

OBSERVATION Post

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

DECEMBER 17, 2010 SERVING THE TWENTYNINE PALMS COMMUNITY SINCE 1957 VOL. 53 ISSUE 50

LAST EDITION OF THE OBSERVATION POST UNTIL JAN. 7

St. Nick invades Combat Center



CPL. M. C. NERL

Santa Claus and his elves ride aboard an M1A1 main battle tank at the Combat Center Thursday. The festive group, which included his "reindeer," 1st Tank Battalion Marines on motorcycles, ended their journey at the 1st Tank Bn. Christmas party where they delivered toys and candy to the unit's children. Later, the children lined up to sit on Santa's lap, take photos and whisper what they want for Christmas into his ear.

East, West Coast squadrons team up for EMV

CPL. M. C. NERL
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Elements of Marine Heavy Lift Helicopter Squadrons 465 and 461 teamed up to prepare for their upcoming deployments to Afghanistan in support of Operation

Enduring Freedom during Enhanced Mojave Viper, a pre-deployment training exercise aboard the Combat Center, Dec. 9.

The two heavy lift squadrons from Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C., and MCAS Miramar,

Calif., respectively, combined to support ground missions and carried out extensive maintenance to keep their CH-53E Super Stallions in the air the entire time, said Maj. Jade Campbell, a CH-53E pilot with HMH-461 and a native of Carson City, Nev.

"We've been executing missions every day," Campbell said. "Both squadrons have been supporting logistics elements with resupply and heavy lifting, and we've been carrying out both day and

See EMV, A4



CPL. M. C. NERL

Marines with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465 and 461 from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., and MCAS New River, N.C., check their H-53 Super Stallions Dec. 9 before morning missions in their Enhanced Mojave Viper. The squadrons teamed up to support EMV.

2nd Bn., 7th Marines bid farewell to sergeant major

LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines and sailors with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, bid farewell to Sgt. Maj. Eric W. Rummel as he moved to his next command and welcomed Sgt. Maj. Michael P. Woods as their new battalion sergeant major at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Dec. 10.

"Today is a significant event in the life of our unit," said Lt. Col. John M. Reed, the

battalion commanding officer. "Today we farewell to our sergeant major and rejoice in his contributions to our success."

Rummel joined the unit in December of 2007 as the company first sergeant for fox Company and deployed to Afghanistan with them in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. While serving with Fox Co., he was promoted and assumed the duties as battalion sergeant major for 2nd Bn.

"It has been a great honor to act as both a first sergeant

and sergeant major for this battalion," said Rummel. "You look over the years of history for this battalion, and it is one heck of a battalion and rightly recognized as being such."

Woods, from Kansas City, Mo., comes to the battalion after serving as a company first sergeant for Headquarters and Service Co. and Co. K with 3rd Bn. 7th Marines.

During his 18 years as a Marine, Woods has served in many capacities throughout the Corps, including as a security guard for the

American Embassy in Rangoon, Burma; and a drill instructor, senior drill instructor and staff non-commissioned officer in charge of the Water Survival Section at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C. He was deployed as a tank gunner during Operations Decisive Endeavor in the former Yugoslavia, Silver Wake in Albania and Decisive Endeavour in Zaire, Africa. He also served

See FAREWELL, A7

Perimeter patrols increased for safety

In an effort to ensure the safety of the public and the security of the Combat Center and its training areas, Combat Center law enforcement officials will be stepping up patrols of the base perimeter during the holiday season. Surveillance methods have also been increased. Those out enjoying the natural beauty of our local area are reminded of their responsibility to know their

location with respect to the boundaries of the base. The Combat Center is the Marine Corps' live-fire training center and supports regular training events including artillery, tanks, aviation bombardment and gunnery among just a myriad of combat training capabilities.

Check out page A5 for a full map of the Combat Center's boundaries in relation to the outlying communities.



SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN

Gunnery Sgt. Andrew Suthers, the operations chief for the Infantry Officer Course in Quantico, Va., explains a color-coded light system on the Solar Portable Alternative Communications Energy System at the Combat Center Monday. The SPACES is designed to tactically charge batteries and run communications equipment in remote areas such as Afghanistan.

'Going green' with SPACES could save lives

SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN
PRESS CHIEF/EDITOR

A new portable, solar energy converter designed to tactically charge batteries and run communications equipment could soon help save lives in combat zones.

The Solar Portable Alternative Communications Energy System consists of several foldable solar panels, a multitude of output and input cables and adapters, and a small box no bigger than the average game console.

In theory, by using the SPACES, troops deployed to remote areas like Afghanistan would be able to power everything from AN/PRC-119F SINCGARS radios and combat operations centers to humvees. This would greatly reduce the need for resupply missions for generator fuel and expose fewer Marines to dangerous enemy attacks, said Maj.

Carlos Barela, the director of the Infantry Officer Course out of Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va.

"It lessens the likelihood of Marines being killed for a resupply that, in the future, may not have had to go," said the Albuquerque, N.M., native.

The IOC was in the Delta/Prospect Training Areas last week conducting the day and night attacks that serve as the students' culminating training event. They have been taking the \$7,485 system on trial runs during their field training operations to see what works and what needs improvement.

The "results varied" in the heavily-shaded areas of the Virginia base, as interference from the tree line made powering up difficult, said Capt. Andrew Eckert, an instructor for IOC Class 1-11. Variables that affected the system

See SPACES, A7

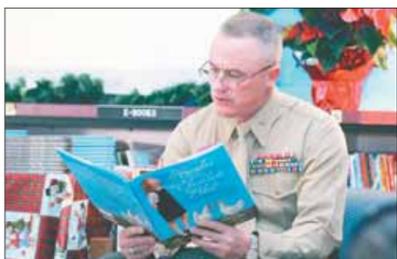


LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Sergeant Maj. Eric W. Rummel, the outgoing battalion sergeant major of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, stands proudly with Sgt. Maj. Michael P. Woods, the incoming battalion sergeant major, at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, Dec. 10.



Scoping out training ~ See A3



Storytime ~ See A4



Making the call ~ See A6



Beasts hunt Rhinos ~ See B1



Visit the official MCAGCC facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter>

Plan ahead to stay safe during the winter months

KRISTIN SHIVES
TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The next several months will bring colder temperatures and, in many areas, TRICARE beneficiaries will have to deal with snow and ice. Snow and ice covered roads and sidewalks can make a winter walk in the park or just across the street treacherous.

While it's important to clear snow and ice from driveways, porches, roofs and walkways, removing it can lead to injuries from slips, trips and falls.

Knowing winter brings a ton of back injuries, TRICARE beneficiaries should be vigilant when performing inside and outside activities. Even if a beneficiary is normally very active and in shape, he or she can easily injure himself while shoveling snow. Injuries related to snow removal are among the most common wintertime injuries.

"If you have a medical condition that prevents you from doing strenuous exercise, speak with your doctor before shoveling and consider hiring someone to remove the snow," said Cmdr. Aileen Buckler, M.D., population health physician analyst with the TRICARE Management Activity.

TRICARE beneficiaries who need care for winter-related injuries can use an urgent care facility or, if necessary, go to the emergency room. They can review their emergency care options at <http://www.tricare.mil/Emergency>.

In addition to these typical winter injuries, there are several other injuries that may plague beneficiaries during the winter months. According to an October 2010 Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center report, from July 2009 through June 2010, 556 service members had cold-related injuries that included frostbite, hypothermia and immersion foot.

Frostbite is the freezing of skin caused by exposure to cold. Under extreme conditions, it can happen in seconds. Factors such as wind chill, alcohol consumption, altitude, dampness and length of cold exposure will affect the onset and severity.

When exposed to cold temperatures, a person's body begins to lose heat faster than it can be produced. Prolonged exposure to cold will eventually use up a body's stored energy, causing hypothermia. Low body temperatures affect the brain, making the victim unable to think clearly or move well.

Trench foot, also known as immersion foot, occurs when the feet are wet for long periods of time, and it can be very painful. Unlike frostbite, trench foot does not require freezing temperatures.

The Department of Health & Human Services has a few tips to prepare for a healthier and injury-free winter, especially when it's freezing, snowing and icy:

- Avoid staying outside for long periods of time
- Wear appropriate outdoor clothing
- Keep clothing, especially socks, dry
- Wear ice grippers on footwear
- Keep your weight over your feet (avoid reaching or twisting when walking)
- Keep skin covered at all times
- Wear proper safety equipment
- Drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration
- Sprinkle cat litter or sand on icy patches

With a little advance planning and preparation, TRICARE beneficiaries and their family members will stay warm and safe while they work, travel and enjoy the outdoors this winter. For more information about winter safety, go to <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/winter>.

Centerspeak

What are your plans for New Year's?

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



2ND LT. MICHAEL MASON
2ND ASSAULT AMPHIBIAN BATTALION

"I'm flying home to Arizona for New Year's."



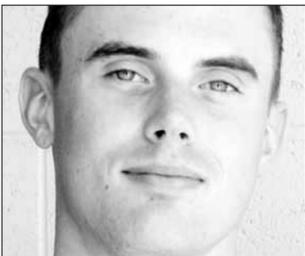
SGT. JOHNNY BAILEY
HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE COMPANY,
3RD BATTALION, 7TH MARINE REGIMENT

"I'm staying around the area and getting ready for Sergeants Course."



LANCE CPL. JAVIER CARRANZA
MARINE WING SUPPORT SQUADRON 272

"I'm going to hang out and make New Year resolutions for myself."



LANCE CPL. NATHAN KOHNE
MARINE WING SUPPORT SQUADRON 272

"Going home to Dallas to see family and friends."

Hot Topics

DSTRESS LINE

From combat related stress to the everyday stressors of life, stress can affect even the strongest Marine. The DSTRESS Line was developed by the Corps to provide professional, anonymous counseling for Marines, their families and loved ones when it is needed most. Call 1-877-476-7734.

APPRENTICESHIPS THROUGH USMAP

The USMAP is a formal military training program that allows Coast Guard, Marine Corps and Navy personnel to complete a civilian apprenticeship program while on active duty. Marines are assigned an apprenticeable trade based on their respective occupational specialties, while sailors may apply for an apprenticeable trade based on their Navy rating. For more information, visit <https://usmap.cnet.navy.mil>.

NEW LANGUAGE PROGRAM OFFERED

Marine Corps Community Services Libraries are now offering Mango Languages software as an alternative to Rosetta Stone. MCCS library patrons may register for a free Mango Language account by visiting their base library. The languages offered include Arabic (Levantine), French, German, Brazilian Portuguese, Tagalog, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Hebrew, Korean, Mandarin Chinese and Japanese. There are also four languages taught with an English-as-a-second-language foundation: ESL Japanese, ESL Spanish, ESL Arabic and ESL Korean.

Marine Corps History

Dec. 20, 1989

Marines are part of force that tries to capture Panama's dictator, Manuel Antonio Noriega.



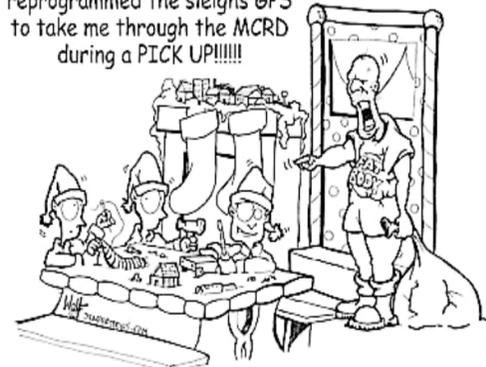
Eagle Eyes

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

"Alright...!!!, Which one of you freaks reprogrammed the sleighs GPS to take me through the MCRD during a PICK UP!!!!!!"



Semper Fi, Santa

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

SUDOKU #2025

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

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2010 HOMETOWN CONTENT

ROYAL COMMONERS

[Puzzle solutions on A7]

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64						65		66						
67						68						69		
70						71						72		

ACROSS

1. Filmom's Alastair
4. Errand runner
9. Unstimulating java
14. Hollywood's Thurman
15. Kate's sitcom friend
16. Word with spitting or mirror
17. She played identical cousins
19. Hourglass, e.g.
20. 1961 Best Actor Maximilian
21. Slovenly woman
23. Keister
25. In need of sanding or salting
26. Top banana
29. "One O'Clock Jump" player
35. Bar bill
36. Attendance guess: Abbr.
37. Smooth as silk
38. Shi'ite's deity
41. Sci-fi visitors
43. V-formation fliers
44. Stay out of sight
46. Ernie of the links
48. Berlin's land: Abbr.
49. Chief Justice, 1953-69
51. Vietnamese festivals
52. "This ___ stickup!"
53. Suffix with soft or hard
55. Result of an overactive pituitary
60. Social outcast
64. ___ con pollo
65. Director of "Cabaret" and "Evita"
67. Radio hostess Hansen
68. Griffith of the ring
69. Org. once headed by Bush 41
70. Autumn bloomer
71. Delirious one
72. Say further

DOWN

1. Has the third of three squares
2. Apple desktop
3. SAT subject
4. Country singer Crystal
5. "Arsenic and ___"
6. "Blue ___" (cops' sickout)
7. Apt. features, in ads
8. Pull out of the water
9. Odds-and-ends carrier
10. Broadcast
11. Made the scene
12. Antiquing agent
13. Frond-bearing plant
18. Virgin Is., e.g.
22. Gets off the fence
24. Cobb topper
26. Like old cigarettes
27. Sylvester's "Rocky" costar
28. More up to the task
30. Put into words
31. Absorbed, as a cost
32. Campaign against Troy, e.g.
33. Map within a map
34. Ogler
39. The whole schmeer
40. High-trajectory artillery piece
42. Whole bunch
45. "Let's see now, where ___?"
47. Big name in iced tea
50. Bacon serving
51. Garr or Hatcher
54. Pinker in the middle
55. Big bash
56. Colored portion of the eye
57. Smell ___ (be wary)
58. Zilch
59. Doll's word
61. Early Peruvian
62. Etcher's supply
63. Brewski topper
66. Ullmann of moviedom

Combat Center Spotlight



Name: Lance Cpl. Carlos Sanchezvalencia
Hometown: Stanford, Conn.
Unit: Combat Camera
Job title: Combat photographer
Job duties: Take promotion, and passport photos and cover any training on the base
What do you like most about your job?: "Getting to see what everyone does. That I get a taste of everything."
Significant achievements: Joining the Marine Corps when he was 23.
Hobbies: photography, sports, going to movies and drinking with friends.
Time at Combat Center: One year

OBSERVATION POST

Commanding General Brig. Gen. H. Stacy Clardy III

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Public Affairs Chief - Gunnery Sgt. Sergio Jimenez

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CPL. M. C. NERL

Infantry Officer Course students support their comrades many hundreds of yards away with fire Dec. 10 during their platoon-sized mechanized attack. The young officers are scheduled to graduate from the IOC today after their time aboard the Combat Center and returning to Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va.

IOC travels to Combat Center for final test

CPL. M. C. NERL
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Aspiring infantry officers with the Infantry Officer Course based out of Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., culminated their course at the Combat Center Dec. 14 before returning to Quantico for their graduation.

The students capped off their training here through counter-insurgency operations and day and night mechanized and reinforced attacks, along with multiple other areas of training, said Capt. Charles Nash, the class advisor for IOC class 1-11.

"Our ability to fire with combined arms here allows us to bring everything we have instructed them on together into one range," the Stafford, Va., native, said after their final night attack Dec. 10. "By the time they graduate on the seventeenth, they'll have the whole staff's absolute confidence in their ability to lead as platoon commanders."

Nash added the group's experiences here will certainly be of assistance in the future.

"Training at Twentynine Palms is an excellent example of what they'll be facing in the future as platoon commanders," Nash said. "Most, if not all of them will be back [aboard the

Combat Center] for Mojave Viper within the next year anyway, so they know what to expect."

The class is one of four that come to the installation each year, Nash added.

Second Lt. Paul Harper, a student with the Infantry Officer Course, said the Combat Center is a premier training installation, and he will value the lessons learned here.

"It's pretty much the destiny of every grunt, enlisted or officer, to wind up at Twentynine Palms," said the Warrenton, Va., native. "But in all reality, the training and instruction we've had here have been absolutely outstanding. The Marine Corps needs places like this, and it sure utilizes the space properly and efficiently."

Another student, 2nd Lt. Giles Royster, said using the weapons and commanding and maneuvering training in real life is invaluable for the IOC students.

"The most crucial part of all this, I think, is that we don't just know what the weapons are, or how they work, but how to maneuver with them and what the Marines dropping rounds over other's heads or supporting with machine guns are feeling and experiencing," the Atlanta native, said.

Following their time at the Combat Center, the



CPL. M. C. NERL

Second Lt. Paul Harper, a student with the Infantry Officer Course at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., shouts commands to other lieutenants while they train aboard Combat Center Range 205 Dec. 10. The IOC is scheduled to graduate back at Quantico today.

students are scheduled to graduate today, and report to their new units immediately after, where they will take command of their first platoons.

SJA CORNER

Gifts and ethics: Bah! Humbug!

CAPTAIN DAVID SEGRAVES

LEGAL ASSISTANCE OFFICE

Now that the Christmas season is upon us, one does not have to act like a Scrooge, but everyone must be careful not to run afoul of ethics rules. Military members and other DoD employees need to be especially cautious when receiving or giving presents. Too much generosity can lead to inappropriate gifts and possible disciplinary action.

First, one must consider the source of the gift. Most military members and DoD employees have the training and instinct to be concerned when receiving gifts from outside sources. The general rule is that an employee shall not, directly or indirectly, solicit or accept a gift from a prohibited source or given because of the employee's official position. There are many exceptions to the general rule, including an allowance of a one-time gift whose fair market value does not exceed \$20 (i.e. a Christmas gift that costs less than \$20). Still, one might consider it prudent to ward off any appearance of impropriety by declining any gift from an outside source other than a simple greeting card.

While military members and other DoD employees realize the dangers of gifts from outside sources, gifts between employees can slip past the unwary. 5 C.F.R. 2635 Subpart C prohibits "an employee from giving, donating to, or soliciting contributions for, a gift to an official superior and from accepting a gift from an employee receiving less pay than himself." The Federal Regulations do make exceptions for holidays or other "occasion[s] on which gifts are traditionally given or exchanged." On these occasions, gifts can be exchanged between employees and their superiors if the gifts have a fair market value of \$10 or less. The regulations also allow for items such as food and refreshments to be shared in the office among several employees. Finally, parties at personal residences are allowed as well. The host can provide personal hospitality and the guests may provide gifts in connection with the receipt of personal hospitality if they are both of a value customarily given in such situations.

Military members and civilian employees can reference the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch (5 C.F.R. 2635) and Joint Ethics Regulation (DOD 5500.7-R) to find out the specific language of the rules and their specific exceptions. For specific situations, military members may contact the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate and DoD employees may contact the Office of the General Counsel.

As we prepare for this season's festivities, military members and civilian employees should remember two adages when considering gifts: "It's the thought that counts" and "Better safe than sorry."

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The Desert Trail

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MARINE CORPS CIVILIAN POLICE

TWENTYNINE PALMS, CA



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CG teaches hope with storytime

LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Commanding General of the Combat Center took a break in his busy schedule to read a book to the first and second graders at the Condor Elementary School.

Brigadier Gen. H. Stacy Clardy III and his wife, Alison, read "Mercedes and

the Chocolate Pilot," written by Margot Theis Raven.

The story takes place in Berlin in 1942 during World War II. During a grim time of war, an American pilot, Lt. Gail S. Halvorsen, dropped parachutes of candy out of his plane for the war-ridden children of Germany, whose act of kindness gave the children hope during a time of sorrow.

The children of the

Combat Center listened intently and watched a picture slideshow of the book while Clardy read. Later, they were given the opportunity to make and decorate their own candy parachutes and wooden airplanes to better understand the story and remind themselves of the kindness shown by the Americans during the second world war.

"Alison and I believe reading is very important to the development of children," Clardy said. "I don't think we can read too much, and I don't think they can read too much. Our Marines and our families need to know that their commanding general cares about their education because that's their future."

Parents saw the event as a great opportunity to teach their children history and about supporting the military, said Colleen Watts, a mother who attended the event with her daughter Kayla. "I wanted her to get a better understanding of how the military supports us and how we can support the military," Watts said. "It's a chance to discuss history and the military with my daughter."

The general signed and handed out books to the children after the reading. He wrote inside the cover of each book "Keep Wishing."

"It's [not only] about the history of the book, it's about what the book represents," Clardy said. "You look at children, even as wars are going on, what you see in the children, and not always in the adults, is hope."

Clardy also encouraged the families to get involved with their child's school.

"I just ask that all the Marines and parents associated with the Combat Center to stay engaged with the schools," he said. "Only through [parental] support can we have the highest levels of education for their children."



LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON

Brigadier General Brig. Gen. H. Stacy Clardy III, the installations commanding general, signs books after his reading Tuesday at Condor Elementary School Wednesday in the school's library. The book he read was "Mercedes and the Chocolate Pilot," by Margot Theis Raven, which tells of hope and kindness during World War II.

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ASYMCA helps military families



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Volunteers pack toys for children of Combat Center military personnel at the Armed Services YMCA for the 3rd annual Holiday Toy Program. The bags are sorted by gender and age. "They are put in a black bag because it could be from Santa or a husband who is deployed," said Kelly Roybal, a volunteer at the ASYMCA. More than 600 children have been registered with the ASYMCA. The ASYMCA will be passing out the bags to the registered families Saturday with more than 50 volunteers during the day.

EMV, from A1

night raids and [casualty evacuation training] with the grunts, too."

Campbell added the training undertaken during EMV was outstanding, and helped the two units to grow together and become more proficient.

"There's ten helicopters split up between us and the other squadron," he said. "We've all been getting along as one big happy family."

Working together was a great test of their skills, said Campbell. "Especially the maintenance guys coming through fixing everything. They've been doing maintenance 24 hours a day, and we've made every mission throughout Mojave Viper."

Private First Class Michael Pettay, an air crew-

man serving with Campbell, said it was a tough, but very fruitful learning experience.

"Its been awesome, we've learned a lot as a crew and as a squadron," the Tullahoma, Tenn., native said. "I can say this much, its been a pain but I know I'm not the only one who's feeling more comfortable and confident now than when we first got here."

Lance Cpl. Jonathan Slyman, a CH-53E mechanic with HMH-465, said he's seen everybody gain from the experience, but he's glad to be done with this phase.

"I have a lot more confidence in our new guys than I did when we first got here," said the Madison, Wis., native. "We've all put in a lot

of hours as a team, and personally, I'll be happy when we get back to the air station and go on pre-deployment."

"The tempo we've worked at here definitely helped us out in the long run in terms of experience," said Slyman. "To win a war you have to be willing to put in the time, effort and have the know-how to make it count, which these two squadrons do."

Campbell said the next time they'll see HM-465 will be in Afghanistan. The squadrons will deploy simultaneously later this winter, along with the infantry and logistics battalions they helped to support during EMV.

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TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt



I received an email the other day from Patricia Brumbalow of Twentynine Palms. I thought it was superior and I am pleased to be able to share her point of view with all of you.

"Regarding your article in the December 2nd issue of The Desert Trail, I feel I must express my opinion about Pope Benedict XVI's recent comment on condoms.

Although I do not profess to be a theologian, I am a sixty-nine-year old "womb" Catholic. My college theology/philosophy instructor, Fr. Leon Kennedy, taught us that our Holy Father, whoever he is, exercises infallibility in the matters of faith and morals. Period.

Our present pontiff, the Reverend Joseph Ratzinger, who oversaw the composition and the publication of The Catechism of the Catholic Church, knows first hand that no one can tinker with the natural moral law.

Although I look forward to your weekly articles, this one, especially your last paragraph, warranted a frown.

May God bless you, Respectfully."

I am delighted that Mrs. Brumbalow sent me such an intelligent and informative statement. Maybe this will encourage more of you to send me material I might be able to use in this column.

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CPL. M. C. NERL

Marines training aboard the Combat Center at Enhanced Mojave Viper, load a notional casualty onto a CH-53E Super Stallion with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 461, which is based out of Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C., Dec. 9. The infantry Marines and squadron are scheduled to deploy in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in the coming months.

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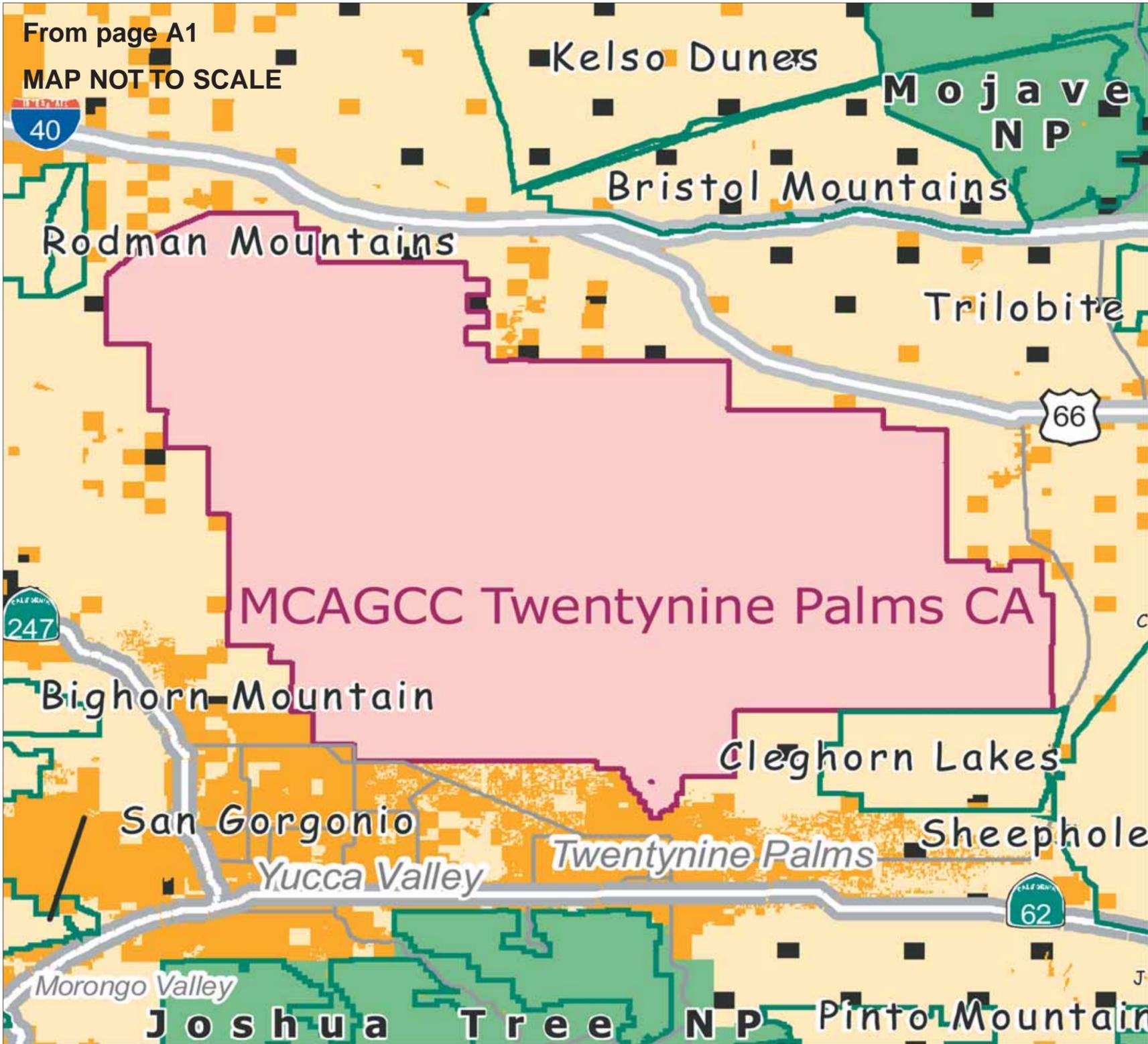
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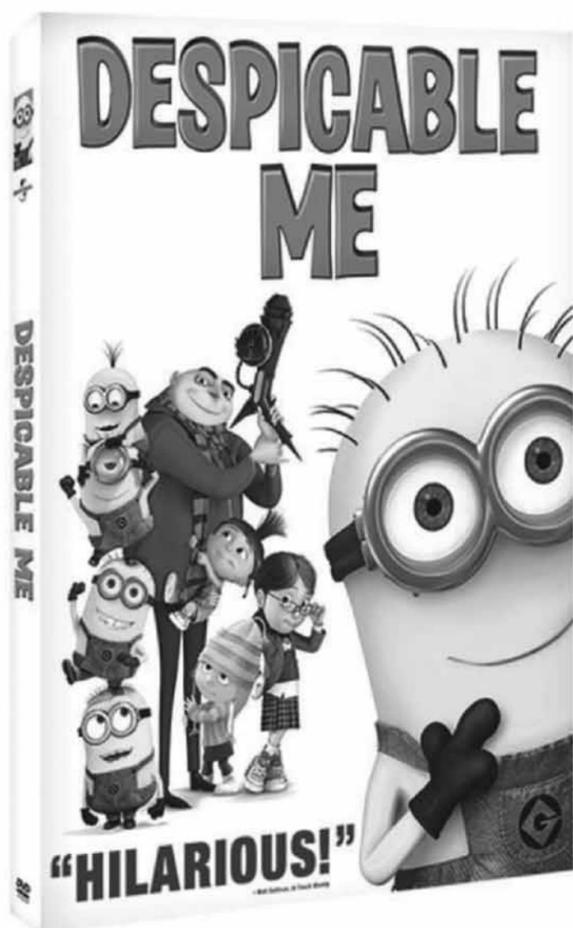


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The University of Values

Headquarters Battalion NCOs call for fire, evacuation

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT**
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Noncommissioned officers with the Combat Center's Headquarters Battalion participated in an exercise at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 7-8, learning how to call for fire and casualty evacuations.

No matter what a Marine's primary military occupational specialty is, Sgt. Maj. James D. Walsh, with Headquarters Bn., said the Marines need to remember what they have been told since before they left for recruit training.

"Every Marine's primary job is a rifleman," Walsh said. "You don't know what environment you're going to be in during the next week, the next month or the next year. It's easy to say 'never,' but it's better to be prepared."

Throughout their two-day trip, the 21 Marines learned how to find their locations and a target's location on maps, and how to effectively direct artillery fire upon it.

Although the idea of calling for fire might appear easy, unless a Marine has the necessary skills and knows the proper jargon, this seemingly simple task can become difficult and even turn deadly, said Ed Blanz, the site manager at the Combined Arms Staff Trainer.

"If you say it wrong, they'll misunderstand you," he said. "If they misunderstand you, they'll kill you."

With sequences of numbers, letters, coordinates and requests, the Marines used practical application to evaluate how well they could use the terms, math and lingo.

At first some of the Marines were confused, but once the class entered the simulator known as the Combined Arms Command and Control Training Upgrade System, they quickly took to it," said Cpl. Blake Meyer, a company clerk with Company B, Headquarters Battalion, who has served in Iraq as an anti-tank missile man.

"Once we got in the simulator and started working on the computer getting the hands-on training, it became a lot easier," he said.

Using the simulator, Marines who had never called for fire before began using their skills and radioed in their targets, waiting only a few seconds before a simulated artillery round told them if they had made the grade.

"You can't take care of everything with direct fire weapons, and in complex attacks or ambushes, the skills we learned here become invaluable," Meyer said.

The Marines also learned about the inner workings of casualty evacuations, and how to call in such assistance using the nine-line



Corporals Sose Frankyan and Brittany Molina, with the Installation Personnel Administrative Center, try to find their location on a grid, while Ryan Legner, an instructor at the Combined Arms Staff Trainer facility, gives hints on the proper method Dec. 7 during a Headquarters Battalion field exercise at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

casualty evacuation method.

The nine-line protocol, designed to communicate with helicopters, efficiently and quickly relays a slew of information to the pilots, including the seriousness of the casualty's injuries, pick-up location, pick-up terrain and enemy presence. This ensures the quickest and safest medical evacuation of wounded personnel possible, said Don Wimp, air advisor at the CAST, and a former air controller.

"As NCOs, you'll have

Marines under you," Wimp said. "As NCOs you need to know how to call in a [casualty evacuation] to be able to take care of your Marines."

Using the simulator, the class sighted locations for a casualty evacuation and took turns calling for assistance.

The training at the CAST is a part of quarterly-scheduled field exercises Headquarters Bn. uses to get their Marines out of their supportive roles and into the field.



A Marine triangulates his position with a target during a call for fire simulation Dec. 8 at the Combined Arms Staff Trainer facility at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.



Corporal Blake Meyer, a company clerk with Company B, Headquarters Battalion, and 1st Sgt. Nelson Hidalgo, the first sergeant for Co. B, Headquarters Bn., discuss Meyer's last shot during a call for fire simulation, Dec. 8 at the Combined Arms Staff Trainer facility in Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. .

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LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Sergeant Maj. Eric W. Rummel, the outgoing battalion sergeant major of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, passes a noncommissioned officer's sword to Lt. Col. John M. Reed, the battalion commanding officer, during a relief and appointment ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, Dec. 10.



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Sergeant Maj. Eric W. Rummel, the outgoing battalion sergeant major of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, stands before Marines, sailors, family and friends as Lt. Col. John M. Reed, the battalion commanding officer speaks about his service during a relief and appointment ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, Dec. 10.

FAREWELL, from A1

as a tank commander during Operations Joint Guard in Yemen and Desert Thunder in Kuwait.

His personal decorations include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with combat distinguishing device with one gold star in lieu of second award, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with combat distinguishing device with two gold stars in lieu of third award and the combat action ribbon with one gold star in lieu of second award.

"Sgt. Maj. Woods, on behalf of all the Marines and sailors of 2nd Bn., 7th Marines I welcome you and your family to join our ranks," Reed said.

SPACES, from A1

included time of day, where the kit was set up and cloud cover.

When the class traveled to the Combat Center, they brought the SPACES along for the ride to get a better idea of its capabilities in an environment similar to what Marines may face during combat deployments, Barela said.

As hoped, the system proved to work better in a desert environment.

"There was more of an effect here; we were able to get longer sustained exposure," said Capt. Charles Nash, the Class 1-11 class advisor.

Now that the Marines have seen how effective the SPACES will be in Afghanistan, they said the system shows potential, but there are still a few things they would like to change before relying on it as an alternative power source away from supply lines, said Eckert, who is from New Glarus, Wis.

An eight-hour charge for a single AN/PRC-119F SINCARS radio battery took between three to four hours, which makes this an unrealistic option for Marines on the move, said Sgt. Taylor Clark, a communications instructor with The Basic School in



SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN

Captain Charles Nash, the Infantry Officer Course Class 1-11 class advisor, out of Quantico, Va., and Gunnery Sgt. Andrew Suthers, the operations chief for IOC, set up a Solar Portable Alternative Communications Energy System at the Combat Center Monday.

Quantico.

"If you're on a patrol, you are not able to stop and set up for four hours; it's not very 'recon friendly,'" explained the Metairie, La., native.

Clark mentioned that in order to keep the SPACES charging at optimal levels, it had to be continually rotated to keep it in direct contact with the sun as the day progressed. It also had to be kept completely free and clear of sand, which can be time consuming and tedious when in a desert, he said.

However, Barela and Clark both said there are many redeeming qualities to the SPACES as well, including how well it stood up to the

harsh Marine lifestyle of deployments.

"It's very flexible," Barela said. "You can roll it up, stick it in a pack, step on it ... It will not break," he said.

"It's very durable, very light [and] user-friendly," Clark added. "Any 'joe-shmoe' can set it up."

Clark said another quality he and the other communications Marines found "surprising" was that they could use their equipment as it was charging.

While the system is not perfect, the Marines said discovering its flaws was the reason they brought it here, and they left the Combat Center with high hopes for the system and its potential.

"Like any piece of equipment, it will continue to be refined," Barela said.

"I'm impressed, but it will take a few more trials before I am able to say this is the system we want," Eckert added.

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Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel Roman Catholic Services
 Christmas Eve, visual service at 5 p.m. Christmas Eve, midnight mass
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 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*)
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 Mon. - Fri., noon - Prayer
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 9 a.m. - Christian Women's Fellowship* (Sept.-May)
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 3:30-5:30 p.m. - Military Council of Catholic Women
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 First Wednesday, 6 p.m. - Baptism preparation class and 7 p.m. - Knights of Columbus
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B1

Beasts sack Rhinos in 'Best of the West'

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

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – With victory secured aboard the Combat Center, the Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 Rhinos journeyed to Camp Pendleton to claim the "Best of the West" title for the Combat Center's fourth year in a row Saturday.

The game was hard fought by both teams until the very end with 1st Marine Logistics Group Beasts claiming victory for Pendleton with a final score of 14-12.

"We made a lot of mistakes at the beginning of the game, and it was tough to recover from. And at the end of the game, they just played better than us," said Jurmal Phillips, the Rhinos' head coach. "It was a close game, and I give them all the credit."

Check out page B4 for more photos



A player with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 Rhinos drags two defenders with 1st MLG Beasts as he charges through their defenses during the Best of the West Football game at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Saturday.



William Bews, a player with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 Rhinos, denies the 1st MLG Beasts receiver the ball during the Best of the West football game at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Saturday.



James Jones, a player with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 Rhinos fumbles the ball as a player with the 1st MLG Beasts pulls him down during the Best of the West football game at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Saturday. The game was hard fought by both teams until the very end with 1st Marine Logistics Group Beasts claiming victory for Pendleton with a final score of 14-12.



An offensive player with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 Rhinos is tackled to the ground by the work of four defensive players from 1st MLG Beasts during the Best of the West football game at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Saturday.

MCCES puts rush on Christmas spirit



CPL. M. C. NERL

The Marines of the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School at the Combat Center run to a Toys-for-Tots drop-off box at the Commanding General's building with gifts to donate during their annual Toys-for-Tots run Wednesday. The Marine Corps Reserve provides toys to Morongo Basin and Coachella Valley children each year through contributions made to the Toys-for-Tots program.

Players shoot for the season

**LANCE CPL.
SARAH ANDERSON**
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The familiar sounds of squeaking sneakers, swishing hoops, and bouncing basketballs on the gym floor let everyone in attendance know that it's game time.

The last of the preseason games of the Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League ended this week to leave the players hyped up for the official games at the start of the year.

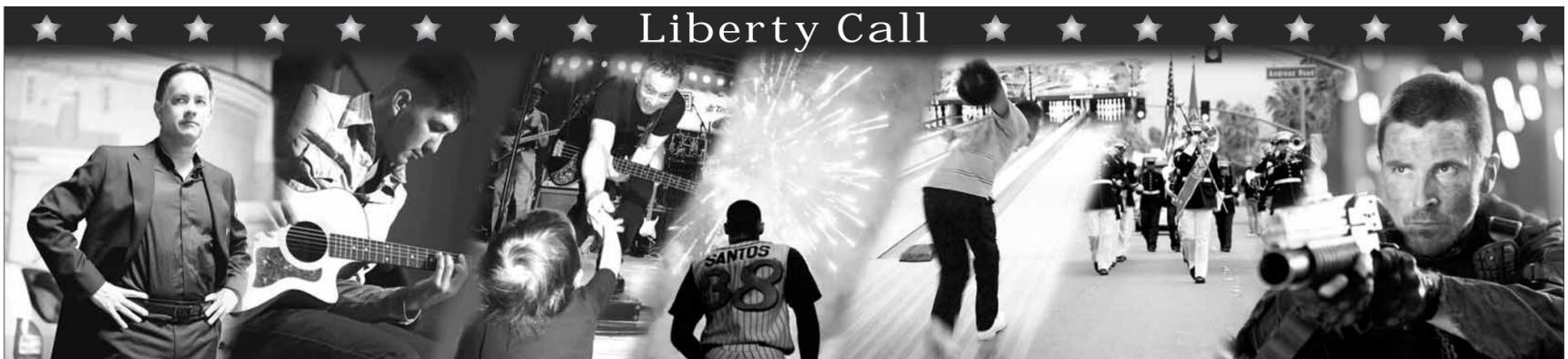
Sixteen teams have shown up on this year's roster to play. The competition is anticipated to be intense as two divisions will be formed. The official games are scheduled to start Jan. 10 and will be held every Monday and Wednesday night. Although

See SHOOT, B3



LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON

A player on the Sappers team shoots a layup during a Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League preseason game against the 7th Marine Regiment Tuesday at the East Gym.



Liberty Call

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.
Saturdays: Variety Night with DJ Gjettblaque
Sundays: Football coverage, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Mondays: Monday Night Football, 5:30 to 8 p.m.
Wednesdays: DJ Gjettblaque, 8 to 10 p.m.

Bloodstripes NCO Club

Mondays: Monday Night Football with free chili dogs, 5:30 to 8 p.m.
Wednesdays: Italian sausage with peppers and onions and green salad. 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.
Mondays: Steak night, 5 to 8 p.m.
Monday-Friday: All Hands Lunch, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Wednesdays: Dinner, full menu, 4:30 to 9 p.m., Karaoke, 5 to 7 p.m.

Combat Center's Officers' Club

Mondays: Steak night, 5 p.m.
Monday-Friday: Lunch served, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Taco Thursdays: 5 to 7 p.m.

For complete calendars visit <http://www.mccs29palms.com>.

Local Events

Pappy and Harriet's Weekend Line-Up Leo Rondeau

Description: The country singer/songwriter performs
When: 7:30 p.m., Friday, Dec. 17

The Evangenitals

Description: Performing a mix of country, punk and folk
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 18
Where: 53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown
For more information, call 365-5956 or visit <http://www.pappyandharriets.com>.

13th Annual Old Town Light Parade

Description: Yucca Valley's popular Christmas parade
When: 5:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 18
Where: On Twentynine Palms Highway between Geronimo Trail and Acoma Trail
For more information call 369-7211 or visit <http://www.Yucca-Valley.org>

The First Christmas

Description: A child learns about the Christmas spirit
When: 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Dec. 17 and 18
Where: Theatre 29
73637 Sullivan Road, Twentynine Palms
For more information call 361-4151 or visit <http://www.theatre29.com>.

Lower Desert

Lewis Black

Description: The edgy comedian performs stand up
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 8
Where: Agua Caliente
32-250 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage
For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Patti Labelle

Description: The pop legend performs her hits
When: 8 p.m., Friday, Jan. 14
Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon
For more information call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinosort.com>.

Golden Boy Boxing

Description: De la Hoya's Golden Boy promotions bouts
When: 8 p.m., Friday, Jan. 14
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Bonnie Raitt

Description: The R&B legend performs her hits
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 22
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, Dec. 17

6 p.m. - The Social Network, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. - Red, Rated PG-13

Midnight - Paranormal Activity 2, Rated R

Saturday, Dec. 18

11 a.m. - Free Matinee, Deck the Halls, Rated PG
2 p.m. - Megamind, Rated PG

6 p.m. - Hereafter, Rated PG-13

9 p.m. - For the Colored Girls, Rated R

Midnight - Conviction, Rated R

Sunday, Dec. 19

2 p.m. - Megamind, Rated PG

6 p.m. - Red, Rated PG-13

9 p.m. - Due Date, Rated R

Monday, Dec. 20

7 p.m. - Paranormal Activity 2, Rated R

Tuesday, Dec. 21

7 p.m. - The Social Network, Rated PG-13

Wednesday, Dec. 22

7 p.m. - Red, Rated PG-13

Thursday, Dec. 23

4 p.m. - Free Matinee, Fred Claus, Rated PG

7 p.m. - Case 39, Rated R

Disney's 'Tangled' fairytale is terrific

NEIL POND

AMERICAN PROFILE

"Tangled"

Rated PG

"Someday," sang Snow White back in 1937, "my prince will come." And he did.

So did dozens of others in the decades since "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," Walt Disney's first animated feature film. Princes and princesses became characters, or character types, around which many a Disney tale would be spun.

"Tangled," Disney's latest, is a retooling of the Grimm's fairytale about Rapunzel, the imprisoned maiden with the long, long golden hair. In this case, the tremendously tressed damsel is a missing princess from a nearby kingdom, kidnapped as an infant and raised by a wicked stepmother as her own in an isolated tower. The sinister stepmom wants to keep Rapunzel, and her hair, a secret from the rest of the world.

And for good reason: There's some mega magical mojo in those cascading locks.



COURTESY ILLUSTRATION

Zachary Levi provides the voice of Flynn, a handsome young thief who stumbles upon Rapunzel's tower/prison. Rapunzel, voiced by Mandy Moore, has been imprisoned by her evil stepmother voiced by Donna Murphy.

When a handsome young thief, Flynn, stumbles upon her fortress prison, Rapunzel, now a teenager, finds her prince charming - and her ticket to a life-changing adventure beyond

the confines of the tower.

"Tangled" is Disney's 50th animated movie. And it lives up to the milestone in almost every way. Time will tell, but it has all the hallmarks of a Disney classic in the vein of some of the company's other generation-spanning, pop-cultural cornerstones.

The animation is sumptuous, and several scenes are real dazzlers, including a heart-pounding chase through an abandoned mineshaft that becomes a watery tomb, and a heart-meltingly lovely romantic segment against a backdrop of a twilight sky filled with thousands of floating, airborne paper lanterns.

The musical numbers are all standouts, so perhaps it's not surprising to find out they were penned by Alan Menken, the veteran tunesmith behind the memorable soundtrack tunes of "Beauty and the Beast," "The Little Mermaid" and "Aladdin." You'll find it difficult to stifle a smile during "I've Got a Dream," the catchy song-and-dance number set in a forest tavern, a folkta-

biker bar, full of colorful rogues, bruisers and hooligans. You'll want to hiss at the duplicitous stepmother, Gothel, a terrific Donna Murphy. And don't be surprised to find your own eyes getting moist as you watch the tears well in the gorgeous, oversized green orbs of Rapunzel, whose voice is provided by pop powerhouse Mandy Moore.

A young up-and-coming TV and movie actor, Zachary Levi, gives the good-guy bandit Flynn a speaking voice to match the character's dashing looks. But two characters without a single spoken line between them, Max the horse and Pascal the chameleon, provide a lion's share of the laughs.

This is the rare "family" film that the entire family can truly appreciate, and enjoy. The latest jewel in the Disney crown will make you believe all over again in the magic of a strong story, splendid songs and princes and princesses who come to rousing, emotional, heartwarming life through the wizardry of well-done animation.



COURTESY ILLUSTRATION

Though her handsome rescuer is somewhat inconvenienced by Rapunzel's long, long golden locks, they contain plenty of valuable magical mojo.

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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

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COURTESY ILLUSTRATION

Pascal the chameleon and Maximus the horse, without a single spoken word between them, provide most of the movie's laughs.

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Combat Center Sports

SHOOT, from B1

the season has not begun, every team has their eyes set on the end, the playoff tournament, and to win the trophy.

Every team played a one pre-season game before the holidays. The 7th Marine Regiment played the 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion Sappers Tuesday in the East Gym.

"Our goal is the trophy," said Michael Wheatley, the coach of the Sappers. "That's it, everything else is secondary."

The biggest challenge the Sappers will face during the season is simply getting back into the groove of the game, Wheatley said. "We just came off a deployment so it's just getting back into team basketball that will be the challenge."

Tuesday was the first time the teams have played since last winter, so the intensity and focus coming from the teams could even be felt in the stands.

As the whistle blew, the Sappers took a critical lead almost immediately, which was the eventual downfall for 7th Marines.

The game went on and the Sappers were unstoppable. Though 7th Marines put up a fight, they lost 58-31 in the end.

The loss didn't seem to affect the players too much. Benjamin Rubio, a player on the 7th Marines team, said he and his fellow players saw the positives and negatives during the game and they would be ready for the season.



LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON

There is a scramble at the hoop as the 7th Marine Regiment and the 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion Sappers teams battle during a Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League preseason game Tuesday at the East Gym. The Sappers won 58-31.

Athlete of the Week



Name: Wesley Diehl
Unit: Marine Wing Support Squadron 374
Hometown: Fort Thomas, Ky.
Recognition: MVP Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 Rhinos
Favorite aspect of the sport: "Just getting out there and playing with the guys."
Advice for aspiring players: "It is a fun game; just try your hardest."



LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON

A player on the Sappers team shoots a layup during a Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League preseason game against 7th Marine Regiment Tuesday at the East Gym. The Sappers won 58-31.

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LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

A First Marine Logistics Group defender plows into Tyler Ray, the kicker for the Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 Rhinos, as Charles Jefferson, the Rhinos' holder dashes away to make a two-point conversion.



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Jason Streets, a quarterback with Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 Rhinos, throws the ball to number nine during the Best of the West Football game against 1st MLG Beasts at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Saturday.

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