

3rd LAR reflects on successes



Lance Cpl. Nicholas W. Sainz, an assistant team leader in 1st Platoon, E Company, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, and native of La Habra, Calif., provides security during operations in Helmand province, April 16. Sainz stood watch while other Marines conducted a search.

CPL. ADAM LEYENDECKER

II MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE (FORWARD)

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PAYNE, Afghanistan – Southern Helmand province used to be a safe haven and stronghold for the insurgency in Afghanistan where the enemy could establish lines of communication and traffic drugs and weapons.

However, the insurgency has been disrupted and forced to find new lines of communication due to Operation Rawhide II. The 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion conducted a series of raids, successfully deterring the enemy and breaking its ability to communicate with insurgents in the north, said Capt. Christopher L. Buck, commanding officer for E Company, 3rd LAR, and native of Perry, Mich.

During the raids, 3rd LAR discovered multiple weapons caches, including one in Chotu which consisted of around \$54 million in opium, weapons, and improvised explosive device-making material.

Finding caches like this saves lives and ensures that those weapons will not be used here or up north, which is where the insurgents are sending most of their weapons, said Buck.

3rd LAR's presence alone has helped disrupt the movement of the insurgency in the south.

"Gone are the days where the insurgents will go toe-to-toe with Marines in a fight," said 1st Sgt. Tony R. Murchison, E Company first sergeant and native of Raleigh, N.C.

With the Marine presence down here, the insurgency

See RAWHIDE, A8

Combat Center Band plays night away at local park



Sergeant Dustin Kaiser, a saxophone player with the Combat Center Band's brass ensemble, plays to the crowd during a Spring Concert Series performance at Luckie Park Saturday. The self-titled "Bandini Band" performed most of their numbers among the crowd before rejoining the concert ensemble on the stage.

LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

TWENTYNINE PALMS, Calif. — The Combat Center Band captivated local residents until the sun went down during the Spring Concert Series at Luckie Park Saturday.

The Spring Concert Series is a free annual event spanning several weekends and featuring a different band at each one.

This year featured the musical stylings of Wake the Bard, who specialize in Celtic music; Reflexx, a new wave 80's-style band; the Combat Center Band's concert and brass ensembles, bringing patriotic and Dixieland tunes; and Southbound, who will finish off the series May 7 with their southern rock stylings.

The Combat Center Band is considered a highlight of the series every year and drew a larger-than-anticipated crowd for their performance Saturday, said Robert Geddis,



The Combat Center Marine Band performs patriotic songs during the third concert in the Spring Concert Series at Luckie Park in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Saturday.

a Twentynine Palms resident.

"I liked them, [the crowd] always likes them," said Sam Smith, an on-air talent on weeknights and a production director with local Z107.7 FM radio station. "We had a really good crowd tonight. It was probably one of the biggest ones they've had so far this

year, and the Combat Center Band always brings a big crowd. It is just a staple of what we do out here. We appreciate them."

Halfway through the patriotic-themed performance, the brass band, who call themselves the "Bandini Band," re-energized a some-

what-waning crowd with their Dixieland tunes, even stepping away from the stage and commingling with the crowd as they performed their numbers.

"I always enjoy the Marine Corps Band," said Gordon

See BAND, A4

New swim qual program changes announced

LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Marine Corps updated its water survival qualifications with Marine Corps Order 1500.52D.

The new Marine Corps Water Survival Training Program took effect April 15, and merges the requirements of the previous four Combat Water Survival Qualifications into Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced, levels.

Besides the new classifications system, Marines will notice more changes in what they are required to perform for each level.

"Biggest difference with the new swim qualification is that everything is done in cammies and boots," said Cpl. Douglas McMillan, a combat water safety swimmer at the Combat Center's Training Tank. "There's not

one event that you don't have them on, and that is what makes it the most hard for people who used to do just Swim Qualification 4."

Marines will also have to demonstrate they can remove their own flak, Kevlar and rifle while completely submerged. The task must be completed in under 10 seconds in the shallow end of the pool for the Beginner qualification, and in under 20 seconds in the deep end for the Intermediate qualification.

This particular event helps ensure even the weakest of Marine swimmers have the best chance of surviving if they get caught underwater, said McMillan.

"Say you fall into a 10-foot-deep river and sink to the bottom because you have full gear on, and you

See SWIM, A7

Local bank donates funds for warriors



The local branch of Fort Sill National Bank, located aboard the Combat Center, along with the Armed Forces Financial Network, awarded a monetary grant of \$3,000 to the installation's Armed Services YMCA, to purchase sports gear and help fund programs for the Combat Center's Wounded Warrior Detachment April 22.

CPL. M. C. NERL



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

Prevent tooth decay: Grab some gum and go

COL. JEFF CHAFFIN, DDS

TRICARE DENTAL CARE BRANCH

An ounce of gum just may prevent a pound of gum disease. It's also healthier and less expensive than replacement teeth.

For example, once a cavity is filled, there is a life-long cycle of replacement of fillings because they only last so long. Poor oral hygiene, such as lack of brushing, flossing and regular dental exams, can lead to root canals, crowns and sometimes extractions. Dental prevention options for beneficiaries include, but are not limited to, sealants, fluoride, diet modification and oral hygiene.

TRICARE beneficiaries should practice good oral hygiene every day with regular brushing and flossing. Visit your dentist regularly for exams and cleanings.

Most beneficiaries do not realize other options can be added to the prevention regimen that will help reduce cavities – such as chewing gum.

According to the Army's "Look for Xylitol First" program, research shows that chewing gum and eating candy that use Xylitol as the sweetener reduces cavity formation. Bacteria in the mouth multiply rapidly when fed by sugar. When you eat, acid is produced in your mouth through the interaction of bacteria (plaque) and food. This metabolic process produces acids that attack the enamel of teeth ultimately causing cavities to form.

Xylitol affects the bacteria associated with dental cavities. Mutans Streptococci, also known as "Strep Mutans" are acid-producing bacteria that attack tooth enamel minerals, which in turn cause tooth decay. Xylitol is ingested by the Strep Mutans just like any other sugar entering the mouth. However, the plaque-producing Strep bacteria are unable to breakdown the Xylitol. This in turn lowers the number and strength of the oral bacteria. With regular use, chewing Xylitol gum three to five times daily for about five minutes, has been shown to reduce cavity rates by between 35-70 percent in cavity-prone patients.

Xylitol is a sugar substitute, low in calories and kills bacteria that lead to tooth decay. It is a natural sweetener that comes from fibrous plant parts, but it does not break down like sugar. Xylitol is approved by the Food and Drug Administration as a sweetener. The cavity-reducing properties are simply a bonus. It contains two-thirds the calories of sugar and is safe for diabetics. For beneficiaries interested in using natural ingredients, Xylitol has the distinction of coming from a plant, and is not chemically manufactured as other sweeteners on the market.

It can be difficult to determine if a product has enough Xylitol to prevent cavity formation. It's best to look at the ingredients list. For chewing gum, when Xylitol appears first in the ingredients list, this is an indication that there is a sufficient therapeutic amount of Xylitol.

Do your part in helping prevent cavities by brushing and flossing daily and reading the ingredients list the next time you shop for chewing gum or mints.

Centerspeak

What non-alcohol related activity do you enjoy?

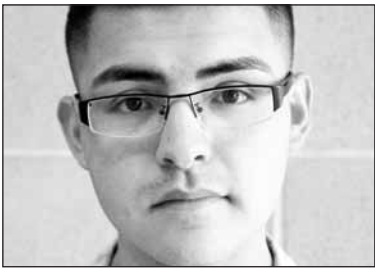
Opinions expressed in Centerspeak are not necessarily those of the OBSERVATION POST, the Marine Corps or the Department of Defense.



SEAMAN JAMES LOUCK

ROBERT E. BUSH NAVAL HOSPITAL

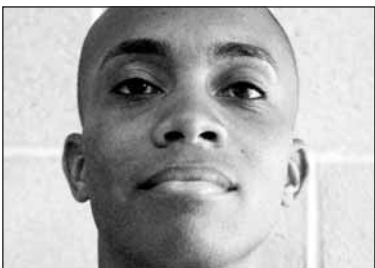
“Marathon running, because I love being outdoors, and it gives me something to do while out here.”



LANCE CPL. ESTEFAN ALCOCER

COMPANY B, MARINE CORPS COMMUNICATION-ELECTRONICS SCHOOL

“Basketball, because I have been playing it my whole life.”



STAFF SGT. JERARD MASON

MARINE UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE SQUADRON 3

“Racquetball, because you can play as hard as you want, it relieves stress and is the equivalent of a punching bag.”



GUNNERY SGT. ALEX HATHAWAY

COMPANY B, MARINE CORPS COMMUNICATION-ELECTRONICS SCHOOL

“Beach volleyball, because you can get a good tan, and you are near the water.”

Hot Topics

VARSITY SOFTBALL TRYOUTS

Varsity softball tryouts will be ongoing every Tuesday from 6 to 8 p.m., and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Felix Field #2. For more information, call Skip Best at 830-4092 or Jack McNellie at (910) 546-6475.

MARSOC SCREENING TEAM

Headquarters Marine Corps and the Marine Special Operations Command Screening Team will be aboard the Combat Center May 2-3 to brief and screen Marines for assignment as Critical Skills Operators. The brief and screening will start at 8 a.m. on both days in building 2070. For more information, see your unit career planner.

ASYMCA SOAPBOX DERBY

Armed Services YMCA is accepting registration for the annual Soapbox Derby, scheduled for June 3 on Adobe Road. The derby is open to kids aged 5 to 14. Register with the ASYMCA at building 192, across from the Marine Mart. Monday thru Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The fee is \$20 per child and includes a soapbox kit and a sheet of plywood to help in their car's construction.

AEROBICS MARATHON

From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., May 18, the East Gym and Fitness Center will host an Aerobics Marathon. Join any number of classes. Prize are given at the end of each class. Bring water and towels. For more information call 830-3381.

Marine Corps History

April 27, 1805

First Lt. Presley N. O'Bannon, who with seven other Marines was part of a force of Greeks and Arabs led by American Consul William Eaton, raised the U.S. flag for the first time over a conquered fortress of the Old World at Derne, a stronghold of the Tripolitan pirates.

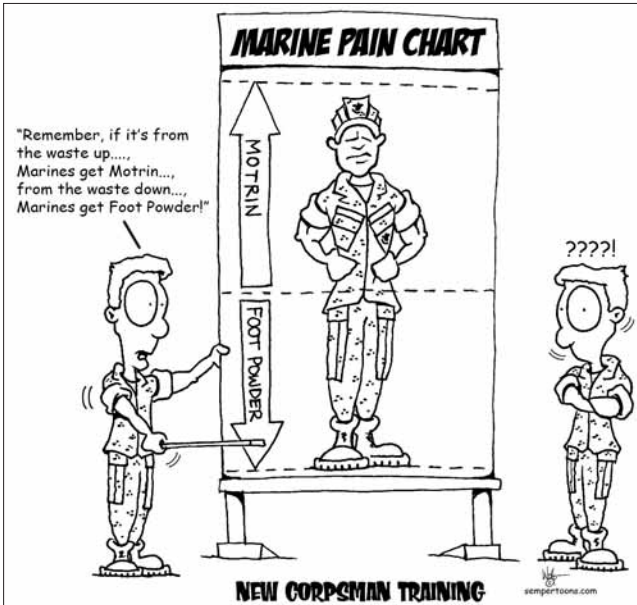


Eagle Eyes

Immediately report any suspicious activity 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 #2158

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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2010 HOMETOWN CONTENT

“OH, DEER!”

[Puzzle solutions on A7]

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ACROSS

1. Pro-___ (some tourneys)
4. Maritime Provinces nation
10. Word before boomer or blues
14. “Yay team!”
15. The Marx Brothers’ ___ Crackers”
16. “Understood!”
17. Fourth of July blaster
19. Vasco da ___
20. Sentry’s imperative
21. “Give ___ break!”
23. Neighbor of Ukr.
24. Firstborn
27. Frat blow out
29. Brazilian vacation spot
30. Maneuver carefully
32. Rival of Graf and Hingis
33. ___ Quentin
34. Perfume holder
35. Run in the wash
36. Hardly a swan dive
38. Some jackets and collars
40. Home to many Kurds
41. Attorneys’ org.
44. “Blondie” or “Beetle Bailey”
45. Da __, Vietnam
46. Gene Kelly’s “___ Girls”
47. Zesty weenie
50. Conspiratorial groups
52. Criticize sharply
53. Pince-___ glasses
54. Gobi’s continent
55. Bartlett’s abbr.
57. One way to quit
62. Game in which it’s illegal to play left-handed
63. Prepares to be dubbed
64. NYC’s Park or Lexington, e.g.
65. Rode the banister
66. Spirited session?
67. Beatty or Rorem

DOWN

1. Quiver carriers
2. Gospel’s Jackson
3. “The Stars Shine Down” author Sidney
4. Side or street follower
5. “___ luck?”
6. Pen point
7. “___, amas, I love...”
8. Jean-Claude Van ___
9. “The Zoo Story” playwright Edward
10. Humongous
11. Ordinarily
12. Dazed and confused
13. Fermentation fungi
18. Interstate: Abbr.
22. “___, vita brevis”
25. Tough spare for a lefty bowler
26. Comets’ trailers
27. Representing falsely
28. Pager signal
31. Erie Canal mule
35. Mel who was Bugs’s voice
36. Be hopping mad
37. Lobster ___ Diavolo
38. Grain alcohol
39. City in “Marines’ Hymn”
41. Skagway resident
42. Have an opinion
43. Examined, as ore
44. Deep-sixes
48. Knocks to the canvas
49. Layer with a “hole”
51. Hershey unit
56. Silent approval
58. Grassy area
59. Iniquity site
60. Compassionate handling, initially
61. ___ NO HOOKS

Combat Center Spotlight



Name: Sgt. Ricardo Asa
Hometown: McAllen, Texas
Unit: Headquarters Company, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School
Job title: Calibration Technician
Job duties: Precision assurance, quality assurance and repairs on communication equipment.
What do you like most about your job?: “I love everything about it. There is no downside to it and I get to learn a little bit of everything.”
Significant achievements: Joined the Marine Corps, is married and has one son
Hobbies: Play music, sing and spend time with his family.
Time at Combat Center: Two years and three months.
Time in the military: Three years and nine months.

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Military Child Carnival an afternoon of fun

STAFF SGT. LYNDEL JOHNSON
COMBAT CORRESPONDANT

No matter how hard a day may be, once you arrive at home and see the bright smile of your children, the weight and stress of the long day fades away.
The Lifelong Learning Library teamed up

with various Combat Center organizations and units Tuesday to say “thank you” to the children who bring great joy to the service men and women around the Corps with a carnival at Felix Field.
Children of all ages participated in various

See CARNIVAL, A7



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

Trey Tyree [left], son of Capt. William Tyree, a Marine with Marine Corps Communications-Electronics School, and James Serrata, son of Cpl. Johnny Serrata, a Marine with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, compete in a sack race at the Military Child Carnival at Felix Field Tuesday.



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

Volunteers play with children during the Military Child Carnival Tuesday at Felix Field.



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

Elizabeth Cornelius, 8-year-old daughter of Sgt. Peter Cornelius, a Marine with 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, hops down the field during a sack race at the Military Child Carnival at Felix Field Tuesday.



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

Jenae Rivers, daughter of Gunnery Sgt. Timothy Rivers, a Marine with Headquarters Battalion, keeps the hula-hoop around her waist as long as possible during a hula-hoop competition at the Military Child Carnival at Felix Field Tuesday.



STAFF SGT. LYNDEL JOHNSON

Manuel Laureano, 5-year-old son of Staff Sgt. Juan Laureano, an instructor at the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, demonstrates why he may one day be a star quarterback in the National Football League during the Military Child Carnival at Felix Field Tuesday.



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

A girl throws bean bags in a game during the Military Child Carnival at Felix Field Tuesday.

SJA CORNER

How to recover your security deposit after moving

CAPT. DAVID SEGRAVES
LEGAL ASSISTANCE OFFICE

Almost every residential rental requires a security deposit of a month’s rent or more.
Too often, landlords treat this money as their property. Renters need to know the rules governing security deposits so they can get back as much as possible when their leases end.
Landlords can only deduct certain expenses from a security deposit.
Specifically, security deposits cover unpaid rent, repair of damages during the renter’s tenancy, cleaning of the unit to return it to the same level of cleanliness it was in at the inception of the tenancy and to reimburse for any defaults under the lease if the lease specifically states the security deposit can be used for that purpose.
To ensure recovery of the full amount of the security deposit, renters need to take steps beginning when they first move into a unit. First they need to perform a complete walkthrough with the landlord/agent and fill out a discrepancy list. Renters should channel both a crazed gunnery sergeant and the paparazzi during the inspection. A thorough and documented (with date-stamped photos) inspection provides a valuable baseline for damage and cleanliness.
As the end of a lease approaches, renters need to read their lease and provide the appropriate amount of notice to the landlord that they will be vacating the unit. At that time, the renter should request another inspection of the property.
This inspection is an opportunity for a renter to receive an itemized list of possible security deposit

deductions while still having time to fix them before the end of the lease. Landlords and renters should agree on the time for these inspections, but they must not be scheduled more than two weeks prior to the end of the lease. Landlords must also provide at least 48 hours of notice before inspection, assuming no other scheduling agreements were made. After receiving the itemized list, renters should compare it to their move-in discrepancy list. If the items are new, the renter should attempt to remedy the issue. Before leaving the unit, renters should perform another personal inspection/walk-

through, also with date-stamped photos.
Within 21 days of the termination of a lease, the landlord must either deliver an itemized statement reflecting the security deposit received, any deductions and the amount to be returned to the tenet. The landlord must at that time return any remaining portion of the security deposit. The itemized deductions must include receipts for supplies and services. Landlords can receive an extension on these receipts if the repairs cannot reasonably be performed within 21 days. In that situation, a landlord must provide a good faith estimate of the amounts and

fully comply within 14 days of completion of the repairs. If a landlord claims he has not received the bills from a cleaning or repair service, the landlord must provide the name and contact information of the service provider.
If renters dispute the amount deducted from the security deposit, they have a few options.
First, they should carefully look at the items deducted and compare them to their photos of the house and their walkthrough lists. If receipts or contact information are provided for service providers, renters can contact these cleaners/repairers and verify the work done.

After assembling some evidence, renters can send a demand letter to the landlord. The California Courts provide an online tool for writing demand letters at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/smallclaims/secdepletter.htm>.
If a landlord persists in

keeping the security deposit, renters will have to file a claim in small claims court.
In this situation, the Legal Assistance Office can provide support for analyzing a renter’s case, writing a demand letter and organizing a case for presentation in small claims court.

Combat Center celebrates Earth Day 2011

LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Combat Center personnel and members of the Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs office spent all of last week cleaning up the base and raising awareness about being environmentally friendly in honor of Earth Day, which fell on April 22 this year.

The week started off with a Yucca Valley Conservation Fair and Earth Day Celebration April 16, to ensure awareness of the upcoming observation. Members of the NREA set up a booth and passed out information to educate people in town on how the Combat Center community is doing its part to preserve energy, reduce light pollution and protect endangered animals, such as the desert tortoise.

“The fair went really well,” said Keith Mohn, the technician specialist with the Combat Center’s Environmental Restoration Department. “I

was really impressed with the community participation and the broad spectrum of energy that was represented [in different presentations].”

The second major event of the week was the five-kilometer Earth Day Awareness Run held at the installation’s physical fitness test course April 20. Runners included Marines, sailors, soldiers, their families and even a few pet pooches.

Units came together to participate in the run. One office topped all others in numbers - the Installation Personnel Administrative Center with 56 Marines.

“It was something we can do to support Earth Day,” said Master Sgt. Alejandra Haro, the IPAC staff non-commissioned officer in charge. “We wanted to contribute, and we can’t easily get off work to police call. It was for a good cause [and] it was a good run for everybody.”

According to Mohn, the run was the perfect way to

gather as many Combat Center personnel as possible in support of Earth Day.

“What better way to bring everyone together than [physical training] on a Wednesday morning?,” he said.

On the final day, April 22, the NREA set up a booth at the Commissary to educate people about the various ways installation personnel are preserving the environment. They also passed out free bags made of recycled materials to encourage people to recycle and keep the Earth clean.

While the Combat Center celebrates Earth Day every year, its “think green” mentality goes year-round, with proactive pollution prevention and programs. Last year, installation personnel reduced waste in the dining facilities by 93 percent by installing compostable-waste decomposers, and also diverted 90 percent of the cardboard waste on the

See EARTH DAY, A7



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Madison Blair, 5-year-old daughter of Gunnery Sgt. Larry Blair, a instructor with Company A., Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, receives reusable grocery bags during an Earth Day observance at the Combat Center’s Commissary April 22.



MELISSA DELAROSA

Keith Mohn, the technician specialist with the Combat Center’s Environmental Restoration Department, briefs the runners on the Earth Day event shortly before the 5-kilometer awareness run April 20 at the Combat Center’s physical fitness test course. The run was held to raise awareness of Earth Day and bring Combat Center members together.



MELISSA DELAROSA

Members of the Combat Center’s Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs office set up a booth and passed out information to educate people in town on how the Combat Center community is doing its part to preserve energy, reduce light pollution and protect endangered animals, such as the desert tortoise, April 16 in Yucca Valley.

BAND, from A1

Rice, a Twentynine Palms resident. “I have been here 27 years and every time they perform [locally], I come and watch them. They always perform well, look good, sound good,

and it just brings out a patriotism feeling.”

Although the Combat Center Band’s part in the series is over, there’s one more chance to join in on the summer festivities. Don’t miss the final performance by Southbound next week-

end, starting at 6 p.m. at Luckie Park.

For more information on the Combat Center Band, visit the Combat Center’s website at <http://www.marines.mil/unit/29palms> or search “Combat Center Band” on Facebook.



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Sergeant Justin Schmidt, an assistant small ensemble leader, leads the Combat Center Band’s brass ensemble, who call themselves the “Bandini Band,” through the crowd during the Spring Concert Series at Luckie Park in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Saturday.

Will Tanks take challenge trophy home again?

Are the defending champions still the best, or are they all talk? Check out next week’s edition of the Observation Post for the final results.



Rifleman Lance Cpl. Kyle Shearen from 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, peers out the doorway looking for his next shot during the paintball tournament at Outdoor Adventures Tuesday. Teams battled to stay alive and capture the flag for their team.



Tank mechanic Sgt. Brandon Gray from 1st Tank Battalion, keeps his eye on the ball as he swims forward during a water polo match against 2/7 Fox at the Training Tank Wednesday. Gray’s team won their match moving up in the bracket into the water polo finals of the Combat Center Challenge.



Corporal Ringo Spulock, a rifleman with Team 2/7 Fox, chips the ball onto the green at Desert Winds Golf Course during the Combat Center Challenge golf tournament Tuesday.

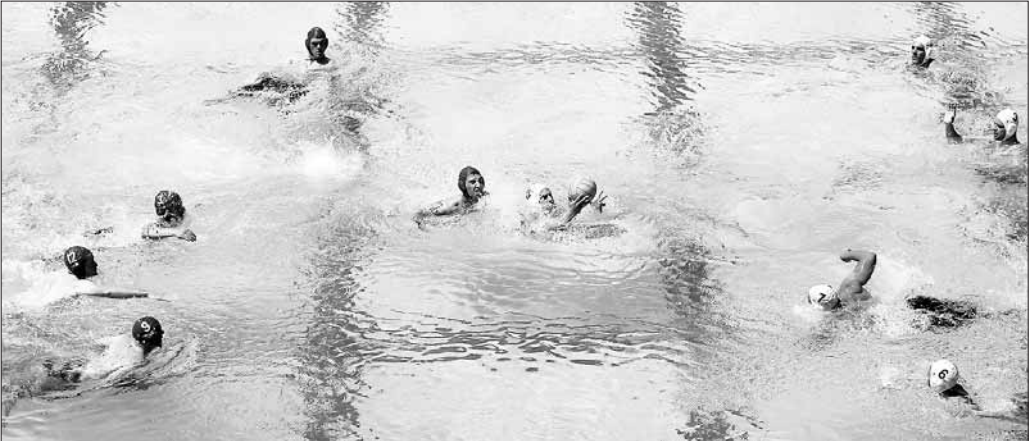


PHOTOS BY DIANE DURDEN

Private First Class Edward Diaz [left], a rifleman with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, attempts to block a pass by Lance Cpl. Wesley Wright, an ammunition technician with Headquarters Battalion, during a basketball game Wednesday. The tournament at the West Gym and Fitness Center was one of several events teams competed in as part this week’s Combat Center Challenge.



Lance Cpl. Wesley Wright, an ammunition technician with Headquarters Battalion, shoots and scores during a basketball game against 2/7 Golf Wednesday. The teams faced off during a tournament at the West Gym and Fitness Center as part of the Combat Center Challenge.



Teams from Headquarters Battalion and 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion race for possession of the ball during the first game of the water polo tournament at the Training Tank Tuesday.

‘Invisibility’ a danger to riders

BOBBY PIIRAINEN
BASE SAFETY

Too often at the scene of a motorcycle accident, the first words out of the car or truck owner is, “Officer, I NEVER saw him!”

This is an unfortunate, but very true statement. But is it always “the other guy’s” fault? I would have to say no.

Let’s talk about some of the more common places this happens. Too often than not, when I am out riding, I see motorcycles riding directly in the driver’s blind spot. This is not only dangerous, but can also become a deadly place to be. In order to be seen while on a motorcycle, we have to make every effort to ensure we aren’t invisible to the other vehicle.

When riding behind a car or truck, don’t ride dead center behind them. Even though you can see the driver in the rear view mirror, you

quickly become part of the scenery to them. Make adjustments in your position as you ride. Ride on the left side of the lane, then switch to the right every minute or so, and continue doing this.

Every time you switch, your headlight shines in that same rear view mirror. But now instead of a steady beam, it catches the driver’s eyes as you move, reminding him or her that you are back there.

Also, when traveling in a separate lane, make sure you can see the eyes of the driver in front of you in his or her mirror. Don’t make the mistake of staying in a position, so that if that vehicle has to swerve in your direction you won’t be able to get out of the way. The best way to accomplish this is to be either completely in front of or behind the vehicle.

When approaching an intersection, or somewhere

that allows a vehicle to make a left turn in front of you, you can help make yourself more visible by doing a short, quick swerve in your lane. It can help get the drivers attention and possibly prevent a collision.

Some other ways you can make yourself more visible out there are modulating headlights.

Riding with your high beams on during the day can help as well. And of course reflective clothing is always a good choice.

Just because we ride motorcycles, we can’t assume the “other guy” will see us or even be paying attention to anything on the road due to talking on a cell phone, texting, etc.

Always ride defensively and NEVER assume you are seen.

Until next month, keep the rubber side down and the shiny side up. Semper- Moto!

Combat Center welcomes Corps' only bishop during Easter Vigil

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN**
PRESS CHIEF/EDITOR

A guest visit made this year's Easter Vigil even more special for the churchgoing members of the Combat Center community during evening mass at the installation's Catholic Chapel Saturday.

Auxiliary Bishop Neal J. Buckon, the Corps' only bishop who visits here only once a year, presided over the evening service.

The night began with the official lighting of the Easter Candle in a fire pit reserved just for that purpose outside the church's doors. All patrons lit their own individual candles from the one Easter Candle.

The bishop also performed seven baptisms, 12 confirmations, five First Communions and one reception to the Catholic Church, making the evening mass more eventful than usual and one the congregation looks forward to every year.



Julianne Wilson, a patron at the installation's Catholic Chapel, reads along with the evening mass during the Easter Vigil Saturday night.



A worshipper makes the sign of the cross as Auxiliary Bishop Neal J. Buckon, the Corps' only bishop, blesses the congregation with holy water toward the end of the Easter Vigil evening mass Saturday.



Auxiliary Bishop Neal J. Buckon, the Corps' only bishop, performs a confirmation for Ramsey Hunkin as his sponsor into the church looks on.



Candles rest along a banister as worshippers at the Combat Center's Catholic Chapel read along with Auxiliary Bishop Neal J. Buckon, the Corps' only bishop, during an Easter Vigil Saturday night.



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

A boy gets his face painted during the Military Child Carnival at Felix Field Tuesday. There were multiple games and activities which included prizes and cotton candy.

CARNIVAL, from A3

events which included sack races, a bean bag toss, a bounce house, a game of “Ring Around the Rosie” with students from Bravo Company, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, and an obstacle course, which held as much fun for the adults as it did for

the kids. Many parents enjoyed watching their loved ones attack the course, weaving in and out of cones with cat-like agility as if they were participating in the National Football League Scouting Combine. When not participating in physical events, the children were entertained by face-painting clowns. Animals and various superheroes were on



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

Marine volunteers work the cotton candy machine during the Kids Carnival at Felix Field Tuesday. The volunteers were covered in pink fluff for the rest of the day.

many smiling faces. One carnival-goer’s measure of the event’s success rested on the success of his new disguise. “Of course [he’s enjoying himself]; he has Spiderman on his face!,” explained the mini-comic book hero’s mother, Jeanalin Rehm, who traveled from San Diego for the event. After three hours, the field’s visitors were slowing down

and well-earned sweat marks streaked through face paint. The goal of the carnival was to “give a celebration for the service-members and their children,” said Ursula Morales, the event’s coordinator. Judging the numerous amounts of smiles present at the field, one would have to say the mission was accomplished and the day a success.

SWIM, from A1

don’t know what to do with cammies, boots, flak jacket, Kevlar and rifle, you have to be able to at least get it all off and stay calm while not being able to breathe,” he explained.

With all the new adjustments, McMillan said the instructor team and the pool are there to ensure the Marines’ success. The Training Tank holds “free swim” sessions weekdays from 4 to 7 p.m. and weekends 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Units can also reserve the pool for physical training sessions in the mornings on weekdays. During all swim hours, the pool will also have water safety instructor on hand to help anyone who needs help to improve their swimming abilities, said Sherry Powell,

the aquatics director for the Training Pool. For more information on the new swim qualifications refer to Marine Corps Order 1500.52D. For more information on the Training Tank go to <http://www.mccs29palms.com> or call 830-6212.

Combat Center Religious Services

Sunday
Immaculate Heart of Mary
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
Mon.-Fri. 11:45 a.m.-Catholic Mass
Christ Chapel
Mon. - Fri., noon - Prayer
Tuesday
Christ Chapel
9 a.m. - Christian Women’s Fellowship* (Sept.-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 and 7 p.m. - Knights of

Columbus
Thursday
Immaculate Heart of Mary
9 a.m. - Adult Class
6 p.m. - Children RCIA
6:30 p.m. - RCIA (Sept.-April)
7 p.m. - Gr. 7 and Confirmation
Friday
Immaculate Heart of Mary
First Friday each month, 12:15 p.m., 4:30 p.m. - Exposition/Adoration Most Blessed Sacrament
Legend
* Indicates child care is provided
+ Call 830-6456/6482 for confession appointments

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.

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

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS									
A	M	S		C	A	N	A	D	A
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R	I	O		E	A	S	E		S
S	A	N		V	I	A	L	B	L
			B	E	L	L	Y	F	L
E	T	O	N	S		I	R	A	N
S	T	R	I	P		N	A	N	G
C	H	I	L	I	D	O	G	C	A
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25th Annual Ridge Run 2011 set for May 6

This annual MWR fundraiser, which is hosted by the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital, will take place May 6 with registration starting at 6 a.m. The event offers a modest 5K course, as well as a rugged and challenging 8K course. The 8K course will take runners over, around and through the ridges and peaks that serve as a backdrop for the Naval Hospital. Squads and individuals are welcome to register for either of the courses. This event is open to all. For information or registration forms contact one of the following:
• HMC Tennison (2nd floor - Staff Education) 830-2526
• HMC Wheeler (3rd floor - Career Counselor) 830-2838
• HM2 Gacayan (1st floor - Preventive Medicine) 830-2002
• Lt. J. G. Lawson (2nd floor - Tricare Operations) 830-2401
Registration forms must be submitted with payment to one of the above contacts.
Cash or checks ONLY. Please make checks payable to Naval Hospital MWR Committee

EARTH, from A4

installation landfill, thanks to recommendations from the men and women in the NREA. More than 300 vehicle batteries have been recharged and reissued back to Marine units, for an estimated cost-savings of \$150,000. A tortoise headstart program produced an additional 100 eggs, and the headstart research is advancing species recovery and populations aboard

the Combat Center. Plans for different renewable energy sources are in the making. Solar panels and other natural, earth-friendly utilities, such as windmills, are also being tested. The Combat Center’s ultimate goal is to satisfy at least 50 percent of the installation’s power needs through renewable energy by 2025. For more information on how you can help keep the Earth green, contact the NREA at 830-8480 or 830-6603.

ADVERTISEMENT

Combat Center Trader Ads

AUTOMOTIVE

CLASSIC 1957 CHEVY PICKUP. 350 engine, 3 speed automatic, \$6,900 OBO. 361-3509.

2008 TOYOTA YARIS. \$10,000 OBO. Approximately 58K miles. Good condition. Consistent maintenance. Call 622-4562.

C5 CORVETTE FRONT BRA. \$50. 413-4015.

2007 SUZUKI BOULEVARD. Black and chrome, 1600 CC, \$3,000 in extras included. Asking \$12,500. 401-3739.

2006 PONTIAC SOLSTICE. Fully loaded, excellent condition, 21,500 miles. \$13,500. Call 819-2773.

MISC.

BABY ITEMS: Solid wood baby crib, baby walker, stroller, wooden horse and more. All in excellent condition. Call 217-3310.

DIAMONDBACK MOUNTAIN BIKE. Like new. \$100. 413-4015.

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 FREE 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 inci-

dental 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.

RAWHIDE, from A1

must now establish new lines of communication and go miles out of their way just to get around us, said Murchison. Marines of 3rd LAR have gone through fields and canals, and over mountains to effectively deter the enemy.

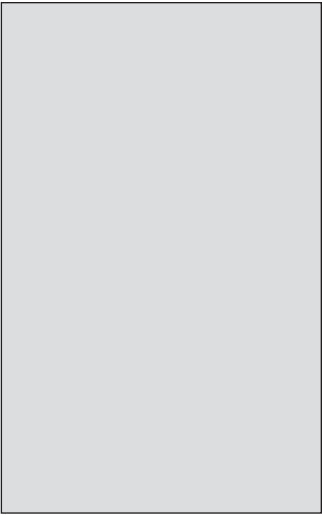
“The Marines have done an outstanding job of relentlessly pursuing the enemy, patrolling their battle space with tactical efficiency and garnering a relationship with the locals,” said Sgt. Maj. John Elliott, sergeant major of 3rd LAR. At the end of the month, 3rd LAR will begin preparing

to transfer authority to 2nd LAR, out of Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N. C. Our Marines saved 2nd LAR some headaches, most notably by taking a significant chunk out of the IED network, said Buck. 3rd LAR will return back to the Combat Center after the transfer of authority.



CPL. ADAM LEYENDECKER

Lance Cpl. William P. Moran, dog handler for 3rd Platoon, Company E, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, and native of Chicago, instructs Cpl. Doodle, a military working dog, at Patrol Base Wolfpack, April 14. Doodle is trained to sniff out improvised explosive devices and other hazardous materials.



CPL. ADAM LEYENDECKER

First Lt. Joshua S. Lum, platoon commander for 3rd Platoon, Company E, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, keeps watch from his Light Armored Vehicle in Helmand province, Afghanistan, April 16.



“Soul Surfer” saved by spiritual side, page B2

NFL, cheerleaders visit Combat Center



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

A young participant in the football camp smashes intensely into his bag during drill in a three day camp run by Chicago Bear Charles Tillman and Dallas Cowboy Kareem Larrimore, Wednesday at Felix Field.



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

Dallas Cowboy Kareem Larrimore watches as a young participant runs an agility drill during a three day football camp Wednesday at Felix Field.

LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The Combat Center children got the star treatment when Chicago Bear Charles Tillman and Dallas Cowboy Kareem Larrimore showed up to spend the week with them.

The players, along with several

College Football League players and cheerleaders, ran a children's football and cheer camp at Felix Field Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

“It's all about the kids for me,” Larrimore said. “Wherever the kids go, I go. I just want to give what I

See NFL, B4



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

Two cheerleaders from University of California, Riverside, teach young girls a cheer routine Wednesday at Felix Field.

Fight Club 29 runners-up at States, keep eye on prize

LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Fight Club 29 headed to Marine Corps Base Camp

Pendleton, Calif., to compete in the California State Pankration Championship and for a shot at trying out for the U.S. national pankration and combat grappling team Saturday.

Pankration is a mixed martial art that combines the sweet sciences of boxing and wrestling.

“If we do well here, it'll

See FIGHT, B4



LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

Coach and manager Mark Geletko encourages rookie fighter Vince Peak during his first tournament appearance at Camp Pendleton Saturday. Peak won a bronze medal.



LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

Mario Martinez, with Fight Club 29, takes his opponent down to the mat in his first match of the California State Pankration Championship at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Saturday.

Misfits still undefeated



LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

James Utley, a player for Tanks BAS, attempts to block a shot from the Misfits at the East Gym and Fitness Center during the Commanding General's Intramural Volleyball League Tuesday. The Misfits outmatched Tanks BAS 2-0.



LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

Dhaval Patel, a Misfits player, serves the ball against Tanks BAS in the East Gym and Fitness Center during the Commanding General's Intramural Volleyball League Tuesday.

Commanding General's Intramural Volleyball League standings

Team	Wins	Losses
Misfits	6	0
3rd CEB	5	0
East Gym	3	2
Tatitlek	3	3
Tanks BAS	2	3
Paper Cutz	2	3
TMO	1	4
MCCES	2	4
Vital Signs	0	5

Bowling league reaches halfway point



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Victor Cervantes, a player with CLB-7, chucks the ball for a strike, adding to his distinction as the highest scorer for the team during the Commanding General's Intramural Bowling League Wednesday.



LANCE CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Tom Davis, a player with Pin Splitters, unleashes a bowling ball to pick up a spare during the Commanding General's Intramural Bowling League Wednesday. Pin Splitters hold 4th place with 13 wins and 11 losses for the season.



Combat Center Clubs

Excursions Enlisted Club
Friday: Social Hour with food, 5 to 7 p.m.
DJ Gjettblaque, 8 to 11 p.m., Ladies Nlght
Saturdays: Variety Night with DJ Gjettblaque, 8 to 11 p.m.
Thursday: Social Hour, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Bloodstripes NCO Club
Fridays: Social Hour with food, 5 to 7 p.m.
Monday: Free Gourmet Bar Food, 5 to 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Free gourmet bar food, 5 to 7 p.m.
Thursday: Social Hour, 7 to 9 p.m.

Hashmarks 29 SNCO Club
Fridays: Dinner, full menu, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Social Hour, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., DJ, 5 to 11 p.m.
Mondays: Steak night, full dinner menu, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday: All-Hands lunch, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Thursday: Social Hour, 5 to 7 p.m.

Combat Center Officers' Club
Monday-Friday: Lunch served, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Monday: Steak Night, 5 to 8 p.m.
Thursdays: Taco Night, 5 to 7 p.m.
Sunday: Easter Brunch, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
For complete calendars visit <http://www.mccs29palms.com>.

Local Events

Pappy and Harriet's Weekend Line-Up:
Three Chord Justice
Description: The Americana/country band performs
When: 8 p.m., Friday, 9 p.m. Saturday, April 29 and 30
Where: 53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown
For more information, call 365-5956 or visit <http://www.pappyandharriets.com>.

Willie Boy's Weekend Line-Up:
Ozzie Mania Tribute Band
Description: The Black Sabbath tribute band performs
When: 9 p.m., Friday, April 29
Barnyard Boyz
Description: A versatile band plays country, folk and rock
When: 7 p.m., Saturday, April 30
Where: Willie Boys Saloon and Dance Hall, 50048 Twentynine Palms Highway, Morongo Valley
For more information, call 363-3343 or visit <http://www.willieboys.com>.

Left Cheek
Description: The classic rock band performs
When: 6 p.m., Friday, April 29
Where: 29 Palms Inn
73950 Inn Avenue, Twentynine Palms
For more information call 367-3505 or visit <http://www.29palmsinn.com>.

Lower Desert

Dionne Warwick
Description: The R&B legend performs her hits
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, May 14
Where: Spotlight 29 Casino Resort
46-200 Harrison Place, Coachella
For more information call 866-377-6829 or visit <http://www.spotlight29.com>.

Stevie Nicks
Description:The famous '60s R & B funk band performs
When: 8 p.m., Friday, May 13
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

The Moody Blues
Description: The classic rock band performs
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, May 14
Where: Agua Caliente
32-250 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage
For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>.

The Doobie Brothers
Description: The famous classic rock band performs
When: 6:45 p.m., Saturday, June 18
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, April 29
6 p.m. – Mars Needs Moms, Rated PG
9 p.m. – Beastly, Rated PG-13
Midnight – Take Me Home Tonight, Rated R

Saturday, April 30
11 a.m. – **Free Matinee.** Tron Legacy, Rated PG
2 p.m. – Rango, Rated PG
6 p.m. – Pickin' & Grinnin', Family Film
9 p.m. – The Adjustment Bureau, Rated PG-13
Midnight – Battle: Los Angeles, Rated PG-13

Sunday, May 1
2 p.m. – Mars Needs Moms, Rated PG
6 p.m. – Limitless, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. – Paul, Rated R

Monday, May 2
7 p.m. – Red Riding Hood, Rated PG-13

Tuesday, May 3
7 p.m. – Take Me Home Tonight, Rated R

Wednesday, May 4
7 p.m. – Beastly, Rated PG-13

Thursday, May 5
7 p.m. – The Adjustment Bureau, Rated PG-13

Inspiring true story hits waves of Hollywood cheese

NEIL POND
AMERICAN PROFILE

“Soul Surfer”
Starring Anna Sophia Robb, Dennis Quaid and Helen Hunt
Rated PG

In 2003, young surfing phenom Bethany Hamilton lost nearly her entire left arm in a shark attack. Doctors said it was a miracle she didn't die from shock and blood loss. The surfing world wondered if Bethany would ever be able to return to the water.

In “Soul Surfer,” Anna Sophia Robb, who charmed audiences as a child in “Because Of Winn Dixie” and “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” plays Bethany as a happy, home-schooled Hawaiian teen who eats, sleeps and breathes surfing.

The opening scenes introduce us to Bethany, her friends and her family, and everyone seems to agree: This girl is going places on a surfboard, possibly even to a world championship.

Then, one otherwise tranquil morning, off the coast of a secluded Hawaiian

COURTESY PHOTO

Sophia Robb [right], plays Bethany Hamilton, a young surfing sensation who tragically loses an arm to shark attack. Bethany's parents are played by Dennis Quaid [left] and Helen Hunt [center].

beach, it happens: A tiger shark breaks the surface of the water and then disappears – and so does Bethany's arm, from the shoulder down.

Bethany's parents are portrayed by Dennis Quaid and Helen Hunt, two veteran actors who, it should be noted, hold their own in body-revealing beach wear surrounded by a cast of

much younger forms in bikinis and swim trunks.

Country superstar Carrie Underwood makes a promising movie-acting debut as Bethany's church youth director. Kevin Sorbo, TV's Hercules, is the Hamiltons' close friend and fellow surf junkie, whose quick thinking the day of the attack plays a key role in the outcome of the situation.

Craig T. Nelson plays the surgeon who pronounces Bethany a “living miracle” after surviving an encounter that came just a couple of critical inches away from ending her life.

The movie uses digital special effects to convincingly “remove” Anna Sophia Robb's arm. It's the same technique that made it look like Gary Sinise, as Lt. Dan in Forrest Gump, had no legs.

And the surfing cinematography makes you feel like you're right there in the water, alongside Bethany as she works to adapt to having one less limb for balance and navigation.

But “Soul Surfer” often wipes out on underdog clichés and waves of melodramatic Hollywood cheese. Bethany's surfing rival is a snotty, hiss-able, raven-haired teen who dresses, of course, in all black. Bethany's parents and two older brothers are so one-dimensional (we never know what any of them do outside of their house or the water), they're almost as flat as their surfboards.

Everything is hyper-dramatized with the same jumpy intensity and sweeping music, whether it's a tense moment inside the curl of a big wave or an evasive move by Bethany's dad to steer around a gaggle of reporters in his front yard.

And it's so relentlessly upbeat, there are few “downs” to give the “ups” any elevation. The closest the movie comes to a moment of darkness or doubt is when Bethany snaps off the left arm of her Barbie doll, her despondent reaction to finding out that a much-touted prosthetic limb isn't going to work as well as she'd hoped.

But one thing “Soul Surfer” has going for it, something that will trump most any flaws for many viewers, is its unabashed depiction of Bethany's Christian faith. It's the rare mainstream, big-star movie that doesn't sidestep or marginalize the significance of a character's spirituality.

The movie's faith factor really hits home when Bethany accompanies her youth group on a mission trip to tsunami-ravaged Thailand, where she realizes a “higher calling,” a spiritual synthesis of her soul and her surfing.

You always wonder how closely based-on-a-true-story movies follow the real events they're supposedly depicting. Stay for the credits, and you'll see how many of the scenes match up, almost exactly, to moments captured in some of the Hamiltons' home videos.

“Soul Surfer” won't wash ashore any Oscars. But if you're looking to catch a wholesome wave about a young woman's remarkable, real-life recovery from a horrific setback, it'll take you for an inspiring ride.

Combat Center Leisure

Desert Detours: Gone fishing at Hemet Lake, Calif.



Welcome to “Desert Detours,” a series that follows correspondent Cpl. M.C. Nerl around on his explorations of the high desert, the basin and the valley. The “out-of-five” palm tree rating scale offers a glance at how worthwhile the writer considers a place to be. Locales will be judged on their accessibility, atmosphere, fun, cost and facilities. Keep an eye out every week for new shenanigans and hot tips on cool things to do.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
CPL. M. C. NERL

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

LAKE HEMET, Calif. – Fishing is a time-honored tradition among men.

Lake Hemet, Calif., located less than an hour from Idyllwild, Calif., is known both for its scenery and fishing opportunities.

Also, let it be known, the limited number of camping spots are first-come-first-serve, as is their selection of small, motorized and rowing boats available for rent.

A handy bit of information for any Marine, sailor or their families wanting to go there is this: make sure it’s a payday weekend, because being in California costs a pretty penny.

It’s \$20 for one night of camping, in a crowded place. This is not what we call “camping” back in the Midwest. Here, you’re surrounded by people driving BMWs and massive trailers, and the campsites are all inches away from one another. Thank God there are quiet hours, or nobody would get any sleep.

Here’s the real kicker – even though they do rent boats, it costs roughly \$80 for a single day. You get 20 of those dollars back, as the security deposit. But serious-

ly, for as slow and little as they are, I find \$80 to be a little much.

Luckily for Marines, camping, fishing, boating and man time are all team sports.

So, grab a few friends, split the cost of the rental, and 80 bucks is nothing. Plus, you can take the \$20 deposit, buy some beer and shore fish afterwards. Absolutely save the alcohol for after you turn in the keys though, because drinking and driving laws still apply when operating any vehicle, including watercraft.

You probably wondered where all the photos of the fish are, seeing as I am writing a story about fishing.

No fish were caught by yours truly because there are five points in the lake where they stock and feed fish, and I was at none of these places.

My bad. Sorry. At least we aren’t in caveman times, where my survival depended on fishing, and I don’t have a family to feed. It kind of feels like an epic fail, but oh well, that’s what diners and Applebee’s are for.

Other than that, though, the whole experience wasn’t a bad one. Idyllwild is close by, and cell phone service is still available in some areas around the lake, although I

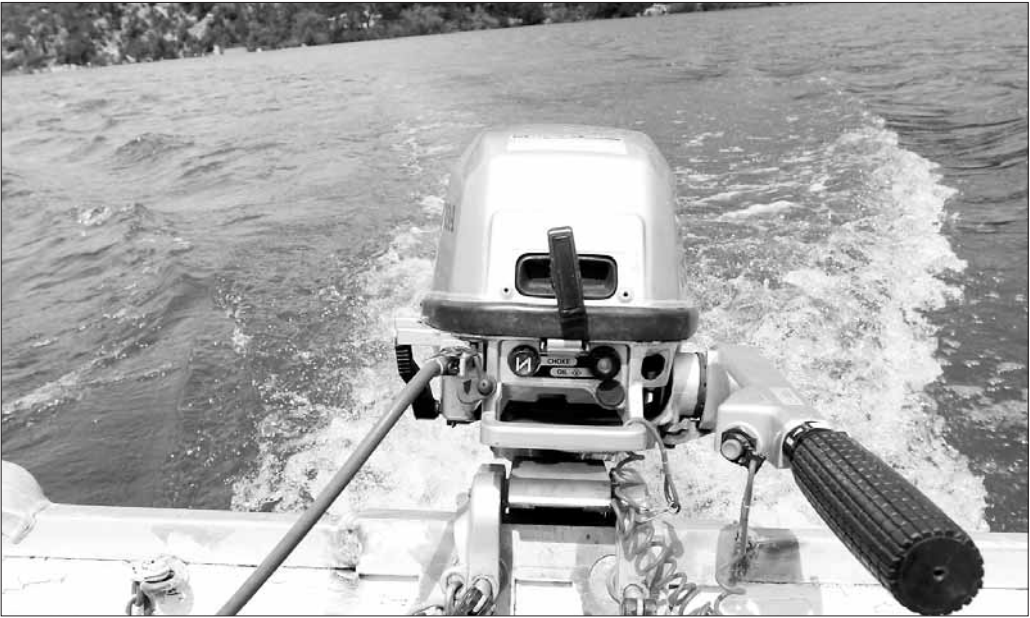


Lake Hemet, Calif., is located several miles from Idyllwild, Calif., and is known for its fishing, scenery and camping. Be warned, however, such an expedition is best carried out on a payday weekend.

prefer it the other way around. Man time requires peace and quiet.

Overall, the lake, despite my poor fishing ability, earned four out of five palm trees. Just don’t be the one who goes up there, acts crazy, causes problems and ruins it for the rest of us, because the area and its residents are quite military friendly.

Editor’s Note: “Desert Detours” is a weekly series exploring opportunities for Marines and sailors from a firsthand perspective. All material included therein is the opinion of the writer and does not imply an endorsement by the U.S. Marine Corps or the Department of Defense.



It’s an extra \$80 to rent a motorboat vice a rowboat at the lake. Don’t worry, you get a \$20 refund for returning the boat in one piece.



Lake Hemet, Calif., is known to many fishermen and vacationers throughout southern California for amazing fishing opportunities. There are multiple spots around the lake where they stock and feed fish. Unfortunately, I did not go to any of these places. I hope the gentlemen in these two boats did.



Corporal Steven Afalla, the legal assistant non-commissioned officer-in-charge at the Combat Center’s Staff Judge Advocate, searches for a seemingly non-existent fish in Lake Hemet, Calif., Saturday. Shore fishing, as demonstrated here, is a great way to legally drink a lot of beer, whilst fishing, a combo prohibited while operating a boat.



Lake Hemet, Calif., is located several miles away from Idyllwild, Calif., and is an area known for its fishing, scenery and camping.

NFL, from B1

have to them.”
The children’s days were filled with drills that strengthened their endurance, agility, strength and focus. The players also taught them techniques such

as how to run, when to crouch and how to brace for impact, as well as how and when to go on the offensive.
“It’s amazing they came out here,” said Andie Skillings, mother of a camp participant. “The kids really look up to them, and they

are learning a lot about teamwork, skills, and sportsmanship. Plus, we are Bears fans so we are pretty excited that Charles Tillman is out here.”
The players said they also hoped the three-day camp and their time together would encourage the kids

to dream big.
“If a kid can see someone who has made it, it inspires them to stick with it and know they can do it, too,” Tillman said.
Larrimore echoed the sentiment.
“If they see that I started as a kid, it lets them know that they can make it,” he said.

During their stay, the players also toured the base and visited the Wounded Warriors and Marines and sailors in Camp Wilson. They even got a taste of the combat convoy simulator, where they defended their humvee from virtual terrorists.
“I’ve found a new respect for these guys,” Larrimore said, referring to Marines. “I really appreciate everything they do.”
Tillman said he grew up in a military family and being back on a base was refreshing.
“My dad spent 20 years in the military and my father-in-law did 30,” he said. “It brings back a lot of memories. It’s my first time being around so many Marines, it’s been great.”



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

Young football players practice new techniques during a football camp run by Chicago Bear Charles Tillman and Dallas Cowboy Kareem Larrimore Wednesday at Felix Field.



LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

Vince Peak, a Fight Club 29 fighter, is announced the winner of his bronze medal match at the California State Pankration Championship at Camp Pendleton Saturday.



LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

Arnold Fajayen groans in pain as his dislocated shoulder is popped back into its socket at the California State Pankration Championship in Camp Pendlehip Saturday. Fajayen then went on to win that match.

FIGHT, from B1

give our guys the opportunity to become part of the world team,” said Mark Geletko, the team’s coach and manager. “If they do get on the team, they would then go to Serbia for the world championship.”
The team of four fighters arrived with high expectations for the tournament and themselves. Other teams in the competition, like the Camp Pendleton team, had rosters of more than 10 fighters.
“There are a lot of teams here,” said Mario Martinez, a Arlington, Va., native, and a Fight Club 29 fighter in the 175-pound bracket.
Despite the fierce competition, the fighters said they all appreciated the talent present.
“These kids do fight well,” Martinez said. “You can learn a lot from them.”
All the teams had a wide array of chances to collect points toward their overall standing. Along with winning individual matches,

ending a match early got the teams higher in the standings, above just a normal victory.
Ethan Surrusco, a Fight Club 29 member who is currently injured, supported his team from the sidelines, saying the tight-knit group recognizes each others’ strengths and really functions as a team.
Through their combined efforts, the team overcame the handicap of having only four fighters to come in second place overall in the tournament.
Martinez took home silver, while Vince Peak and Edwin Nuñez earned bronze medals.
The team’s three medalists also earned the chance to try out for the national team in Las Vegas June 26.
Fight Club 29 is currently gearing up for the U.S. Armed Forces Pankration Championship May 21, also at Camp Pendleton, where they hope to enter eight fighters and take another jab at gaining national try-out qualifications.

Athlete of the Week



Name: Mario Martinez
Hometown: Arlington, Va.
Unit: Headquarters Company, 7th Marine Regiment
Recognition: Silver medalist at the California State Pankration Championships in the 175 pound weight class.
Favorite aspect of the sport: “Utilizing all the skill I learn in practice in competition.”
Advice for aspiring athletes: “You have to follow your dreams. If you want to do something, you just have to go out and do it.”