

Integrator

UNLEASHED

Integrator
v.
Shadow

RQ21A Integrator

- Length: 7.2 feet
- Weight: 75 pounds
- Wing span: 7.2 feet
- Payload capacity: 37.5 pounds
- Propulsion: 8hp advanced reciprocating engine
- Cruise speed: 55 knots
- Max altitude: >15,000 feet
- Endurance: 24 hours
- Max speed: 80+ knots



AAI RQ-7 Shadow

- Length: 11.2 feet
- Weight: 185 pounds
- Wing span: 14 feet
- Payload capacity: 45-80 pounds
- Propulsion: 38hp Wankel UAV 741
- Cruise speed: 90 knots
- Max altitude: 15,000 feet
- Endurance: 6 hours
- Max speed: 117.3 knots



CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

A new unmanned aerial vehicle, the Integrator, is recovered using a mobile catcher wire instead of the traditional landing strip a sneak preview for Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadrons 2 and 3 at the VMU-3 airfield Jan. 22.

Corps adopts state-of-the-art unmanned aerial vehicle

Lance Cpl. Ali Azimi
Combat Correspondent

From the time of spears and arrows to modern warfare today, as technology has progressed so has the way we fight. Unmanned aerial vehicles give our troops an extra edge on the battlefield.

"It's important for the guys on the ground to be able to see over that wall that they're about to go into and it keeps us from using manned vehicles and risking lives," said Staff Sgt. Chad Olsen, squadron weapons and tactical instructor, VMU-2. "It's the eyes in the sky"

The Naval Air Systems Command demonstrated the next model UAV to be incorporated into the Marine Corps at the Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3 airfield here Jan. 22.

Officials said they plan to have the RQ21A Small Tactical Unmanned Aerial System, better known as the Integrator, in production for the Marine Corps by fiscal year 2013.

It flew for the first time in a tactical environment in front of VMU-2 and VMU-3, two of its future operators.

The VMU-2 Marines, based out of Marine Corps Air

See UAV, A5



CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

A new unmanned aerial vehicle, the Integrator, is launched during a sneak preview for Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadrons 2 and 3 at the VMU-3 airfield Jan. 22.

'First Team' starts EMV

■ 1/7 begins pre-deployment workup

LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines and sailors with Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, attacked range 220 during the Clear, Hold, Build exercise in their evolution of Enhanced Mojave Viper Monday.

The platoons took turns clearing out sections of the Combined Arms Military Operations on Urban Terrain facility.

The company rolled in with some help from a couple of tanks from Company D, 1st Tank Battalion. Two tanks led the amphibious assault vehicles into CAMOUT.

The operation of CHB-1 has service members navigate and clear an area full of role players acting as insurgents, simulated improvise explosive devices and small arms fire.

It was Pfc. Avory Schanfelter's first time out in EMV. He said he didn't know what to expect.

"I knew it was going to be hectic and I was shocked at first," said Schanfelter, infantryman, Co. C, 1/7. "It really gets your blood pumping. I just did what I was told, and I think the exercise went well."

CHB-1 is a three-day exercise that kicks off the 30-day evolution of EMV. The exercise tests the units' abilities to work together in an environment that will be similar to what they would encounter while deployed to Afghanistan.

"When the exercise started, it hit us hard," said Lance Cpl. Jonathan Lambert, squad automatic weapon gunner, Co. C, 1/7. "But we adapted, and I think we did well to regroup."

The Marines get their evaluation notes from the range personnel on their performance after each run of the course.

With this step of EMV behind them, Co. C, 1/7, will move onto the next step of EMV, live fire platoon exercise at Range 410.

"I just can't wait to get over there to Afghanistan and put this training to good use," Lambert said.

"I knew it was going to be hectic, and I was shocked at first. It really gets your blood pumping."

— Pfc. Avory Schanfelter



See more photos, page A5

LANCE CPL. LAUREN KURKIMILIS

Marines with Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, prepare to rush during the Clear, Hold, Build 1 stage of their Enhanced Mojave Viper cycle Monday.

This Week in Combat Center History



Reprinted from the Observation Post dated January 27, 1967, Vol. 11, No. 5

Training Session Underway Here For 605 Reservists

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Marine Corps reserve units began filtering into MCB Twentynine Palms last week in preparation for their annual two-week combat training and refresher course.¹

The Marine reservists,² 605 in all, belong to reserve units of the 4th LAAM Battalion (Light Anti-aircraft Missile), under the command of Lt. Col. D. E. Erway.

Troops from the eight reserve units will devote most of their training period to anti-air warfare exercises, including voice and digital data processes for transmitting information from the anti-warfare information center to the Battery control centers.

Besides the anti-warfare exercises, the Marine reservists will undergo training in the M-60 machinegun, hand grenades, NBC (Nuclear-Biological-Chemical) warfare, and physical conditioning.³

The eight reserve units at the 29 Palms Base are "A" and "D" Batteries from Pasadena, Calif., "B" and "C" Batteries from San Jose, Calif., H&S Battery from Fresno, Calif., Comm. Battery from Chicago, Ill., 10th Motor Transport from Philadelphia, Pa., and 2nd Motor transport from Wyoming, Pa.⁴

FOOTNOTES

(1) Except during times when units are activated and mobilized, reserve Marines generally train one weekend per month and two weeks per year.

(2) There are approximately 40,000 Marine reservist and 187 Reserve Training Centers throughout the United States.

(3) Reserve Marines are equipped and trained to the same standards as active Marine forces.

(4) 4th LAAM Battalion was deactivated in October 1997. Companies from 2nd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, 4th Landing Support Battalion, 2nd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment and Headquarters Battery, 14th Marine Regiment currently occupy the Reserve Training Centers at these locations.

DMV updates children's safety seat law

JEAN SHIOMOTO

COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS DIVISION

The Department of Motor Vehicles is in the process of updating existing Information Technology systems, which will delay the completion of programming for new legislation.

The purpose of the update is to notify the courts of legislative changes to California's Child Passenger Safety Seat Law and provide specific instructions regarding the new provisions of California Vehicle Code (CVC) §27363(f).

Effective January 1, 2012, new legislation (SB 929) modifies California's Child Passenger Safety Seat Law, to require children to ride in either a car seat or booster seat until the age of 8, or until they reach a height of 4'9".

The legislation also adds a new citable section, CVC §27363(f), which prohibits transporting a child in a rear-facing child passenger restraint system in the front seat of a vehicle with an active front passenger airbag. DMV must modify existing programming to add CVC §27363(f) to the California Violation Sections Reporting Code Table Track.

Until further notice, mail a hardcopy Abstract of Conviction (DL 106) or Release Certificate (DL 106R) form denoting the CVC §27363(f) conviction to the Abstract Processing Unit (APU) in DMV Headquarters.

Before sending the hardcopy abstract to APU for the violation of CVC §27363(f), continue to follow current

procedures and report all other sections violated via an electronic DL 106. DMV will provide notice once programming is completed that will allow the courts to submit abstracts for violations of CVC §27363(f) electronically.

Questions regarding the information contained in this memo or changes to the e-mail distribution list may be directed to the Justice and Government Liaison Branch at (916) 657-7732 or via e-mail at jagcourt@dmv.ca.gov.

ADDRESS

To mail a hardcopy Abstract of Conviction (DL 106) or Release Certificate (DL 106R) form denoting the CVC §27363(f) conviction to the Abstract Processing Unit:

Department of Motor Vehicles
Abstract Processing Unit
PO BOX 942890
Mail Station J-232
Sacramento, California
92290-0001

Hot Topics

BINGO

The O'Club will be hosting a fun night out of Guys & Dolls Bingo tonight. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at the door. This event is open to all hands from 6 to 9 p.m.

KICKBALL TOURNAMENT

There will be a Kickball Tournament Feb. 7-9 at Felix Field from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Teams must consist of 11 players. There will be a mandatory coaches meeting February 1 at noon, Bldg. 1341. This event is open to active duty, civilian, family members, contractors and DoD employees. Contact Marine Corps Community Services sports department at 830-4092 for more information.

DODGEBALL SEASON

It's time again for dodgeball. The season will be held every Wednesday evening at the East Gym from Feb. 8 to April 11. Deadline to register is Feb. 1 at 3 p.m. at the East Gym. The league is open to active duty, family members, and NAF/DoD employees. For more information, call 830-4092.

WINTER SCRAMBLE

The Desert Winds Golf Course will be hosting the Winter Scramble January 27 at 9 a.m. the game is a four-person scramble. The tournament costs \$30 per person or \$5 for members. Door prizes and prizes for winners will be given. For more information call 830-6132.



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.

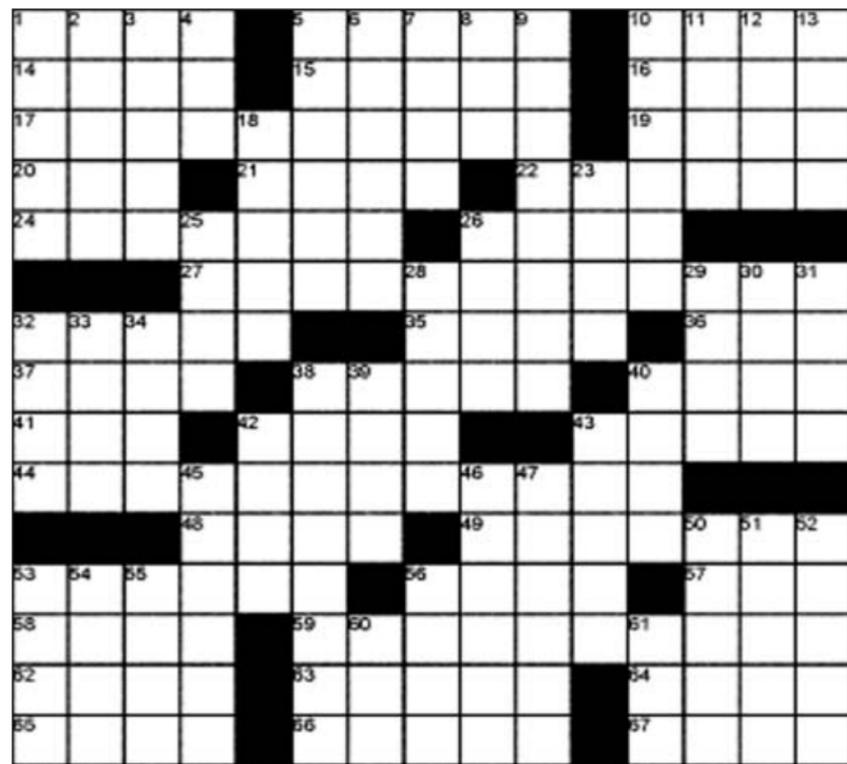
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CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2011 HOMETOWN CONTENT

YABBA DABBA DO!

[Puzzle solutions on A7]



ACROSS

1. Kind of radio
5. Mgmt.
10. Gangster Diamond
14. Zhivago's love
15. Recto's opposite
16. Emmy winner Falco
17. TV figure with a "neighborhood"
19. Strip in the Mideast
20. Block or cannon ender
21. Totally blown away
22. Woolly Andeans
24. Article supplement
26. Dismiss unceremoniously
27. 1960 Olympics track star
32. Risk a ticket
35. Add some booze to
36. Project completion?
37. Rolls of bills
38. Mower's path
40. Bit of perspiration
41. He was thrice the champ
42. Bust's opposite
43. Loggins or G
44. Big name in cake mix

DOWN

1. Sport Italian cars, for short
2. ___ Gras
3. Pioneering DJ Alan
4. Like Wonderland's hatter
5. Frank admission
6. Sterilize
7. Loquacious TV horse
8. Leb. neighbor
9. One exhibiting competence
10. Smooth musically
11. Dutch cheese town
12. City near the Sphinx
13. Salty septet
18. Enthusiastic, and then some
23. Rich deposit
25. Merino mamas
26. Fresh kid
28. Site of Crockett's last stand
29. Bank holding
30. Lay out in advance
31. Lamarr of Hollywood

32. Ear cleaner

33. White as a sheet
34. Work in the cutting room
38. Friendly at parties
39. Popular Microsoft product
40. Convy or Parks
42. Free rides at the tourney
43. "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" Author Ken
45. War ender
46. Community Chest kin
47. Seoul man
50. "I Believe" singer Frankie
51. Like a North Pole drudge
52. Like an oboe's sound
53. "Toodles-oo!"
54. Leprechaun's turf
55. Tear apart
56. Speaker in Cooperstown
60. Two-?tim loser to DDE
61. Gave grub to

OBSERVATION POST

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WHAT I'VE LEARNED

THE NERD

Staff Sgt. Matt Heen

Tuba Player, Combat Center Band
34, Williston, North Dakota

INTERVIEWED AND
PHOTOGRAPHED BY

SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN

Dec. 16, 2011

> **I like video games.** I mostly play on computers. I never got into consol stuff.

> **I can't do it on a controller.** Give me a mouse and a keyboard and I can play those games.

> **I like RPG. Balder's Gate** and Balder's Gate II were the big ones. Those were based on Dungeons and Dragons. I imagine it stemmed from how much I like to read.

> **The one I'm playing now** is Elder Scrolls.

> **I didn't get into Star Trek** with the first series. Star Wars, now that was my first love.

> **I have no ego.**

> **I grew up in a small town** in North Dakota. It's not saying much though. 1,200 people. Pretty big for North Dakota.

> **My grandparents still live there** on the farm. I did my time there, working on the farm.

> **I'm from an A-typical family.** Mom stayed home. Dad went to work. I didn't realize how uncommon that it is. We've had people call us The Beavers, which I don't like.

> **The town's changing.** There's oil there now.

> **That's all I knew** growing up, that town.

> **My parents had to come up** with my name last minute because nobody knew twins were coming.

> **My mom said,** "Doctor, I told you so." But they thought my heartbeat was an echo. We were tiny, and had no lung development.

> **I've always been told my whole life** we're fraternal. But very few people can tell us apart.

> **When I was a kid, my house** was being built. I fell and hit a nail, so now I have this dent. The only way our grandmother could tell us apart was to flip up our bangs. If there was a dent, it was Matt.

> **My brother and I were** never good at sports. I still can't hit a ball.

> **I did wrestling. I was kind** of shoehorned into that. We were starting to get bigger then. It was a great way to get out aggression.

> **I did football until ninth grade,** until I realized I'm pretty bad at this.

> **He was the better wrestler, definitely.** Third in the state. I was the better musician.

> **It was the thing to do** in fifth grade, be in band. I realized a couple of years later I was terrible at trumpet.

> **I mean, I can play polka.** But then again, most people from North Dakota do.

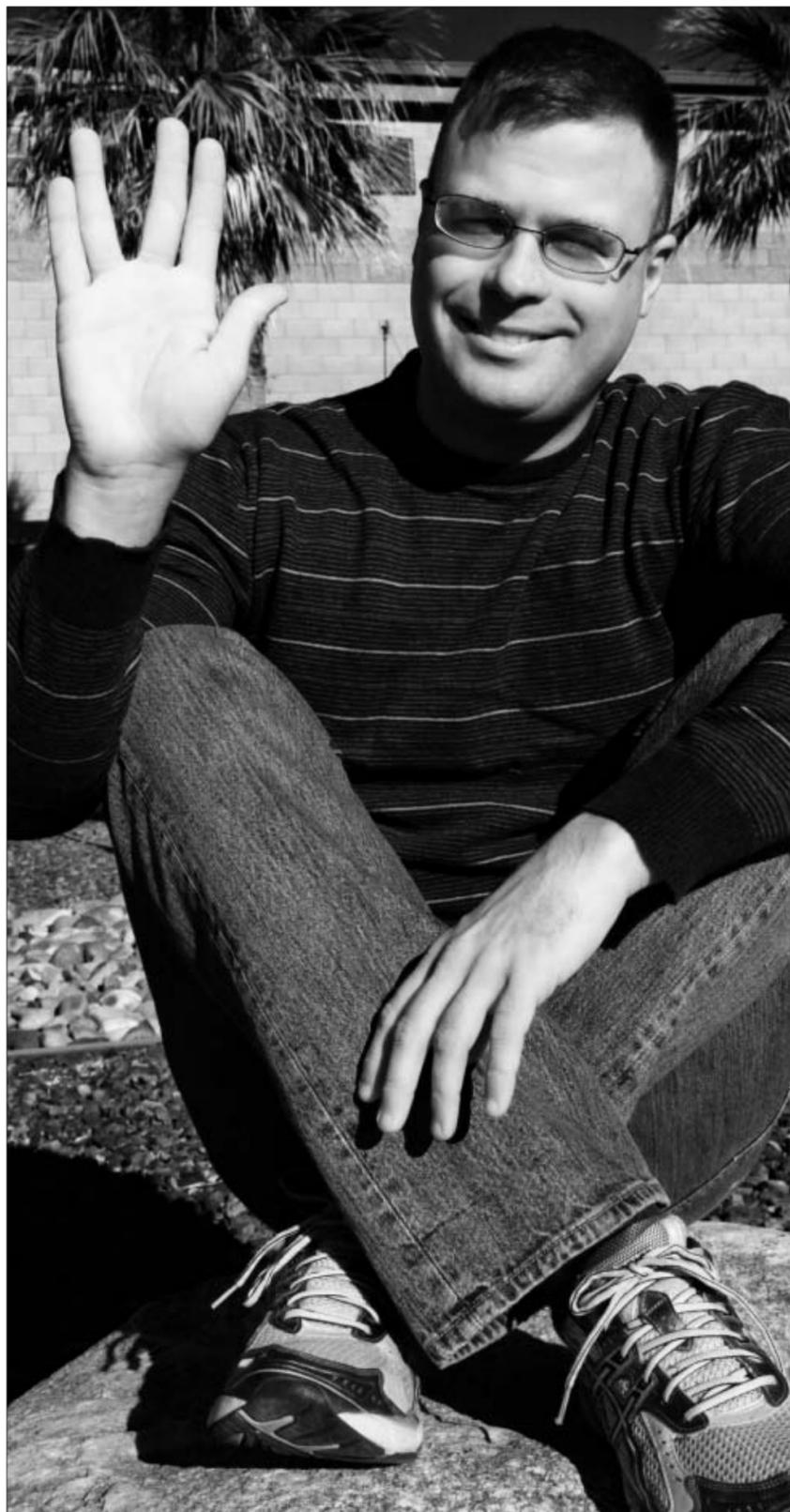
> **My twin brother and I were** big readers. The first big novel I read was The Hobbit in third or fourth grade.

> **I went to college first. I was going** to be a music teacher. Man, was I sick of school by then.

> **I love to travel. I was lucky** enough to spend time in Italy with the NATO band. We went to Australia, into the Alps, north of Hamburg. I got to visit England a few times.

> **It's all about if you're in a place,** get out and see what you can. Go to the town's local bar and get a feel for the area.

> **No matter where you go** in the world, there is always an Irish pub.



What do you need to file your tax return?

CAPT. SHANNON MAWSON

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

There are several important documents that clients need to get ready to file taxes. All of the following documents are needed for yourself, a spouse, and all children or relatives who may be claimed as a dependant on your tax return:

- W-2.

- Social Security Card. If a dependant or spouse does not have a social security card and they are not eligible to obtain one, they must have an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number issued by the IRS. A few examples of a person who may need to obtain an ITIN are: a nonresident alien required to file a U.S.

tax return, a U.S. resident alien filing a U.S. tax return, a dependent or spouse of a U.S. citizen/resident alien, or a dependent or spouse of a nonresident alien visa holder. To apply for an ITIN, go to: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw7.pdf>

- 1099-R. This is a document you will receive if you have distributions from pensions, annuities, IRAs, insurance contracts, profit-sharing plans and/or retirement plans (like your Thrift Savings Plan)

- W2-G. This is a document you receive from a casino or similar establishment which will report your gambling winnings for that tax year.

- Power of attorney. You need this if

you will be filing taxes on behalf of an individual, or if you are filing jointly with a spouse and your spouse is not present.

- Voided check with your bank routing and checking account information. This is needed to direct deposit your return.

Make copies of these documents, and place the originals in a folder for your personal records. Give the copies to your tax preparer.

Starting Jan. 24, eligible service members, retirees and dependants can file their 2011 taxes at the installation's Tax Center at Building 1428, Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 8 p.m. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 830-4TAX.

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

You Tube

The Combat Center has its own YouTube channel. Find it at

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



CHRISSY CUTTITA

Gunnery Sgt. Matthew Smith, a maintainer with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 501, marshals in the first Marine variant F-35B Lightning II joint strike fighter to arrive at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., Jan. 11.

Corps gets new birds

■ Commandant announces F-35B fighter jet off probation

SAMUEL KING
EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. — A resolution to be even more expeditionary will be met this year, now that Marines here received their first two F-35B Lightning II variants of DOD's fifth generation fighter, Jan. 11.

At the 33rd Fighter Wing, Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 501 is the home for the new aircraft where its "Warlords," pilots and maintainers, reside with a team of other professionals in preparation to deploy out anywhere in the world for the nation's defense.

"The wing gaining another variant of the F-35 marks a significant step in the stand up of the F-35 pilot and maintenance training here," said Air Force Col. Andrew Toth, commander, 33rd Fighter Wing. "The integration of the F-35B/C strike fighters will provide dominant, multi-role, fifth generation capabilities needed across the full spectrum of combat operations to deter potential adversaries."

Maj. Joseph Bachmann, the wing's first F-35 pilot, ferried the first of his service's two joint strike fighter variants from Lockheed Martin Headquarters in Fort Worth, Texas. Two F-18 escorts from the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing escorted the F-35 to represent the wing, the Warlords' report for flying operations.

"The Marine Corps has to be ready to fight across the spectrum of war; a force that is most ready when the nation is least ready. The F-35B gives us the capability to do just that," said Maj. Gen. Jon M. Davis, commanding general, 2nd MAW.

With the latest addition to the fleet, the 33rd FW has a total of eight joint strike fighters with Air Force variants arriving last summer. Three distinct variants of the F-35 will replace the A-10 and F-16 for the Air Force, the F/A-18 for the Navy, the F/A-18 and AV-B Harrier for the Marines and a variety of fighters for at least nine other countries.

"The STOVL capability of the F-35B will enable us to deploy with the Marine Air-Ground Task Force and ensure these fifth-generation capabilities are available when needed," said Air Force Lt. Col. James B. Wellons, commanding officer, VMFAT-501. "Our mission is to conduct F-35B operations in coordination with our joint and coalition partners at Eglin Air Force Base in order to attain our annual pilot training requirement."

Warlords, like Air Force and future Navy flying squadrons, will be qualified to operate on their service's variant of the F-35 via the certifications received at the 33rd FW's Academic Training Center. Each military branch has a separate training chain of command at the "schoolhouse," but members are collocated to provide DOD the best environment for future joint operations.

Like their flying squadron counterparts in the 33rd FW, Warlords will honor their unit's history. The Marine fighting fleet timeline began in the 1950s with FJ-3 Fury, continued with the F-4 Phantom and a decade of flying F/A-18 Hornets until 1997. They reactivated and redesignated to VMFAT-501 in April 2010 keeping their squadron motto, "VINI-VICI," interpreted to read, "I came, I conquered."

The Marine squadron at Eglin is scheduled to receive five more F-35Bs this year and continue joint strike fighter maintenance with their new variant.

367-3577 For Advertising

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4	8	6	7	2	1	5	3	9
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LANCE CPL. LAUREN KURKIMILIS



LANCE CPL. LAUREN KURKIMILIS



LANCE CPL. D.J. WU



LANCE CPL. D.J. WU

1. Marines with Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, provide cover after they clear a lane during the Clear, Hold, Build 1 stage of their Enhanced Mojave Viper cycle Monday. **2.** Marines and an improvised explosive device dog prepare to take cover in building after rushing across a hot zone. **3.** A light armored vehicle is hit by simulated IED as the convoy approaches the outskirts of the Combined Arms Military Operations on Urban Terrain facility before occupying the town. **4.** A fire team provides suppressing fire for Marines below from the roof of a building they cleared moments before.

UAV, from A1

Station Cherry Point, N.C., Combat Center in support of Enhanced Mojave Viper. They got an unexpected treat when they found out the demonstration would take place on the same airfield they were operating on.

"We knew there'd be another UAV out here, but we didn't expect it to be the Integrator," said Olsen.

Coincidentally, the AAI RQ-7 Shadow, one of the current UAVs in operation, was also scheduled to run exercises alongside the Integrator, highlighting the crafts' differences even more.

Visually, the Integrator is sleeker and features a flattened tail, versus the upward bent tail of the shadow.

"It's awesome," said Cpl. Juan Reyes, field radio operator, VMU-2, after seeing the Integrator for the first time. "It's smaller and more tactical."

The Shadow also requires a longer launching pad and creates a noticeably louder noise, while the Integrator's launching pad is nearly half the size of the Shadow's and the noise more muffled.

But what sets the Integrator apart from most UAVs is not the launch, it's the recovery. "The biggest thing is we're not tied to the

runway like previous tactical unmanned aerial systems," said John F. Parks, deputy assistant program manager of logistics, PMA 263, NAVAIR.

The Integrator's retrieval system combines the use of global positioning systems with the high tension cables.

The specially-made cable hangs from a 54-foot-tall receiver, attached at each end, with a differential GPS pad located directly below it. The UAV operator lines up Integrator's GPS with the one on the ground. As the two sync, the wing hooks onto the rope and comes to a complete stop approximately 20feet from the ground.

The Integrator's accelerometer senses the loss of forward momentum and shuts off the engine. The aircraft is lowered down by on a pulley system and disconnected from the cable.

Using the Integrator of landing will change the role of VMUs on naval ships. The Shadow can't be recovered on ships because it could not land on the moving vessel. The Integrator will make that extra mobility possible.

"It's going to be an amazing capability for us with its size and being able to be deployed with the MEUs and flown off of ships," Olsen said. "It's going to expand our abilities exponentially."



CPL ANDREW D. THORBURN

Field service representatives from In Situ and Boeing prepare the catcher for the military's newest unmanned aerial vehicle, the Integrator, at VMU-3's airfield Jan. 22. Officials said they plan to have the Integrator, in production for the Marine Corps by fiscal year 2013.

Week **IN** Photos

Air Operations



CPL. MICHAEL PETERSHEIM

[Above] MV-22 Ospreys with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron VMM-261, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, fly over Farmville Municipal Airport in Virginia during a simulated airfield seizure Jan. 14. The Ospreys were used to insert a company sized force from Camp Lejeune, N.C., onto the airfield to secure it as part of the 24th MEU's Realistic Urban Training exercise, scheduled from Jan. 5-20.



LANCE CPL. MIKE GRANAHAN

[Right] A CH-47 Chinook helicopter slows to 10 knots while members of the Singapore Armed Forces Naval Diving Unit conduct helocast training with U.S. Marines Jan. 12 during Exercise Sandfisher off the coast of Singapore.

[Bottom] Sgt. Donald Christensen, explosive ordnance disposal technician with Company C., Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, moves into position as helicopters prepare to land Jan. 12.



LANCE CPL. VERNON T. MEEKINS



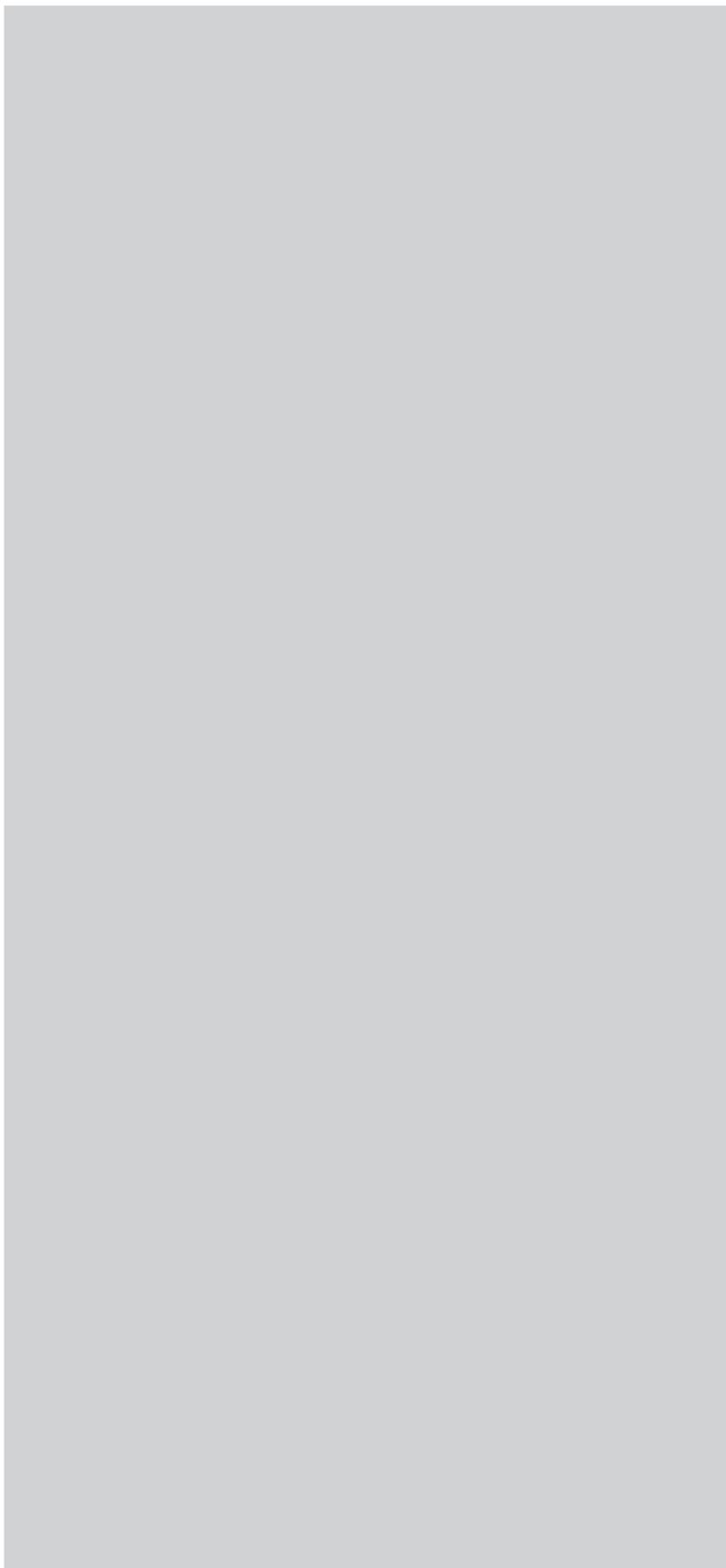
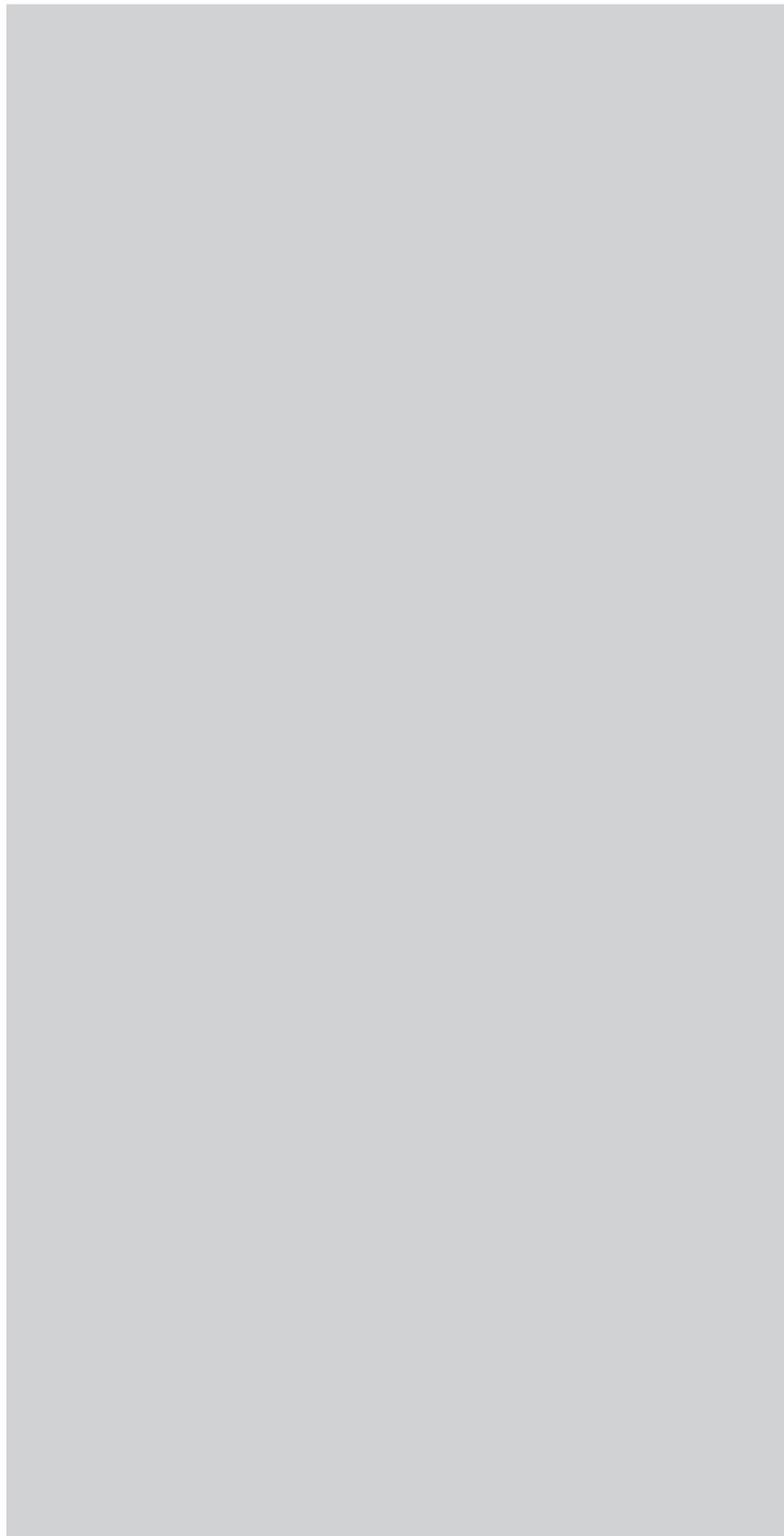
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The Combat Center has its own YouTube channel. Find it at

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



Athlete of the Year

JEANETTE

HOGAN

SUPERWOMAN

Baller

Mother Teacher

Marine

BY CPL. SARAH DIETZ

PHOTOGRAPH BY SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN

No one would call Staff Sgt. Jeanette Hogan a still woman. Laidback, sure. Calm, maybe. Friendly, absolutely. Personable, only if you make your dental appointments on time. But not still.

She is a mom, a Marine, a basketball player, a baseball player, a football player, a mentor, a leader and an easy interview for reporters. She is bubbly and energetic and laughs a lot. But she is not still.

She is always on the move. Marine during the day, wife in evenings, mother at all times and superstar athlete at basketball tournaments on the weekends.

"I started with track in 3rd grade, moved on to little league baseball, and my coach

introduced me to basketball," Hogan said. "It was game over from there."

Hogan's love for athletics started early in life. Her priorities took precedence, however, and sports had to be put on a back-burner to take care of her family.

Hogan grew up in a rural area of Newport, R.I., and was the seventh of 13 children. Being the middle child definitely had its pressures. Hogan was caught dead center in between being an example to the younger six while still learning from the older six and finding herself somewhere along the way.

"It has its crazy moments," said Hogan, who serves as the base's dental liaison. "A lot of sibling rivalry."

Her older sister Catherine taught her

See **ATHLETE**, B6





Liberty Call

Matt Damon follows animal instincts in family friendly comedy-drama



COURTESY PHOTO

Struggling as a new widowed father with a difficult teenage son and trying to be both mom and dad to his precocious daughter, Benjamin Mee, played by Matt Damon, does what any mourning, overwhelmed single parent adrift in a career crisis would do. "We bought a zoo!"

NEIL POND *AMERICAN PROFILE*

"We Bought a Zoo"

Starring Matt Damon and Scarlett Johansson
Directed by Cameron Crowe
124 min., PG-13

If you're a half hour into this movie and forget its title, don't worry. You'll be reminded each of the three times someone says...

"We bought a zoo!"

It's loosely based on a true story with Matt Damon in the role of Benjamin Mee, a journalist whose creative juices dried up after his wife's death from an unspecified condition (in the book on which the movie is based, it's brain cancer).

Struggling with a difficult teenage son (Colin Ford, who plays young Sam Winchester on TV's "Supernatural"),

uninterested in the sexy sympathies of single women who tempt him with homemade lasagna, and trying to be both mom and dad to his precocious daughter (7-year-old Maggie Elizabeth Jones), Mee does what any mourning, overwhelmed single parent adrift in a career crisis would do.

"We bought a zoo!" as his daughter helpfully explains to Mee's disapproving older brother (Thomas Hayden Church), who dryly advises his recently widowed little bro to "travel the stages of grief, but stop before zebras are involved."

Mee doesn't listen, of course. He snatches up the rundown zoo lock, stock and barrel, including its motley crew of idealistic, workaholic staffers, most notably a lovely zookeeper (Scarlett Johansson) and her teenage

niece (Elle Fanning).

It's a just a matter of time before sparks fly, love blooms, animals escape, the bank account runs dry and a zoo inspector threatens to shut the whole place down.

Director Cameron Crowe was once Hollywood's edgy wonder boy, a former star "Rolling Stone" reporter who made a few terrific, pop-culturally iconic movies ("Say Anything," "Jerry McGuire," "Almost Famous" and "Vanilla Sky"), one self-indulgent stinker ("Elizabethtown") and a handful of rock docs. "We Bought a Zoo" is his first foray into the world of family entertainment, more or less. (Parents, be prepared to hear a couple of words you might not use around the Sunday roast beef.)

And like a zoo, this movie has a little something for practically every cus-

tomers' taste: critters, chuckles, an adorably cute kid, romance in the rain, heart-tugging flashbacks and themes of finding purpose, being brave, moving on and working to make dreams become reality.

But it's also ponderously heavy on contrivance, schmaltz and assorted gooey zoo-ey hokey, with heated dramatic showdowns that immediately evaporate into thin air, one-dimensional stock characters, and a soundtrack of FM '70s rock classics that seem like leftovers from one of Crowe's other movies...or maybe one of his "Rolling Stone" cover stories.

But hey, isn't that little monkey a hoot? Look at the baby peacocks! How'd the grizzly bear get out?! Aww, that old tiger looks sad... "We bought a zoo!"

Combat Center Clubs

Excursions Enlisted Club

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

Bloodstripes NCO Club

Friday: Social Hour with food, 5 - 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 - 9 p.m.

Hashmarks 29 SNCO Club

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

Combat Center Officers' Club

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

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

Local Events

Jake's Women

When: Every Friday & Saturday until February 11 at 7 p.m., and a Sunday Matinee Feb. 5
Where: Theatre 29
736377 Sullivan Rd., Twentynine Palms, Calif.
For tickets and information call 316-4151 or visit <http://www.theatre29.org>

Rick Barton's "Continental"

Former Drop Kick Murphy legend with son
When: Friday, Jan. 27 9 p.m.
Where: Pappy and Harriet's
53688 Pioneer Town Road, Pioneer Town, Calif.
For more information visit <http://www.pappyandharriets.com>

Free Line Dance Lessons

Learn to dance to traditional country music
When: 5 - 9 p.m., every Sunday
Where: Willie Boy's Saloon and Dance Hall
50048 29 Palms Hwy, Morongo Valley, Calif.
For more information, call 363-3343.

Lower Desert

Easton Corbin

Live music performance from the country music star
When: 9 p.m., Friday, Jan. 27
Where: Agua Caliente
32-250 Bob Hope Dr., Rancho Mirage
For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Joss Stone & Dave Stewart

Live music performance
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 11
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Hiroshima

Live music performance of jazz fusion
When: 8p.m., Saturday, Jan. 28
Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon, Calif.
For more information call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinosort.com>.

Frank Caliendao

Live comedy
When: 9 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 28
Where: Spotlight 29 Casino Resort
46-200 Harrison Place, Coachella, Calif.
For more information call 866-377-6829 or visit <http://www.spotlight29.com>.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Jan. 27

6 p.m. - The Muppets, Rated PG
9 p.m. - Hugo, Rated PG
Midnight - New Year's Eve, Rated PG-13

Saturday, Jan. 28

11 a.m. - Free Matinee Alvin & the Chipmunks, Rated PG
2 p.m. - Alvin & the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked, Rated G
6 p.m. - Sherlock Holmes, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. - The Sitter, Rated R

Sunday, Jan. 29

2 p.m. - The Adventures of Tin-Tin, Rated PG
6 p.m. - Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol, PG-13
9 p.m. - Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol, PG-13

Monday, Jan. 30

7 p.m. - Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows, Rated PG-13

Tuesday, Jan. 31

7 p.m. - Hugo, Rated PG

Wednesday, Feb. 1

7 p.m. - The Muppets, Rated PG

Thursday, Feb. 2

7 p.m. - Arthur Christmas, Rated PG

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

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ATHLETE, from B1

about the basics – how to wear makeup, how to drive. But it's her mother who she credits as her biggest influence.

"She is a single parent with 13 kids," Hogan said. "She worked jobs to support us. When we were old enough, we all worked too. Mom has always been my role model."

Now a mom with two children of her own, Hogan said growing up with so many siblings prepared her for her own motherhood.

Hogan also introduced her brothers and sisters to sports during the many hours she helped her mother by babysitting her siblings.

"I went to the park with them so they were always there when I played. [Taking care of them] is what made me a good parent today," she said.

Hogan moved in with Catherine in Virginia after high school to help her while Catherine's Marine husband was deployed with the Navy. When he returned, Hogan moved back to Rhode Island in 1997, and walked into the recruiter's office.

"I grew up tough," Hogan said. "My hometown was a Navy town, and I wanted to do something better."

"My sister's ex was a big influence in me joining," Hogan added. "When I was a kid, he used to make me and my brother do jumping jacks and wall-sits when we got in trouble."

Hogan enlisted as a field radio operator. Her first assignment was with 8th Communications Battalion at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., where she met her husband Damon. The two married in 1999. Damon left the Corps

after his first enlistment, and Hogan continued her service.

"It became a part of me," she said. "Some people join and go back home. I didn't have anything to go home to."

During her years spent at Camp Lejeune, she was actively involved in the base's women's basketball team.

She fit the seasons she played in between deployments to Norway, Greece and Haiti, and two tours in Iraq.

"My favorite deployment was Haiti," Hogan said. "It's a third world country, so it wasn't spectacular, but the people welcomed us."

Hogan's sports career hit a wall when she was faced with two foot surgeries and a recovery period that lasted from 2006 to 2008.

"It was discouraging," she said. "I didn't think I would ever play again. You just have to keep positive and surround yourself with positive people. If you think negative, you're never going to get better."

"It was one of my goals, get better and stronger to play," she added. "It felt good [coming back], I could run the PFT, CFT and play basketball again."

Hogan started slowly, building up her strength, endurance and agility. She re-entered the competition arena in 2008 as a force to be reckoned with.

Now, she is a key player on the installation's women's varsity basketball team. She plays on the intramural softball, volleyball and co-ed flag football teams during the off-season.

With everything going on in her life, Hogan's at the top of her game. She gets her time on the court, and her family is right there cheering her on. And she said that's all she needs.

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