of independence of seven Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico and Chili. The theme for this year's observance is "Heritage, Diversity, Integrity and Honor: The Renewed Hope of America." See MARADMIN 502/10 for current personnel numbers and significant contributions.

Marine Corps History

Sept. 24, 1873

Almost 200 Marines and sailors from the USS Pensacola and Benicia landed at the Bay of Panama, Columbia, to protect the railroad and American lives and property during the revolution.

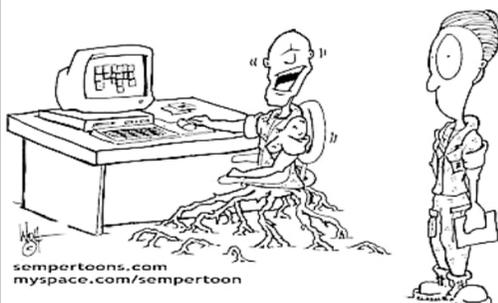


Report any suspicious activity immediately which may be a sign of terrorism, including:

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

830-3937

AFTER MY 4TH YEAR...THE ROOTS GREW! SINCE THEN, I'VE BEEN MY MONITORS WORST NIGHTMARE!!



HOME STEADER'S

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

SUDOKU #1942

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

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2010 HOMETOWN CONTENT

A FLOCK OF J'S

[Puzzle solutions on A9]

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14					15				16				
17				18					19				
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44				45		46				47			
48				49		50							
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56	57	58					59	60			61		
62					63	64				65	66		
67					68					69			
70					71					72			

- ACROSS**
1. Front-porch tune, maybe
 6. Give this for that
 10. Starbucks offering, informally
 14. "To form ___ perfect Union ..."
 15. Screwballer Hubbell
 16. Like a dust bowl
 17. "Finnegans Wake" writer
 19. Give up
 20. Actress Hagen
 21. Sudden-death periods: Abbr.
 22. Invites to enter
 24. Japanese mercenaries
 27. ___ Mahal
 28. Fred's dancing sister
 31. Ais and unaus
 35. Fire hose hookup
 39. Severe pang
 40. Central spots
 41. Loaf ends
 43. In apple-pie order
 44. Cast out
 46. Fumigation experts
 48. "Don't quit your ___"
 50. Johnny's "Sleep Walk" partner
 51. Man-mouse connector
 52. Virgil epic
 56. Come to pass
 59. Romper room habitue
 61. Fla. neighbor
 62. Stone for some Scorpions
 63. "Shoeless" baseball legend
 67. Amos or Spelling
 68. Stew veggie
 69. Rock star Winwood
 70. Work on a website?
 71. Truck-stop stopper
 72. Long-eared beasts
- DOWN**
1. Bourbon Street cuisine
 2. Fine fiddle
 3. Like some noses
 4. Prospector's find
 5. Bandleader Brown
 6. Caber tosser
 7. Means partner
 8. Compass doodle
 9. Cumberbund features
 10. Heavyweight champ, 1908-15
 11. Belligerent god
 12. Middle of a Caesarean boast
 13. Yemeni city
 18. Nativity figure
 23. Popcorn add-on
 25. Singer nicknamed "Pearl"
 26. State further
 29. Perjured oneself
 30. Nonlethal swords
 32. Elder or alder
 33. Icy coating
 34. Gets hard
 35. Musher's ride
 36. "Animal House" frock
 37. ___-deuce
 38. Raines or Cinders
 42. Beethoven specialty
 45. Floored it
 47. Beehive State tribesman
 49. Bluegrass strings
 53. Mitigates
 54. Porter's "___ Paris"
 55. Odense people
 56. Red-___ (wieners)
 57. Per unit
 58. ___-mutuel
 59. Jailbird's stretch
 60. Town near Santa Barbara
 64. All right, informally
 65. Johnny Reb's monogram
 66. Horsehead-shaped pcs.

Combat Center Spotlight

Name: Lance Cpl. Thomas Nelson

Hometown: Longview, Texas

Unit: Marine Wing Support Squadron 374

Job title: Meteorology and Oceanography Forecaster

Job duties: Build 96-hour weather forecasts for his unit and any other unit that needs it.

What do you like most about your job? "I like weather. I picked the job. You learn something new every day."

Hobbies: "I'm a family man. I spend time with my family and watch sports."

Time in the Marine Corps: Three years



OBSERVATION POST

Commanding General Brig. Gen. H. Stacy Clardy III

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Griffin Road to be closed for repairs



Beginning Sept. 30, Griffin Road is scheduled to be repaved from First Street to Tenth Street. Construction crews will move in segments to minimize disruptions in traffic flow. The first segment to be shut down is the section from First Street to Third Street. Check future editions of the Observation Post for construction updates.

Phantoms bid Mendez farewell, Johnson new Sgtnmaj

CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Friends, family members, Marines and sailors gathered at the Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field as Sgt. Maj. Rufino Mendez, Jr., relinquished his post as the squadron sergeant major of Marine Unmanned

Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3 to Sgt. Maj. James L. Johnson during a relief and appointment ceremony Sept. 16.

Mendez, who helped form the squadron aboard the Combat Center in 2008, will report to the east coast for recruiting duty near Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., and said

his fellow squadron members made an impact on him.

"[VMU-3] has made me into a better Marine and person," Mendez said. "It's just like being a teacher. It's a two-way street; you teach them, and they teach you."

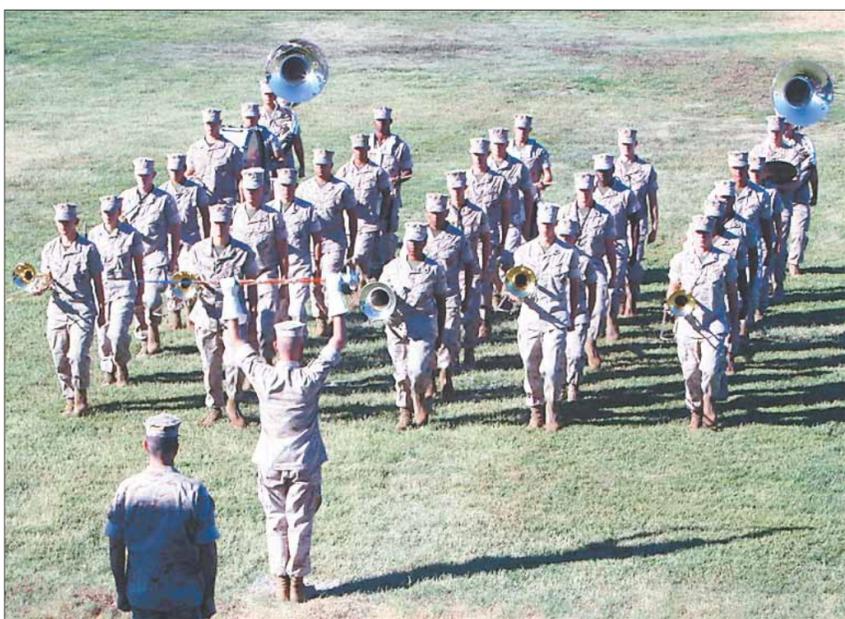
Mendez was also awarded a

See PHANTOMS, A9



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Sergeant Maj. Rufino Mendez, Jr., relinquishes the noncommissioned officer's sword to Lt. Col. Tim Burton, the commanding officer of Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3, during a relief and appointment ceremony, where Mendez relinquished his position as the senior enlisted Marine in the squadron to Sgt. Maj. James L. Johnson.



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

The Combat Center Band provided the music for a relief and appointment ceremony for Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3 at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, Sept. 16.

You are invited!

October 1

Join the Rotary Clubs of the Morongo Basin
& the Basin Wide Foundation for our

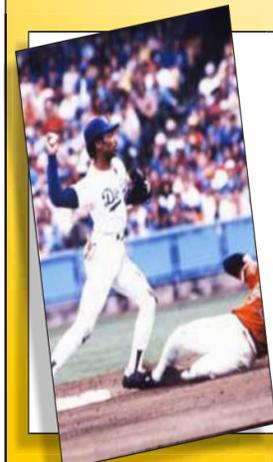
2010

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the Brehm Youth Sports Park



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Live Auction
Dodger items in Auction!
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appearance by
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Dodger Alumni
Derrel Thomas!

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Yucca Valley. 6 pm
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Tickets available at the Hi-
Desert Star, Mojave
Mortgage or
call Shannon Luckino at
(760)365-0444

Donations can be made to the Miracle League Field at the Basin Wide Foundation or the Rotary Club of Yucca Valley, or call Chairperson Shannon Luckino @ 760.365.0444, or Cindy Melland @ 760.365.3315

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email: boobarker@yahoo.com

The Sportsman's Club of Joshua Tree Inc. is a not for profit corporation and supports Local Schools, Scholarships, and other Community Programs.

Ancient Warriors speak to troops through Greek play

CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Dramatic readers used ancient Greek literature to provide a window to the past to show Marines and sailors that the battle seldom ends when the air falls silent, and that the effects of war are timeless.

The play "Ajax" consists of five scenes depicting a well-known and brave soldier, Ajax, and his emotional breakdown, which eventually leads to his suicide.

The story of the grief-stricken warrior aimed to illustrate the psychological and physical problems of some veterans returning from war, and the dangers of bottling up emotions that come with their experiences, said Bryan Doerries, founder of Theater of War,

Productions.

Sophocles, an Athenian general and playwright, wrote the play more than 2,500 years ago and had it performed for his army of 17,000 soldiers.

The story the audience heard was written by warriors for warriors, Doerries said during the introduction.

The way Sophocles depicts the mentally wounded warrior is one aspect of the play that relates to military members, he said. "The way he depicts what goes on in his mind and what happens after his suicide."

The ancient literature was then put into context, matched with emotion and quickly came to life before the Marines and sailors in the Base Theater.

"The professional actors made the story," said Lance

Cpl. Austin Grey, an infantryman with Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment. "The way they presented it was great and much better than other briefs I've had in the past," said the Tampa Bay, Fla., native.

After the reading a four-person panel of Marines, sailors and civilians from the audience took to the stage to share their interpretations and experiences pertaining to Ajax's suicide.

"I can relate with the story of Ajax, because as a commander, I didn't have the luxury to show emotion," said Maj. Trent Gibson, an assistant operations officer with Regimental Combat Team 7, who has served on two combat deployments in Iraq.

"I had to be the rock, to help focus my Marines on

the mission.

"When it was over, ultimately I had to realize, 'Pay tribute to the dead, but focus on the living,'" he said.

"Inside us, we all have weakness, fears and insecurities that make us human. As Marines, we think that we have to be machines, but we don't. We think that having emotions makes us weak, makes us less of a man, but it doesn't," Gibson added.

Another panelist, Navy Lt. Cmdr. Shauna King-Hollis, head of the deployment health department for the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital, said there is a close correlation between what Ajax experienced and what she has seen from Marines and sailors returning from war.

"The timelessness - I think that through the depiction in the play, we realize

these symptoms are very common in military members today," she said.

The audience discussed different aspects of the play, comparing returning Marines and sailors, "modern day warriors," to those of the past.

"War doesn't necessarily stop when the fighting stops. Just because his enemy was dead and buried, Ajax may have thought that the war was over, but it wasn't," Gibson added. "As warriors weakness is reviled. He didn't realize he needed to face his emotions to stay strong."

The presentation offered a unique perspective and broke the mold of the typical

PowerPoint presentation, said Petty Officer 3rd Class Mitchell Groke, a corpsman with RCT-7, and a Bossier, La., native.

The Theater of War has completed 116 performances for more than 20,000 members of the military communities in the last year, 22 of them for Marine Corps audiences.

In his closing remarks, Doerries offered one last thought before the Marines and sailors returned to their daily duties.

"You're not alone. Just like you're not alone in this room, in this country, or in the world, you're not alone across time."

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CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT

Reg E. Cathey [right] hunches over the reading table as his character, Ajax, commits suicide, using the microphone as an improvised sword. Erica Tazel, playing Ajax's wife, Tecmessa, reacts in horror, during a Theatre of War performance Wednesday at the Combat Center Base Theater. "Ajax," an ancient Greek play, has been performed by the group 116 times this year for military audiences all over the world.

TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM
by Lou Gerhardt



I will be observing my 85th birthday next Tuesday and for the first time in better than 40 years we will NOT be having some kind of fund-raising event (last year we had two large parties) to raise money for my non-profit activities. This is my idea. In fact I telephoned someone just the other day and canceled a dinner.

This year I am simply suggesting that if you wish, you can send a gift to my non-profit activities (I'm emphasizing getting a first class homeless shelter in our Hi Desert, as soon as possible.) You can mail your gifts to Dr. Lou Gerhardt, 74007 Playa Vista, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277. You will receive a receipt for tax purposes in return.

I am an extremely fortunate man. Life has been wonderful in every way. I have a caring and patient wife, a loving family, many friends, and significant tasks to occupy my time. My motto remains "Sinesco Discens" or "I grow old learning."

Robert Browning wrote it best:
 "Grow old along with me!
 The best is yet to be,
 The last of life, for which the first was made:
 Our times are in his hand
 Who saith "A whole I planned,
 Youth shows but half; trust God: see all,
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'First Team' conducts boat raid exercise in Guam

CPL. MICHAEL A. BIANCO
31ST MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT

U.S. NAVAL BASE GUAM – More than 10 Combat Rubber Reconnaissance Craft filled with Marines from Company B, Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, blasted through the waves off the shores of Guam during a mock boat raid in support of exercise Valiant Shield Sept. 19.

The mission, – to seize a port facility in order to allow the introduction of follow-on MEU forces ashore.

“The boat company can raid, destroy or seize objectives that are in a region where helicopters or AAVs can give up the element of surprise with audible compromise,”

said Capt. Roberto Rodriguez, Co. B commander. “The Marines and sailors of Co. B are specially trained and equipped to conduct amphibious boat raids, but our application using the CRRC allows us to conduct a range of military operations.”

According to Rodriguez, CRRCs allow the MEU to introduce a force ashore stealthily, at a time and location that keeps the enemy off balance.

“CRRCs can be useful during humanitarian aid and disaster recovery operations where floods or tsunamis do not allow mechanized assets to be used,” he said. “A CRRC would be a useful platform for a disaster response team to conduct an assessment because it would have

the security with Marines, but could also get into flooded areas or up rivers and streams when roads may be damaged by earthquakes or flooding.”

The training is designed to replicate real-world scenarios to prepare the troops for challenges they may face as a part of a Maritime Contingency Force. The desert-based unit has recently conducted several boat raids to become more familiar with its new role.

The 31st MEU is currently conducting the certification exercise as a part of its deployment to the Asia-Pacific Theater and is preparing for exercises where it will train alongside foreign military forces from Japan, the Republic of the Philippines and the Republic of Korea.



CPL. MICHAEL A. BIANCO

Marines with Company B, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, conduct a boat raid on the coast of Guam Sept. 19 in support of exercise Valiant Shield, which is part of the MEU's certification exercise.



CPL. MICHAEL A. BIANCO

A Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) with the dock landing ship U.S.S. Harpers Ferry (LSD 49), 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, lands on shore Sept. 19 during a boat raid on the coast of Guam in support of exercise Valiant Shield, which is part of the MEU's certification exercise.

MOURNS, from A1

Ride, a program that provides special needs children and adults therapeutic and recreational horseback riding sessions, Mullins said. This was a perfect example that described his brother's innate desire to help people even before enlisting in the Navy, he said.

Swink's friends portrayed him as a “fun-loving” and vibrant personality.

“He was full of life, he could get you to do anything,” said Petty Officer 3rd Class Justin Critelli, a shipmate and friend of Swink.

The ceremony ended with the presentation of the American Flag to Mullins in honor of the sacrifice Swink made for his country. Mullins thanked his family, friends and the Armed Services for the support Swink's loved ones received during the “rollercoaster of emotions” they experienced since learning of Swink's death.

Almost as somber as the crowd trickled in, the attendees slowly made their way out, offering their condolences and support to the family of a local hero.



LANCE CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON

Brian Mullins, Petty Officer 3rd Class James M. Swink's brother, tells the crowd about the heroism, kindness and courage his brother possessed before sacrificing his life in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Swink served with 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

El Capitan Mountain scaled for cause



SPECIAL TO THE OBSERVATION POST

Lieutenant Col. Robert Buzby, the current operations officer of the Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command, helps Steve Wampler, a charitable foundation organizer for handicapped kids, who also has cerebral palsy, climb El Capitan Mountain at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, Calif., in an effort to raise money for Wampler's foundation Sept. 16 to 18. Wampler's mission was assisted by a small, enthusiastic group of service members and civilians. Buzby was joined by Staff Sgt. Matt Foust, of the Combat Center's Wounded Warrior Regiment Detachment and two former Marines.

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Evening colors ceremony highlights Retiree Appreciation Month



The Sept. 16 evening colors ceremony was held to recognize Retiree Appreciation Month. "We want to honor those who served in the past and present," said David Petrovich, a relocation specialist for the Combat Center. [Top, left] Two retired military members place their hands over their heart as they watch Old Glory lowered during the Retiree Appreciation Month Evening Colors Ceremony Sept. 16 at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field. The ceremony began at dusk. [Bottom, left] Marines carry the flag after its lowering. [Right] Marines slowly lower the nation's flag during an evening colors ceremony held in honor of Retiree Appreciation Month. *Photos by Pfc. Sarah Anderson*

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Course tests corporals' water survival skills

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
LANCE CPL. ANDREW D.
THORBURN**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Instructors with the Combat Logistics Battalion 7-sponsored Corporals Course gave an everyday physical training session new purpose when they changed their pool time PT to swim qualification.

"Swim qual is one of those items that is on the training list that is hard to get your training in, so we thought we would help the units out by doing a swim qual while we have them at Corporals Course," said Gunnery Sgt. Christine Britt, the staff noncommissioned officer in charge of the course.

The instructors also aimed to take advantage of the group's competitive nature.

"When they are out here with their fellow corporals, and they see somebody they thought was weaker than them, they go do a level two," Britt said. "This is their age group, their peers. We are hoping that being in their own setting is going to encourage them to do more and better."

Once the students decid-

ed to try for a higher qualification level, there was no turning back or changing their minds.

"We don't let them get out," Britt said. "They are not allowed to quit, and it is not just the instructors. Mostly fellow students, if they see someone is having a hard time, they will jump in to try to help them get through it, both mentally and physically."

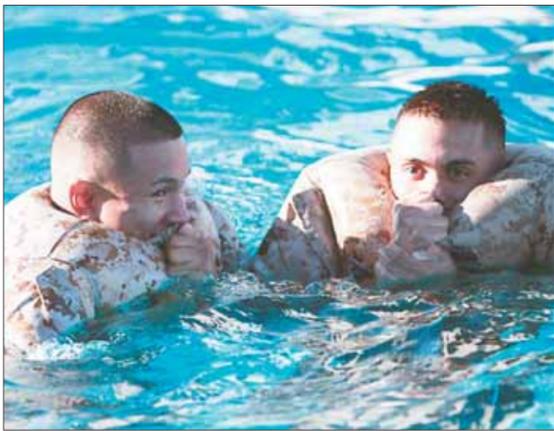
Instructors said because of the swim qualification and the Corporals Course in general, units will not only get back a more confident corporal, but a leader with more than the average swim qualification experience, who know how to push themselves to their water survival limits.

"When it comes time for their company to do swim qual, they'll be able to give examples, advice on how to make it easier for themselves and support to their subordinates," said Cpl. Donavon Leeder, a Corporals Course student.

The Corporals Course is scheduled to graduate today at the Combat Center's Sunset Cinema at 9 a.m.



Corporal Colby Staples, a Corporals Course student, storms his way across the pool with his rubber M16 during the Combat Logistics Battalion 7-sponsored Corporals Course swim qualification at the Combat Center's Training Tank Monday.



Students in the Combat Logistics Battalion 7-sponsored Corporals Course blow into their blouses to stay afloat for five minutes during swim qualification at the Combat Center's Training Tank Monday.



Students with the Combat Logistics Battalion 7-sponsored Corporals Course take part in an abandonment ship test during swim qualification at the Combat Center's Training Tank Monday.

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US, UK aviation partnership thriving in Afghanistan

CPL. RYAN RHOLES

3RD MARINE AIRCRAFT WING (FWD)

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan — On the morning of June 1, the U.S. Marine Corps' 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) and United Kingdom's Joint Aviation Group integrated under one command. Brig. Gen. Andrew W. O'Donnell Jr., the 3rd MAW (Fwd) commanding general, led a historical flag raising ceremony with his British counterpart, Group Capt. Nick Laird, the JAG commander.

Since then, the two forces have been operating in unison under O'Donnell's authority, as the sole aviation combat element of Regional

Command (Southwest) — the command responsible for operations in Helmand and Nimroz provinces. They have completely pooled their resources and manpower in order to support the missions across one of the most dangerous and influential regions in Afghanistan.

"As two separate organizations, we both have strengths," Laird said. "But combined, we have exceptional agility to react to a very determined enemy and insurgent campaign."

The JAG brought more than 30 rotary-wing aircraft to 3rd MAW (Fwd)'s collection of aviation platforms. Both forces now contribute everything from light attack helicopters to cargo and

troop transport aircraft in order to support the Afghan National Security Forces and coalition service members throughout the province.

"We have the additional resources to support the ground forces in a far more comprehensive way than we previously had in this part of the country" said Laird, who has been deployed to Afghanistan several times throughout the years. "I think with the number of aircraft we bring to the table, and the number of aircraft [the U.S.] brings to the table, we get synergies and efficiencies. I strive for what is intelligent tasking — making the best use

See **PARTNERS, A10**



CPL. RYAN RHOLES

United Kingdom forces file into the back of a U.S. CH-53E Super Stallion from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), in the early morning hours of July 30.



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GUNNERY SGT. STEVEN WILLIAMS

United Kingdom Army Lance Cpl. Mark Waddingham, with the 664 Squadron of the U.K.'s Army Air Corps, takes a wild ride on a U.S. Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 365, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward). The U.K. soldiers were invited to the squadron to see how the U.S. aviation crews work.

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CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Marines with Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3, march into place during a relief and appointment ceremony for the squadron at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Sept. 16



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Marines, sailors and family members bow their heads during the invocation at a relief and appointment ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, Sept. 16. Sgt. Maj. Rufino Mendez, Jr., relinquished his post as the squadron sergeant major of Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3 to Sgt. Maj. James L. Johnson. Mendez was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.



CPL. R. LOGAN KYLE

Sergeant Maj. Rufino Mendez, Jr., [left] stands ready to relinquish his post as the squadron sergeant major of Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3 to Sgt. Maj. James L. Johnson [right] during a relief and appointment ceremony Sept. 16.

PHANTOMS, from A3

Meritorious Service Medal for his accomplishments and contributions to the squadron.

Johnson returns to the States after a tour with Marine Corps Embassy Security Group in Bangkok, Thailand. However, the 23-year veteran of the Corps is no stranger to the Combat Center. This is his fourth tour of duty aboard the Combat Center.

Originally an infantryman and later a light armored vehicle crewman, Johnson has served with 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, and 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion.

"I'm very honored and privileged to have the opportunity to serve here as VMU-3 sergeant major," Johnson said. "My family and I are going to do everything we can do to make this a good

tour, not only for ourselves but for the Marines, sailors and their families."

Lieutenant Col. Tim Burton, the squadron's commanding officer, said he was proud to welcome Johnson as a new teammate.

"I look forward to working with Johnson and getting to know [him], and working through the challenges ahead," said Burton, during a speech at the ceremony.

"Johnson knows the ground here, and he's going to help the Marines succeed in this austere environment."

Johnson will have time to get to know his Marines and sailors before deploying in support of Operation Enduring Freedom next year.

COMBAT CENTER RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Sunday

Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel Roman Catholic Services
8:45 a.m. - Confessions+
9 a.m. - Rosary
9:30 a.m. - Catholic Mass*
9:30 a.m. - Children's Liturgy of the Word
4 p.m. - Choir Practice
4:15 p.m. - Confessions+
4:30 p.m. - Rosary
5 p.m. - Catholic Mass

Christ Chapel

9 a.m. - Calvary Fellowship* (Contemporary Worship)
9 a.m. - Children's Church
10:30 a.m. - Redemption* (A blend of traditional and contemporary worship)
10:45 a.m. - Children's Church

Weekday Events

Immaculate Heart of Mary

Monday - Friday, 11:45 a.m. - Catholic Mass
Christ Chapel
Monday - Friday, noon - Daily Prayer

Tuesday

Christ Chapel

9 a.m. - Christian Women's Fellowship* (Sept. through May)
Immaculate Heart of Mary
3:30-5:30 p.m. - Military Council of Catholic Women

Wednesday

Immaculate Heart of Mary

First Wednesday, 6 p.m. - Baptism preparation class
First Wednesday, 7 p.m. - Knights of Columbus
Thursday
Immaculate Heart of Mary
9 a.m. - Adult Class
6 p.m. - Children RCIA
6:30 p.m. - RCIA (Sept.-April)
7 p.m. - Gr. 7 and Confirmation

Friday

Immaculate Heart of Mary

First Friday each month, 12:15 p.m., 4:30 p.m. - Exposition/Adoration Most Blessed Sacrament

Legend

* Indicates child care is provided
+ Appointments can be made for confessions by calling 830-6456/6482

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MARINE CORPS CIVILIAN POLICE

TWENTYNINE PALMS, CA



The Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms is currently hiring civilian police officers. Positions available include Patrol Officer, Military Working Dog Handler, Patrol Supervisor, Field Training Officer, Watch Commander, and many others.

Police Officer Salary: \$34,881 - \$56,174

BENEFITS:

- Annual uniform allowance
- Night differential and Sunday premium pay
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REQUIREMENTS:

- Minimum of 1 year law enforcement or security experience or educational equivalent
- Must successfully complete pre-employment screening and USMC Police Academy

HOW TO APPLY:

For complete information on this opportunity, visit the program's website:

www.usmccle.com

All U.S. Citizens may apply at: www.usajobs.gov

Veterans, Prior Service, Current Federal and Appointment Eligibles may apply at: <https://chart.donhr.navy.mil>

Combat Center Trader Ads

AUTOMOTIVE

1952 PLYMOUTH. 4 door, restored. 1966 Ford Galaxie, needs work. Call Steve for more information. 272-9948. 9/24/10

1957 NASH EXECUTIVE MODEL PROJECT CAR. Registered, complete engine, \$500 OBO. 5 rims, size 15.6 lug, off-road heavy duty. \$180 OBO. Call Jose 361-3509. 9/24/10

2008 TOYOTA YARIS. \$10,000 OBO. Approx. 38K miles. Good condition. Consistent maintenance. 622-4562. 9/10/10

2009 HONDA SHADOW 750. One owner, low miles, like new. \$5,000. Call Logan for details. 423-504-6926. 7/30/10

2002 CR250R DIRT BIKE. Eline starter, FMF pipe and silencer, paddle tire for the dunes. Runs very strong. \$2,800. 910-3979. 6/25/10

1999 TRANS AM 30TH ANNIVERSARY CONVERTIBLE. White with blue stripes. 5.7 LT-1, Auto, \$12,500. 408-9088. 6/11/10

2006 TRIUMPH SCRAMBLER. 3,275 miles. \$6,000 firm. Modern classic styled after Steve McQueen's Desert Racer. 365-5902. 6/11/10

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MISC. ITEMS. Golf set \$75 OBO. Baby play pen \$50 OBO. Baby swing \$50. Call Socorro Gallard 361-3509. 9/24/10

OAK BOOKCASE BUNK BED. With storage drawers. \$150. E-mail bookowl50@yahoo.com for pictures. 369-4239. 9/24/10

AMAZON PARROT, \$500 OBO. Upright freezer \$200 OBO. Twin bed, captains. \$100 OBO. 285-1603. 9/10/10

OAK BOOKSHELF, \$100 OBO, Ikea couch and ottoman \$100 OBO. Other household items. 285-1603. 9/10/10

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SPORTS AND SCI FI CARD COLLECTION. Mid '80s to mid '90s football and baseball. Some older baseball cards. Star Trek and Star Wars cards. Sold by individual heroes, hero sets, team sets or the whole collection. Call Stephen at 567-7921. 9/10/10

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 830-6213.

SPORTS AND LEISURE

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

SEPTEMBER 24, 2010

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B1

Scion update – Deadline almost here



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Kai Hei Tai, the resident team from the Combat Center representing the Marine Corps for the Scion: Battle of the Builds, received a visit from Toyota representatives who came to check on the progress of their custom Scion xB Wednesday at the installation's Auto Skills Center.

The team has hit a few speed bumps during their custom build, but they are using the famous Marine trait of adapting and overcoming to make their dream a four-wheeled reality.

"We've been putting in a lot of time on this car," said Lance Cpl. Joshua Harrison, a ground communications organizational repairman with Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion. "I'm working on the body right now, but there's been a lot of custom fabrication all over this thing."

Harrison, an Austin, Texas, native, said aside from the body modifications, the crew has also modified the drive train, and many suspension components, and will be adding a far beefier set of 33-inch tires. The team used a turbo kit from Precision Turbo Works, which is not yet on the commercial market.

Although the team's progress is admittedly slow, with their new parts coming in and pulls from the junkyard, Kai Hei Tai said they are sure they will meet their Oct. 5 deadline to finish the xB Assault.

The team is one of three military finalists chosen by the vehicle manufacturer. Each team received a basic Scion xB and \$15,000 to build their winning designs. The grand prize winners are scheduled to be announced Oct. 18.

Staff Sgt. Rodrigo Gonzales, the range control supervisor of BEARMAT range control unit, checks wiring and interior parts Wednesday at the Combat Center's Auto Skills Center. Gonzales is part of Kai Hei Tai, the installation's team in the Scion: Battle of the Builds competition. Kai Hei Tai is the only finalist team for the Marine Corps.

LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

US, UK Marines run across nation for wounded warriors

PFC. CHRISTOFER P. BAINES

HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS

ARLINGTON, Va. – A team of six runners, including a triple amputee, are setting out across the United States to accomplish a monumental task known as the Gumpathon. To complete their ambitious journey, the team must travel 3,530 miles through three deserts, four time zones, 10 mountain ranges and 16 states.

By completing the Gumpathon, service members hope to raise \$1 million for three separate charities, all benefiting wounded warriors from the United States and the United Kingdom.

"I got the idea for the Gumpathon from having watched the film Forrest Gump about 14 years ago," said U. K. Royal Marine Colour Sgt. Damian Todd. "I thought of what an amazing experience it would be to run across the states, and while I did it, raise money for charity. At the time I hadn't had anything particularly in mind that was motivating enough and had

touched me to do that, and I kind of shelved the idea."

However, some ideas don't fade with time. Around two years ago, Todd brought his initiative to life after visiting with his friend Mark Ormrod, who lost three limbs in Afghanistan due to a landmine. It was then he saw firsthand how performing the most basic of tasks can be taken for granted, and was touched seeing Ormrod persevering in the face of adversity.

"I felt it was the right time to get the idea off the shelf and do something for wounded soldiers," Todd said.

Charities benefiting from the Gumpathon include the American Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund, the British Royal Marine Charitable Trust Fund and Help for Heroes. Throughout the voyage, the team plans to collect donations in person and on their website, <http://www.gumpathon.com>.

The epic journey began Sept. 10, starting from the USS Intrepid. The team continued to the nation's capital where they made an appearance at the British Embassy

and Pentagon 9/11 Memorial. Each person will run at least 20 miles every day relay style and finish at the Santa Monica Pier in California, where Todd plans to dive into the ocean for a victory swim. Their arrival date is currently slated for Nov. 11.

As long and arduous as the trek may be, motivation is high among the team. Master Gunnery Sgt. Charles "Chunks" Padilla, the only U.S. Marine on the team, is eager to support the wounded warriors.

"Knowing that there's Marines downrange giving their all; this is just my way of helping the individuals and Marines that are getting injured," Padilla said.

Though Todd wanted a U.S. Marine on the team, Padilla's presence is rather special, considering he worked with Royal Marines for three years, teaching their mountain leader course.

"They're a lot like us, they're animals, they're warriors and they got the can-do attitude," he said.

As mind-boggling as the crossing may seem, the men,



PFC. CHRISTOFER BAINES

Four of the six Gumpathon runners run up Massachusetts Ave. NW in their final push to the British Embassy with two Royal Marine Commandos, Sept. 14, 2010. The Gumpathon is a fundraiser aimed toward earning \$1 million for three separate charities supporting the well-being of American and British wounded warriors.

as well as the support staff, are motivated and committed to working as a cohesive team to accomplish this worthy goal. Even Ormrod, a triple amputee, will run at least one mile a day utilizing a prosthesis designed specifically for the journey.

With their "can-do" attitudes, the team carries an indomitable spirit.

"The mindset is there, so everything else will follow," Padilla said.

However, difficulties are not limited to keeping everyone happy; the physical

implications of running more than 3,500 miles can also be extremely taxing. Fortunately, the team has acquired some help in the form of Jules Payne, mother of a Royal Marine, and a

See RUN, B4

Regional championship kicks off

PFC. SARAH ANDERSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. – Players' spirits were hyped up as the West Coast Regional

Championship kicked off Monday at Marine Air Station Yuma, Ariz. Every Marine Corps installation on the West Coast was represented by at least one team.

Twentynine Palms was

picked to play Marine Corps Base Hawaii for the first game.

The Combat Center's team said they have been looking forward to this championship all season.

"We have been practicing

hard," said Isaac Soloria, a player for the team. "We have a good team playing with each other. We have a lot of camaraderie, and we understand each other."

Like every team, Twentynine Palms had a lot of confidence and determination to leave it all out on the field.

"We are going to give it everything we have," said Soloria, a native of San Diego.

Hawaii came to regionals as an undefeated team in their division on the islands, said coach Mauricio Piedrahita. "I haven't really seen what Twentynine Palms is like, but we are going to come out here and play our game."

The teams took their positions on the field, and waited in anticipation for the whistle's blast, which signaled the start of the game.

Neither team had played against the other since the

See SOCCER, B3



PFC. SARAH ANDERSON

Mario Delmoral [left], a player for the Twentynine Palms base soccer team, jumps over a player from Marine Corps Base Hawaii who attempted to slide tackle him during a game Monday night at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., soccer field.

The Combat Center presents the 2010 Sounds of Freedom Rock Festival featuring Seether and Saliva
7 to 10:30 p.m. on Saturday at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field

Please no outside food, drinks or alcohol allowed
Please bring your own lawn chair but leave your pets and umbrellas at home
The concert is free, beer and food will be available for purchase
For more information call Kelley Coe at 830-5086



Combat Center Clubs

Excursions Enlisted Club

Fridays: Social food, 5 to 7 p.m.; Salsa dancing, 7 to 8 p.m.; Ladies' night, 8 to 10 p.m.; DJ Vlad, 8 to 11 p.m. Sundays: Football coverage, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Mondays: Monday Night Football, 5:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesdays: Karaoke with DJ Gjettblaque, 8 to 10 p.m.

Bloodstripes NCO Club

Mondays: Monday Night Football, 5:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesdays: Buffalo Wings, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Hashmarks 29 SNCO Club

Fridays: Dinner, full menu, 4:30 to 9 p.m., Social hour 5:30 p.m., DJ, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. Monday-Friday: All Hands Lunch, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Mondays: Steak night, 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesdays: Dinner, full menu, 4:30 to 9 p.m., Karaoke, 5 to 7 p.m.

Combat Center's Officers' Club

Monday-Friday: Lunch served, 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

Dungen with Mini Mansions

Description: Visiting all the way from Swenden When: 9 p.m. Friday, Sept. 24

Outside Show: Earthlings with Alain Johannes and Sweethead

Inside Show: I See Hawks in LA
Description: The unique So. Cal. bands perform When: 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 25
Where: Pappy and Harriet's
53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown
For more information, call 365-5956 or visit <http://www.pappyandharriets.com>.

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

Description: Hilarious Tony winning comedy When: 7 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays until Sept. 25
Where: Theatre 29
73637 Sullivan Road, Twentynine Palms
For more information call 361-4151 or visit <http://www.theatre29.com>.

The Sounds of Freedom Concert

Description: Seether and Saliva perform at the Combat Center's free concert
When: 7 to 10:30 p.m.
Where: Combat Center's Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field
For more information call Kelley Coe at 830-5086.

Lower Desert

Daryl Hall & John Oates

Description: The 70's, 80's pop performers come to town
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 2
Where: Agua Caliente
32-250 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage
For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Bachman & Turner

Description: The rock 'n' roll giants are reunited
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 16
Where: Spotlight 29 Casino Resort
46-200 Harrison Place, Coachella
For more information call 866-377-6829 or visit <http://www.spotlight29.com>.

Tim McGraw

Description: The country star performs
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 16
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Gladys Knight

Description: The classic soul/pop artist performs
When: 5 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 7
Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon
For more information call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinosort.com>.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Sept. 24

6 p.m. – Charlie St. Cloud, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – Eat Pray Love, Rated PG-13
Midnight – The Other Guys, Rated PG-13

Saturday, Sept. 25

11 a.m. – Free Matinee, Shrek Forever After, Rated PG
2 p.m. – Cats and Dogs 2, Rated PG

Sunday, Sept. 26

11 a.m. – Nanny McPhee Returns, Rated PG
2 p.m. – Nanny McPhee Returns, Rated PG
5 p.m. – The Other Guys, Rated PG-13
7 p.m. – The Lottery Ticket, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – Scott Pilgrim vs The World, Rated PG-13

Monday, Sept. 27

4 p.m. – Cats and Dogs, Rated PG
6 p.m. – Vampire Sucks, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – Eat, Pray, Love, Rated PG-13

Tuesday, Sept. 28

4 p.m. – Step Up 3, Rated PG-13
6 p.m. – Scott Pilgrim vs The World, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – The Lottery Ticket, Rated PG-13

Wednesday, Sept. 29

4 p.m. – Nanny McPhee Returns, Rated PG
6 p.m. – Charlie St. Cloud, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – The Other Guys, Rated PG-13

Thursday, Sept. 30

4 p.m. – Nanny McPhee Returns, Rated PG
6 p.m. – Scott Pilgrim vs The World, Rated PG-13
7 p.m. – Dinner for Schmucks, Rated PG-13

Outstanding cast elevates 'Get Low'

NEIL POND

AMERICAN PROFILE

"Get Low"

Rated PG-13

Based on a true story, "Get Low" is the tale of a 1930s Tennessee hermit with a secret he wants to get off his chest before he dies.

So Felix Bush plans his own living funeral, a tri-county event at which his worldly goods will be given away and the record will be set straight...in order that he can finally rest in peace when the time comes.

An outstanding cast elevates the story beyond the relatively modest dramatic elements of the yarn itself. Robert Duvall is outstanding as the cantankerous mountain man around which town gossip



COURTESY PHOTO

Felix Bush, played by Robert Duvall, is a hermit who wants to get a secret off his chest before he dies.

and tall tales swirl. Bill Murray sprinkles a masterful dollop of dry, perfectly measured humor to

his supporting role as the funeral director commissioned to stage the event. Sissy Spacek is Felix's old flame, nursing an old romantic wound.

Duvall has portrayed dozens of colorful movie characters and coots over the past five decades, and he makes Felix look, sound and act like a naturally aged composite of some of his greatest creations. It's as if the swaggering lieutenant colonel in "Apocalypse Now," the Indian-fighting cattle wrangler from "Lonesome Dove" and the washed-up country singer in "Tender Mercies" all finally came home to roost behind one long, scrappy, scraggly beard.

Spacek seems quite at home in the movie's wooded hills and winding hollers, which look a lot like the backdrop of many scenes from "Coal Miner's

Daughter," in which she memorably portrayed young Loretta Lynn. The Oscar-winning actress imparts a finely nuanced Southern elegance to the pivotal part of Mattie Darrow, who long ago left rural life – and Felix – for the refinements of civilization.

And Murray...well, he almost steals the show as the city-slicker undertaker who at first sees Felix as his ticket to a big payday, but later comes to understand the deeper significance of the event he's been asked to stage and promote. Lucas Black, who 14 years ago played the little boy, Frank, in "Sling Blade," is instrumental to moving the story along as the funeral assistant, a young father and husband who wants to do the right thing for his eccentric client.

The specter of death hangs heavy over this tender tale of romance and mystery. But that never dampens the spirit of the performances, which positively sparkle with warmth, charm and dimensions of character that the actors coax from quiet moments, small gestures and gentle tones of conversation. There's almost no shouting, only one gunshot (and that's a warning fired into the air) and a single physical altercation that's over almost as quickly as it begins.

This is a tender, folksy character study – a rarity these days in Hollywood – with an uplifting message about the suffocating burden of guilt, the power of forgiveness and a love that bridges life and death. See it before it quietly drifts away.



COURTESY PHOTO

This is a tender character study with an uplifting message about the suffocating burden of guilt.

Cinema 6		Showtimes Effective 9/24/10 - 9/30/10
Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps (PG13) Everyday: 2:15, 6:00, 9:00	The Town (R) Everyday: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00	
Easy A (PG 13) Everyday: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00	Legend Of The Guardians: The Owls Of Ga'Hoole (PG) Everyday: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00	
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COURTESY PHOTO

Robert Duvall is outstanding as Felix Bush, the cantankerous mountain man around which town gossip and tall tales swirl.

Combat Center Sports



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Jason Streets, quarterback for the Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 Rhinos, scans downfield for an open receiver Wednesday at the Combat Center's Felix Field. The Rhinos lost to the Headquarters Battalion Bulldogs 26 to 10.



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

James Jones, a running back for the Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 Rhinos, gets tossed around by the Headquarters Battalion Bulldogs defense Wednesday during a Combat Center's Commanding General's Intramural Football League game. The Rhinos lost to the Bulldogs 26 to 10.

SOCCER, from B1

regional championship last year. Both teams were entering the game nearly blind, not knowing how their opponent played.

The whistle finally blew and Twentynine Palms took the ball. Rene Renteria scored within the first 15 minutes.

Because of the early goal,

Twentynine Palms grew a little too confident, and to their surprise, were scored on shortly after that.

The game seemed to be a ping pong match in the first half as neither team could get solid control of the field.

"We were having a hard time adapting to their strategy," said Nathan Rohn, a player for the Combat

Center. "They seemed to always have two thirds of their team on one half of the field at all times. We couldn't adapt to the numbers they had against us."

When half time rolled around, both teams were frustrated.

"We came out rusty, it took a little bit for us to get comfortable with each other again," said Misker Derseh, the coach of the Twentynine Palms team.

As the second half started, the entire style of play on the team changed. Twentynine Palms played with more finesse and patience than during the previous half. The team played with control and dominated the second half, ending the game with a narrow victory of 4-3 in favor of Twentynine Palms. The Hawaii team left the field, bidding adieu to its undefeated ranking.

"The second half we got better, but we expect to get a lot better as the tournament goes on," Derseh said. "I expect good things. Once we click again, we can play to the level I know we can."

The first game ended and Twentynine Palms claimed their first victory. Twentynine Palms has never won a regional championship, and have high hopes for this tournament.



PFC. SARAH ANDERSON

AJ Wilson, a goalkeeper on the Twentynine Palms base team saves a goal during a game against Marine Corps Base Hawaii Monday night at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz. soccer field.

Athlete of the Week

Name: Christopher Spurgeon

Hometown: Albertville, Ala.

Unit: Consolidated Material Support Center

Job title: Supply administration and operations specialist

Recognition: Scored touchdowns in each game, including a 2-point conversion

Favorite aspect of the sport: The thrill and camaraderie that comes with the sport

Advice for aspiring athletes: Keep your head in the game.



ROGER MELANSON ESTATE AUCTION

Pope's Auction
Sat., Oct. 2nd

Auction 11 A.M.
Held at: 3022 Alta Ave., Yucca Valley, CA

Roger was a long time resident of Yucca Valley and a good friend. He served our community for many years as a Sheriff's Sergeant. He will be missed by family and friends.

Auction items: Tractors, implements, tractor parts, forklift, hand & power tools, paint guns & accessories, trailers, construction supplies, furniture, appliances and much, much more.

Any questions call:
Rosemary: 760-819-1031
10% Buyer's Fee
Auctioneer: Jack Pope



LANCE CPL. M. C. NERL

Charles Jefferson, the Headquarters Battalion Bulldogs quarterback, tries to evade defenders Wednesday at Felix Field during their victory against the Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 Rhinos. The Bulldogs won 26 to 10.

1st Annual Summer's End Craft Fair & Boutique

September 25th, 8:00AM-2:00PM
at Joshua Springs Calvary Chapel

(57373 Joshua Lane - Yucca Valley, CA)

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RUN, from B1

physical therapist that specializes in preventative and post injury care. The responsibility of keeping the runners fit to run falls on her capable hands. She's also pulling double-duty as the RV driver for the first few hundred miles of the trip.

"At one point we were lost trying to find a campsite, and a lady went out of her way 20-odd miles

to get us there," Payne said. "She just said 'follow me.'"

With motivation high and a capable team behind the effort, the Gumpathon team is bound for California. During a speech at the British Embassy in Washington, Todd said completing the voyage will be a colossal achievement, but what truly matters is the fundraising efforts to support our wounded warriors.

To donate, text "GUMP" to

50555 or visit <http://www.gumpathon.com>. Running enthusiasts can also go out and show support by tracking their progress via the Gumpathon website.

"Our pain will help reduce that of others," Todd said. "We will be in pain for two-and-a-bit months, but guys like Mark will be in pain for the rest of their lives. So that's the sacrifice we make, and the sacrifice we want people to make is that \$10 here, \$10 there."



PFC. CHRISTOFER BAINES

The Gumpathon team, U.S. and Royal Marines and Marine Corps Marathon race director Rick Nealis pose for a photo in front of the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Sept. 15, 2010. The runners' sixth day will take them from Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., to Charlottesville, Va.

Soccer spotlight

Goalkeeper scores on Yuma's team



PFC. SARAH ANDERSON

AJ Wilson, a goalkeeper for the Twentynine Palms base soccer team, scored a goal for the first time in his Marine Corps soccer career during a regional game against Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., Tuesday at MCAS Yuma's field. Wilson was pulled out of the goal and put in a forward field position. Wilson had never played in the field and was on the opposite side of the field from where he is most comfortable. He was on the field no longer than three minutes when the ball was crossed into the center of Yuma's goal, and Wilson scored the goal on a rebound after a blocked shot by the goalkeeper. "I was on cloud nine," Wilson said. "It was crazy. There's nothing like the feeling of scoring a goal." Twentynine Palms won the game, 4-2.

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