



President Barack Obama  
44th President of the United States



## THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

“I believe we can seize this future together, because we are not as divided as our politics suggest; we’re not as cynical as the pundits believe; we are greater than the sum of our individual ambitions; and we remain more than a collection of red states and blue states.

We are, and forever will be, the United States of America.

And together, with your help, and God’s grace, we will continue our journey forward, and

remind the world just why it is that we live in the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you, America. God bless you.

God bless these United States.”

## Disaster Relief

### Marines help save 14 trapped New Yorkers

**Cpl. Michael Ito**  
Marine Forces Reserve

NEW ORLEANS, — Winds, close to 80 mph, whipped the 14-foot floodwaters through the streets of New York the night of Oct. 29 as Hurricane Sandy bore down on the city. During the height of the storm, a detective from the New York Police Department approached the duty noncommissioned officer of 6th Communications Battalion, 4th Marine Logistics Group in Brooklyn, N.Y., and requested assistance for a rescue operation.

A transformer in the Queens neighborhood of Rockaway Beach burst, triggering a house fire that soon spread to adjacent buildings. Because of the fire and the floodwaters, many residents were trapped.

First responders attempted to help stranded residents, but they were also trapped, bringing the number of those marooned to 14. The water was too deep for the emergency

“The conditions were dangerous; some first responders had already been trapped. But the Marines went out and performed. They knew they were saving peoples’ lives.”

— Lt. Col. Richard Bordonaro

services units, so the NYPD called on the Reserve Marines for support.

“We were just checking (our training center) for damage because the storm was getting pretty bad,” said Sgt. Jorge Negron, a ground radio repairman with 6th Communications Battalion. “The police showed up at the gate and, after getting approval, there was no hesitation. It was just ‘yeah, of course we’ll help.’”

Lt. Col. Richard Bordonaro, Inspector-Instructor for the 6th Communications Battalion, authorized the use of two 7-ton trucks, as well as the service of three Marines and one Navy corpsman, to conduct rescue assistance under the authority of the Defense Support of Civil Authorities directive.

Sgts. Allan Donaire, Michael Roy and Jorje Negron along with Petty Officer 2nd Class Matthew Pulitano, hospital corpsman, responded to the police department’s request at approximately 10:15 p.m.

“As soon as we got over the bridge, the water (between us and the neighborhood) was so high,” said Sgt. Michael Ray, ground radio repairman. “SUVs were completely underwater

See **RELIEF** page A6

# 237 years

## A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

As we pause to celebrate the 237th birthday of our Corps, we reflect on the rich legacy of service handed down to us, we recommit ourselves to the tasks at hand, and we look forward toward a bright future in service to our country.

Marines exist to fight and win our Nation’s battles. We are most proud of our well-earned reputation for answering the clarion call first. This was never more evident than at the epic battle of Guadalcanal 70 years ago. Picked to lead the first allied counter-offensive of the Pacific war because they were the “most ready,” Marines landed on 7 August 1942 in the Solomon Islands. They persevered through months of unremitting deprivation and bitter combat. By the time the veterans of the Blue Diamond, the Cactus Air Force, our legendary Marine Raiders, and initial elements of the Follow-Me Division gathered together to raise a canteen and toast the birthday of their beloved Corps some three months later, the battle was no longer an issue. The situation was well in hand...victory was assumed.

We carry that same legacy of resolute commitment and valor today. Over the past year, Marines have stood firm in the toughest of circumstances and on numerous occasions. We’ve taken the fight to the enemy in Helmand and to the Horn of Africa. We’ve manned the ramparts of beleaguered embassies in the Middle East and North Africa, fought alongside our allies throughout the world, while behind the scenes, afloat and ashore, other Marines did the painstaking hard work required to maintain our high levels of readiness and efficiency.

As we look toward the future, we know that our sentimental place in the hearts of our fellow Americans and critical role in the defense of our way of life are assured. America has always wanted a Marine Corps...it’s always been that way. Now, more than ever, America needs its Marines as we confront a dangerous and unpredictable world. Faced with difficult days ahead, we will continue to draw strength from our rich heritage and the shared values of the Marines to our left and to our right. We know who we are...we know what we stand for. As ever we will strive to be found worthy of the legendary trust of our fellow Americans.

I salute the enduring faithfulness of those who have gone before, of those who wear our cloth today and of the families who stand so resolutely at our sides. Happy Birthday, Marines!

Semper Fidelis,  
  
JAMES F. AMOS  
General, U.S. Marine Corps

## 1/7 honors fallen brothers

**Lance Cpl. Lauren Kurkimillis**  
Combat Correspondent

Warriors of today are courageous patriots who, on their own will, devote their lives to protect the citizens of the United States of America. They stood before their family members and peers and swore to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic and to bear true faith and allegiance to the same. All who take the oath of enlistment fulfill their promise by sacrificing their time, energy and devotion. Others are brought to a higher calling and sacrifice their lives. Cpl. Taylor Baune, Lance Cpl. Steven Stevens, Lance Cpl. Eugene Mills, Lance Cpl. Niall Coti-Sears, Lance Cpl. Hunter Hogan and Lance Cpl. Curtis Duarte fought for the men they served beside and for a home to which they would not return.

1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, held a

remembrance ceremony Nov. 2, at the Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field for six of their Marines who made the ultimate sacrifice in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

“Today we are gathered to remember and pay tribute to our fallen brothers,” said Lt. Col. David Bradney, battalion commander, 1/7. “Many ventured into harm’s way time and again in service of their nation, their families and in service of their brothers in arms.”

The Marines of 1/7 stood in formation and friends and family filled the stands as the six Marines were honored with a 21 gun salute, six battlefield crosses and one final roll call. The solemn notes of Amazing Grace resonated across the open field as those who knew the fallen remembered their Marines for their sacrifices.

See **REMEMBRANCE** page A5



LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

The Baune family pay their respects to Cpl. Taylor J. Baune during the 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Remembrance Ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Nov. 2.



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**SUDOKU #2718-M**

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See answers on page A3

**EAR! EAR!**

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- ACROSS**
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  - "Serpico" writer Peter
  - Bauxite and galena
  - Big name in appliances
  - Sax type
  - Low-lying area
  - Classic column style
  - False god
  - Sea of \_\_\_ (Don River's terminus)
  - Enclosure with an ear doctor's bill?
  - Seeks damages
  - Bard's nightfall
  - Stimpy's TV pal
  - \_\_\_-Mart Stores, Inc.
  - Fictional spy Helm
  - Crater edge
  - Oodles
  - Coral formation
  - Like Thor or Odin
  - Ear doctor's favorite statesman
  - Dummy Mortimer
  - Tallow source
  - Cassini of fashion
  - Final: Abbr.
  - Clobber with snowballs
  - Ram's ma'am
  - Nile slitherer
  - Greek goddess of dawn
  - Balzac's "Le \_\_\_ Goriot"
  - Cause problems for an ear doctor
  - Metered vehicle
  - Apple throwaway
  - Ballerina Shearer
  - March 17 slogan word
  - Tilling tools
  - Williams of "Happy Days"
  - Smell something fierce
  - Fraternal fellows
  - Lake Malawi, as it's also known
- DOWN**
- Alfred E. Neuman's mag
  - Love personified
  - Hard to come by
  - Makes booties
  - Appliance that sucks
  - Principal streets, slangily
  - Pierce player on "M\*A\*S\*H"
  - Do penance
  - You, right now
  - Pennsylvania Avenue office shape
  - Five o'clock shadow remover
  - Flee to hitch
  - A natural, in raps
  - Supply more weapons to
  - How a confident 9-? Down may work
  - Rolls of bills
  - Astronaut Shepard
  - Theater box
  - Prepare to hit a drive
  - Voodoo charm
  - NO \_\_\_ TRAFFIC
  - Major Detroit newspaper
  - Part to play
  - Bumped off, biblically
  - Add fringe to
  - Freud contemporary
  - "Great" pope of the 5th cen.
  - Fencer's "You got me!"
  - "The buck stops here" president
  - Autumn bloomer
  - Look impolitely
  - Tinker Bell, for one
  - Thread holder
  - Black wood
  - Hockey venue
  - Travel like Kirk
  - "Mona \_\_\_"
  - Love personified
  - Santa \_\_\_, CA

This week in  
**Combat Center**



Reprinted from the Observation Post dated Nov. 7, 2008 Vol. 51 Issue No. 45

**Combat Center remembers corpsman who risked it all**

**LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON**  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Combat Center service members remembered the life and death of a hero who dutifully performed his job of saving Marines with no regard to his own life as it comes closer to the anniversary of his death Nov. 8, 2005.

Robert E. Bush received the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions during the Battle of Okinawa in the midst of World War II.

"We see pictures of Robert E. Bush and it reminds us of what we strive to be like," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher Demetruilas, the career counselor for the hospital.

Bush's story began when he dropped out of high school at age 17 to join the Navy Medical Corps, where he was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division. Less than a year later he was par-taking in an amphibious assault on Okinawa, Japan, for what later was considered the longest and bloodiest battle in the Pacific theater of World War II.

On May 2, 1945, during the battle of Okinawa, Bush braved surrounding artillery, mortar and machine gun fire from hostile positions as he moved from one wounded Marine to another, ending on a ridgetop administering blood plasma to a Marine captain in critical condition.

During this perilous moment, the Japanese launched a counter-attack, leaving Bush and the Marine officer exposed during the deadly firefight. Despite the danger, Bush continued to administer the plasma. Lifting the bottle high in one hand, Bush drew his pistol with the other and fired into the advancing enemy ranks until he was out of ammunition. He quickly grabbed a dis-

carded carbine and continued to fire upon enemy ranks. His actions accounted for six enemy deaths.

Disregarding his own injuries, which included a loss of an eye during the counter-attack, Bush refused medical attention until he had finished his main mission in evacuating the Marine officer. He collapsed as he tried to walk to the battle aid station.

It is the Medal of Honor recipients that we take strength from," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Jose Mata, a health benefits advisor at the hospital. "We look back and see what he did. There was a Marine captain wounded, and without a thought about himself, he killed the enemy and dragged



COURTESY PHOTO

Hospital Corpsman Robert E. Bush receives the Medal of Honor from Mr. President Harry S. Truman Oct. 5, 1945, in Washington, D. C.

the Marine back into safe territory, completely ignoring his own injuries.

"He shows us how to live our lives the way they should be done, not the convenient way, but the right way," continued the Hialeah, Fla., native.

After the battle he was sent home due to his

injuries where he dutifully returned to high school and married his high school sweetheart, Wanda.

Bush enrolled in classes at the University of Washington and bought a small lumber company where he spent the next 50 years building and spreading his company throughout north western United States.

Several monuments have been built in Bush's honor including a statue of him during the war located in his hometown of South Bend, Washington, a similar statue outside the main doors of the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital, and the Bush Health Care Clinic, located in Camp Courtney, Okinawa, Japan, was also named after him.

"He was a hero," said Demetruilas, who met Bush during a corpsman ball years ago. "He is the epitome of what you want a green side corpsman to be."



LANCE CPL. MONICA C. ERICKSON

The statue of Robert E. Bush, which stands in front of the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital depicts him in action during the Battle of Okinawa in the midst of World War II that resulted in his receipt of the Medal of Honor.

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**In Oceanside:**  
- Angelo's Kars, 222 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054  
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**In Twentynine Palms:**  
- Adobe Smoke Shop, 6441 Adobe Rd.  
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- K Smoke Shop, 5865A Adobe Rd.

**In San Diego:**  
- Club Mustang, 2200 University Ave.  
- Club San Diego, 3955 Fourth St.  
- Get It On Shoppe, 3219 Mission Blvd.  
- Main Street Motel, 3494 Main St.  
- Vulcan Baths, 805 W. Cedar St.

**In Yucca Valley:**  
- Yucca Tobacco Mart, 57602 29 Palms Hwy.  
- Puff's Tobacco Mart, 57063 29 Palms Hwy.

**In National City:**  
- Dream Crystal, 15366 Highland Ave.  
- Sports Auto Sales, 1112 National City Blvd.

**In Palm Springs:**  
- Village Pub, 266 S. Palm Canyon Dr.

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WHAT I'VE LEARNED

# THE RUNNER

**Staff Sgt. Arold Sylvain**

Motor Transport Chief, VMU-3  
27, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

INTERVIEWED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
**LANCE CPL. D.J. WU**

November 2, 2012

> **I started running when** I was in middle school. I was in PE class and the teacher, who was also the track coach, he told everyone to run around the track.  
> **I didn't even know I could run.** He thought I was fast and said I should join the team and I said, "OK."

> **Later in high school I figured** out that I was more of a track guy. But then my friend said I should join the cross country team.

> **I still prefer track stuff.** But I like the one mile and the 3 mile races. I don't like the two mile for some reason, go figure.

> **All I do is think when I run.** That's what I like to do when I need to think. I think of anything and everything when I run.

> **A lot of people say** that they go running to be free. I just go running to run most of the time.

> **I'm the type of guy** that if I don't run or work out for a day or two, I just feel disgusting. That's just how I feel. I need to run sometimes, even for just a mile. I crave running.

> **I run by myself.** I tend to hold back if I run with someone else. I don't really know anyone that runs at my pace. If I run with someone else I'm not really getting the full works out.

> **When I go into a race,** I run it to win. I don't like running races for the fun of it. It's all about the competition for me.

> **When I start a race,** I like to look from behind and watch the other runner. I watch for how they run and their techniques before I make my move.

> **There was a time when** I used to keep and display all of my trophies and medals from races and stuff. After a while it just became so much. I had too many.

> **So I just threw a lot** of them away. I kept the ones that were important and meant something to me.

> **If I didn't have to work hard** at the race or it was just a small race I don't keep the trophy.

> **One time when** I won a race, they gave me like a glass you would find at Walmart or something and wrote 1st on it. Or another time when I got a floor tile with first place on it.

> **Those were just small** races that didn't really challenge me.

> **One of the trophies** I did keep was a regional championship from one of my first races.

> **When I first began** running half marathons I didn't wear socks. I didn't realize I would need them because I usually run short distance so I would be done quickly. During this race half way through I started getting a blister and it just got bigger as I ran. Eventually I had to start running on the side of my foot.

> **I still ended up finishing first.** That trophy reminds me how much of a challenge that race was.

> **I still want to do better** in running. Ever since high school I wanted to be in the Olympics.

> **That is something** that motivated me and still motivates me.

> **Maybe in a few years I'll start** training up for that and go to the Olympic trials. That's something that I still want to do. I want to compete on the world stage in a major event.

> **I don't think that you** can make a good runner. I think it's something that you're just born with. Things like proper technique, I don't think that is something that can be taught. You just feel it. I thank God that I can do this.



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# Red Cross station links up to gain volunteers

**Capt. Nicholas Mannweiler**  
Public Affairs Officer

The Combat Center's American Red Cross station gained a new volunteer management tool this week with the launch of an online volunteer website.

The volunteer connection website allows people interested in serving with the station to register and submit the areas in which they are interested in, and be matched up with available volunteer opportunities.

The new system digitizes the Red Cross volunteer system, an important modernization step for an organization that is 97% volunteer-manned. By electronically tracking the contact information, training requirements and qualifications of their volunteers, the Red Cross station can more efficiently manage its resources and can make volunteering easier and more enjoyable for those that wish to support the station and its mission.

"We're always recruiting. Due to the nature of being in a military community, there's a high rate of turnover. There's always a flow," said Michael Wolfe, Combat Center station manager.

The majority of Red Cross volunteers aboard the Combat Center provide support to the Naval Hospital but their skills and time are provided to help several other sections and organizations around the installation. Military Red Cross stations have a unique mission compared to their community counterparts. Whereas community stations do blood drives, health fairs and disaster relief, the military stations support their on-base communities and their unique requirements, said Wolfe.

The Combat Center Red Cross station helps service members and families with emergency communication messages during family emergencies and can help them patch into the regional call center for telephone calls during emergencies. The military chapters fall under the national chapter of the American Red Cross, a different chain of command compared to the regional organization of the community chapters.

Would-be volunteers can begin the process by creating a profile in the Volunteer Connection system by visiting [https://volunteerconnection.redcross.org/?nd=intake&entry\\_point\\_id=244&logout=1](https://volunteerconnection.redcross.org/?nd=intake&entry_point_id=244&logout=1). The website directs them to fill out an application with a username and password they are provided and they pick from a list of upcoming orientation sessions. A list of volunteer position descriptions provides insight and ideas into possible ways in which the new volunteer can serve. Training requirements are then determined following the in-person orientation meeting so the new volunteer can gain the skills they need to effectively fill their new role.

Operating a station aboard a military installation provides Wolfe with a pool of potential volunteers with technical skills and even professional credentialing, such as registered nurses, certified nursing assistants and pharmacy technicians. Volunteers come from all walks of life and levels of experience.

"We're specifically looking to fill volunteer leadership positions here," said Wolfe. "The station volunteer chairman is the top volunteer leader and that position is currently vacant. The sky's the limit on what Red Cross on base can do. We have motivated, skilled volunteers who want to better themselves and help their community while they do it."

For more information, visit the Combat Center's Red Cross station in the Village Center or connect with them through their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/pages/Twenty-nine-Palms-American-Red-Cross/118023948289828](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Twenty-nine-Palms-American-Red-Cross/118023948289828) or call 830-6685.



"The sky's the limit on what Red Cross on base can do. We have motivated, skilled volunteers who want to better themselves and help their community while they do it."

- Michael Wolfe

## REMEMBRANCE, from A1

“They stood proudly and courageously for the protection of our nation,” said Capt. Rhett Hansen, company commander, Company C, 1/7, “They sacrificed their lives for the protection of America and Americans. For millions of fellow citizens who may or may not ever fully appreciate the ultimate sacrifice.”

Hansen intimately described the heroic, final actions of each Marine from his company.

“On the evening of June 21st, we conducted a night insert,” Hansen said. “With the sunrise on June 22nd, the enemy conducted the first of many attacks. We knew this would be a difficult operation.

“At patrol base three, the enemy attacked first platoon with direct fire and grenades. First platoon repelled attack after attack. However, shrapnel from an enemy grenade injured one of the Marines and he required evacuation. As soon as he saw that one of his brothers was wounded, Lance Cpl. Stevens, who was famous for his bright smile and his infectious sense of humor, quickly put on his gear and proclaimed that he was ready to go sweep the landing

zone for the medevac aircraft that he knew his wounded brother was going to need. ‘I’m ready when you are,’ he said. He wasn’t tasked or told to get ready. He knew what needed to be done and he happily did it.

“With the enemies’ rounds impacting the patrol base, led by Lance Cpl. Stevens, the landing zone security team selflessly rushed out of the compound into a hail of gunfire. As Lance Cpl. Stevens swept the zone, he fell to a barrage of enemy fires. Despite his fears, he ventured into harm’s way and laid down his life for his brothers.”

It was silent as they lined up in front of the six battlefield crosses. As Marines solemnly saluted the symbols of their brothers in arms

and family members kneeled before the pictures of their sons, brothers and husbands, only the sound of grieving sobs and dog tags in the wind could be heard. They remembered them for the lives they lived and for the heroism in the way they died.

“Courage is not the answer to fear,” Bradney said. “Courage is the awareness of danger in the presence of fear and the action of continuing forth. Our brothers embodied courage as they laid down their lives in selfless acts of heroism.”

*Courage is not the answer to fear, Courage is the awareness of danger, in the presence of fear and the action of continuing forth. Our brothers embodied courage as they laid down their lives in selfless acts of heroism.*

— Lt. Col. David Bradney



PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

**[Above]** The battlefield cross for Lance Cpl. Curtis Duarte, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, stands at the 1/7 Remembrance Ceremony Nov. 2. The tradition of the battlefield cross dates back to the Civil War, when a soldier’s boots and rifle were similarly stacked in order to mark graves on the battlefield. The Remembrance Ceremony included a roll call of the names of the six fallen Marines from the unit, a 21-gun salute and remarks from the leaders of the Marines.

**[Left]** Marines with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, assemble battlefield crosses at the battalion’s Remembrance Ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Nov. 2. Six members of “First Team” gave the ultimate sacrifice during their deployment to Afghanistan.

**RELIEF, from A1**

and the flood waters were almost over the hood of our 7-ton (approximately seven feet)."

There were two fires raging when they arrived in the Breezy Point area — one of the fires eventually destroyed 111 houses, and the other that burned a power plant.

"When we turned the corner (and seeing the homes ablaze), it was the most disturbing thing I've ever seen," said Negron. "The entire block was on fire; it looked like the road to Armageddon."

The first responders' vehicles were either water-logged or not large enough to enter the floodwaters, so over the next five hours, the Marines transported members of local police and fire departments to different areas of the neighborhood.

"The bravery and dedication I saw was so great," said Negron. "Everyone was riding in our truck and then the police would hop into their raft and go to a family in need and the fire department would get in their (rafts) and go straight to a fire."

Bordonaro reinforced how harrowing the situation was for everyone. The storm was not letting up.

"We lost communication with the Marines several times," said Bordonaro. "The winds were high and cell phone reception was sketchy at best. All across New

York you could see mass destruction."

The Marines were thankful everyone made it safely out of the situation alive because of good teamwork.

"It was so great to see everyone come together, the police, firemen and the Marines," said Roy. "It didn't matter who you worked for at that point, we were just all trying to get those people out of there."

Negron felt thankful that he had a chance to serve the community. It is definitely gratifying to see so many people safely make it out of such a bad situation, he said.

"I talked to the Marines before they went out, and they were ready," said Bordonaro. "The conditions were dangerous; some first responders had already been trapped. But the Marines went out and performed. They knew they were saving peoples' lives."

The three Marines and hospital corpsman are assigned to the 6th Communication Battalion, a Reserve unit headquartered in Brooklyn, N.Y. The unit specializes in communications and is trained to provide radio, cyber, wire/switching, and satellite services to support Marine Expeditionary Forces. 6th Communication Battalion also serves the community by organizing and operating the Toys for Tots program in the New York City and Long Island area, participating in parades and memorial services, and supporting many other community activities.



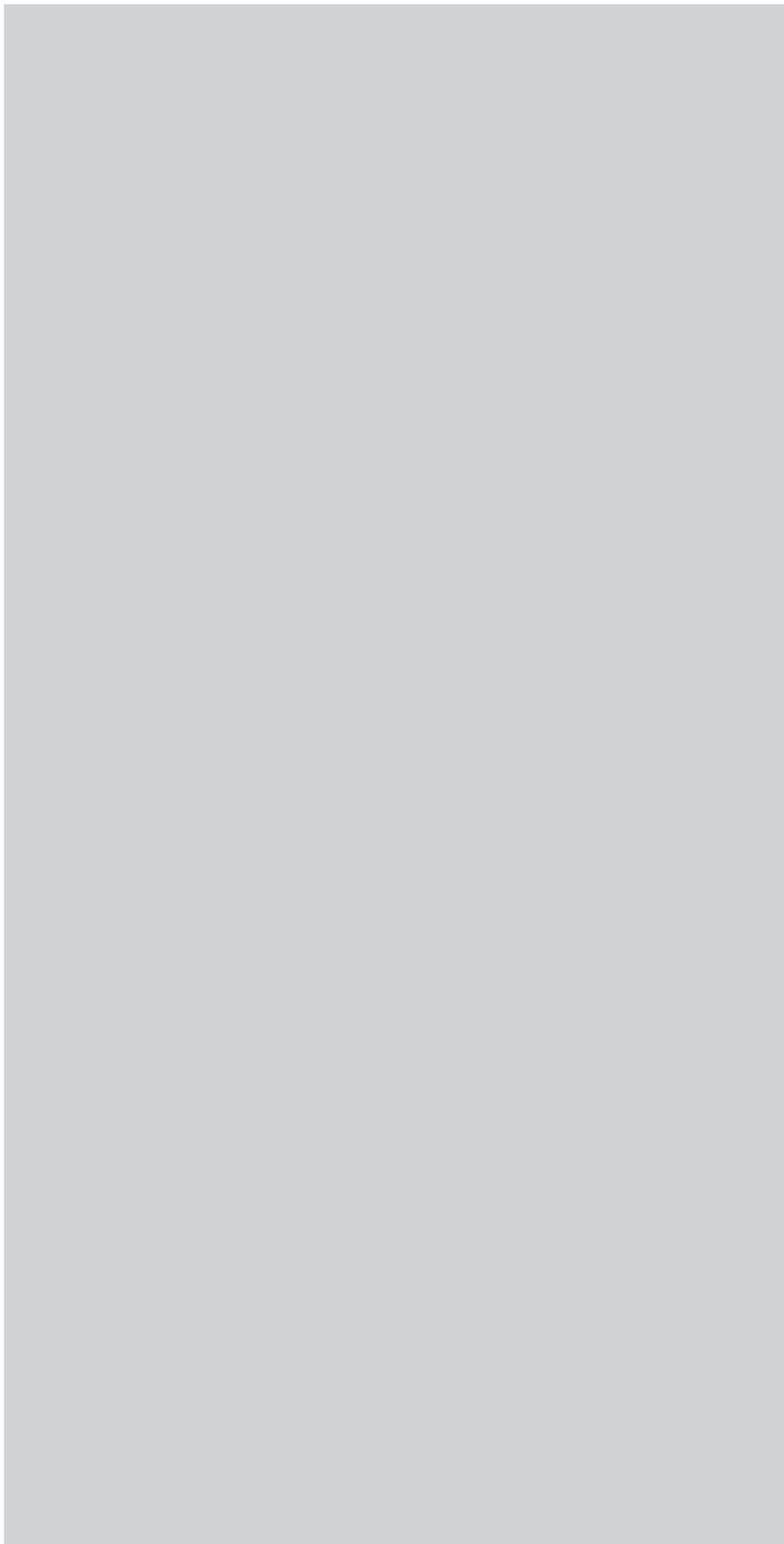
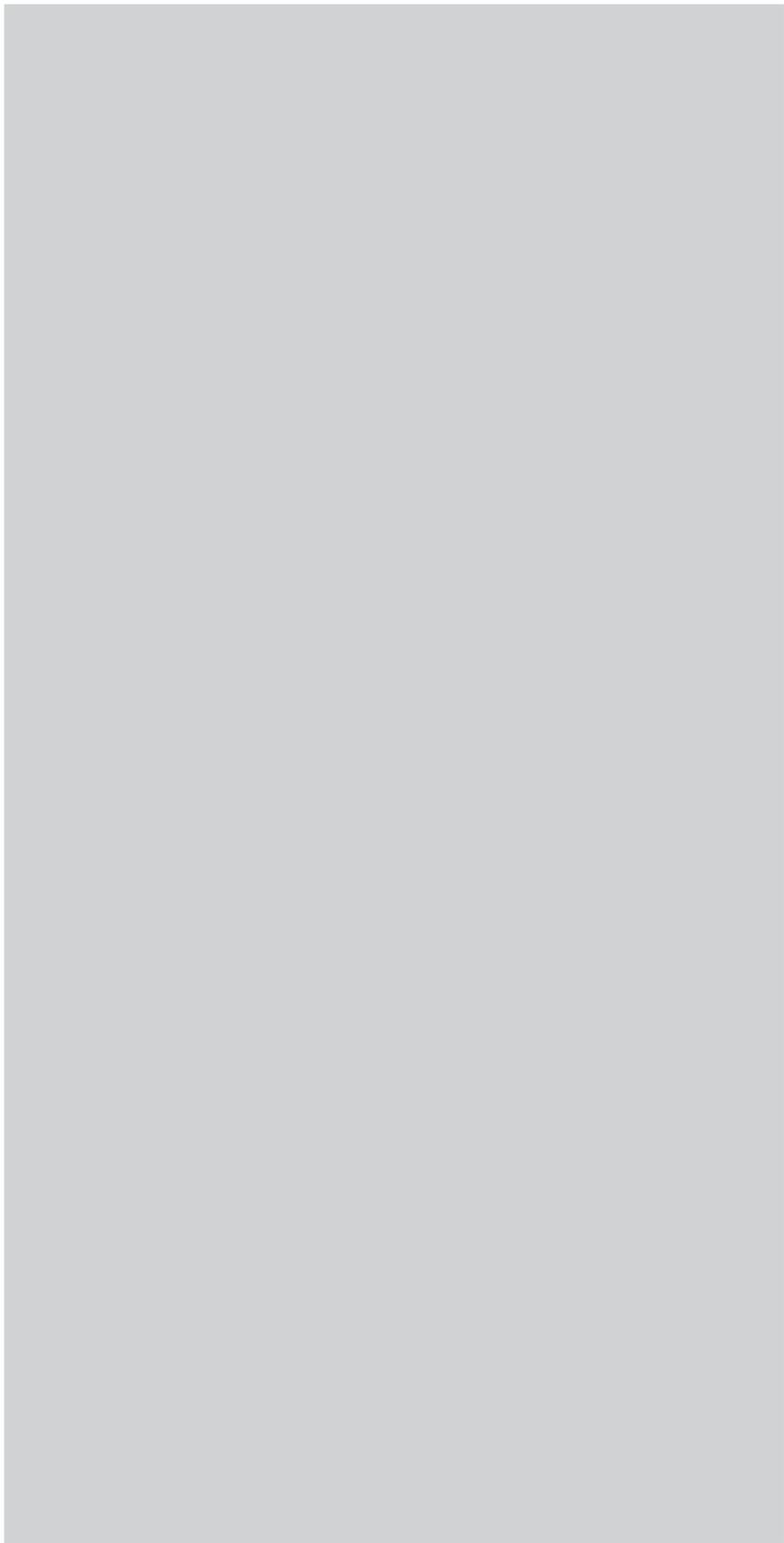
PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS MARTIN CUARON

**[Above]** HOBOKEN, N.J. — Petty Officer 2nd Class Dustin Harley with Coastal Riverine Squadron 4, connects a 10 kilowatt light plant at the Hoboken ferry terminal in support of Hurricane Sandy relief efforts. CRS 4 is operating under the U.S. Northern Command Defense Support of Civil Authorities mission, working closely with state officials and the Federal Emergency Management Agency in disaster response.

**[Left]** Corporal Thomas Cavallo, airframe mechanic with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 366, throws a couch on the street in Staten Island, N.Y., Nov. 4.



CPL. BRYAN NYGAARD





## Combat Center Marines begin annual Christmas tradition

**Lance Cpl. Ali Azimi**  
Combat Correspondent

A handful of Combat Center Marines and sailors headed to Toys R' Us in Indio, Calif., Nov. 1 to collect toys for the Toys for Tots Program. The store donated \$18,000 worth of toys to the Toys for Tots program, adding to the cache of board games, action figures and dolls already collected.

Marines began the Toys for Tots program as a way to collect and donate toys for needy children in 1947. Since then, they have collected millions of toys for children in unfortunate circumstances all around the United States.

"It's our ability as Marines to give back to the community," said Sgt. Jeremy Smith, main battle tank technician, 4th Tank Battalion. "It shows that we care and it's definitely worth it."

The program has survived for decades and still donates a countless amount of toys every year to give to kids on Christmas. A simple toy can mean the world to a young boy or girl.

"When you were a kid and you got a toy, man that was the best thing," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Jose Saenz,

corpsman, 4th Tanks. "Just imagine a little kid that's not going to get a toy."

4th Tanks is in charge of the programs collection, which began Oct. 10 and ends Dec. 17.

"I'm really happy I get to do this," said Saenz. "I always saw the Marines with the boxes and thought that's kind of cool and now I have a chance to do it. Back in the office we already have another truck filled with toys so I think this year is going to be pretty good."

The volunteers were split up into and given an age range to buy for in the store. Their only rule was that each item must cost under \$25. Their shopping carts filled up quickly with everything from Spiderman action figures to Barbie dolls.

Their shopping carts quickly filled with piles of toys and were lined up at the cash registers.

It took well over an hour to process everything through the registers and load up into their white truck. By the end of their shopping spree, the truck was filled with a mountain of toys.

"It's something that will fulfill you, make you feel good about yourself," said Saenz. "Just come donate. It's not for the Marines it's for the kids."

For information on how to donate visit <http://29-palms-ca.toysfortots.org/local-coordinator-sites/lco-sites/default.aspx>.



PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. ALI AZIMI

**[Above]** Capt. Michael Gocke, inspector-instructor, 4th Tank Battalion, picks out toys from a Toys R' Us as part of the Toys for Tots program Nov. 1. The store allowed Marines and sailors to pick out \$18,000 worth of toys from their store in Indio, Calif.

**[Left]** Sgt. Jeremy Smith, main battle tank technician, 4th Tank Battalion, piles up the collection of toys donated from a Toys R' Us in Indio, Calif., as part of the Toys for Tots program Nov. 1. Smith was one of a handful of Combat Center Marines and sailors who volunteered to make the trip to Indio and collect toys for children in need.





# 6-4-8

Combat Center runners compete in race series



Story and photos by Lance Cpl. D. J. Wu

**M**ore than 100 runners from the Combat Center came out to the Desert Winds Golf Course to run the first part of the 6-4-8 Race Series Nov. 1.

The competitors ran a six-mile course through the golf course's 18 holes. Runners competed as teams and individual racers. This race was the first of three races in the series. The other two races are a four-mile run at the Obstacle Course on Nov. 15 and an eight-mile run at the PFT track on Nov. 29.

This is the second time that the cross country race series is taking place at the Combat Center. More races have come up by popular demand and Marine Corps Community Services Semper Fit has heard the call.

"We've been hearing that the people here want more running contests," said Charles Dougwillow, branch head, Semper

**// We've been hearing that the people here want more running contests. This race is just one of many that are starting to roll out for people to participate in."**

-Charles Dougwillow

Fit. "This race is just one of many that we are starting to roll out for people to participate in."

"We give out awards

for the fastest male and female runners for each race."

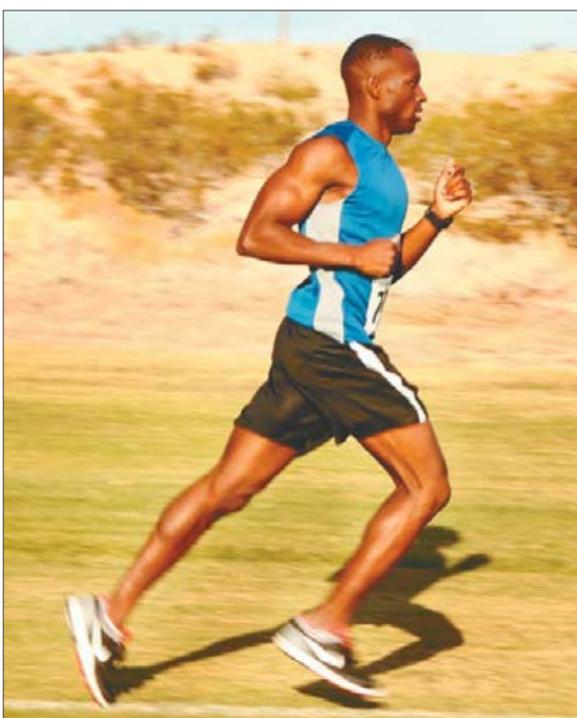
Dougwillow said. "The team scores are combined at the end of the series to find out the best team."

For many of the runners, it is all about the competition. The number of runners is increasing throughout the races. From just the first race of the series, the number of runners has nearly tripled from last year.

"All of these races are a good thing," said Staff Sgt. Arold Sylvain, motor transport chief, Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3. "I'm here to win, for myself and with the team for the squadron."

Sylvain went on to win the race with a time of 36:40. The female winner was Fabiola Pamatz with a time of 45:25.

"I wish it was a closer race," Sylvain said. "I race to win and I love the competition."



**[Top]** A runner makes his way over a hill on the cross-country running trail of the Desert Winds Golf Course for the 6-4-8 Race series Nov. 1. Individuals and teams raced the six-mile course to find a winner.

**[Above]** The VMU-3 team stretches after completing the six-mile race at the Desert Winds Golf Course Nov. 1.

**[Right]** Staff Sgt. Arold Sylvain, motor transport chief, Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3 is out in the lead of the race. Sylvain won the race with a time of 36:40.



## Combat Center Clubs

### Excursions Enlisted Club

Monday: Margarita Mondays  
 Thursday: Rockin' Karaoke 7-10 p.m.  
 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.

### Bloodstripes NCO Club

Monday: Margarita Mondays  
 Thursday: Warrior Night 4:30 - 9 p.m.  
 Friday: Karaoke Night 6 - 9 p.m.

### Hashmarks 29 SNCO Club

Friday: Steak Night, 4:30 - 8 p.m.  
 Monday-Friday: All-hands lunch from 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.  
 Monday: All-hands steak night, 4:30 - 8 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: Taco Night, 5 - 7 p.m.

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

## Local Events

### The Shadow Mountain Band

Local bands play  
 When: Saturday, Nov. 10, 5 p.m.  
 Where: Pappy and Harriet's Pioneertown Palace  
 53688 Pioneertown Rd., Pioneertown, Calif.  
 For more information, call 365-5956.

### Free Line Dance Lessons

Band with boffo blast twang performs  
 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.



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

## Lower Desert

### Ceelo Green

Popular artist performs  
 When: 9 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 16  
 Where: Agua Caliente Casino Resort Spa  
 32-250 Bob Hope Dr., Rancho Mirage  
 For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>.

### John Legend

Nine-time Grammy Award winner performs  
 When: 9 p.m., Friday, Nov. 16  
 Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino  
 84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio  
 For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

### Moon Walker

The ultimate Michael Jackson experience  
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 17  
 Where: Spotlight 29 Casino Resort  
 46-200 Harrison Place, Coachella, Calif.  
 For more information call 866-377-6829 or visit <http://www.spotlight29.com>.

### Sinbad/Zapp

Comedian performs  
 When: 8:00 p.m., Friday, Nov. 23  
 Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa  
 49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon, Calif.  
 For more information call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinosort.com>.

## Sunset Cinema

### Friday, November 9

#### FREE VETERANS DAY MOVIE

6 p.m. - **FREE VETERANS DAY MOVIE** Valkyrie, Rated PG-13  
 9 p.m. - **FREE VETERANS DAY MOVIE** Hurt Locker, Rated R  
 Midnight - End of Watch, Rated R

### Saturday, November 10

10:30 a.m. - **Free Matinee** Rio, Rated PG  
 12:30 p.m. - Finding Nemo, Rated G  
 3 p.m. - Finding Nemo 3D, Rated G  
 6 p.m. - Resident Evil, Rated R  
 9 p.m. - **FREE VETERANS DAY MOVIE** Inglourious Basterds, Rated R  
 Midnight - Dredd, Rated R

### Sunday, November 11

12:30 p.m. - **FREE VETERANS DAY MOVIE** Act of Valor, Rated PG-13  
 3 p.m. - Pitch Perfect, Rated PG-13  
 6 p.m. - Frankenweenie 3D, Rated PG  
 9 p.m. - Looper, Rated R

### Monday, November 12

12:30 p.m. - Frankenweenie, Rated PG  
 3 p.m. - **FREE VETERANS DAY MOVIE** Flags of our Fathers, Rated PG-13  
 6 p.m. - **FREE VETERANS DAY MOVIE** Defiance, Rated R  
 9 p.m. - Looper, Rated R

### Tuesday, November 13

7 p.m. - Dredd, Rated R

### Wednesday, November 14

5:30 p.m. - Trouble with the Curve, Rated PG-13

8:30 p.m. - End of Watch, Rated R

### Thursday, November 15

5:30 p.m. - Possession, Rated PG-13

8:30 p.m. - Lawless, Rated R

# Drama of secret mission to free hostages based on true 1979 story



COURTESY PHOTO

As the movie begins, the six Americans escape from the fallen American embassy in Tehran just as it's taken over by Iranian revolutionaries, seething with anger at the United States. Their 60-some colleagues, not so lucky, are captured in what would eventually stretch into the 444-day ordeal that would become the Iranian Hostage Crisis.

## NEIL POND

### "Argo"

Starring Ben Affleck, John Goodman & Alan Arkin  
 Directed by Ben Affleck  
 Rated R, 120 min.

It's based on a true story, but don't worry if you don't recall it. Only a handful of people even knew it was going on at the time---or for years afterward.

Director-star Ben Affleck's "Argo" is about a super-secret CIA mission to pluck a small group of refugee American diplomat-citizens to safety from the chaos of the 1979 Iranian revolution. The plan was so undercover, it wasn't even de-classified and made public until the late 1990s.

As the movie begins, the six Americans escape from the fallen American embassy in Tehran just as it's taken over by Iranian revolutionaries, seething with anger at the United States. Their 60-some colleagues, not so lucky, are captured in what would eventually stretch into the 444-day ordeal that would become the Iranian Hostage Crisis.

The Americans slip out a back door and make their way amid the confusion to the house of the Canadian ambassador, who agrees to hide them --- at tremendous risk to himself and his family. Getting caught harboring the American "spies" would certainly mean arrest for everyone, perhaps even public execution by a lynch mob.

Back in Washington, realizing the dire-

ness of the situation, CIA agent Tony Mendez (Affleck) knows a conventional "extraction" is out of the question. So he concocts a preposterous-sounding scheme involving a fake Hollywood sci-fi movie, "Argo," will have a realistic premise, characters, storyboards and even advance press to convince the Iran authorities that it's the real deal.

Once there, he'll "disguise" the Americans as his Canadian film crew, forge some passports and bring them out of the country with him when he comes home.

The CIA higher-ups aren't quite sold on the idea, but even they realize there simply aren't many other ideas to be found. "You don't have a better bad idea than this?" they ask.

Affleck, whose previous success as a director includes "Gone Baby Gone" and "The Town," has moved his bar up another considerable notch with "Argo." It's Oscar-worthy material, an adrenaline-pumping saga that crackles with excitement from its opening scene to its closing seconds.

It's also got plenty of wit, especially in its depiction of the inside-movie-making process, and a savvy grasp of the look and feel of its era --- the '70s facial hair, color palette, clothes, glasses, music, and TV newscasts.

"Argo" splits its time between the increasingly tense situation in Tehran and Mendez's scramble to make his fake movie. As the Iranian revolutionaries are growing closer by the day to discovering the identities and location of the refugees, the CIA agent is collaborating

in Hollywood with two filmmaking insiders, a special-effects guru (John Goodman) and a veteran producer (Alan Arkin), to ensure that the fake movie, "Argo," will have a realistic premise, characters, storyboards and even advance press to convince the Iran authorities that it's the real deal.

"If I'm doing a fake movie," says Arkin's character, "it's gonna be a fake hit."

One wrenching scene cuts back and forth between a glitzy casting call media event for the movie in a Hollywood hotel, and a dire situation in the embassy when several hostages are roused from sleep, marched into the basement, blindfolded and positioned in front of a firing squad.

When Mendez hits the ground in Iran, the clock is definitely ticking. And as his risky deception comes down to its final, do-or-die moments, you'll be as every bit as nervous as the six Americans who've been asked to impersonate a director, a cameraman, and the other faux filmmakers faking a fantasy on which their real lives depend.

The business of movies has always been one of illusion, but the line between real and reel has rarely been drawn with such artfully crafted tension...and timeliness. Ben Affleck's taut, terrific "Argo" tells the little-known retro tale of a time three decades ago when Hollywood and Washington rode to the rescue with a phony film---in a situation that, given today's headline news from the Middle East, seems not only frighteningly, jarringly real, but like it could easily have happened last week.

**flickr**

Hey Combat Center fans - Spread the word! The Combat Center has its own Flickr photo and video streams. Find them at <http://www.flickr.com/thecombatcenter>.

**YouTube**

Hey Combat Center fans - Spread the word! The Combat Center has its own YouTube channel. Find it at <http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO>.

**facebook**

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

Halls of Montezuma

Marjah

Iwo Jima

Tarawa

*Happy Birthday  
Marines!*

Midway

Hue City

Fallujah

Tripoli

**237 Years of Service**

Since 1775

Chosin Reservoir

Wake Island

Belleau Wood

Okinawa

Pearl Harbor

Guadalcanal

Helmand Province

# WeekINPhotos

## Hurricane Sandy Cleanup Effort



**[Left]** Staff Sgt. James-Lucas Vincent and Sgt. Jason Hayward, explosive ordnance disposal technician, Combat Logistics Battalion 26, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, prepare to enter a flooded basement in Staten Island, NY, Nov. 6.

**[Above]** Sgt. Jason Hayward, explosive ordnance disposal technician, CLB-26, 26th MEU, takes off his boots to enter a flooded basement and turn off a water valve in Staten Island, NY, Nov. 6.

**[Below]** Marines and sailors with the 26th MEU and sailors with USS Wasp walk to a residential area in Staten Island, NY, Nov. 6

PHOTOS BY GUNNERY SGT. MICHAEL KROPIEWNICKI

