

OBSERVATION
POST

February 18, 2011

Since 1957

Vol. 54 Issue 7

Pendleton Marines train in massive, new combat town

CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

For some Marines the experience of entering an Afghan village for the first time will seem as foreign as the culture they have been entrusted to protect. However, after training at the Combat Center's newest and most realistic "mock" city training complex, many of those Marines will be better prepared to face that challenge.

Marines from 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, are training aboard the combined arms, live-fire, Military Operations on Urban Terrain complex here, which is designed to train Marines as they fight.

The Camp Pendleton, Calif.-based unit, used the 1,560-building facility at Range 220 here Tuesday, as part of Enhanced Mojave Viper, the Corps' premiere pre-deployment training exercise.

The facility, roughly equivalent in size to downtown San Diego, allows Marines to refine the complex and dangerous tactics they may have to use during their deployment to Afghanistan later this year.

The Marines are in the final week of the grueling month-long EMV, which combines all four components of the Marine Air Ground Task Force, the ground combat, logistics, aviation and command elements.

Trainers, known as Coyotes, brought in 575 friendly and enemy role players and spread them out over seven separate mock city districts within the 274-acre complex. During day and night exercises, small unit leaders and individual Marines were made to interact with role players, some of who spoke little or no English, and others who spoke only Pashto or other dialects found in Afghanistan and nearby regions. They had to communicate by any means necessary in a fast-moving environment filled with explosions, gunfire and the ever-present fog of war. At times, some had to resort to hand and arm signals when interpreters were not available.

Within CAMOUT, Marines were exposed to elaborate scenes filled with true-to-life characters that milled about the town square and alley-ways and often, whose allegiance was



CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT

A Marine dog handler and his dog with 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment take cover from enemy fire, at the Combat Center's new combined arms, live-fire, Military Operations on Urban Terrain training range, in search of improvised explosive devices as part of Enhanced Mojave Viper, Tuesday.

See more photos on pages A8 and A9

hard to distinguish. Trickier yet, a friend could turn to a foe after a serious insult. A "thinking" enemy was quick to adapt and change its tactics and quickly blend right into the crowd after a hit-and-run attack.

Both friend and foe followed a general script, but were free to act based on cultural and religious norms and the actions and reactions of the Marines.

With chaos swirling around them, the Marines were often challenged to transition quickly between roles, some of which required different and conflicting skill sets. They had to be warriors during an attack, then conduct search and seizure missions and do crowd control like policemen. They had to defend themselves from sniper attacks and ambushes, yet be sure to keep their fire in check to protect

innocent civilians. They had to be peacekeepers between rival factions, then transition to humanitarian relief work and become goodwill ambassadors.

According to Combat Center officials, this is the current nature of conflict in many areas around the world. This, and recent history and lessons learned were some of the reasons the Combined Arms MOUT facility was constructed.

The complex supports any number of Marines and sailors, from a small 12-man squad to a full Marine Expeditionary Brigade, composed of more than 15,000 Marines and sailors and its supporting units. CAMOUT's realistic settings such as classrooms, markets, hotels and other businesses complete with role-players, challenged Marines to communicate,

coordinate, maneuver and operate in an urban setting. Throughout the facility, the Camp Pendleton-based Marines were constantly kept on the alert by the detonation of improvised explosive devices, and enemy ambushes coming from "spiderhole" hiding places and almost 1,900 feet of enemy tunnels. They had to search basements and find and destroy weapons caches found in almost 1,900 feet of underground tunnels, a manmade riverbed and dozens of courtyards and compounds, according to an official release.

According to Combat Center officials, the \$170 million spent on CAMOUT, is a good investment. It will provide vital and realistic training Marines will need to accomplish their mission and most importantly, save many lives.

Tax team to travel

LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center's Tax Center is making it easier than ever for Marines to get their taxes done on time.

The Mobile Tax Team brings their services to Marines. All unit leaders need to do is schedule an appointment, and the team will show up to file an entire section's taxes.

"Our estimation is we can go through one platoon a day," said Capt. David Segraves, the Tax Center officer in charge.

The team also spent a majority of their week last week set up at Camp Wilson for any Marines whose training schedule may have prevented them from getting to the Tax Center.

"Some Marines don't have the opportunity to get their taxes done during training," said Sgt. Anthony Woody, a member of the Mobile Tax Team.

Utilizing the Tax Center or the Mobile Tax Team also eliminates spending money on online commercial tax services, said Segraves, a native of Wichita, Kan.

"Talking to someone is easier and efficient," he said. "Also, we may find things that commercial tax services don't."

Because of mission requirements and busy schedules, some unit leaders may feel like it is hard to also fit in their Marines' taxes. This is simply not true, and the Mobile Tax Team is very flexible, Segraves said. The Mobile Tax Team is conscious of scheduling conflicts and is very flexible.

"We can work around any training," he said. "We are here as a service to be used, and we are here to support."

To schedule an appointment with the Mobile Tax Team or the Tax Center, call 830-4TAX (4829).



LANCE CPL. D.J. WU

FSNB officials were on hand for the informal opening of a new ATM at the Ocotillo Exchange Feb. 10.

New ATM unveiled at Ocotillo Exchange

LANCE CPL. D. J. WU
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

A new ATM, installed at the Ocotillo Exchange Feb. 10, marked the start of a new way for the Combat Center Community to withdraw cash.

This automated teller machine, which is owned by Fort Sill National Bank, is different than the rest of the ATMs on the Combat Center. It is not connected to the backbone of the Combat Center's communications network. It connects for transactions wirelessly.

"It's a win-win for the store and the bank" said Sherri Bevan, FSNB developmental branch manager. "It will help customers who

need cash, and it will bring business to the store."

Marine Corps Community Services personnel and FSNB officials were on hand for the informal opening of the machine, located toward the back of the store, next to magazine rack. The ATM has been in huge demand from customers and one of the store's top priorities, said Trisha McDowell, the Ocotillo Exchange Store manager.

"People are always coming in and asking if we have an ATM," she said.

The Ocotillo Exchange is located on Berkley Ave., near the Ocotillo gate, and is open Monday through Saturday from 6:30 a.m. to 10p.m., and 10 a.m. to 7p.m. on Sundays.

Combat Center remembers fallen Marine with memorial

LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The busyness of the Combat Center seemed to subside as installation personnel paused to honor a fallen Marine Tuesday during a memorial service for Cpl. Donald Fowler III



LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON

First Sgt. Nelson Hidalgo, first sergeant for Company B, Headquarters Battalion, conducts final roll call during Cpl. Donald Fowler III's memorial service Tuesday at the Protestant Chapel.

at the Protestant Chapel.

Fowler, from Santee, Calif., and a Marine with the Staff Judge Advocate office, passed away Feb. 7 after a vehicle roll-over on Twentynine Palms Highway.

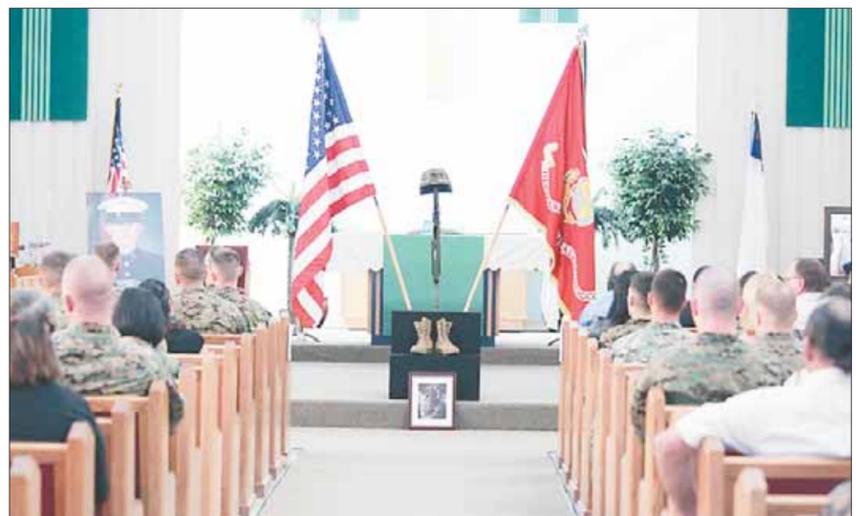
"Today I am memorializing one of my Marines," said Col. Alex Peterson, the Combat Center's staff judge advocate. "My respect for Cpl. Fowler was deep and strong. I will remember him as that Marine my NCOs respected, taking care of my Marines and embodying excellence."

Many people sat solemnly in the pews, looking at a military cross or watching a slide show made by Fowler's family, depicting him as a young boy growing through the years into a Marine, husband and a father.

Fowler's friends gave their condolences to his family and shared stories of good times with the late corporal.

"He was a Marine, a warrior at the truest

See MEMORIAL, A7



LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON

A military cross for Cpl. Donald Fowler III rests at the front of the chapel during his memorial service Tuesday at the Protestant Chapel.

Take prevention to 'heart'

KRISTIN SHIVES

TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY

FALLS CHURCH, Va – February is American Heart Month, a good reminder for TRICARE beneficiaries to practice healthy habits and use preventive medical services to reduce the risk of heart disease.

The most common cause of death in the United States is heart disease. About every 25 seconds, someone will have a heart attack, and about one person every minute will die from one, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

People often think heart attacks are sudden and intense, however many heart attacks start out with mild pain or discomfort. Knowing the signs and symptoms of a heart attack is important for getting help as soon as possible. The CDC offers the following symptoms to be aware of:

- Chest discomfort, such as pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain
- Arms, back, neck or jaw discomfort
- Shortness of breath
- Breaking out in a cold sweat
- Nausea, stomach pains
- Light-headedness

Some conditions can increase risk for heart disease, including arrhythmia, heart failure and peripheral artery disease. High cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and secondhand smoke are additional risk factors associated with heart disease.

While some may think of heart disease as a "man's disease," it is actually the number one cause of death among men and women in the United States. In fact, women account for nearly 50 percent of heart disease deaths.

Fortunately, there are ways beneficiaries can lower their chances of developing heart disease. The National Institutes of Health recommends six key steps to help reduce the risk of having a heart attack; stop smoking, lower high blood pressure, cut high cholesterol, manage diabetes, aim for a healthy weight and be physically active each day.

"An Institutes of Medicine report shows that smoking and breathing in second-hand smoke from those around you increases your risk of heart problems," said Cmdr. Aileen Buckler (USPHS), TRICARE population health physician. "If you or someone you care for needs help quitting smoking, visit <http://www.ucaan-quit2.org> for interactive tools, quit plans and a 24/7 Web chat line."

Beneficiaries looking to improve cholesterol levels, control high blood pressure and manage weight can find the answer in exercise. TRICARE beneficiaries should talk with their primary care manager before starting an exercise program. Visit <http://www.tricare.mil/getfit> for information and links to better nutrition, exercise and more.

A heart-healthy eating plan is also a good idea. It should include portion-control, foods with little or no salt, limiting alcohol and cutting back on foods high in cholesterol. Beneficiaries can work with their PCM to develop an action plan to help ensure success towards a healthy diet and lifestyle. Check out the newly released 2010 Dietary Guidelines for information on healthy eating <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/dietaryguidelines.htm>

Prevention is the key in maintaining good health. Early discovery and treatment of disease can lead to better health. Beneficiaries should discuss their individual and family medical histories as well as concerns about preventive screening with their health care provider.

Changes made in 2009 allow TRICARE Standard beneficiaries to get screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol and body measurement. To learn more on other preventive health services, visit www.tricare.mil/preventiveservices.

Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease> for more information about heart health month. Starting today, make every month American Heart Month for a healthier life.

Centerspeak

Who do you think was the most influential president?

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



CPL. JASON LOMELI

HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE COMPANY,
2ND BATTALION, 7TH MARINE REGIMENT

"John F. Kennedy, because he was a man's man who stood up for what he believed in and he paid the ultimate price for it."



LT. CMDR. TIM BRENDER

ROBERT E. BUSH NAVAL HOSPITAL

"Abraham Lincoln, because he presided over great change in this country and the Civil War."



LANCE CPL. JAMES S. BURK

MATERIAL READINESS, COMBAT LOGISTICS
BATTALION 7

"Ronald Reagan, because he was voted in with the greatest percentage the popular vote in history. His policies and politics helped end the Cold War and he is still influencing presidents with foreign policy."



LANCE CPL. JOSEPH RIVAS

COMPANY F,
2ND BATTALION, 7TH MARINE REGIMENT

"Clinton, because he made some good policies when he was in office."

Hot Topics

DECA SCHOLARSHIPS DEADLINE SOON

The deadline for submitting applications for the Defense Commissary Agency's 2011 Scholarships for Military Children program is Feb. 22. Applications are available in commissaries worldwide and online at <http://www.commissaries.com>, under the "News & Info" tab, or at <http://www.militaryscholar.org>. Applicants must be dependent, unmarried children of active duty or reservist service members or retirees, or survivors of service members who died while on active duty or receiving military retirement pay. Applicants must also be 21 years old or younger, or 23 and younger if enrolled as a full-time college student.

OSC SCHOLARSHIPS

The Officers' Spouses' Club has scholarships available for the 2011-2012 academic year. Applicants must be a spouse or child of an active duty or decessate service member and must live in the Morongo Basin at the time of application. Child applicants must be seniors at an area high school, home school program or be attended a local college at the time of application. Applicants must also be working toward a first AA, BA or BS degree. Deadline for application is March 15. For more information or to find out where to get an application, e-mail oscpresident@gmail.com.

Marine Corps History

Feb. 17, 1967

The first full day of Operation DECKHOUSE VI, which lasted until March 3, was conducted near Quang Ngai City. The Special Landing Force (Battalion Landing Team Y4 and Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 363) accounted for 280 enemy killed.



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



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

SUDOKU #2089

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

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2010 HOMETOWN CONTENT

RAISING A RACKET

[Puzzle solutions on A4]

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14						15				16				
17						18				19				
			20				21		22					
23	24	25				26		27						
28				29			30				31	32	33	34
35				36						37				
38			39		40			41	42		43			
44				45			46			47		48		
49					50	51						52		
				53				54			55			
56	57	58	59				60		61					
62						63		64				65	66	67
68						69				70				
71						72				73				

ACROSS

1. Morocco's capital
6. "They're ___!" (racetrack cry)
9. Comic-strip Viking
14. Geologic time
15. "QB ___" (Uris novel)
16. Central Florida city
17. Aborigine missile
19. Judge or juror
20. Before, to bards
21. Birth
23. Harrison Ford's "Star Wars" role
27. Popular cruise port
28. "___ y Plata" (Montana's motto)
29. City on the Penobscot River
35. Put a match to
36. Watchful one
37. Ruth ___ Ginsburg
38. Puts on
40. More artful
43. Latvian port
44. Finish off
46. Sax great Getz
48. "___ Kapital"
49. Hurricane consequence, perhaps
52. Suffix with Brooklyn or bleacher
53. Snaky shape
54. First-stringer
56. Tax man
61. Forty-niner's find
62. ___-foot oil
63. Bagel topper
68. He went to hell, so to speak
69. Adam's madam
70. Applied 3-In-One to
71. Knight's horse
72. Bottom line
73. Not yet hard

DOWN

1. Dixie soldier
2. GI's address
3. Ghostly greeting
4. High points
5. 1953 Richard Burton film
6. Eggs
7. Sawyer's pal
8. Mozart's "The Marriage of ___"
9. Hair-styling gadget
10. Realty unit
11. Running back's pickup
12. Actor Guinness
13. Seldom seen
18. The Penn ___ (noted trackmeet)
22. Round Table address
23. Armed robbery
24. Melodic passage
25. Previously owned
26. Like Nash's lama
30. Mill fodder
31. Berne's river
32. Cry of accomplishment
33. Cancel out
34. Boo-boo remover
39. Seek redress from
41. JFK predictions
42. Convertible
45. De-created?
47. Milton Berle's theme song
50. CIA forerunner
51. Annual pro golf tour classic
55. Pine exudation
56. Added stipulations
57. Spot in the Senate
58. All there
59. Luncheon conclusion?
60. Go from pillar to post
64. Kennel guest
65. Chicago trains
66. Shoebox letters
67. Banned bug killer

Combat Center Spotlight



Name: Sgt. Justin Schmidt
Hometown: Wauconda, Ill.
Unit: Combat Center Band
Job title: Trumpet player, assistant small ensemble leader, squad leader
Job duties: Play the trumpet, rehearse and form the small ensembles, train younger Marines
What do you like most about your job?: "I like the fact that I will never be good enough, no matter what I do. Even if all I did was just play the trumpet, I would never be good enough. I could always improve on it. It is not a job to me, but a life."
Significant achievements: "Got married, had two boys, joining the Marine Corps and attended college."
Time at Combat Center: Two years.

OBSERVATION POST

Commanding General Brig. Gen. H. Stacy Clardy III

Public Affairs Officer - Capt. Nick Mannweiler
 Public Affairs Chief - Gunnery Sgt. Sergio Jimenez

Press Chief/Editor - Sgt. Heather Golden
 Layout, Design - Leslie Shaw

The Observation Post is published by Hi-Desert Publishing, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of Defense or the United States Marine Corps, under exclusive written contract with the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. This commercial enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the military services. Contents of the Observation Post are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the United States government, the DoD, or the United States Marine Corps. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts and supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the DoD or Hi-Desert Publishing of the services advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. Editorial content is prepared by the Public Affairs Office, MCAGCC, Twentynine Palms, Calif. 92278. All photos, unless otherwise indicated are Official USMC Photos. Questions can be directed to the Public Affairs Office, located in building 1417, during normal working hours at 830-6213 or FAX 830-5474. The Observation Post is made with 60 percent recycled paper.

Sergeants Course Marine named Combat Center's Instructor of the Year

LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Staff Sgt. Elmer Estes, a native of Harlan, Ky., was named the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center's Instructor of the Year in February, for standing out among his peers as a Sergeants Course instructor at the Twentynine Palms Staff Noncommissioned Officers Academy.

"He's a very passionate Marine and deliberate in his approach to teaching," said Gunnery Sgt. James Petty, the staff noncommissioned officer in charge of Sergeants Course. "When the academy nominated him, it was a unanimous decision."

Joining the Marine Corps in 1998, Estes was originally a small arms repairman for 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment. He became an instructor with the Staff Noncommissioned officers Academy in July of 2010.

Estes said he tries to grab his students' attention to help them better retain the information they are being taught and stay engaged in learning.

"I believe we set the students up for failure if we don't let them explore as many avenues of approach as possible," Estes said. "I believe the textbook is a guide that allows us to expand on. It allows the sergeants to teach themselves



LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON

Students at the Sergeants Course wait to get counseled by Staff Sgt. Elmer Estes, an instructor at the Twentynine Palms Staff Noncommissioned Officers Academy Tuesday. Estes was recently named the Combat Center's Instructor of the Year.

without even knowing it."

Winning against the other instructor nominees on the Combat Center, which includes Marines from other courses across the installation, was an extreme honor, Estes said.

"Everyone here has their own unique philosophies and ways they incorporated their teaching methods," he said. "Being recommended was an honor, and winning is an even bigger honor. It's rewarding knowing all of our efforts combined are being recognized across the Marine Corps."

Estes was selected for the

See INSTRUCTOR, A7



LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON

Staff Sgt. Elmer Estes, an instructor at the Twentynine Palms Staff Noncommissioned Officers Academy, counsels a Marine in his Sergeants Course class Tuesday in a Sergeants Course barracks. Estes was recently named the Combat Center's Instructor of the Year.

Montford Point Marine shares history with MVSD

DIANE DURDEN

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

Marines assigned to the Mojave Viper Support Detachment got a rare opportunity to meet Marine Corps history face-to-face Wednesday when retired Master Gunnery Sgt. Robert Reid, a Montford Point Marine, visited aboard the Combat Center.

In celebration of National African American History Month, Reid was invited to share the story of Montford Point with Marines.

During World War II, black Americans were not allowed to enlist in the Marine Corps. A presidential directive, signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1942, provided an opportunity for black Americans to join the Corps. Instead of attending training at Marine Corps Recruit Depots Parris Island, S.C., or San Diego, Calif., with white Marines, they were segregated and sent to Montford Point, N.C. Approximately 20,000 Marines received basic training



DIANE DURDEN

Lance Cpl. Evan Smith, an M88 Hercules Tank Recovery Vehicle operator with 2nd Maintenance Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, shows retired Master Gunnery Sgt. Robert Reid, the weapon of a modern-day Marine, as Master Gunnery Sgt. Douglas Todd, operations chief, Mojave Viper Support Detachment, looks on. Reid met with MVSD Marines to share stories about his time spent training at Montford Point. Reid was invited to speak to Marines as part of an education series for National African American History Month.

there between 1942 and 1949.

Reid's unique experiences with the Corps started not when he arrived at the segregated training facility, but

when he arrived at the recruiting station to enlist.

"[The recruiters] didn't tell us [that] if you enlisted you came in for three years. If

you were drafted, you only came in for two," he said.

Reid also shared several

See HISTORY, A7

SJA CORNER

Debt collection scams

CAPT. DAVID SEGRAVES

LEGAL ASSISTANCE OFFICE

Your phone rings, and a person on the other side of the phone says you owe them \$400 for a cash advance made to your bank account one year ago. They threaten to call your command or have you arrested if you do not pay them within the next three hours. Concerned for your career and freedom, you follow their directions and fax your debit card information to them. You may have just become the victim of a debt collection scam.

You have many protections under the Federal Fair Debt Collection Practices Act and under California's Rosenthal Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. First, realize that debt collectors cannot contact your command (See the SJA Corner article in the Jan. 21 edition of the Observation Post, available on the MCAGCC website). Second, debt collectors cannot legally threaten to have you arrested. In fact, any potential law suit by a valid debt collector must be filed either where you signed the contract or where you reside; moreover, they must still provide proper service to take you to court.

Maintain a skeptical disposition when dealing with anyone requesting money over the phone. Elicit as much information about the debt collector as possible and take good notes. Get the name of the collector, the collection company, their phone number, their address and any other information you can gather. Once you get this information, you have a couple of options to help you determine if an alleged debt is valid.

You can check your credit report with one of the three main credit reporting

bureaus (See the SJA Corner article in the Nov. 26, 2010, edition of the Observation Post for instructions).

Even if the debt is on your credit report, if you do not recognize the debt, you should make the debt collector verify the debt. You should send a letter via certified mail with return receipt requested to the debt collector stating you dispute the debt and request the name and address of the original creditor. Any debt collector must provide you with their mailing address.

If the debt collector will not give you an address, it is a good sign that they are crooks. Do not forget you have the ability to perform Internet searches on the alleged debt collector/debt collection agency. Often, other consumers or consumer advocate agencies will post information about debt collection scams and aliases the crooks use.

Finally, help stop the harassment and help protect others by reporting the incident. To stop your own harassment, you can contact the Criminal Investigation Division of the Provost Marshal's Office at 830-6820. Their investigators can open a case on the crooks.

To help others, you can file a complaint electronically with the Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Sentinel Military site at <http://www.ftc.gov/sentinel/military/index.shtml>. This system allows the FTC to target criminals and alert the military community of dangers.

Debt collectors and scammers will attempt to scare you or get you mad in hopes of eliciting strong emotions and a quick payment. If you are ever faced by this situation, remember to keep your bearing and use your moral courage to exercise your rights.



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

2/7 mortarmen add more metal to Lead Mountain

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
CPL. M. C. NERL**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, ventured to the Combat Center's Lead Mountain training area to exercise their core competencies, Monday through today.

The battalion's Weapons Company honed their skills with 81mm mortars, one of their most effective weapons, said 1st Lt. Rory

H. Smith, the mortar platoon commander with the company.

"For us, [the training] encompasses a hip shoot, where we will move to a pre-determined position with pre-selected fields of fire," said the Avon, Conn., native. "We'll most likely coordinate targets after that depending on what the [forward observers and controllers] tell us."

Smith added the training is

good for the Marines, and most have an excellent time, even though coordinating all their tools and elements can be difficult.

"For [mortarmen], it encompasses all their training," Smith said. "The biggest part is keeping [communications with the fire support coordination center], because we're forward moving elements."

"Other than that, it is fairly easy to do the exercise itself," he added. "But with newer Marines, it's good to get them out here and show them how the platoon operates. It's good training, the guys like it, so it's a good time."

Lance Cpl. Joe Dinh, a forward observer with Weapons Co., 2/7, described what his role is during this type of training.

"Our mission as forward observers is to know the capabilities of the 81mm mortar," said the Liberal, Kan., native. "Since we're educated and know the limitations of the system, we're observing and directing fire to use its capabilities to the maximum potential."

Dinh added the training gets difficult, especially at night. However, the Marines in the company have the ability to see the job through.

"During the day, the training went well," Dinh said. "Obviously, it's more difficult to see the targets when there's a lot of dust, or at night, but we shouldn't have many problems. We'll be calling in our own missions directly to the teams."

Private First Class Samuel Robertson, a mortarman with Weapons Co., said get-



Marines with Weapons Company, Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, practice their nighttime standard operating procedures and gun drills Tuesday at the Combat Center's Lead Mountain Training Area. The team is slated to deploy with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit this summer.



Lance Cpl. Jeff Riley, a mortarman with Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, preps 81mm mortar rounds Tuesday during the battalion's training at the Combat Center's Lead Mountain Training Area.

ting the practice is good for the future of the unit.

"There's a lot of Marines that have been in [2/7] for more than one or two deployments," said the Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., native. "I'm glad I have the leaders I do, and the time we have right now where it isn't over 120 degrees out and we can focus on training and getting ready for our deployment."

The battalion will continue to train in preparation for their upcoming deployment this summer with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, based out of Okinawa, Japan. The unit will become the Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines.



Lance Cpl. Jeff Riley [left], and Pfc. Samuel Robertson, both mortarman with Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, line up their mortar system Tuesday at the Combat Center's Lead Mountain Training Area.

MCAGCC health fair scheduled for April

DAN BARBER

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, ROBERT E. BUSH NAVAL HOSPITAL

An Active Duty and Base Employee Health Fair will be held April 7-8 at the base theater.

This special program will be presented in two-hour segments starting each day at 7:30 a.m. and running until 3 p.m.

Your health is not only important to you, but also to your health care provider.

According to the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 55 percent of all cases of poor health and nearly half of all premature deaths in this country are caused by lifestyle-related problems. This health fair will focus on offering the necessary health information to maintain a strong and healthy lifestyle.

The fair will offer Hearing Conservation, Men's Health, Women's Health, Tobacco Cessation, Sexual Health/ STD Prevention, Behavioral Health, Internet addiction, Self Esteem and Sexual Assault Prevention.

This program is sponsored by the Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms and the Public Health Department of San Bernardino County.

Point of Contact for the event is Petty Officer 2nd Class Nicole Gacayan at 830-2002, or Petty Officer 2nd Class George Herrera at 830-2621.

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

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS													
R	A	B	A	T	O	F	F	H	A	G	A	R	
E	P	O	C	H	V	I	I	O	C	A	L	A	
B	O	O	M	E	R	A	N	G	T	R	I	E	R
E	R	E	N	A	S	C	E	N	C	E			
H	A	N	S	O	L	O	R	I	O				
O	R	O	B	A	N	G	O	R	M	A	I	N	E
L	I	T	E	Y	E	R	B	A	D	E	R		
D	O	N	S	S	L	I	E	R	R	I	G	A	
U	S	E	U	P	S	T	A	N	D	A	S		
P	O	W	E	R	O	U	T	A	G	E	I	T	E
E	S	S	S	T	A	R	T	E	R				
A	S	S	E	S	S	O	R	O	R	E			
N	E	A	T	S	P	O	P	P	Y	S	E	E	D
D	A	N	T	E	E	V	E	O	I	L	E	D	
S	T	E	E	D	N	E	T	U	N	S	E	T	

SAFETY CORNER

Cruiser or sport bike?

BOBBY J. PIIRAINENTRAFFIC SAFETY/ MOTORCYCLE
PROGRAM MANAGER

Often I get the question, "What kind of bike should I get?" This doesn't have to be a very difficult question to answer. The motorcycling world has many, many motorcycle options to choose from. I always respond with a question of my own, "What type of riding would you like to do?" The answer to my question will help our journey down the correct path.

Commonly, a potential rider will say they would prefer to take a long road trip or would like to just commute. Others would say they would like to take faster corners and maybe see some track time in the future. And some more adventurous individuals would say they'd like to do some street and off-highway riding. Still interested? Then you're on your way to choosing the right ride for yourself.

Still can't answer the question? It can be tricky to decide what type of riding you may want to do. After all, a motorcycle is a big investment, and if you've never ridden before, it can be hard to visualize what style of riding you will do in the future. The good

news is you don't have to answer this question right away. Let us explore some rides and see if we can get something to spark.

If you're like me, then you believe in the KISS mentality (Keep It Simple Stupid). So I'll do my best to move this along painlessly.

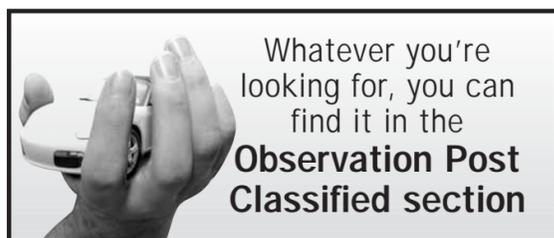
Cruiser or sport bike?

Cruisers can be classified as lower, more relaxed and comfortable motorcycles designed for longer hauls. A cruiser motorcycle typically has a classic design with pulled back handle bars, low seat height and exposed engine, and can range from small displacement motors with limited cargo space to large displacement motors with plenty of room for a passenger and large bags for cargo. Is a cruiser for you? Keep in mind cruisers have limited lean angles for cornering and are heavier and less nimble.

On the other side of the spectrum, sport bikes were designed for competitive use. They provide lots of power from a smaller displacement motor. They are lightweight with a higher center of gravity and allow for more clearance for quicker cornering. Sounds fun right? Unfortunately, the trade off is sport bikes are very uncomfortable for long trips, and insurance cost can be high for a new rider.

I hope this helps with your selection. Either way, getting yourself on two wheels will undoubtedly be an enjoyable and memorable experience.

And if you still can't decide what style of motorcycle is right for you, then take my approach on it. Buy both! Just remember whatever path you follow, always get the appropriate training. For every Marine and sailor, the appropriate training begins with the Basic Rider Course.



Whatever you're looking for, you can find it in the **Observation Post Classified section**

Combat Center Religious Services

Sunday
Immaculate Heart of Mary 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*
(September 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 (September-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

Muslim prayer space is available in the Village Center, room 87.
Jewish prayer space is available in the Village Center, room 93.
For more information call 830-5430.

Combat Center Trader Ads

AUTOMOTIVE

2002 CR250. FMF pipe and silencer, paddle tire, eline starter, runs very strong. \$2,600 OBO. 910-3979.

2007 SUZUKI BOULEVARD. Black and chrome, 1600 CC, \$3,000 in extras included. Asking price \$13,500. 401-3739.

2000 NISSAN XTERRA. 4x4, auto, PDL, PW, roof rack, tow pkg, newer timing belt, 31" BFG's, 132K miles, \$5,000. Call 957-5630.

2008 TOYOTA YARIS. \$10,000 OBO. Approx- imately 46K miles. Good condition. Consistent maintenance. Call 622-4562.

2005 NISSAN ARMADA. White, 66,000 miles. Call for details. 362-5293.

MISC.

BUNK BED. Double/twin. Upgraded mattresses. Pooh Bear bedding included. Like new. \$225. Call 413-4015.

GIBSON LES PAUL ELECTRIC. 1995 hard shell case. Excellent condition. \$1,500. Call 413-4015.

BICYCLE, BABY ITEMS: Schwinn Stingray bicycle, solid wood baby crib, baby walker, stroller, wooden horse and more. All in excellent condition. Call 217-3310.

COLLECTIBLE SPORTS,

SCI-FI CARDS: Baseball, football from mid 80's to 90's. Star Trek and Star Wars collectible cards too. Individual heroes, team sets or the whole collection. Call Stephen at 567-7921.

YOUR AD HERE

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.

Squadron's UAVs serve as eyes in the sky

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Since the French Revolution, military commanders have been using aerial reconnaissance to monitor enemy movements. The system has evolved from vehicles using primitive smoke balloons to modern unmanned aerial vehicles.

Aboard the Combat Center, members of the Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 provide support to units with aerial reconnaissance and surveillance.

"The main focus of every mission that goes on is to just do our best and try to do what we do in-country, what we do in the states," said Cpl. Alexander Keil, UAV operator with VMU-1. "That way we have the best support we can give the troops on the ground."

The operators are only one part of the team that keeps the craft ready to fly.

"We have a lot of help coming from our maintainers," said Keil, a Pago Pago, American Samoa, native. "A lot of people don't give them

enough credit, and there are so many different things that put a UAV into the air."

As the maintainers prep the birds for flight, they have to worry about both their vehicles and their crews.

"[We have to make] sure the bird is in the right conditions for flight and safe for flight," said Cpl. Quinn Austen Schwehr, a UAV maintainer. "I have to worry about my crew that's on the ground, that everybody uses the proper protection."

As they launch and land the vehicles, the biggest problem presented aboard the Combat Center is the constant wind.

"We can't launch with any tail wind at all, and you can't land it with anything above five knots," said Schwehr, a Kennewick, Wash., native. "The wind changes a lot out here, so we have to switch landing gear or rotate the launcher so it is facing into it."

When it comes time to land the planes, they clear the runway and, just like naval pilots on aircraft carriers, hope the hook grabs the line.

"We will have a bird that



Vehicle operators and maintainers inspect an RQ-7B Shadow, unmanned aerial vehicle before launch at the Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 airfield aboard the Combat Center Tuesday.

will land and skip over the resting gear [line]," Schwehr said. "So it will either catch on the second [line], or else it will go into the net. Net recoveries usually break a communications relay package, so there's not that much damage when they hit the net."

Before they can send the planes out, communications must be set up.

"Every day we set up radios so we can talk with the towers out here, and we can talk to the ground units," said Lance Cpl. Antquan Milledge, a radio operator. "The bird can't go up if the communications isn't up."

Milledge explained that, despite periodic weather complications, how the Combat Center is a great place for the UAV team to fix any problems that might come up.

"This is still a training facility, so it does help us repair," Milledge, an Albany, N.Y., native. "We can troubleshoot a lot of stuff our here, so when we are in combat or in theater we know what to do, we know what works and what don't work."



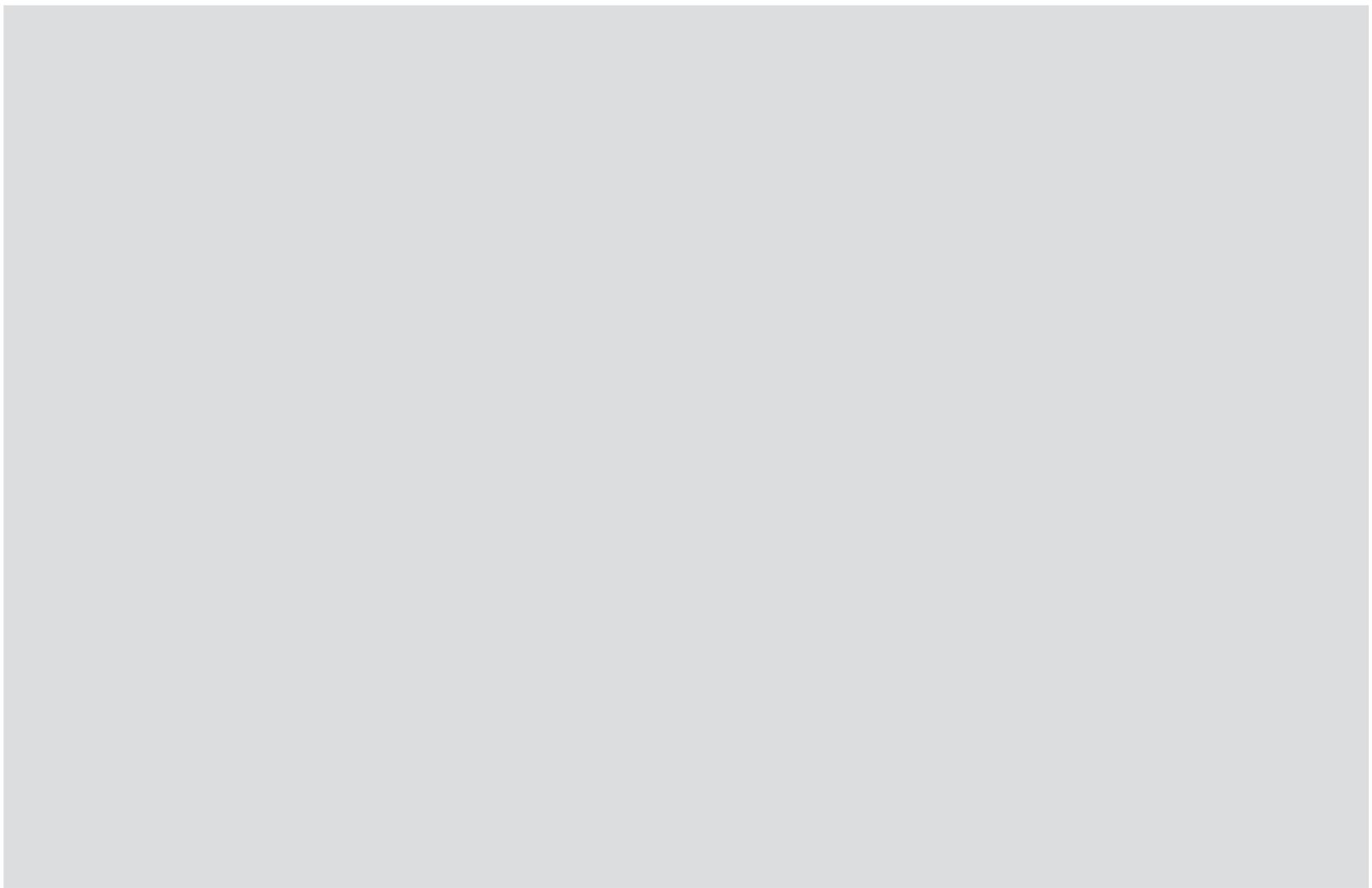
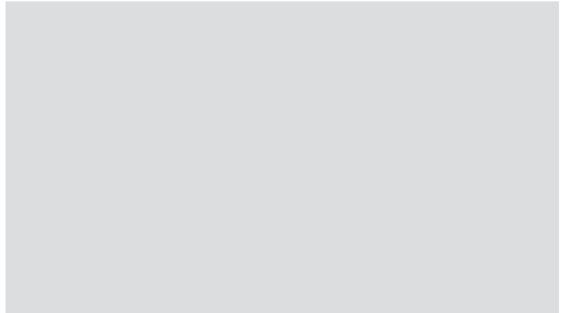
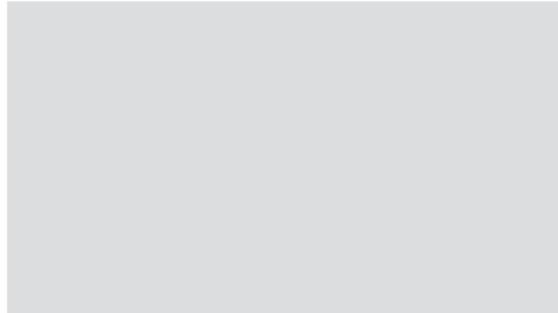
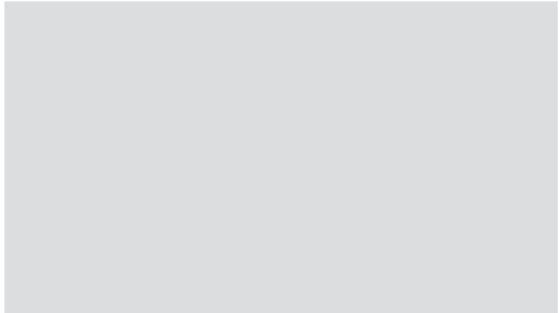
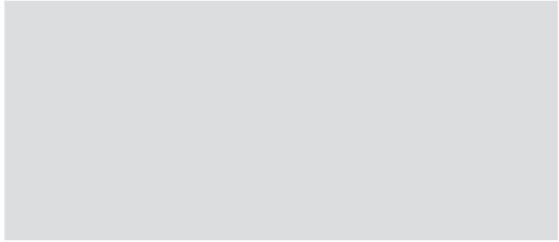
An RQ-7B Shadow Unmanned Aerial Vehicle is launched aboard the Combat Center in a test flight at the VMU-1 airfield Tuesday.



An RQ-7B Shadow Unmanned Aerial Vehicle is launched aboard the Combat Center in a test flight at the VMU-1 airfield Tuesday.



Corporal Quinn Austen Schwehr, a unmanned aerial vehicle maintainer with VMU-1, instructs Cpl. Cody Bowdoin, a UAV maintainer, how the RQ-7B Shadow works at the VMU-1 airfield Tuesday.





DIANE DURDEN

Retired Master Gunnery Sgt. Robert Reid enjoys a meal with Marines at the Mojave Viper Support Detachment dining facility at Camp Wilson Wednesday after sharing stories about his time spent training at Montford Point. Reid was invited to speak to Marines as part of an education series for National African American History Month.

HISTORY, from A3

stories about the lack of proper medical attention available to them, burial ceremonies for cigarette butts and the words of their drill instructors.

The drill instructors were always reminding them why they enlisted - to wear the Eagle, Globe and Anchor.

"They would say to us, 'If you make it, well good luck to you.'" Reid chuckled, emphasizing the word "if."

There was no "if" for Reid. He made it through and wore that Eagle, Globe and Anchor for 24 years as a fire, crash and rescue specialist. He retired in 1974.

"Had it not been for Master Gunnery Sgt. Reid and the warriors of yesterday, it doesn't matter what color your skin was, none of us would be in the position we are today," said Sgt. Maj. Harrison Tanksley, the Combat Center sergeant major.

INSTRUCTOR, from A3

board because of his influence on the students, as seen in their end of course critiques, and for achieving senior faculty advisor in only about six months, Petty said.

"He excelled quicker than any other I've seen," he said. "He is always the first to the office and the last to leave. That stands out."

Estes said teaching is his passion.

"With sergeants, challenging them every day to allow themselves to develop to a more well-rounded Marine is rewarding in itself," Estes said. "Watching them grow, watching their determination and inspiration for learning what I'm teaching is phenomenal. To see them take back to their units what I taught them is more rewarding than winning an award itself."

Estes will now move on to the Enlisted Professional Military Education Instructor of the Year board. This will include Marine Corps-wide enlisted Instructor of the Year winners from individual installations.

If Estes wins in the EPME board, he will then move on to the Elihu Rose Award, which is Marine Corps-wide and will put him up against the best officers and civilian instructors of the Corps has to offer as well.

MEMORIAL, from A1

sense," Master Gunnery Sgt. Mark Braun, the legal chief at the Staff Judge Advocate's office. "He truly had a great sense of humor. He had a devotion to the Corps and fellow Marines. From his Marines, there are only good memories. He had a big heart, and we are going to miss him very much."

Fowler was also remembered by several friends as a good leader, one who took care of his Marines, a "funny guy," and a great friend.

"I imagine Cpl. Fowler executed his final set of PCS orders," Peterson said. "As we speak, he is in-processing with his new unit. Like an NCO, he is probably walking around to see how he can make his new unit better."

Fowler is survived by his wife, Amber, and his four-year-old daughter, Talyn.



LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON

Navy Chaplain Lt. Brian Gibbons reads scripture during a memorial service for Cpl. Donald Fowler III Tuesday at the protestant chapel.



LANCE CPL. SARAH ANDERSON

Amber Fowler holds her 4-year-old daughter Talyn during a memorial service for Cpl. Donald Fowler III Tuesday. Fowler passed away in a vehicle rollover on Twentynine Palms Highway Feb. 7.

Stay Proud



Stay Marine

CAMOUT proves grueling for EMV Marines



PHOTOS BY CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT

1 Marines with 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, patrol the streets of the Combat Center's new combined arms, live-fire, Military Operations in Urban Terrain training range in search of improvised explosive devices as part of Enhanced Mojave Viper, Tuesday.



2 Coyotes closely watch how Marines from 1/5 react to enemy fire from an adjacent rooftop during a patrol at the new CAMOUT facility.



3 Marines with 1/5 take cover from enemy fire during a patrol at the new CAMOUT facility.

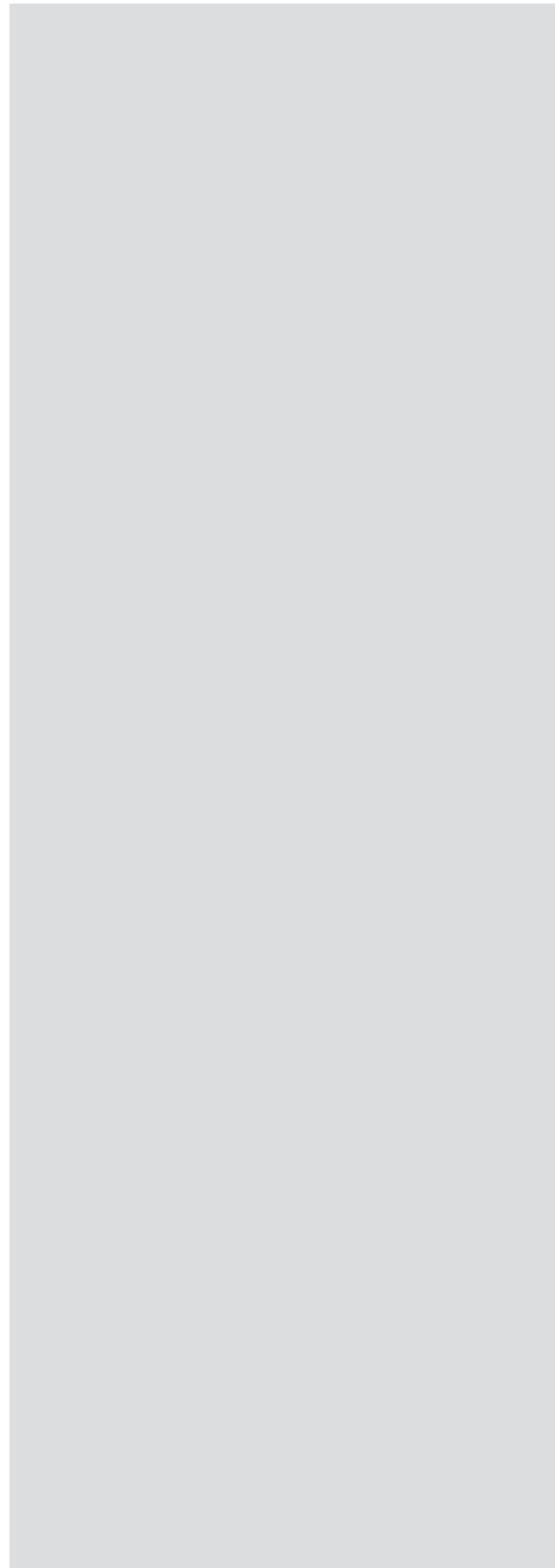
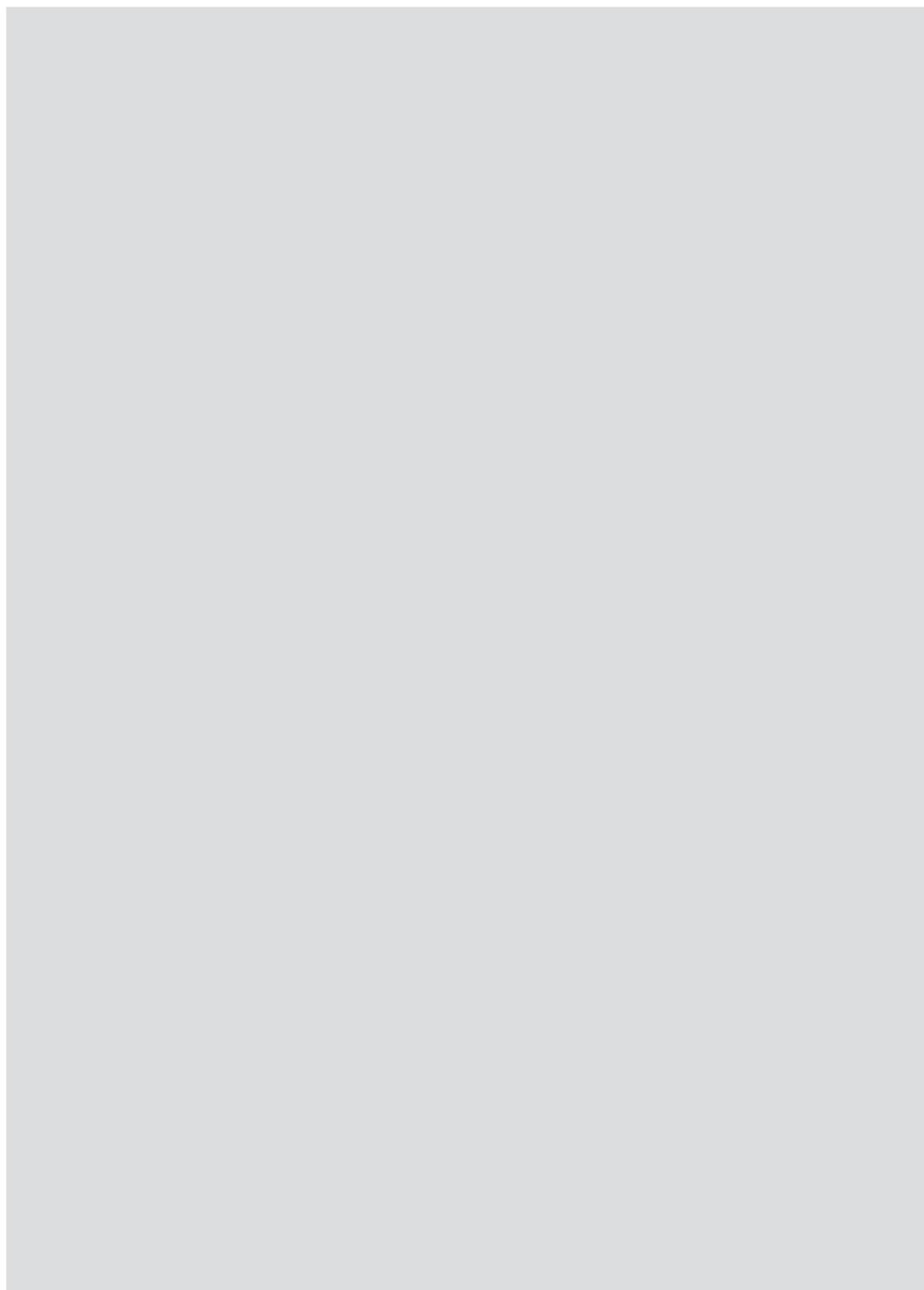


4 Marines with 1/5 get a vantage point over the streets of the CAMOUT facility.



5 A roleplaying Afghan National Army soldier takes up a security position.

ADVERTISEMENT





6 Coyote instructors closely monitor how Marines from 1/5 react to enemy fire from an adjacent rooftop during a patrol.

9 A roleplayer Afghan National Army soldier takes up a security position.



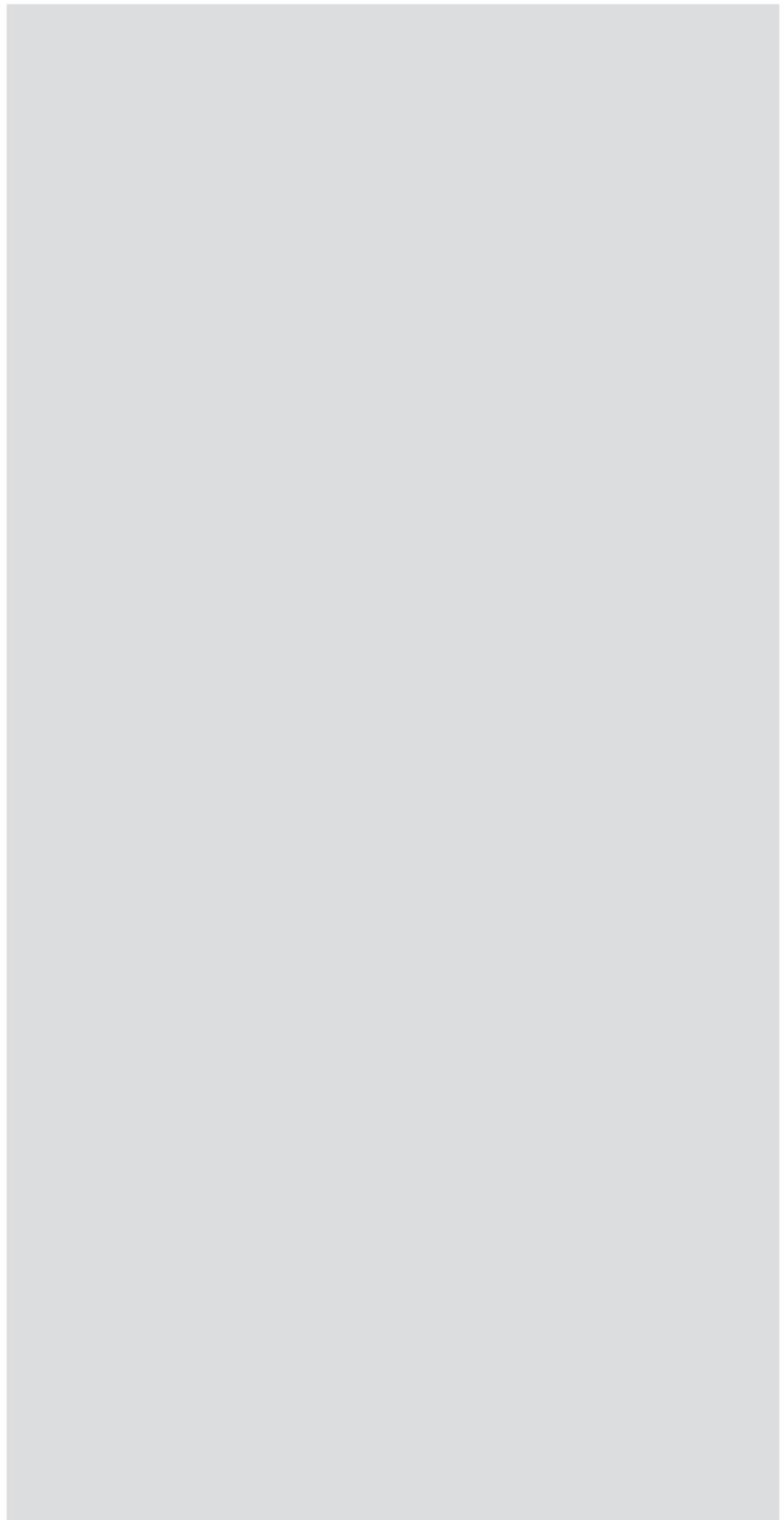
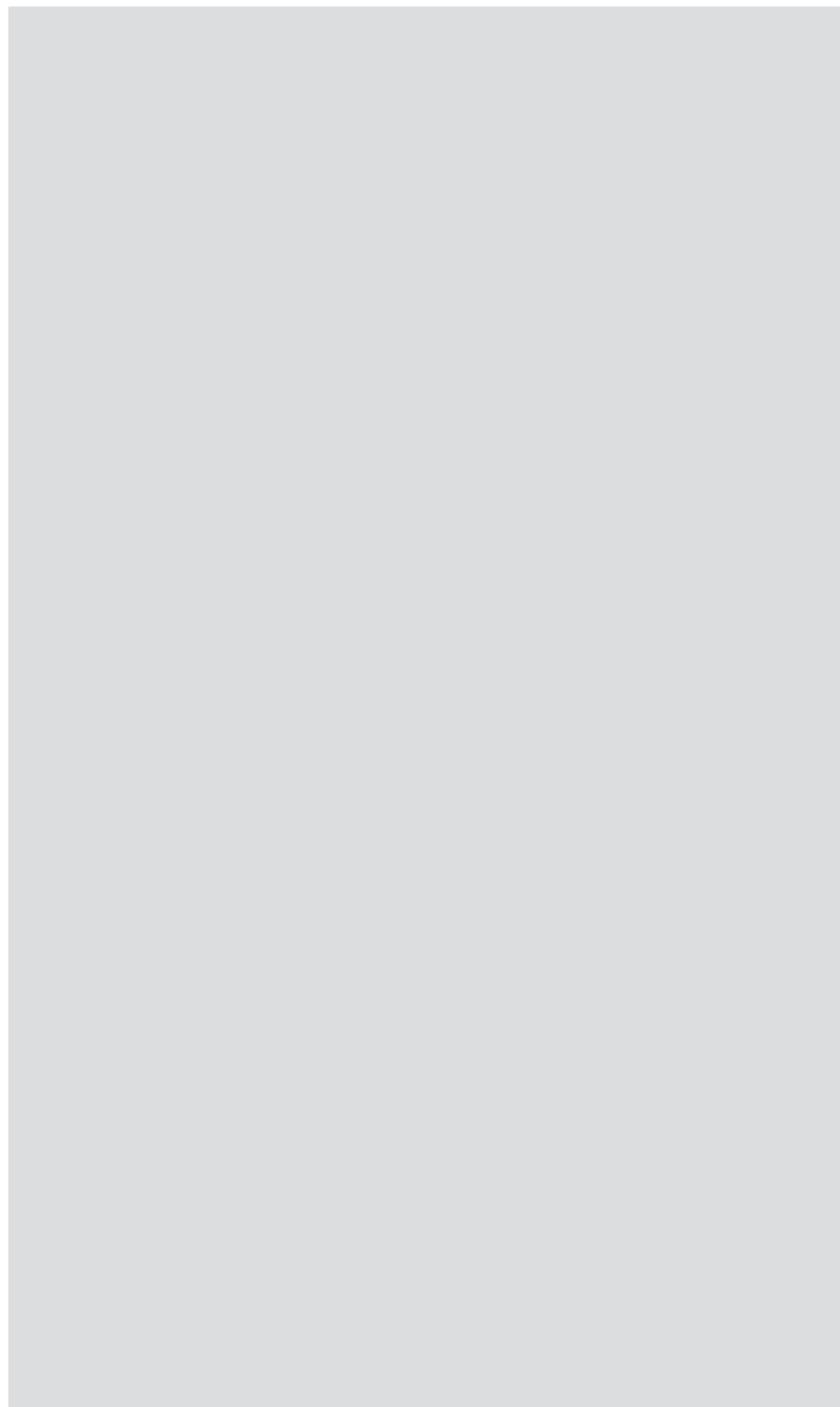
7 Afghan roleplayers inhabit a mock neighborhood during an Enhanced Mojave Viper exercise at the Combat Center's new CAMOUT facility.

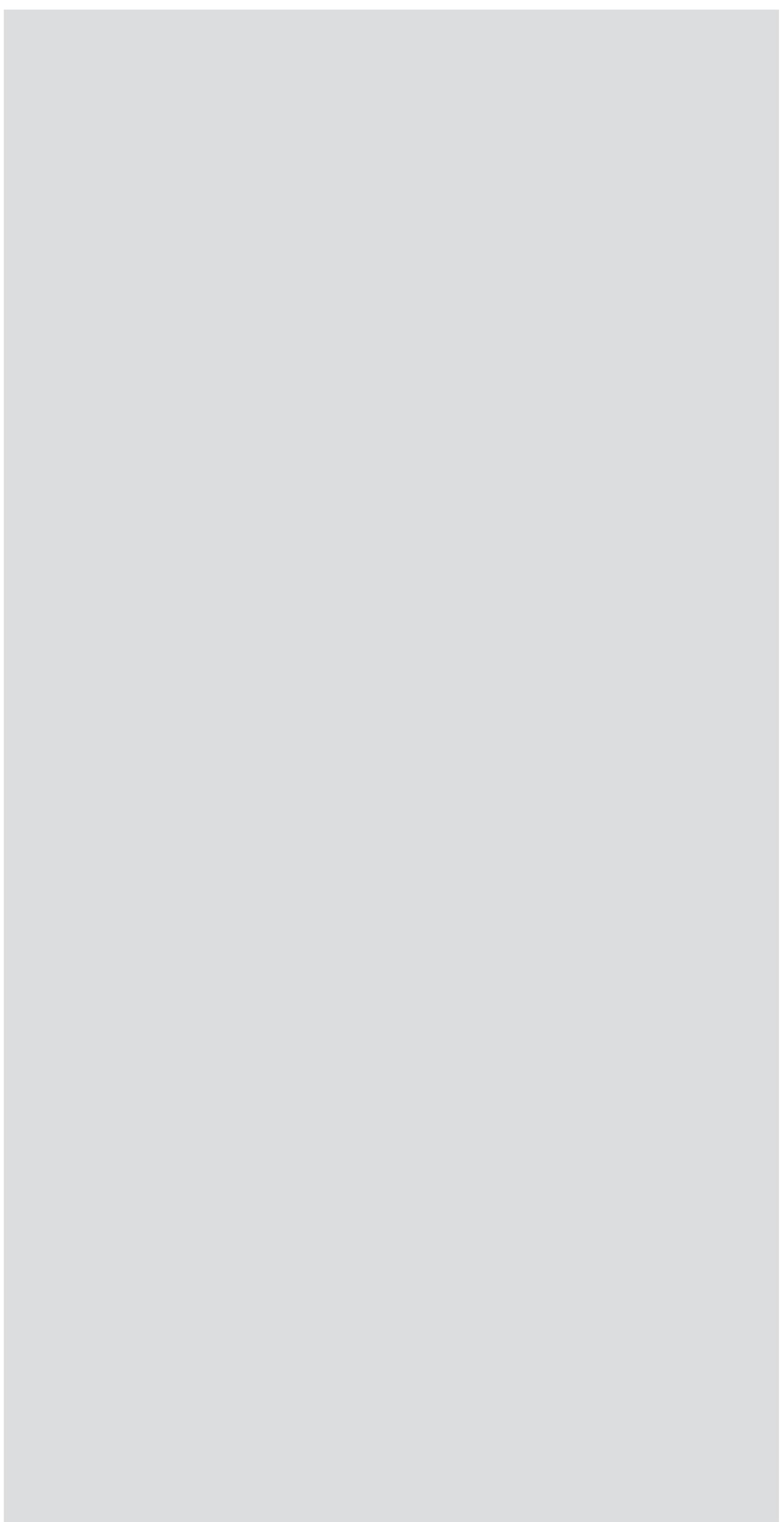


10 A Marine with 1/5 guards a suspected insurgent roleplayer after he was found carrying contraband during a search.



8 Marines with 1/5 patrol the streets of the Combat Center's new combined arms, live-fire, Military Operations in Urban Terrain training range.







Two-ball tournament scores at East Gym

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

Combat Center personnel packed the East Gym and Fitness Center Tuesday for the sixth annual basketball Two Ball Shooting Tournament.

More than 20 teams of two players from both Men's and Women's Divisions competed, with their eyes on first place.

Randy Husted, a Marine Corps Community Services Sports coordinator, said the tournaments were double elimination. The players had seven shooting locations to

choose from, each with their own designated point values. If the players took a shot from every shooting position, they received 10 bonus points. If they made baskets from all the positions, they received an additional 15 points.

The Women's Division started off the night, playing

four-fast paced games before crowning their champions Kathrin Cornwell and Kristi O'Neil. Most of the teams cycled quickly through each position and qualified for the 10 bonus points.

After the Women's Division finished, the Men's

See TWO BALL, B4



Jennet Hogan, a competitor in the sixth annual Two Ball Shooting Tournament, shoots for five points during the tournament at the East Gym and Fitness Center Tuesday.



Tracy Campese, a competitor in the sixth annual Two Ball Shooting Tournament, shoots for five points during the tournament at the East Gym and Fitness Center Tuesday. The Women's Division had three teams participate.



Layton Matthews, a competitor in the sixth annual Two Ball Shooting Tournament, scores a two point layup during the tournament at the East Gym and Fitness Center Tuesday. The Men's Division had 18 teams participate.



Players with for the sixth annual Two Ball Shooting Tournament filled the stands in the East Gym and Fitness Center as others play their rounds Tuesday.



Layton Matthews II [right], a competitor in the sixth annual Two Ball Shooting Tournament, shoots for seven points during the tournament at the East Gym and Fitness Center Tuesday.



Kathrin Cornwell, a competitor in the sixth annual Two Ball Shooting Tournament, shoots for five points during the tournament at the East Gym and Fitness Center Tuesday.



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
Wednesdays: DJ Gjettblaque, 8 to 10 p.m.

Bloodstripes NCO Club

Monday: Chicken nuggets and nachos
Wednesdays: Buffalo wings, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Thursday: Free salsa lessons

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 and full dinner menu
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

Monday: Valentine's Day Dinner, 5:30 to 8:30 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: GRW and the White Buffalo

Description: The country/rock music band performs
When: 8 p.m., Friday, Feb. 18

The Paul Chesne Band

Description: The local rock 'n' rollers perform
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 19
Where: 53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown
For more information, call 365-5956 or visit <http://www.pappyandharriets.com>.

Willie Boy's Weekend Line-Up:

The Mighty Delta Tones

Description: A country/rock band performs
When: 9 p.m., Friday, Feb. 18

Michael Chain

Description: A country band performs
When: 9 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 19
Where: 53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown
For more information, call 365-5956 or visit <http://www.pappyandharriets.com>.

Reach Out Morongo Basin's 2011 Parade of Homes

Description: The charity's largest annual fundraiser visit six of Morongo Basin's most luxurious homes
When: Noon to 5 p.m., Sunday Feb. 20
For tickets and information call 361-1410 or visit www.ReachOutMB.org.

Pulitzer winning play, "W;t" offered at Groves

Description: Margaret Edson's Pulitzer winning drama
When: 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, 2:30 p.m. on Sundays through March 11.
Where: Groves Cabin Theatre
8768 Desert Willow Trail, Morongo Valley
For more information call 365-4523 or visit <http://www.grovescabintheatre.org>.

Lower Desert

BB King

Description: The blues legend performs his hits
When: 9 p.m., Friday, Feb. 18
Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon
For more information call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinoresort.com>.

Lionel Richie

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

Huey Lewis and the News

Description: The famous rock band performs their hits
When: 7 p.m., Sunday, March 13
Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon
For more information call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinoresort.com>.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Feb. 18

6 p.m. – Megamind, Rated PG
9 p.m. – Season of the Witch, Rated PG-13
Midnight – The Fighter, Rated R

Saturday, Feb. 19

11 a.m. – Free matinee: Aliens in the Attic, Rated PG
2 p.m. – Gulliver's Travels, Rated PG
6 p.m. – Little Fockers, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – True Grit, Rated PG-13
Midnight – The Green Hornet, Rated PG-13

Sunday, Feb. 20

2 p.m. – The Green Hornet, Rated PG-13
6 p.m. – The Dilemma, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – Sneak Preview: Hall Pass, Rated R

Monday, Feb. 21

2 p.m. – Megamind, Rated PG
6 p.m. – Season of the Witch, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – Little Fockers, Rated PG-13

Tuesday, Feb. 22

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

Wednesday, Feb. 23

7 p.m. – Gulliver's Travels, Rated PG

Thursday, Feb. 24

7 p.m. – Little Fockers, Rated PG-13

Explorers dive into danger in 'Sanctum'

NEIL POND

AMERICAN PROFILE

"Sanctum"
Rated R

A group of underwater cave-exploring daredevils gets more adventure than they expected in "Sanctum," a subterranean survival yarn that will make most people think twice about paddling off into a dark, deep, uncharted cavern filled with water.

Most people probably wouldn't think of doing that, period. But to these globe-trotting "cavers," it's the ultimate kick.

Problems arise, however, on an expedition inside one of the Earth's most intimidating, least mapped cave systems. When a South Pacific cyclone floods the normally dry area of the cave they're using as base camp, the trapped explorers are forced to find another way out.

In some ways, "Sanctum" is a throwback to an old-fashioned Hollywood staple, the "disaster" movie. Put several people in a dire situation and see who comes out alive.

"Sanctum" uses the old-standby survivor bait but doesn't hook anything new or novel with it. There are no surprising plot twists, no didn't-see-that-coming revelations. The story basically unfolds as one long, wet slog as the cast becomes dispatched, one at a time, in various painful, watery ways.

There's a brief exchange about the inside of a big cave feeling, and looking, like a cathedral. One of the charac-



COURTESY PHOTO

"Sanctum" is a subterranean survival yarn that will make most people think twice about paddling off into a dark, deep, uncharted cavern filled with water.

ters makes a comment about how "even God" can't find them, much less rescuers, deep down in the bowels of the Earth. But it never amounts to anything – other than a pretentious title that suggests something sacred.

For anyone interested in the technicalities of diving, "Sanctum" does weave in some details about breathing equipment, the dire consequences of ascending too fast or diving unprepared and the feeling of panic that most inexperienced divers would feel under the challenging circumstances the movie depicts.

And it does have some impressive-looking underwater photography, which looks even more spectacu-

lar in 3-D. When the divers squeeze through a particularly narrow passage, you almost feel like you're scraping up against the rocks yourself.

The fancy camera work comes courtesy of James Cameron, the director who pioneered groundbreaking new 3-D technology for "Avatar," and who's also shown an affinity – if not a fetish – for putting movie characters in real pickles in, or under, the water. Remember "Titanic" and "The Abyss"?

Cameron's not directing here, but he does serve as one of the movie's producers. Too bad more of his hands-on blockbuster touch isn't evident with the unknown actors, clumsily staged action sequences, cheesy dialogue and draggy pace.

"Sanctum" goes through the predictable action-adventure paces, but too often feels like Cameron is just playing around with some very expensive bathtub toys – and treading water until his "Avatar" sequel comes out next year.



COURTESY PHOTO

Problems arise when a South Pacific cyclone floods the normally dry area of the cave they're using as base camp, the trapped explorers are forced to find another way out.

Combat Center Sports



CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT

Midnight Meat Train's Kyle Brake winds up to unload a dodgeball on the Suckaduckas during a Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball League game, Feb. 10. The teams split victories in a doubleheader competition. The teams played a total of 10 games in two "best-of-five" matches. Each team won one match 3-2.



CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT

Suckaduckas' Carlos Iruegas dodges as his teammate, Zackery Meyerle, jumps over incoming dodgeballs during a Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball League game, Feb. 10, against Midnight Meat Train. The teams split victories in a doubleheader competition. The teams played a total of 10 games in two "best-of-five" matches. Each team won one match 3-2.



CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT

Midnight Meat Trains' Joe Cardona unloads a dodgeball on the Suckaduckas during a Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball League game Feb. 10.



CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT

Midnight Meat Train dodgeballers pass off dodgeballs to their teammate during a Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball League game Feb. 10 against Midnight Meat Train.



CPL. ANDREW S. AVITT

Dodgeballers from both the Suckaduckas and Midnight Meat Train rush to grab their team's dodgeballs at the beginning of a match during a Commanding General's Intramural Dodgeball League game Feb. 10 against Midnight Meat Train.



CPL. M. C. NERL

Matthew McQueen, a shooting guard with MCCES - TTS, flies down court Wednesday during a Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League game against Head Busters at the Combat Center's East Gym Fitness Center. MCCES won the game 56-53.



CPL. M. C. NERL

David Kirk, a point guard with Head Busters, goes for a lay-up Wednesday during a Commanding General's Intramural Basketball League game against MCCES-TTS at the Combat Center's East Gym Fitness Center. MCCES won the game 56-53.

Did you know?



If you are active duty, retired military or a family member, you can place a FREE ad in our Combat Center Trader Ads

See page 5 for details and limitations

TWO BALL, from B1

Division wasted no time in powering through their matches until it was down to Elijah Gonzales and Donavon Nyseth vs. James Burke and Tommy Burk.

"It is pretty fun, laid back, relaxing and gets my mind off of everything," said Gonzales, a player in the tournament.

The finals were the most heated games of the night with both teams scoring

high and making every second count, but Gonzales and Nyseth managed to grab the title of champions.

"We had lot of strong teams," said Skip Best, another Marine Corps Community Services Sports coordinator. "We are just blessed right now with a lot of guys who can shoot the basket, and that was what it was all about"

For more information on upcoming sporting events, call the Sports Department at 830-4092.



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Players with the sixth annual Two Ball Shooting Tournament start the round out passing the ball to their partners at the East Gym and Fitness Center Tuesday.



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Kathrin Cornwell, a competitor in the sixth annual Two Ball Shooting Tournament, shoots for eight points during the tournament at the East Gym and Fitness Center Tuesday. The Men's Division had 30 teams participate.

Athlete of the Week



Name: Shea Foland
Hometown: Clovis, N.M.
Unit: Company B, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School
Recognition: Played outstanding game in come-from-behind victory over Head Busters.
Favorite aspect of the sport: "The teamwork and camaraderie of the sport."
Advice for aspiring athletes: "Work hard, don't give up."