

OBSERVATION POST

Arty takes flight, page A4

October 21, 2011

Since 1957

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HOME AT LAST



PFC. ALI AZIMI

Sgt. Benjamin A. Shockey, a rifleman with Weapons Company, picks up his daughter, Isabel, after she lept into his arms during 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment's homecoming celebration at the Combat Center Monday.

'Darkside' Marines back from Afghanistan

Pfc. Ali Azimi
Combat Correspondent

Homecomings mean many things, like mission accomplishment and some much-deserved time off. But, mostly, it means finally being with family.

When the Marines of 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment stepped off the buses at Del Valle Field Monday and Wednesday, it was the first time they saw their wives and children in seven months.

For other Marines, the reunion was even sweeter.

Gunnery Sgt. Adam M. Tack, platoon sergeant for Weapons Company, and Cpl. Clay W. Smith, mortarman with Weapons Co., both came home to newborns they had only seen in photographs and videos.

"While he was deployed, we talked by email, and he only got to see some pictures," said Lulu, Cpl. Smith's wife, and mother of newborn Andy and 5-year-old Saul.

The hardest part about having him deployed was having their son without him there, Lulu said. She



PFC. ALI AZIMI

Gunnery Sgt. Adam M. Tack, platoon sergeant for Weapons Co., 3/4, meets and holds his newborn daughter, Ariel, for the first time from a seven-month deployment to Helmand province, Afghanistan, Monday. This was also Tack's birthday. His wife, Melanie, joins in the moment.

See HOME, A6

3/4 builds foundation

PFC. ALI AZIMI

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines of 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment arrived at Del Valle Field to a crowd of family and loved ones Monday and Wednesday, after a seven-month deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Under the threat of improvised explosive devices and hidden Taliban insurgents, the 3/4 Marines did more than just fight against Afghan insurgents directly.

They built rapport with Afghan locals, collecting information to prevent insurgent attacks, and helped train Afghan National Security Forces, teaching them how to protect and fight for themselves.

These Marines set up a foundation in Afghanistan for any unit to be able to fall into and build on.

About 500 Marines arrived by bus throughout the week to the crowd of screaming families, waving their arms in the air frantically.

Families arrived from states as far as Florida and New York.

"Everyone is happy; everyone just seems to be so excited," said Ali Nelson, family readiness officer for 3/4. "It's been a long deployment, but we're glad it's come to an end and we got our guys home safe."

Unfortunately, this is not the case for all Marines and their families. Five Marines made the ultimate sacrifice during the deployment.

A memorial service will be held at the Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field in honor these fallen Marines Oct. 27 at 10 a.m.

Check out more photos from 3/4's homecoming and a link to the video coverage at <http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter>



Corps' top leadership visits Combat Center Marines, sailors

CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines and sailors filled the Sunset Cinema Theater and Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field for a visit from the Commandant and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Monday.

Gen. James F. Amos, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, took the microphone first and talked about the importance of the Combat Center.

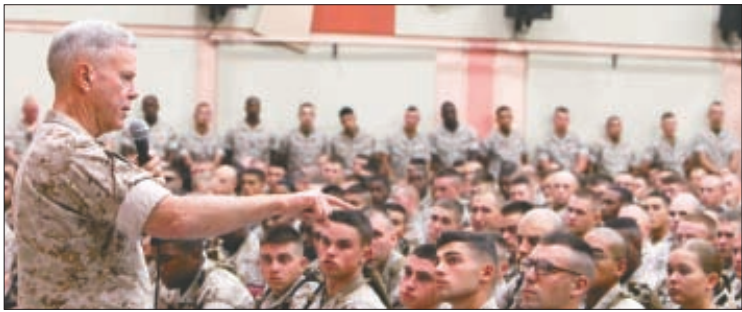
"The Combat Center is home plate for the Marine Corps, because it doesn't matter if you are east or west coast or in Japan, we all come here to train," Amos said.

He then went on to talk about the Marine Corps' upcoming birthday.

"Our birthday is coming up and no other service celebrates its birthday like we do," Amos said. "Other services are done with their ball by 9 p.m. We are lucky if we are done by 9 a.m. the next day," he said, jokingly.

Before passing the microphone to the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Micheal P. Barrett, Amos told a story of a question he answered to a reporter.

He was asked if this was the worst of times to be in the Marine Corps and Amos' response was, "This is the best of times to be a Marine because we are doing the things that attracted you to go through boot camp," he said, speaking directly to his Combat



CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

[Above] Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James F. Amos tells Combat Center Marines that the Corps will not leave Afghanistan until the job is done Monday at the Combat Center's Sunset Cinema Theater.

[Right] Staff Sgt. Ryan M. Korth, a student with the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, receives a challenge coin, from the Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James F. Amos.

The Commandant's wife, Bonnie, took her own tour of the Combat Center with a very different focus in mind. See details from her trip on page A3.



CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

See CMC, A3

This Week in Combat Center History

Reprinted from the Observation Post dated Oct. 18, 1963, Vol. 7, No. 42

1st Hospital Company joins desert family

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

A new unit has joined the family at this Hi-Desert Base.

The First Hospital Company, Fleet Marine Force Pacific has a new home after relocating from Camp Pendleton last month.

The new company’s mission is to provide primary definitive surgical facilities for force units, establishment of a 100-bed hospital⁽¹⁾ for the treatment of wounded, sick and injured, and provisions for evacuation of cases requiring prolonged hospital action.

Its secondary mission is to augment division medical facilities either as a complete unit or through employment of provisional detachments organized within the company.⁽²⁾

Navy Lieutenant R. E. Greene, (MC), is the company commander. He is a four-year veteran of the Navy’s Medical Corps.

The unit has been assigned administrative and billeting areas near the hospital. Their vehicles jointly occupy the HqtrsCo For-Trps⁽³⁾ motor pool.

The 1st Hospital Company became an organization separate and apart from other medical units of the Fleet Marine Force during the reorganization of the 1st Marine Division’s Medical Battalion. On 12 April 1957, the unit was activated. Supplies and equipment necessary to operate the company were provided by the First Medical Battalion and the unit was assigned to the battalion for admin-

istrative and operational control.

Immediately following activation, the unit was placed in a “housekeeping” status and did not participate in field training as a unit due to the lack of medical personnel within the 1st Marine Division.

On 1 July 1959, the unit was placed in a “cadre” status and two men were assigned to maintain the equipment. The unit remained in this status until 1962 when it was reactivated and approximately 45 personnel assigned. During 1962, the unit concentrated on placing the company in a combat-ready status and took the equipment to the field for a training exercise in the late summer.

- ⁽¹⁾ The original hospital was located in building 1551 and what is now called The Village Center. The hospital moved to its current location on Sturgis Road in 1993.

⁽²⁾ Navy Corpsman currently assigned to Marine Corps units aboard the Combat Center are part of those units and are not included in the Naval Hospitals personnel strength.

⁽³⁾ Headquarters Company, Force Troops was the command that provided over-sight of training aboard the base as well as the various construction projects that established the Mainside infrastructure.

Motorcycle safety

Avoiding the dangers of cornering misjudgment

FRANK SANTIAGO
CAPE FOX PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

I’ve never met a rider who went down because he was doing the right thing.

I often overhear riders telling their buddies about crash experiences they had in the past, and I usually hear, “I had to lay it down.”

I want to chuckle, but deep inside I know the rider just doesn’t have the right education and many times doesn’t realize he made a mistake that could have been severe.

He was simply lucky to be telling his story.

Corners are responsible for most single vehicle accidents involving motorcyclists. In other words, there are a high percentage of riders “going down” in turns with no outside factors relating to the crash. Yet, I still hear riders explaining that they had to lay it down.

So I wonder, if there is no

natural or unnatural force pushing a rider to crash in a turn, then why are they still “having to lay it down?”

We certainly can’t blame the corner. The corner doesn’t have secret energies snatching a rider to the ground. So the error must lie somewhere else, or more appropriately, with someone else.

We as riders must accept a huge amount of responsibility. Our motorcycles produce a great amount of power.

Unfortunately, some of us cannot manage that power successfully.

Can we chalk this up to the lack of skill? Perhaps. Or should we say it’s due to poor roadway conditions?

I would have to say it’s related to the de-evolution of our riders’ mentality. Today’s riders have become more focused on looking cool and going fast, they are putting responsibility second. And as a result, current riders are finding them-

selves riding well above their own heads, and in a corner, this is extremely dangerous.

I would challenge all riders to take a few steps back and take a bigger look at their own riding behavior. I challenge them to ask themselves what they can do to perfect their cornering techniques. In most cases, I’d bet that simply a little more brake pressure before the turn would clean up a majority of the mishaps made while cornering.

All it takes for us to better manage and refine our abilities is a little discipline and a little acceptance of responsibility.

A good way to think about it is, if you think you are traveling slowly enough for the turn, go ahead and slow down a little more. Plus, you always look cooler going slow through a turn than going down in a turn.

Hot Topics

FRAUD, WASTE, MISMANAGEMENT HOTLINE

The Command Inspector General’s Fraud, Waste, Mismanagement Hotline is available to all military personnel, civilian employees and family members at 830-7749 or DSN 230-7749. Facsimiles can be called in at 830-6155 or DSN 230-6155. You can also file a complaint at SMBPLMS CenterInspector@usmc.mil

HAUNTED HOUSE

The Single Marine Program promises to turn the former Main Exchange into a damp, dark and musty place with endless screams of tortured souls October 29-30 from 7p.m. to 11 p.m. For more information on the upcoming haunted house, call 830-4767. Must be 13 years or older to participate.

CAR & BIKE SHOW

Check out the Commanding General’s Car & Bike Show Oct. 22 at 11 a.m. on the corner of 5th and Brown Streets. There will be food and beer for purchase. No outside alcohol allowed. The event is free. There will also be a live performance by Barry Michael at 3:30 p.m.

HALLOWEEN HAVOC

The Halloween Havoc Basketball Tournament is scheduled for tOct. 28-30 at the West Gym and Fitness Center. Cheer the Combat Center’s varsity team to victory over the MCAS Yuma, MCAS Miramar, Camp Pendleton and Nellis Air Force Base teams. Call 830-4092 for more information.



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.

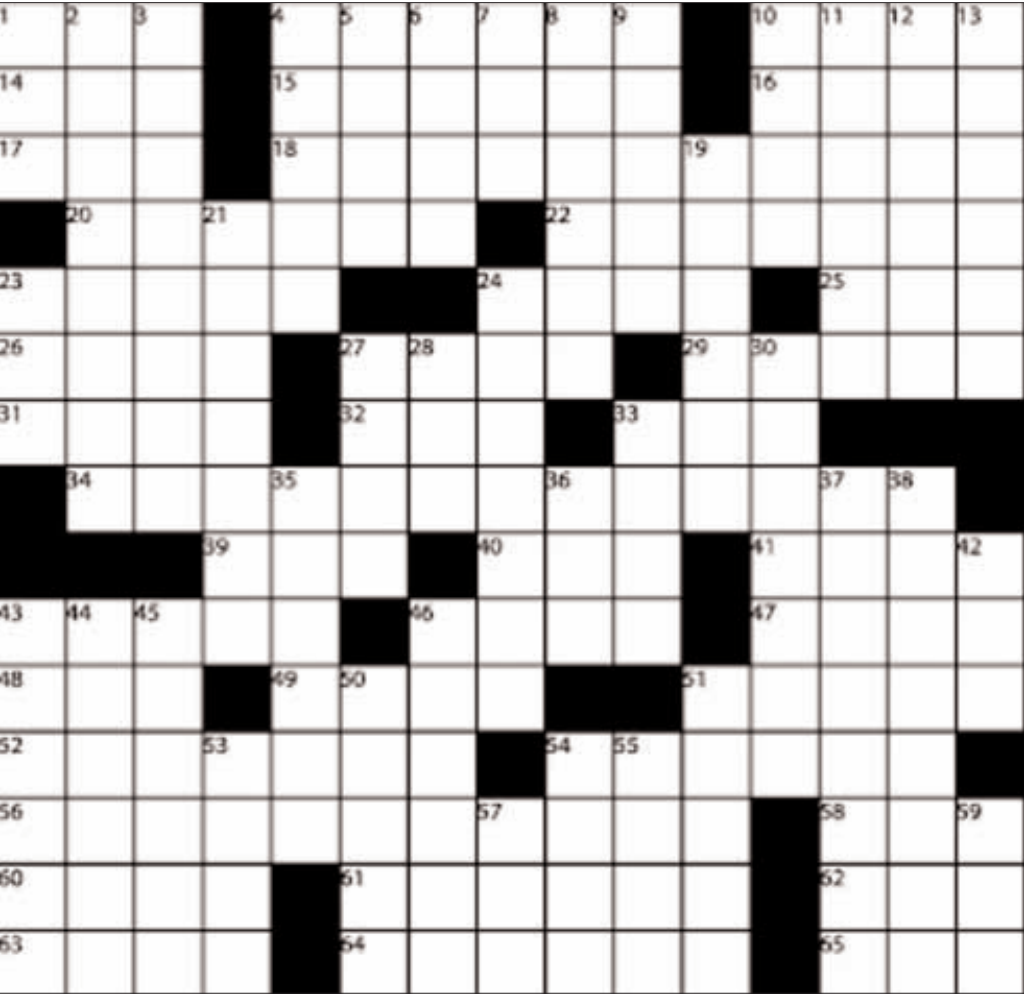
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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2011 HOMETOWN CONTENT

STICKING YOUR NOSE INTO EVERYTHING

[Puzzle solutions on A7]



ACROSS

1. Russian-built fighter
4. Pretigious prizes since 1901
10. Farmland unit
14. Chowd down
15. Lucky charm
16. Extinct cousins of the ostrich
17. Suffix with loyal or royal
18. Tiny slices of time
20. On a tilt
22. Rap’s ____ boys
23. Seville so long
24. A whole lot
25. Sought a seat
26. German auto pioneer Karl
27. Mongrel dogs
29. Macbeth’s title
31. Actress Blanchett
32. Three-time Burmese prime minister
33. Nest egg initials
34. “It’s been ages!”
39. Partner of food and lodging
40. Luau chow

41. “____ Naglia”
43. Mr. Doubleday
46. Bivouac shelter
47. Blast-furnace materials
48. Curly poker
49. Ox’s burden
51. Kama____
52. Denomination minted in Italy, once
54. “I couldn’t care less” attitude
56. Overlooked by the doctor
58. Former “Tonight Show” bandleader Severinsen
60. Cleopatra’s river
61. Former speaker of the house Tip
62. Santa ____ winds
63. Driving test taker, usually
64. 2000 Olympics city
65. Ginza

- ing a handshake, perhaps
3. Gains an acceptance form
4. Grannies
5. Muscat’s land
6. Lay one down, in baseball
7. “Don’t Bring Me Down” rockers
8. Sappho’s island
9. Dutch painter Jan
10. Tori or Wally
11. The Iran-__ affair
12. About 57 degrees mathematically
13. Dead Sea Scrolls scribe
19. Bearded former world leader
21. Smith Brothers unit
23. “Lost” network
24. Satchmo’s instrument
27. Bags a class
28. Introduction to sex?

30. Discuss thoroughly
33. “What’s ____ for me?”
35. Deadhead icon Jerry
36. Billion years
37. Environmentalists’ celebration
38. The whole gang
42. Thick-brick link
43. Sum total
44. Clyde’s partner in crime
45. It may be in a groove
46. Auto gear system, informally
50. Peloponnesian city
51. In a somber way
53. Bank claim
54. M____ “memonic”
55. Brazilian soccer legend
57. UK lexicon
59. Recyclable item

OBSERVATION POST

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LANCE CPL. MATTHEW ALLEN

Gen. James F. Amos (far right), Commandant of Marine Corps, observes improvised explosive device lane training at Range 215 during his visit to the Combat Center Monday.



CPL. JEREMIAH HANDELAND

Marines with the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School listen to Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, and SgtMaj Micheal P. Barrett, Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps. Gen. Amos and SgtMaj Barrett toured the Combat Center to visit with Marines and discuss future plans of the Marine Corps.



SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN



CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

[Top] Cpl. Clifford Henderson, a student at the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, asks Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James F. Amos a question during the general's visit to the Combat Center Monday.

[Left] Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Micheal P. Barrett thanks Marines for their service before leaving the Combat Center Monday.

CMC, from A1

Center audience.

Once Barrett took the stage, he made sure the Marines all knew what they each meant to him personally, ensuring them the highest levels of command have the Marines' best interest at heart.

"I don't need to know anything else about you,"

Barrett said. "Ninety percent of you joined after 9/11. You could have chosen to do anything else with your life, but you chose to serve your country. There is nothing more honorable or nobler profession than to serve the country in this capacity."

At the end of their speeches to thousands of Marines and sailors during the day, they

answered questions. The Marines asked how they were going to be affected by upcoming budget cuts, and what the impact to promotions and re-enlisting will be with the upcoming drawdown.

"It's great that he comes out here to talk with us and answer our questions," said Staff Sgt. Ryan M. Korth, a student with the Marine

Corps Communication-Electronics School.

As Amos and Barrett said their farewells to the Marines in the theater and at the field, they stressed how proud they are to be serving the Marines and how thankful they are for all the sacrifices the Marines and their families make.

The group also visited Camp Wilson.



SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN

Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, welcomes home Cpl. Mario Acevedo, infantryman with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, as his unit steps off the bus during their homecoming celebration Monday.



CPL. JEREMIAH HANDELAND

Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, talks to and answers questions from the Marines and sailors of the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School Monday.

Commandant's wife reaches out during trip

SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN

PRESS CHIEF / EDITOR

Bonnie Amos, wife of Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James F. Amos, accompanied her husband to the Combat Center for a visit Monday.

While the general was touring and talking with Marines, Mrs. Amos was hard at work learning about some of the services available to Marines, sailors and their families here.

She is no stranger to such programs as the Single Marine and Sailor Program, the Armed Services YMCA or the Wounded Warrior Battalions, and she listened with open ears during the day's meetings, interjecting ideas on possible improvements and asking questions where unclear.

Mrs. Amos said while she enjoyed every aspect of her visit, it was the Wounded Warrior detachment that stuck with her the most.

Sgt. Brandon DelFiorentio and Cpl. Timothy Culhane, both patients with the detachment, created two videos to help spread the word about problems facing families and wounded vets. One video featured military children; the other highlighted the dangers of traumatic brain injury.

"Having seen the two videos that the Wounded Warrior Battalion Marines put together, I hope it saves lives and puts lives back together," Mrs. Amos said.

"This is powerful stuff. We need this," she said.

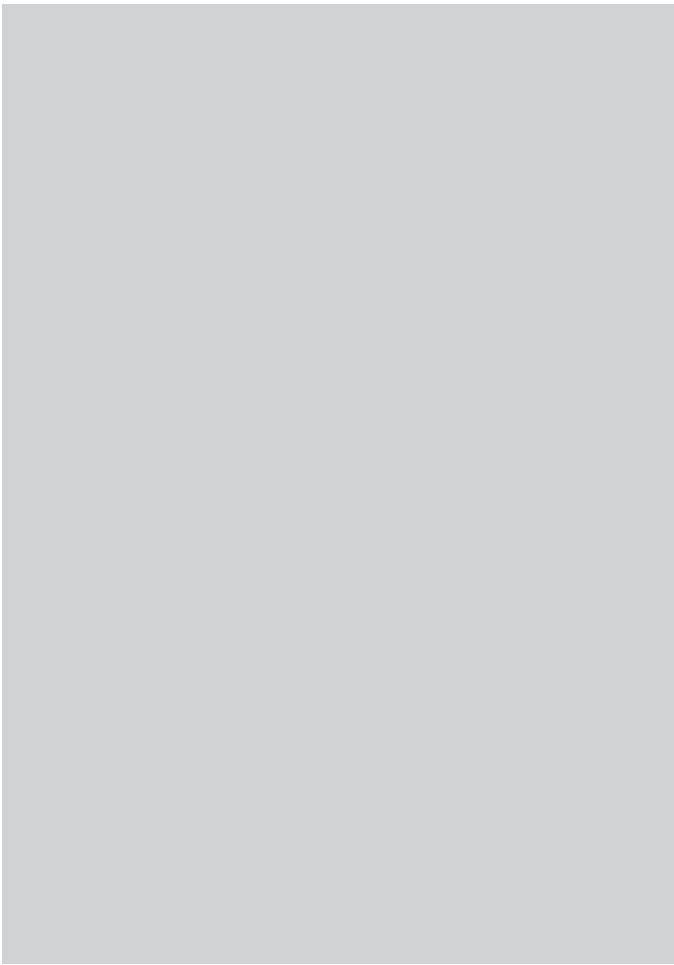
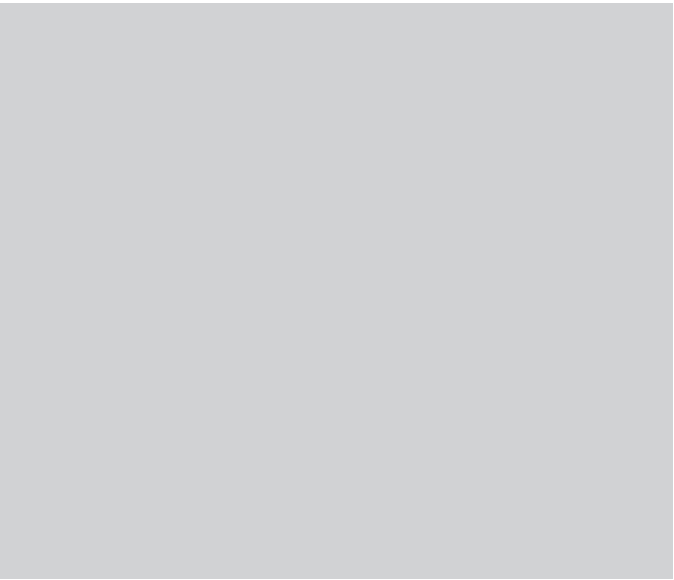
DelFiorentio and Culhane said they plan to send these videos to First Lady Michelle Obama.



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



The Combat Center has its own
YouTube channel. Find it at
<http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO>





PHOTOS BY PFC. ALI AZIMI

Marines from CLB-5 brace themselves for the hurling wind of an approaching CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter.



[Top] A Marine with CLB-5 stands by to help detach the cables holding the M777A2 Howitzer airlifted into the field.

[Right] A CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter lifts an M777A2 Howitzer.



FLYING GUN

Marines of Combat Logistics Battalion 5 and 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment teamed up to successfully hook up an M777A2 Howitzer to a CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter during an external lift exercise at the Combat Center's Sand Hill training area Oct. 14. This exercise simulated bringing a howitzer into a combat zone, should one malfunction and need to be replaced. The 3/11 Marines provided the gun and acted as advisors for the CLB-5 Marines.

30 Minutes or less

Marines train to beat the clock

CPL. GARRY J. WELCH
31st Marine Expeditionary Unit

USS ESSEX, At sea — No man left behind.

This saying is drilled into every Marine’s head from the first day they enter recruit training, and upheld as they continue through their service to the Corps.

When pilots get shot down or have to eject from their aircraft, they count on the Marines and sailors of the Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel force to uphold that saying.

To ensure they are ready to answer that call if it comes, Marines and sailors with Company E, Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, conducted a mock TRAP mission, during the MEU’s certification exercise.

Trained to be ready in 30 minutes or less, the TRAP team left the USS Essex quickly, bound for Irisuna Jima, Japan, the island where a downed Air Force pilot was waiting for rescue.

“As we landed on Irisuna Jima Island, we exited the helicopter and set up security,” said Lance Cpl. Taylor W. Jasper, team leader with BLT 2/7, 31st MEU. “We found the pilot almost immediately; he was only about 60 meters from where we landed.”

Although the landing was unopposed, the Marines were expecting trouble during insertion. In the case of an opposed landing, the Marines had an AV-8B Harrier jet aircraft standing by to provide close air support.

“We were told we were going into a hot landing zone,” Jasper said. “We went ready to take fire and still complete our mission.”

Although the team is prepared to take fire, they usually try to avoid making contact with the enemy. Engaging the enemy could cause unnecessary complications during the rescue mission.

“TRAP force is not a direct combat team,” said Jasper. “We don’t go in to

engage the enemy, that’s not our mission. We will if we have to, but ideally we try to avoid contact.”

Upon discovering the downed pilot, Seaman Robert Bingham, a hospital corpsman with Co. E, began providing medical care to the injured pilot.

“He wasn’t injured too badly, and the terrain made it easy to get to him,” Bingham said. “I cared for him for about seven minutes before we had him on the stretcher and into the helicopter on the way out of there.”

Within 15 minutes of the Marines hitting the deck, they found the downed pilot, stabilized his condition, and loaded him onto the helicopter, completing the TRAP mission.

“This was a graded exercise,” said Jasper. “Overall it went really smoothly, we didn’t take fire, and we were done in just under 15 minutes.”

“We pray that it doesn’t happen, but if by chance a pilot did go down or has to ditch his plane, then at least there is an element within the MEU that can go out and get them,” Bingham said.

It is because the Air Combat Element and BLT of the 31st MEU operate together so frequently, that the Marines and sailors of the 31st MEU are always ready to act if called upon.

“The 31st MEU is extremely well suited to execute a TRAP mission for three reasons: our equipment, our training and our people,” said Lt. Col. Gary Roesti, executive officer of the 31st MEU.

The 31st MEU possesses a wide array of air and ground vehicles that allow for rapid deployment from a land-or sea-based platform to accomplish the mission.

Roesti added that other military units can conduct TRAP missions, however, no other unit in the world, excluding the Marine Corps’ other numbered MEUs, possesses the flexibility of the 31st MEU.

The 31st MEU is the nation’s only continually forward deployed MEU, and remains a force-in-readiness in the Asia-Pacific region.



PHOTOS BY PFC. MICHAEL S. OXTON.

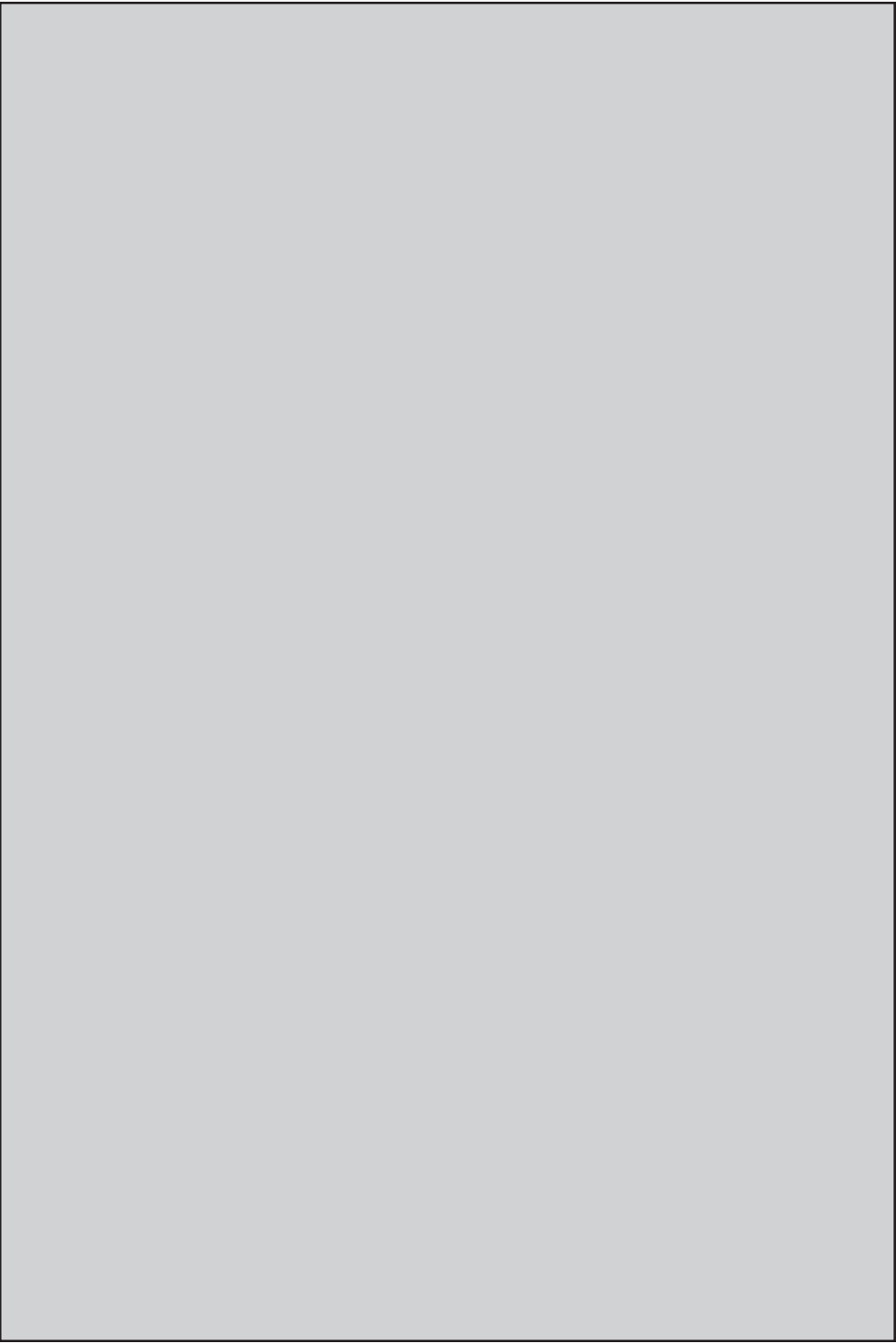
Marines assigned to Company E, Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, move a wounded pilot onto a back board during a mock Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel mission on Irisuna Jima, Japan, Oct. 11.



Marines with Company E, Battalion Landing Team 2nd battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, move a wounded pilot on a back board during a mock Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel mission on Irisun Jima, Japan, Oct. 11.



Cpl. Melvin Peterson, team leader with Company E, Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, communicates through a radio during a mock Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel mission on Irisun Jima, Japan, Oct. 11.





Master Sgt. Jason Belcher, communications chief with Headquarters and Service Co., 3/4, hugs his family as he returns home from Afghanistan Wednesday.

Check out the official MCAGCC social media sites at:



<http://www.flickr.com/thecombatcenter>



<http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO>



<http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter>



PHOTOS BY PFC. ALI AZIMI.

[Above] A crowd of families and loved ones cheer and wave raised banners for the returning 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, Marines as they step off the bus during their homecoming celebration at Del Valle Field Wednesday. The unit just completed a seven-month deployment to Afghanistan. More Marines, also returned Monday afternoon. Five from the battalion paid the ultimate sacrifice during the deployment, and a memorial service is scheduled for Oct. 27.

HOME, from A1

would get up in the middle of the night to feed and take care of him and in the morning she would want to rest, but couldn't because no one else was there to take care of him.

"Afterwards my mom was there and she helped me for a couple of weeks, but after that you still need the extra help," Lulu said.

She and her two sons, Andy and Saul, arrived at the Combat Center at 10 a.m. from Oceanside, CA, passing the time talking to other families and thinking of the moment they would be reunited with their father and husband.

Saul ran around playing with the other children, but continually checked in with his mother asking if his father was there yet. Lulu would then smile and respond, almost.

"That's been going on since we started driving," she said. "Last night he woke up a couple of times and asked 'where's daddy?'"

Cpl. Smith was finally able to meet his 4-month-old son after stepping off the bus. Immediately after spotting her husband, Lulu sprinted to Smith wrapping her arms around

him. Smith's smile spread uncontrollably across his face as he saw his son Saul, and his newborn son Andy.

"It's amazing being home," said Cpl. Smith. "I can't wait to get home and just lay down with my family."

Andy Smith was born during Cpl. Smith's deployment May 29, coincidentally, the same birthday as his father. But these two are not the only ones who share a birthday surprise.

Tack met his first child, Ariel, after coming home from deployment, the date of his birthday.

"This is all the celebration I need," said Gunnery Sgt. Tack as he looked at his daughter, smiling. "It feels pretty good to be home."

Just like Cpl. Smith, Gunnery Sgt. Tack had only seen his daughter through pictures from emails.

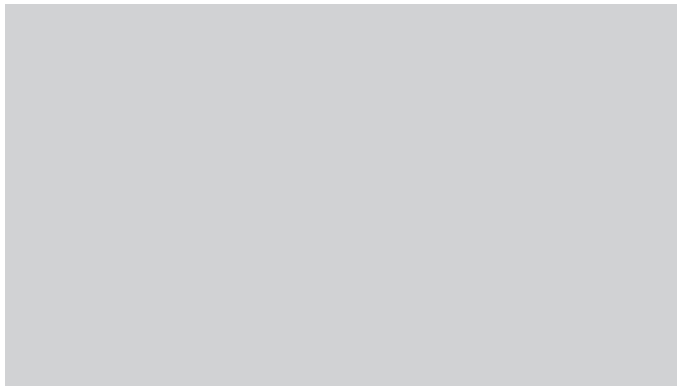
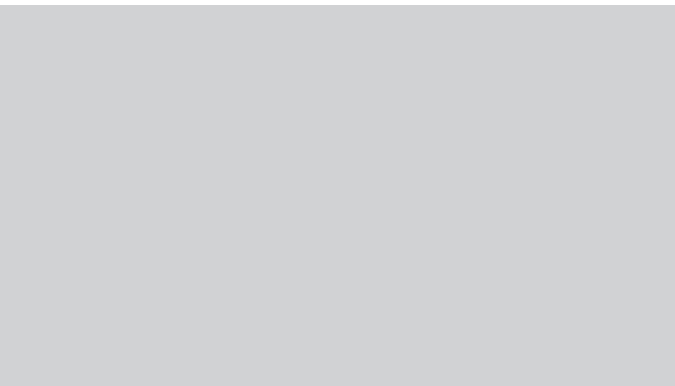
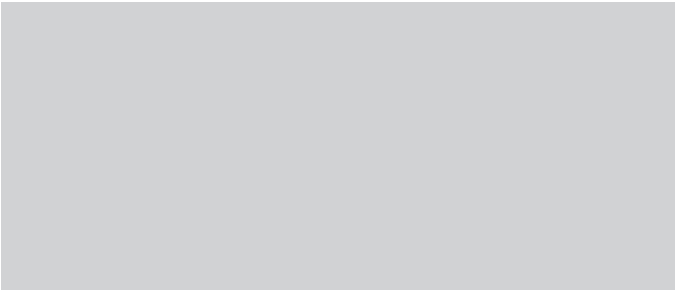
Melanie, his wife, brought Ariel out an hour before the arrival of the 3/4 Marines. As Ariel slept in her stroller, Melanie never looked away from the road that would lead her husband to her.

"I just can't wait for him to get here," she said, welling up with tears.

Melanie's wish was soon answered when the buses arrived. After a few minutes of searching and a phone call later she and her husband were reunited.

Melanie led Tack to the stroller where he picked up his daughter for the first time. He held her out in his arms, staring at her in disbelief, unable to look away.

After seven months of serving overseas, Marines of 3/4 were finally able to come home to hug their wives and see their kids, some for the first time. Oct. 17 was a memorable occasion for most of the Marines returning from deployment, but to others it was a day they would never forget.



Good eats

■ Mess halls evolve

LEGAL ASSISTANCE OFFICE

the law. Commands need to assist Marines in asserting their rights.

Per the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (15 USC 1692), debt collectors cannot contact debtors at their place of business if they know or have reason to know the employer prohibits the consumer from receiving such communication. California law under its Fair Debt Collection Practices law (Cal. Civ. Code 1788) expands debt collectors to include anyone who collects debts on behalf of himself or herself. The Marine Corps recognizes these issues in paragraph 16002(3) of the LEGADMINMAN which states "processing of complaints of indebtedness will not be extended to those

creditor on the prohibition for contacting them and make a log of the call. When a Marine discovers a violation has occurred, the Marine should send a letter via certified mail notifying the creditor of the violation and that further violations of the California Fair Debt Collection Practices law subject the creditor to a lawsuit for actual damages (if the interaction adversely affects the Marine's career) and penalties of between \$100 to \$1,000 per violation (Cal Civ. Code 1788.30). In a suit for these violations, Marines may also collect their costs, including attorney's fees, if the creditor acted in bad faith.

Contact the Legal Assistance Office at 830-6111 for more information.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

The addition of civilians was just the beginning.

“When people see food prepared in front of them, it’s more appealing,” said Edward Ferrante, Phelps Hall’s new general manager. “We eat with our eyes.”

SUDOKU SOLUTIONS										CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS									
9	5	8	1	7	6	2	4	3		MIT	NOBELS	ACRE							
3	4	7	8	2	5	6	9	1		ATK	AMULET	MOAR							
2	1	6	9	3	4	5	7	8		IST	NANO	SECONDS							
5	2	3	7	8	1	4	6	9			ASLAN	BEASTIE							
4	8	9	6	5	2	1	3	7		ADIOS		TONS	RAN						
6	7	1	3	4	9	8	2	5		BENZ	CURS	THANE							
8	3	4	2	1	7	9	5	6		CATE	UNU	IRA							
7	9	2	5	6	8	3	1	4			LONG	TIMEN	OSEE						
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										ABNER	TENT	ORES							
										MOE	CART	SUTRA							
										ONELIRA	APATHY								
										UNDI	AGNOSED	DOC							
										NILE	ONEILL	ANA							
										TEEN	SYDNEY	YEN							

AUTOMOTIVE

2001 BOMBARDIER DS650. Immaculate. Can be seen at lemon lot. \$3,000 OBO. 819-9353.

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

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

2007 CR85R HONDA. \$1,500 OBO. 366-7626

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MISC.

GOLF CLUBS. Ping Eye 2 Irons I-SW \$225. Slazenger forged blades 2-PW \$200. Assorted putters and wedges. Call 413-4015.

LAZ BOY RECLINER. Like new, no pets/smoking. Dark burgundy fabric. \$75. 385-208-8125.

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

BUNK BED WITH MATTRESSES. White metal, \$200. 366-7626

NORDICTRACK CX1000: Elliptical workout \$300 OBO. 361-3509

COLLECTIBLE SPORTS, SCI-FI CARDS: Baseball, football from mid 80's to 90's. Individual heroes, team sets or make an offer on the whole collection. Call Stephen at 567-7921.

YOUR FREE AD HERE

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

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.

WeekINPhotos

Afghanistan



CPL. JEFF DREW

Marines with Charlie Battery, 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, fire an M982 Excalibur round from an M777A Howitzer during a recent fire support mission at Fire Base Fiddlers Green, Helmand province Oct. 10. In between fire missions, the Marines continue with daily life. They also mentor their Afghan National Army counterparts and constantly rehearse their positions to guarantee their artillery rounds hit their targets when coalition forces need their help.



SGT. JUSTIN SHEMANSKI



CPL. KATHERINE M. SOLANO

The need for **SPEED**

Combat Center riders hit the track

Story and photos by Cpl. Andrew D. Thorburn
Combat Correspondent

Combat Center Marines and sailors from across southern California traveled deep into the heart of the Mojave Desert to improve their riding skills at Chuckwalla Valley Raceway, Desert Center, Calif., for a day of riding and classes Oct 15.

The event featured the Jason Pridmore's Star Motorcycle School, and was sponsored by the Combat Center's Base Safety.

This is the second time Marines and Base Safety have traveled to Chuckwalla.

"The biggest thing is control," said Jason Pridmore, the school's owner and operator of Star Motorcycle School. "The bikes now a day are so powerful, it is almost like giving a kid a gun. We have to train them and that is what we are trying to do here."

The rider instructors from both the school

and the Combat Center hope the class does more than just teach bike control, though.

"We also want them to get into the appropriate mindset that speed is not for the street. Speed is for the track," said Frank Santiago, a safety instructor with the Combat Center. "At the school, they don't want you to go fast. They want you to learn technique and maintain total control of your motorcycle."

The Marines who had participated during a previous similar event said they decided to come back again this time because of how much they learned.

"It's excellent, it's absolutely valuable for Marines who want to go fast," said Sgt. David Wong, an administrative specialist with the Wounded Warrior detachment. "Well number

See **TRACK, B4**



[Above] Sgt. David Wong, administrative specialist with the Wounded Warrior detachment, tests his limits on the turns at the Chuckwalla Valley Raceway, in Desert Center, Calif., during the Jason Pridmore Star Motorcycle School Oct. 15.



[Left] Lance Cpl. Joshua Vogel, light armored vehicle crewman, with 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, and Sgt. David Wong, administrative specialist with the Wounded Warrior detachment, gear up before driving onto the track at Chuckwalla Valley Raceway, in Desert Center, Calif., Oct. 15.



Frank Santiago, safety instructor with the Combat Center (black bike with 13) rounds a corner at Chuckwalla Valley Raceway, in Desert Center, Calif., with fellow riders using some of the body control techniques taught to them at the Jason Pridmore Star Motorcycle School Oct. 15.

[Right] Combat Center Marines load up with condiments before enjoying lunch with their co-workers during the 14th annual Chili Lunch, hosted by the fire department Oct. 14. The firefighters cooked enough chili to feed about 1,500 diners, plus 450 hot dogs ready for the grill.



CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Annual chili lunch a hot affair

CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Combat Center firefighters took a break from fighting fires to starting a few fires of their own with their famous chili during the 14th annual Chili Lunch Oct. 14.

"It's absolutely wonderful," said Assistant Chief Darlene Hull with the base fire department. "Our guys here have the best attitudes. They know going into it, it is going to be an all-day, all-week production, and they feed off the fact that everybody loves it."

The annual event has built up enough rapport throughout the years that the chili chiefs can support the whole lunch with just pre-sold tickets alone.

"I'm guessing around 1,200 to 1,500 pre-sell tickets," she said. "That is the money that supports this program, because we use it to buy all the food ingredients, hamburger, beans and tomatoes. We have enough chili to serve about 1,500,

plus about 450 hotdogs on hand."

They needed every pound of food they had to feed the steady line of personnel waiting for chili. More than 100 tickets were bought on location within the first hour of opening the doors.

"The hot chili is amazing, and it is actually hot which is good because I am a spice guy," Cpl. Bruce Bacle, legal services clerk with Staff Judge Advocate. "It is definitely a step above the rest."

The event also serves as a social gathering for many people who work together from around the Combat Center but rarely have time to mingle in a relaxed atmosphere.

"I love it, because you are working so you don't have time to socialize," said Charles Delvalle, deputy IT manager with Marine Corps Community Services. "You don't get to see other departments, and it is a real good get-together and helps us feel more like a family. That is what I think of us as, a family."

Pioneer Days



PHOTOS BY SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN

[Above] Brig. Gen. George W. Smith Jr., the Combat Center's commanding general, and his wife, Kathleen, wave to the crowd during the Pioneer Days parade in Twentynine Palms Oct. 15.

[Right] Anthony Tomassini, 2, excitedly shows off his candy to his father, Cpl. Yamil Tomassini, embark chief for 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment.





Combat Center Clubs

Excursions Enlisted Club

Friday: Social hour with food, 5 to 7 p.m. followed by DJ Gjettblaque, 8 to 11 p.m., Ladies Night
Saturday: Request Night, DJ Gjettblaque 8 to 11 p.m.
Sunday: Football coverage, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Monday: Monday Night Football coverage, 5:30 p.m.
Thursday: Social hour, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Bloodstripes NCO Club

Friday: Social hour with food, 5 to 7 p.m.
Monday: Monday Night Football coverage, 5:30 p.m.
Wednesday: Free gourmet bar food, 5 to 7 p.m.
Thursday: Social hour, 7 to 9 p.m.

Hashmarks 29 SNCO Club

Monday-Friday: Lunch from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Monday: Steak night and full menu, 4:30-7:30 p.m.
Tuesday: Social hour, 5 to 7 p.m.
Thursday: Social hour, 5 to 7 p.m.
Friday: Social Hour, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Combat Center Officers' Club

Monday: Steak night, 5 to 7:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday: All-hands lunch, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Thursday: Taco Night, 5 to 7 p.m.

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

Local Events

A Celebration of a Decade

Join the Morongo Basin Cultural Arts Council and the Hi-Desert Cultural Center as they kick off the Council's Art Tours' 10th anniversary celebration at 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 21. The gala will be at the Blak Box Theater and will honor Art Tours founders and veteran artists. Performers will provide a glimpse of "Zircon Wish" to be held the following evening. Cash bar and complimentary hor d'oeuvres will be available.

Opening Weekend Party with Zircon Circus

Presenting the aerial entertainment works of Wish and Zircon from 6-9 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 22, at 62929 Sunny Sands Dr. in Joshua Tree. The circus starts at 7 p.m. There will be an after party from 9 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Theater production of A Haunting We Will Go

The play is produced by special arrangement with the Dramatic Publishing Company and performed by the Yucca Valley High School Theater Department
When: 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, Oct. 18-22 with a matinee performance at 1 p.m. on Oct. 22.
Where: The Yucca Valley High School Multipurpose Room at 7600 Sage Ave. in Yucca Valley. Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$4 for students and will be available at the door.

Lower Desert

Chicago

The rock legends perform their hits
When: 8 p.m., Friday, Oct. 21
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Halloween Costume Ball

Radio's Mark and Brian present the annual event
When: 7 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 22
Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
49500 Seminole Dr., Cabazon
For more information call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinoresort.com>.

The Band Perry

An American country music group
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 29
Where: Agua Caliente
32-250 Bob Hope Dr., Rancho Mirage
For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DREAMWORKS PICTURES

Charlie Kenton (left), played by Hugh Jackman, gives instructions to robotic Atom while Kenton's son, Max, played by Dakota Goyo, looks on in DreamWorks Pictures' action drama "Real Steel."

Rock'em, sock'em robots the nuts 'n' bolts of futuristic father-son drama

NEIL POND
AMERICAN PROFILE

"Real Steel"

Starring Hugh Jackman & Evangeline Lilly
Directed by Shawn Levy
127 min., PG-13

It'll be difficult for anyone of a certain age to watch Disney's "Real Steel" and not think of a popular kids game from the 1960s.

Rock'em Sock'em Robots, anyone?

In the movie's not-so-distant future, the sport of boxing is obsolete. Wrestling? Too tame. What really gets the fans pumped, however, is the spectacle of two mechanical men hammering each other into scrap metal.

Unlike the pint-size, plasticized punching toys of yesteryear, these bots are beasts, 8-foot-tall slabs of remote-controlled, hi-tech hurt. Hugh Jackman plays Charlie Kenton, a washed-up boxer

now trying to eek out a living on the grungy fringes of the robot fighting circuit with his android.

Things take an unexpected—and initially unwelcome—turn for Charlie with the reappearance of his long-ago-abandoned son, Max (12-year-old Dakota Goyo), and their discovery of a broken, half-buried robot in the muddy muck of a junkyard. The new bot, Atom, may be smaller than some of the

metal monsters against which he's pitted, but he comes into the ring with a secret weapon: old-school boxing moves drilled into his data bank by Charlie.

Evangeline Lilly (Kate from TV's "Lost") plays the owner of a gym where no one comes to box anymore, which gives her character plenty of time to help Charlie with robot repair—and fend off his advances when he tries to rekindle their old flame.

The bots in "Real Steel" are high-tech, special-effect marvels, each with distinctive personalities, colorfully customized features and unique fighting styles. Boxing legend Sugar Ray Leonard helped choreograph the classic jabs, uppercuts, hooks, slips, bobs and blocks in Atom's steel-fisted arsenal.

Even though they're mute, theoretically emotionless, metallic gladiators, it's difficult not see the battling bots as somewhat human, especially when they're "injured," dented and crushed, delimbed, or even decapitated. . . and blood-like fluid slowly pools onto the mat.

But the real meat of this story is in the father-son relationship between Charlie and Max, for which the movie relies heavily on time-tested, heart-tugging Disney signature themes juiced with a familiar twist of kid-spunkiness that might reflect Steven Spielberg's participation as one of the project's 12 producers. (A sugary subplot about Max teaching Atom to hip-hop dance, however, is cuteness overkill.)

Older kids will enjoy the rousing, rock'em, sock'em action and the humor; parents will relate to the story's human foundation, cheer for Atom's "Rocky"-like ascension up through the robot-fighting ranks, and perhaps even get a little misty over the sentimental nuts and bolts that hold everything together. "Real Steel" isn't a new Disney classic, but it does have an undeniable heavy-metal charm.

Check out the official MCAGCC social media sites at:

<http://www.flickr.com/thecombatcenter>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO>

<http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter>

If you are active duty, retired military or a family member, you can place a FREE ad?

See page 9 for details and limitations

Combat Center Sports



CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Chris Longo, a defensive end with MWSS 374 Rhinos, blocks the extra point during a Commanding General's Intramural Football League game at Felix Field Wednesday. Despite the Rhinos' defensive efforts, the Bulldawgs secured victory 20-10.



PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. D.J. WU

[Above] Pitch Slapped!!! shortstop Scott Sliker keeps his eye on the ball to slam it into left field during a co-ed soft-ball game against MWSS-374 Tuesday at Felix Field. Pitch Slapped!!! came out with an early lead, but MWSS 374 came back in the late innings to take the game 16-15.

[Far left] Erin Detty-Greschaw of Pitch Slapped!!! hustles on to third base on her liner down the first base side that led to a inside-the-park homerun.



Co-ed Softball League: Week 3

Team	Wins	Losses			
1. Drama Killers	3	0	5. Spartans	1	2
2. Chicks & Sticks	2	1	6. K's Buy	1	2
3. OutKast	2	1	7. MWSS 374	1	2
4. Pitch Slapped!!!	2	1	8. Ballz & Dollz	0	3



Michael Luhm, a participant with Jason Pridmores Star Motorcycle School, rounds the corner as fast as he dares, utilizing techniques the instructors taught.

TRACK, from B1

one Marines want to go fast but they don't have the place to do it and this is the place to do it. Number two, it absolutely gives them the skill to do it. A lot of what they teach us here helps out on the street.”

“I have already been in a course with them,” Wong said. “After the first time I took the course with them, the next day I was out riding and going onto the onramp for the highway when all of a sudden the vehicle in front of me stopped. We were going 60 mph at least into a dead stop. Instead of doing what a lot of riders would do and hit the brake, I went and straightened up real quick, downshift real quick, got around.”

Before participating in this class, the riders attended additional courses aboard the Combat Center and had a wide range of experience riding on the street and tracks.

“A lot of these guys have never been to a track before, so it is something new for them,” said Frank Santiago, a safety instructor with the Combat Center. “But some of these guys are veterans and know the exhilaration of being on the track and would rather test themselves out here than anywhere else. This is a good place to test your skill and really become a better rider”

The Chuckwalla track is not built for speed but for handling practice.

“It’s not a very fast track, but it is a technical track, what I mean by that is a lot of bank, decreasing radius corners and blind corners,” Santiago said. “You are really going to get your skills pushed a little more and more each time. It is an outstanding track for the riders who are trying to develop what they know.”

For more information on military motorcycle courses or upcoming classes call 830-6154.



PHOTOS BY CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Staff Sgt. Shawn Williams, wire chief with the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, makes last minute modifications to his chain before being allowed onto the Chuckwalla Valley Raceway, in Desert Center, Calif., during the Jason Pridmore Star Motorcycle School Saturday.



[Above] Thomas Montano, a general instructor with the Jason Pridmore Star Motorcycle School, inspects motorcycles before allowing them on the Chuckwalla Valley Raceway.



Riders ride in groups as they practice techniques and improved their confidence.



[Right] Jason Pridmore, owner and operator of Star Motorcycle School, explains the goals of his school to Marines and civilians during the first class of the day.