



OBSERVATION POST

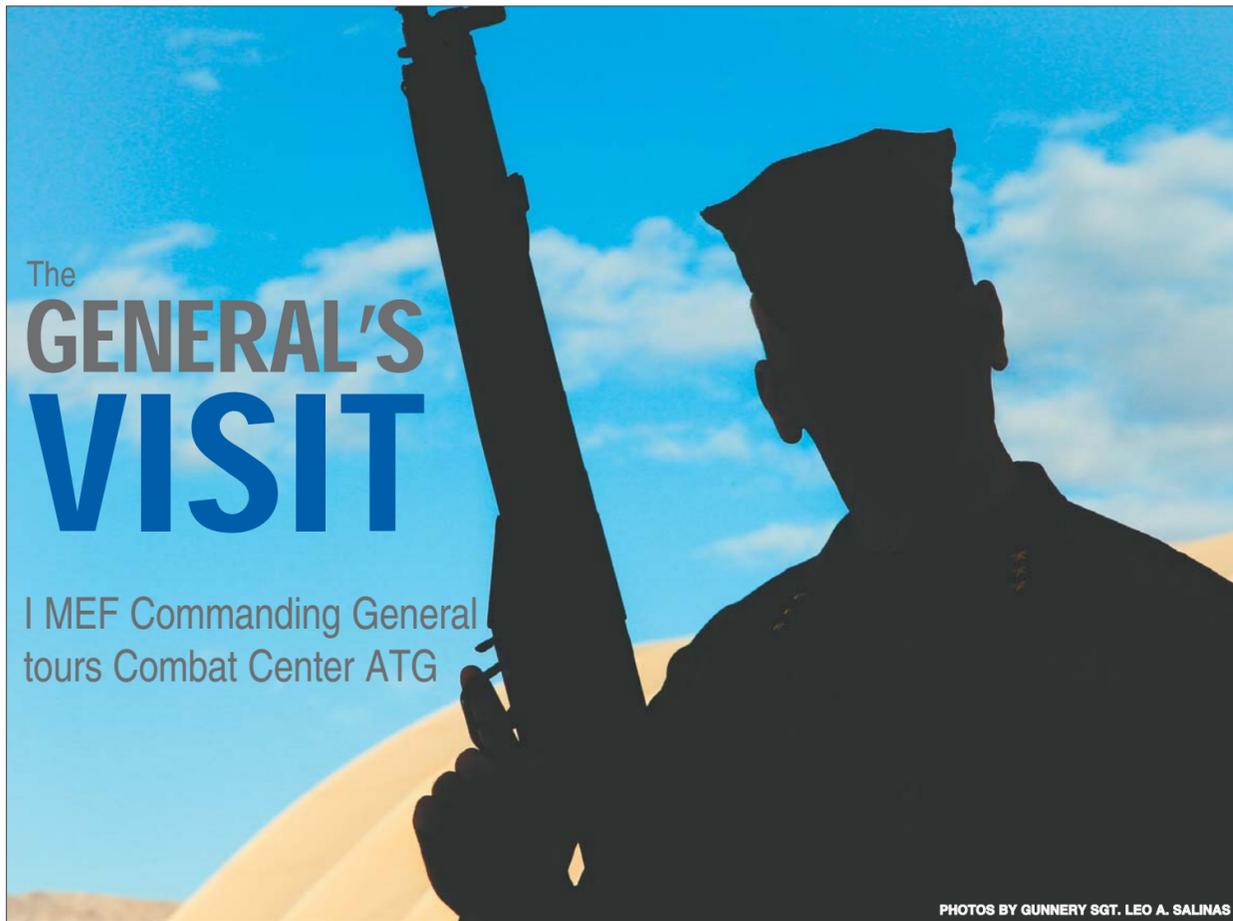
MCAGCC TWENTYNINE PALMS



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Since 1957
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The GENERAL'S VISIT

I MEF Commanding General tours Combat Center ATG

PHOTOS BY GUNNERY SGT. LEO A. SALINAS

Cpl. William J. Jackson
Combat Correspondent

Lt. Gen. John A. Toolan, Jr., Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force, visited service members and civilian employees at the Combat Center's Advisor Training Group compound Nov. 16.

The visit was to showcase ATG's capabilities and significance to the Marine Corps. ATG provides cultural awareness, medical training, weapons handling and language training to the service members deploying to Afghanistan who work with and train Afghan National Security Forces.

Toolan first stepped off to speak with a graduating class and answer questions about the Corps' future and the ongoing efforts of Operation Enduring Freedom. He spoke about the importance of ATG's mission.

"Stability will take hold in Afghanistan," Toolan said to the Marines and British troops from a Regional Operations Coordination Center team from Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. "You've got to have a long term view and most people don't. You may not see the product or end state, but your kids will."

Commander Michael Dreelan, United Kingdom liaison officer, OCC-R, British Royal Navy, and ATG student, said the training he experienced improved his outlook about working with the ANSF during his first

See **VISIT** page A4



[Top] Lt. Gen. John A. Toolan, Jr., Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force, visits the Combat Center's Advisor Training Group Nov. 16. Toolan's tour of the compound included a weapons and medical aid training brief.

[Above] Lt. Gen. John A. Toolan, Jr., is shown a weapon demonstration by Sgt. Louis Diaz, advisor trainer, ATG, during his visit to the Combat Center's ATG compound Nov. 16.

Thinking outside the Box

■ Expo brings inventions, ideas to Combat Center

Lance Cpl. D. J. Wu
Combat Correspondent

Technology and communications are on an ever changing plain. The world and the Marine Corps is always on the lookout for the latest and greatest technologies that can push them forward.

The Tech Expo, hosted by the Combat Center's G-6 brought in-demand technologies and companies to the Combat Center's Officer's Club Nov. 15.

The G-6 and the event organizers, National Conference Services, Inc., collaborated to put together the expo. The G-6 takes requests from all over the Combat Center for vendor and product



LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

Marines and sailors across the Combat Center went to the Officer's Club Nov. 15, to see the latest and greatest advancement in technology at the Tech Expo, hosted by G-6.

demonstrations.

"The companies here have some kind of focus broadly within the Marine Corps or specifically here at Twentynine Palms," said Carolyn Clauss, event manager. "We give the opportunity for the companies to network with the different units on base."

The Tech Expo tours military bases around the country. Vendors and companies know that the Combat Center is a major training installation in the Marine Corps. Each trip is catered to the needs of each installation.

"They know that there's a lot of training going on," Clauss said. "They know about the Communication-Electronics School, so they bring a lot of tactical communications and training equipment."

See **EXPO** page A4

British Royal Marines run Operation Black Alligator

Lance Cpl. Lauren A. Kurkimilis
Combat Correspondent

Royal Marines with 42 Commando have traveled across the globe from their home at Bickleigh Barracks in Plymouth, Devon, U.K. to train at the Combat Center. They are here for an annual training exercise called Black Alligator 12.

"Black Alligator is a battalion-level exercise involving 42 Commando, Royal Marines," said Capt. Ismael Lara, Exercise Integration Officer, G-3. "They come all the way here from the U.K. and they are self-sustained. The biggest part that makes this



LANCE CPL. LAUREN A. KURKIMILIS

Royal Marines from Company M, 42 Commando, perform a platoon-level exercise Nov. 14 at Range 111. The Royal Marines arrived at the Combat Center Oct. 9 to conduct their annual Black Alligator training that prepares them for combat with a series of combined arms exercises.

unique, compared to any other foreign exercises, is that there is usually a Marine presence out there with the foreign military. In this case, they are out there on their own and completely self-sufficient."

There are more than 600 Royal Marines participating in Black Alligator. They put boots on the ground Oct. 9 and will continue an array of training scenarios until Dec. 3.

"They come here for a series of training exercises," said Lt. Col. Aaron F. Potter, G-3 operations officer. "They do company-

See **ALLIGATOR** page A5

3rd CEB welcomes new leader

Lance Cpl. Ali Azimi
Correspondent

Lt. Col. Brian Dwyer received command of 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion from Lt. Col. John Sullivan during the unit's change of command ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Nov. 16.

A change of command ceremony is more than the transfer of leadership from one commander to the next, it also gives Marines a chance to look back on all they have accomplished.

Three platoons of 3rd CEB Marines marched onto the field in formation as they prepared for a change of leadership. Behind them waved 50 flags, representing the 50 states and 3rd CEB's military vehicles parked at the edge of the field.

"Today is bitter sweet for me," said Sullivan. "Bitter because command is a high honor and as I think about all the accomplishments of the battalion. It's sweet at the same time."

Lt. Col. Brian Dwyer (left) receives command of 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion from Lt. Col. John Sullivan (right) during the unit's change of command ceremony at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Nov. 16.

Behind the ceremony stood three platoons of 3rd CEB Marines, waiting to welcome their new commander.



LANCE CPL. ALI AZIMI

Dwyer attributed the great condition of the battalion to Sullivan's command over the past few years. Without shadow of a doubt, this battalion is far better off than it was when he first took command, he said.

"I've had the privilege of watching this command for the past couple of years when it was reactivated and its growth over the past three battalion commanders," Dwyer continued. "I whole-heartedly accept this responsibility and look forward to it."

After the change of command was complete, Sullivan took his place on the field where he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal in lieu of 2nd Award for his extraordinary service as commander of 3rd CEB.

"A concern an outgoing commander has is, you want to make sure you are turning over your unit, your Marines and sailors, to someone who is going to take good care of them. I am confident that my former classmate and friend, Lt. Col. Dwyer, is going to do a great job," Sullivan said. "I walk away with a lot of pride knowing we've accomplished a great deal together."

– Lt. Col. John Sullivan



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This week in Combat Center History



Reprinted from the Observation Post dated Dec. 5, 2008 Vol. 51 Issue No. 49

It's time to winterize your vehicle

CPL. MARGARET HUGHES
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

When temperatures begin to drop, it is a sign that winter is right around the corner and vehicle problems and accidents are sure to follow.

Although Twentynine Palms stays relatively warm during the winter compared to other areas around the country, the temperature can still drop below freezing, which means winterizing your car is important, especially for Marines and sailors who are traveling up to those snowy mountains for skiing and snowboarding.

According to The Safety Corner monthly newsletter from the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, there are many tasks that should be checked and taken care of to winterize vehicles before the winter season rolls around.

- Don't put off a 30,000-mile full service.
- Flush the cooling system and replace the coolant.
- Have battery serviced and load tested to check its ability to hold a charge. If the battery is more than four and a half years old, replace it.
- Check the lights, heater and defroster.
- Get a brake check if you haven't had one in the last six months.
- Ensure a spare tire is filled with air and all proper tire changing equipment is in the trunk.
- Since air contracts in cold temperatures, check tire pressure regularly with a tire gauge to ensure tire pressure is at a safe level and ensure all tires are in good condition.
- Replace windshield wiper blades and ensure the windshield washer reservoir is filled with freeze-resistant windshield washer fluid.

- Keep the gas tank as full as possible to prevent moisture from freezing in the gas lines.
- Put together an emergency winter kit including blankets, extra boots and gloves, ice scraper, small shovel, flashlight, flares, water, and kitty litter for traction if stuck in snow.

"Following these basic guidelines can help save lives," said Col. Monte Dunard, the director for MCCLL. "Every year there are reports of people that go off the road and are not prepared for winter survival. Having a few supplies can make the difference between life and death."

Having these supplies is a necessity for those traveling to Big Bear, Calif., said Rachael Jahn, the safety compliance coordinator for Big Bear City Fire Department.

For those Marines and sailors traveling up to the mountains this winter, Jahn suggests to dress in layers, have a set of chains for all four tires, and always have food and water. She also suggests to never drive below a half tank of gas because you might be turned away if the roads are too hazardous or if the vehicle is deemed unsafe for the road conditions at the time.

"Depending on the conditions, you can be turned back by local authorities if the vehicle doesn't have chains or is not a four-wheel drive vehicle with snow tires," Jahn said. "Always carry chains if you're heading up to Big Bear."

Preparing your vehicle, equipment and plan before the season kicks into full gear can alleviate a problem you might have in the future.

"Think about a survival plan now, not when you get stuck in a snow bank coming back from a short or long ski weekend," Dunard said.



COURTESY PHOTO

A truck, with its front axle broken after swerving off the road, is stranded in Big Bear, Calif., in 2007. Preparing your vehicle, equipment and planning for winter weather can alleviate problems in the future

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See answers on page A5

COFFEE KLATSCH

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- ACROSS**
- Hotfooted it
 - Drink with a burger and fries
 - Catcher's posture
 - "Take one"
 - Hertz rival
 - The silent Marx
 - Molecule part
 - Dirty campaigner
 - Carpenter's groove
 - Mahmoud Abbas's org
 - Main line
 - Winning candidate
 - Kofi Annan
 - Part of Roy G. Biv
 - "Maria"
 - Zero-star fare
 - Le Sage's "Gil"
 - Bad day for Caesar
 - Have a tab
 - Memorable Jackie Gleason character
 - Pub serving
 - An army NCO
 - Hammer end
 - Anjou relative
 - Clamp shape
 - Poseidon's realm
 - Bator, Mongolia
 - Less lenient
 - Idolizer
 - Na Na
 - Gun barrel diameter
 - Bit of Web programming
 - Abba of Israel
 - NY Yankees and Chi. White Sox
 - Garb for a judge
 - Designer
 - Schiaparelli
 - Taylor of "The Nanny"
 - "Zounds!"
 - Fiddler's tune
- DOWN**
- What elms provide
 - Flower part
 - Chip away at
 - FDR, but not TR
 - Pitched a tent
 - Immature seed
 - Italian island resort
 - Braying beast
 - Gambler's loss, figuratively
 - Airline to down under
 - Hankering
 - Takeoff artist
 - British sympathizer of 1776
 - Most recent
 - New Ager John
 - Turn aside
 - "Waste not, want not," e.g.
 - Prospector's find
 - "The Virginian" author Wister
 - capita income
 - String tie
 - Cask dregs
 - "Peer Gynt" playwright
 - Sharp left from Ali
 - Steep slope
 - Blunted blade
 - Weak brew
 - Arrow poison
 - Declared as fact
 - Car shopper's option
 - Biblical queendom
 - Duke or earl
 - Rub out
 - Kidney-related
 - Not quite shut
 - Chip's chipmunk chum
 - Bakery fixture
 - Plod along
 - Post opposite

The #1 reason you're not losing weight

BY SHARI LOPATIN
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

You've changed the foods you eat to include more fruits and veggies. You've cut back on the soda and you've started exercising three times a week.

And yet, you're not losing weight ... or at least, you're not losing enough. Why? It really all boils down to two very small, but significant words: portion control.

"Many individuals are totally unaware of how much is an appropriate amount of food," said Lynne Campagne, a registered dietitian with TriWest Healthcare Alliance.

How many calories are you really consuming each day? For example, a single serving of meat—like chicken or steak—is roughly the size of your palm. Reducing the number of calories you eat or drink can help to prevent weight gain ... and promote weight loss.

And the key to controlling calories lay in portion control.

Try Portion Control: 'Create Your Plate' Did you know the American Diabetes

Association has a tool to help you control your portions better?

It's called "Create Your Plate," and it focuses first on portion sizes and then food choice. Not only is it meant to help diabetics manage their condition, but it can be an effective weight-loss tool.

You can apply the basics of "Create Your Plate" easily at home. Here's how it works:

- Put a line down the middle of your empty dinner plate.
- On one side, cut it again so you have three sections on your plate.
- Fill the largest section with non-starchy veggies (i.e. green beans, spinach, mushrooms).
- In one of the smaller sections, place starchy foods such as whole grain breads or potatoes.
- Fill the other small section with meat such as chicken or salmon.
- Add an eight-ounce glass of low-fat milk or a six-ounce container of light yogurt.

For more healthy eating tips, visit TriWest.com/HealthyLiving.

OBSERVATION POST

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MCIWest off-limits establishments guidance prohibits service members from patronizing the following locations. This order applies to all military personnel.

- In Oceanside:**
- Angelo's Kars, 222 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054
 - Angelo's Kars, 226 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054
- 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 National City:**
- Dream Crystal, 15366 Highland Ave.
 - Sports Auto Sales, 1112 National City Blvd.

Local off-limits guidance prohibits service members from patronizing the following locations.

- In Twentynine Palms:**
- Adobe Smoke Shop, 6441 Adobe Rd.
 - STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Rd.
 - K Smoke Shop, 5865A Adobe Rd.
- In Yucca Valley:**
- Yucca Tobacco Mart, 57602 29 Palms Hwy.
 - Puff's Tobacco Mart, 57063 29 Palms Hwy.
- In Palm Springs:**
- Village Pub, 266 S. Palm Canyon Dr.

For the complete orders, but not off-limits, check out the Combat Center's official website at <http://www.marines.mil/units/29palms>

WHAT I'VE LEARNED

THE BUSY BEE

Deanna Storer

Perpetual Volunteer
40, Boise, Idaho

INTERVIEWED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY
1ST LT. SIN Y. KOOK

November 18, 2012

> **I don't know**, I've never had a bad date— umm, the best date is with a bunch of friends, going to dinner, movie-watching, Dirty Dancing. Yes, it was 1988.

> **I wanted to be on TV** as an actress but I didn't

watch a lot of TV growing up so... I should probably say I wanted to be on stage, in front of people. I was in a family of five kids and I was second, not first. Yes, I wanted to be the center of attention.

> **Liver has a horrible taste** and duck is grizzily. We had duck, yuuuck, and it's squeaky. But I love squeaky cheese which is curds, ironically but yeah, still hate duck.

> **I don't know how I** got picked for Oprah. I'm amazed, I guess because of the great programs I'm affiliated with, like LINKS. I care, I hope that came through. Wherever I decide to put my energy into, I put my whole heart goes with it.

> **Babbet Maxwell with Military** Spouse magazine said that I was selected to participate, an opportunity for military spouses, October 10 and 11. First, they wanted to know if I was available and interested.

They said that we were going to watch a new show they created, and they wanted our opinion. She couldn't tell me a location except D.C. It was Jack's, my oldest son, 13th birthday. I was skeptic and I didn't want it to be a competition among the spouses in the Armed Forces. When I said I didn't know, she said if I wasn't giving birth or getting married, I should be there.

> **It was almost as if as, 'I knew it!'** I just had this sneaky suspicion in my mind. I mean it's her network, wouldn't she show up? But just, ah! Like, 'huh! It's really her!'

> **I remember looking at the girl** next to me and saying, 'It's Christmas. It's Christmas with Oprah!' Do you know what this means? Do you really know what this means?

> **It's so humbling.** I'm really terribly torn. Oprah said keep the ones that you want. Wherever these things end up, they will be most well-deserved. I won't keep all of them. Some things are better suited for others. Like my mom has a dog and there's an awesome dog bin. So, she's going to get that. I want to share some but at the same time I'm keeping Oprah's advice and keeping the ones I do want.

> **All expense paid.** There's cash for us to play with. It's an all-inclusive island, all-inclusive resort. And it's a week with my husband. I don't get him alone by myself for an extended amount of time very often. So I'm very much looking forward to that.

> **It's truly overwhelming.** I wore waterproof mascara just in case.

> **8 years old in Iowa.** My grandparents came to our house, we had a Christmas program we all performed in, the kids. We got to open presents that night with just our family. The next day we went to our grandparents' house and had the whole extended family. It was just awesome. There was so much family. Best Christmas growing up, ever.

> **Volunteering is people driven. I love people.** I love to learn about people. Everybody is so different and has something different to offer. I love to find out that one place of when they fit in and where they fit in. Also their 'ah-ha!' moment that they know, but yeah, it's people.

> **Cuz I have to sit still.** And school is boring, I'd fall asleep. I don't have time to be bored.

> **One girl punched me once** — well, it wasn't a mean punch. She was being tough and I was blowing her off. She got mad that I wasn't afraid of her. I think she hit me either in the side of the neck or, heavens no, not a black eye! Actually, I think she hit me in the arm. Everybody just stopped. It was between classes in the hallway. I wasn't enemies with her, she just had a beef with me and I would not fester it. She finally said, 'That's it. I'm going to hit you.' I didn't think she would. It was mortifying.

> **We've been** together since 1990, so 22 years. Am I aging myself?

> **I was looking under** the car door to look at the baby puppies and mama dog bit me, protecting her puppies. But I was a kid, I was four. I get a claustrophobic issue so they put a blanket over my mouth to do stitches.

> **I'm a really good** shot. I've got great aim.

> **The one time Ron took me** hunting with his buddies and my brother, they gave me a rifle with an action lever safety or something. Hamar safety? We got out of the truck and he said, 'Ok D- put your safety on.' I did but I had my glove on and it slipped off my thumb and it went off. Every man patted himself down to make sure they weren't full of bullets and we all got back in the truck because I cleared the area. So they took my gun away and put me on a rock. They told me I had to sit there and read a book. I said, 'What if the bears came?' They didn't care because I cost them an entire hunting area. I cleared it for everyone.

> **I love outdoors.** I do enjoy being outside. But if they go hunting, they're out for days and they stink, so yeah.

> **Christmas eve, open one** present and ham buns for dinner. My mom always made ham buns, yes, H-A-M. Oh, and rolls. Ham buns and rolls for Christmas Eve.

> **Dude, you're burning** this. You're fired.

> **Twentynine Palms has** a uniqueness all its own that's becoming home to me. I just miss the mountains, green, and the seasons back in Idaho.

> **I will tell people I used to be shy.** I thought I was a shy kid! I did! But my mom tells me, constantly lately, that my older sister used to push me and say, 'Deanna, you go do it.' So I was never afraid to go first. I was never afraid to be the first one out there because she was with me. She always said, 'I got your back. You go do it and I'll be right here.' I knew I wasn't alone and I didn't care to do it first. If she were to tell me to go do it alone, I probably would have never done it.

> **As long as I didn't** have to do it by myself, I was happy.

> **We want more for our kids** and we had a lot. So they're getting more than a lot. I really truly try to hold back. It's hard to not spoil your kids. I want them to have everything because I didn't have everything. But at the same time, I want them to know what it is to need and to want. If I give them everything they won't want for anything.

> **If I had a daughter**, ohhhhh. She would be so spoiled! She would probably end up the one who wanted to be in dresses and curl her hair and total princess because that's not me.

> **I was the tomboy** growing up. I threw worms at my sister's hair. I was dirty. My hair never curled, it was always straight. It still is always straight! I was my dad's son, until his son came along.

> **I love, love love little girls.** I'm grateful that I don't have one or I'd go broke.

> **Lust lasts three years!** True love kicks in after three years when you're good and sick of each other.

> **You can fall** in love, true love lasts when the lust is gone. Yet I have friends who've been married for over 25 years and she's said there's still physical chemistry running wild.

> **Optimism is healthy.** Absolutely I'm an optimist!

> **I think success is** measured by the individual, when it's most important. Other people will judge and measure success. What success to me is not necessarily money, but achieving goals. Successful people achieve their goals and are content with it.

> **I still have goals** that I have not met but I am continually working and evaluating. I've come to a point in my life where it's absolute contentment. I'm happy of where I am and what I'm doing.

> **Sleeping in.** Getting up. This morning was a perfect day. The boys are here, nobody's fighting. Everything's just clicking. Things are going well. Lunch with the girls. Dinner cooks itself. Everything's in its place and there's a good movie on.



DEANNA STORER, MIDDLE ROW, FAR RIGHT SITTING DOWN

VISIT, from A1

deployment to Afghanistan.

"I can honestly say, from the bottom of my heart, that the team here has given me essential skills to ensure that I can deliver real effect on the ground in Afghanistan," Dreelan said.

"The role players that you have here remained in role, the fact that they're using the language and remain in that language throughout the period is second to none," he explained to Toolan. "I'm [surprised] by the capability you've got here. I would wish to see that recreated back in the United Kingdom."

Next, the official visitor found himself submerged in a Middle Eastern place setting for lunch, where class leaders discussed their thoughts on the training. Their in-depth discussion led them to a foreign weapons brief.

The knowledgeable instructors and weapons specialists had every bit of Toolan's attention. With

each weapon the instructors and Toolan handled, a discussion broke out. History, nomenclature and specifications of each weapon were brought to the table.

The 10 weapons in the class are standard military rifles, machine guns and mortars that students are trained to handle. Weapons instructors for ATG ensure that their students are up-to date with foreign weapons commonly found in country.

Before Toolan finished his tour, Petty Officer 1st Class Reynaldo Delattibodierr, hospital corpsman, showed him how life saving skills are taught to the students. ATG's medical instructors train students with advanced equipment to simulate emergencies. Their equipment can simulate breathing problems and bleeding from an amputation.

"My thought is that the Afghan National Army would be happy to continue a relationship with the U.S.," Toolan said about ATG's training. "They understand that there are capabilities that they need as an armed force."



[Left] Lt. Gen. John A. Toolan, Jr., Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Col. Joseph Craft, Regional Operations Coordination Center senior advisor and Commanding General Brig. Gen. George W. Smith, Jr. talk during Toolan's tour of the Advisor Training Group Nov. 16.

[Above] Lt. Gen. John A. Toolan, Jr., Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force, receives a weapons brief from the ATG staff during his visit at the Combat Center Nov. 16.

**EXPO, from A1**

Units across the installation were encouraged to go to the Tech Expo to see what it had to offer.

"I just came to the expo to see what's out here," said 1st Lt. Timothy Richardson, communications officer, Combat Logistics Battalion 7. "As a communications officer it's important for me to know what's coming out and what's on the horizon."

The Tech Expo is used as a tool to keep Marines aboard the Combat Center abreast of the progressing technology field.

"It's a rapidly changing field and you have to keep your finger on the pulse," Richardson said. "Technology changes quickly, especially in the communications field. You have to stay on top of it."



[Above] 1st Lt. Timothy Richardson, communications officer, Combat Logistics Battalion 7 talks to vendors at the Tech Expo at the Combat Center's Officer's Club Nov. 15.



[Left] Cpl. Timothy Mills, supply clerk, Tactical Training Exercise Control Group, takes a look at what some vendors have to offer at the Tech Expo at the Combat Center's Officer's Club Nov. 15.

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ALLIGATOR, from A1

sized attacks, combined arms training, live fire exercises with heavy machine guns and mortars and they train on our MOUT facilities. They do just about everything needed to make them combat ready.”

The Combat Center offers the British Royal Marines the chance to train in a desert environment.

“This is the only place in the world where you can do what we do and that's why they come here,” Potter said. “We combine live-fire training with maneuver. We have the ranges to do it and we do it safely.”

The Combat Center is made up of more than 935 square miles and is more than six times larger than the largest training area in the United Kingdom, the Defense Training Estate on the Salisbury Plain.

“The size of the area is significantly larger than what's available in the U.K. and the terrain is more challenging and much more varied,” said Capt Mark Sandey, Company M Second in Command, 42 Commando. “It's certainly more difficult than what we're used to and it actually resembles some of the places that we are more likely to deploy to in the future.”

The troops of 42 Commando have also been able to utilize many of the military operations on urban terrain ranges available here at the Combat Center

“There are a lot more urban facilities here,” Sandey said. “Range 220, the big town up on the hill, is vast compared to what we have. We get the opportunities for larger formations to exercise and the greater realism of being able to immerse yourself in that environment as opposed to have just eight or 10 stand-alone buildings which is closer to what we have in the U.K.”

The most important value taken away from Black Alligator is the realism the Royal Marines experience and the accurate representation of what they might face when deployed, said Sandey.

“I've never been to the States before, and to be on such a huge range, where you can do so much in this massive space, is definitely a new experience,” said Marine Felix Melligan, General GT's Marine, Company M, 42 Commando. “There are so many aspects of the FSG, fire support group and now out here they've been able to do their (training) which they don't really get to do too much back in the U.K.”

The Royal Marines are training in combined arms exercises from a fireteam-level all the way up to battalion-level which is new training for most.

“None of us, aside from the lads that have gone on tour, have really done that level of attack before,” said Melligan. “We've been working from two-men then four-men to eight-men and we've been building up gradually. I think we're are really prepared and I'm looking forward to it.”

The Marines of the Combat Center have been supportive and efficiently accommodating towards the Royal Marines of 42 Commando said Sandey. It is important that they continue to develop and maintain the already strong alliance between the two militaries.

“They are our counterpart,” said Potter. “They've had a great influence on us and our traditions as a Marine Corps. They are a great ally and we've enjoyed a long, mutually beneficial relationship with them. We don't just have a shared language, we have shared traditions, customs and ethos and a shared commitment to doing things the right way.”



[Above] Cpl. Chris Warren, section commander, Company M, 42 Commando, evaluates the performance of his Royal Marines after they performed a platoon-level exercise Nov. 14 at Range 111. The Royal Marines arrived at the Combat Center Oct. 9 to conduct their annual Black Alligator training which prepares them for combat using a series of combined arms exercises.

[Right] A Royal Marine with Company M, 42 Commando, performs a platoon-level exercise Nov. 14 at Range 111. The Royal Marines arrived at the Combat Center Oct. 9 to conduct their annual Black Alligator training.



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SAFETY

STORY BY LANCE CPL. ALI AZIMI

UTV COURSE NOW REQUIRED

A new class has been added to the list of motor vehicle safety classes for the Marine Corps. The newest edition is the Utility Terrain Vehicle Course that teaches Marines capabilities and proper handling of off-highway vehicles.

UTVs, also referred to as recreational off-highway vehicles, are four wheeled versatile machines able to traverse rough terrain, tight spots and narrow roads other vehicles have difficulty or can't fit through.

Unlike other off-road vehicles, such as dirt bikes or all-terrain vehicles, the UTVs feature extra seats to safely accommodate passengers and a cargo bed to help transport gear and supplies. The roll-over protection structure guards users in case of an accident, and its light weight and engine size save gas as an alternate to SUVs and trucks.

"The UTV world is really big and there are a big variety of styles," said Bob Piirainen, traffic safety manager and UTV instructor, Combat Center Safety Office. "We use them for all kinds of stuff. The range guys use them to go out to the ranges, which is a lot easier with four wheel drive and being able to fit into tight areas."

All these benefits of UTVs have made the vehicle a commonly used asset in the Marine Corps. However, a trend of small accidents with the vehicles prompted a counter measure to assure the safety of Marines.

"We've had quite a few accidents with them," Piirainen said. "People started getting hurt with them. The Marine Corps went out and had some folks put

together a curriculum."

Since the establishment of the Driver Improvement Course and the Basic Riders Course for motorcyclists, there has been a large decrease in the number of accidents on the road and the UTV course looks to do the same.

The Combat Center is scheduled to have its first course in the December time frame. The course only takes half a day and is taught at the Combat Center's dirt bike and ATV range. The lessons teach everything from basic maneuvers to going around obstacles. Marines must provide their own off-road vehicle and take an online survey at <http://www.rohva.org/> prior to the course.

"Anybody who operates the UTVs in an off-road environment is required to take the course," Piirainen said. "Any MOS can potentially need it."

There are only a handful of instructors in the Marine Corps. Piirainen was one of the first six people to be certified as a UTV instructor in the Marine Corps and

"Anybody who operates the UTVs in an off-road environment is required to take the course. Any MOS can potentially need it."

— Bob Piirainen

is the Combat Center's only UTV instructor.

The first instructor's course for the UTVs was held at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center Bridgeport, Calif. in June. The five-day course taught instructors everything about the versatile vehicles and how to pass on those lessons to students of the course.

"Fortunately, we were up in Bridgeport so we got a lot of extra training with them, meaning a lot of rock climbing and traversing over some different types of obstacles. It's not only soft sand you see here but also trees, rocks and things only Bridgeport has," Piirainen said.

Piirainen looks to pass on the lessons he's learned to the Marines of the Combat Center.

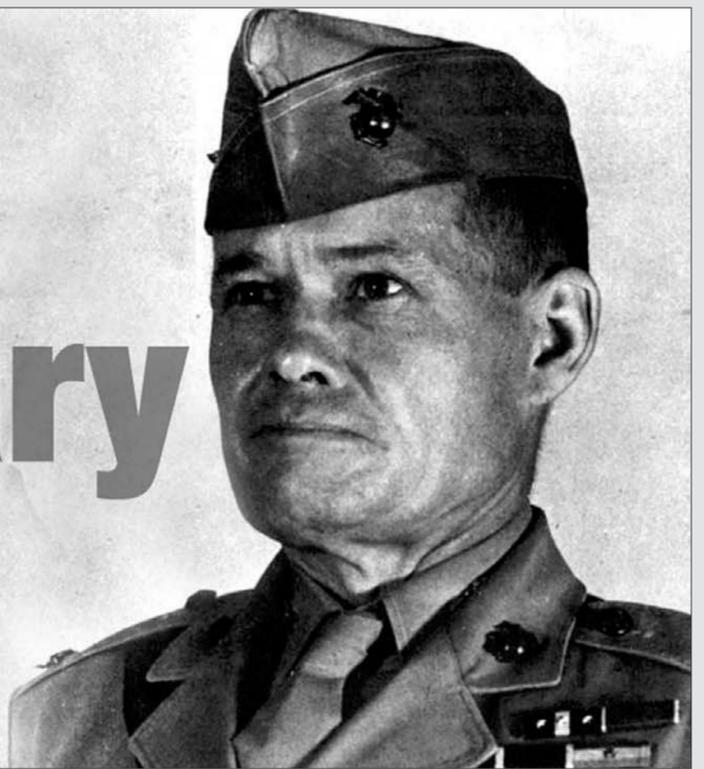
In order to take the course, Marines must have their driver's license and a Drivers Improvement Card. For more information on the course or to sign up, call Piirainen at 830-6154.





A Legendary Marine

Story by Cpl. Thomas Bricker



Behind the scenes of the Corps' most recognized hero
"Chesty" Puller

In the United States, Veterans Day pays homage to service men and women of the nation's military, those who currently wear the uniform and those who came before.

The day, which first garnered national prominence in 1919 when President Woodrow Wilson signed Armistice Day into effect, was created to recognize those whose acts of courage, selflessness and heroism have kept this country safe.

If most Marines were asked to name a high-profile Marine of the past or someone to emulate, there's a good chance you'll hear a common answer. The name would be Chesty Puller: an enlisted man, a commissioned officer, a recipient of five Navy Crosses and an overall hero in the Corps.

All recruits going through Marine Corps boot camp learn about those who've served before them. Marines are taught to emulate traits of those who have proven themselves to be heroes and exceptional, fearless leaders. Lt. Gen. Lewis "Chesty" Puller was the embodiment of these traits. As a Marine for more than 30 years, from World War II to the Vietnam War, Puller became one of the most decorated and recognizable figures in military history.

"He was cut from a different bolt of cloth. He exemplified so many traits we want to follow," said Danny Strand, director of Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow's Safety and Emergency Services. "He was one of the most decorated Marines in history. His troops loved him too."

Many attribute Puller's exemplary leadership qualities to his ability to relate to the troops he led. Once an enlisted man himself, Puller made sure his Marines were well taken care of.

"Chesty showed everyone you didn't need a college education to lead Marines. He was one of them at one point so he understood what they would go through," Strand explained. "I think this is why most people liked him as much as they did."

Puller was recognized for many dauntless tasks while serving in the Marine Corps. He was awarded his first Navy Cross for leading his forces into engagements against superior numbers. Throughout 1930, Puller led forces in the Nicaraguan National Guard in several battles against bandits in which the outnumbered national guard forces routed the enemy each time. In the entirety of 1930, Puller lost nine men. Subsequently, he was awarded four more Navy Crosses for equal feats of extraordinary heroism. Tales of valor such as these have made it easy for Marines to remember why he has become the legend he is today.

With these many counts of bravery under his belt, it was only a matter of time before tall tales of Puller's deeds began to spread. There are Marines today who have a hard time separating fact from fiction.

"There's a lot of myth and legends that follow Puller now," said Sgt. Michael Pressler, artillery mechanic with Fleet Support Division aboard MCLB Barstow. "A lot of it has gotten blown way out of proportion but, with him, I could see how. It's hard to tell what's real and what's been fabricated."

Puller has become known for more than his acts of valor during his time serving. His words and actions out of battle have garnered him fans within the ranks as well.

"He held himself to a higher standard than anyone else he knew," said Strand, a fellow mustang and retired lieutenant colonel. "During his time, an accidental discharge of your weapon was twenty dollars. He once fined himself one hundred dollars for one."

Although it's hard to say whether the sayings are true, many people attribute some of their favorite quotes to Puller, as well.

"My favorite quotes from Chesty are ones that have to do with common sense. Now, I know we're not supposed to put our hands in our pockets but Chesty once said 'a Marine with cold hands and warm pockets is a fool,'" said Sgt. Jacey Marks, assistant training chief with Headquarters Battalion, MCLB Barstow.

Puller's approach to situations with common sense and understanding play a large role in the reasons Marines and others hold him in high regard.

Puller earned the respect of those he served with through the lessons he taught by word or action. And this respect has stood the test of time. It's good men and women like Chesty Puller we honor on Veterans Day each year.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARINE CORPS ARCHIVES & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Brig. Gen. Lewis "Chesty" Puller inspects staff and battalion commanders in Korea in 1951. Puller was beloved by his men and continues to inspire Marines with his legendary quotes and acts of heroism.

"There's a lot of myth and legends that follow Puller now. A lot of it has gotten blown way out of proportion but, with him, I could see how. It's hard to tell what's real and what's been fabricated."

-Sgt. Michael Pressler



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

Free Line Dance Lessons

Learn to dance the night away
 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

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.morongocasinoresort.com>.

Pacquiao vs. Marquez 4

Fighters take the cage
 When: 6 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 8
 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>.

Journey

Classic band performs
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 8
 Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
 84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
 For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Ohio Players and The Family Stone

American funk groups perform
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 29
 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, November 23

6 p.m. - Hotel Transylvania, Rated PG
 9 p.m. - Trouble with the Curve, Rated PG-13
 Midnight - Dredd, Rated R

Saturday, November 24

10:30 a.m. - Free Matinee Cars 2, Rated PG
 12:30 p.m. - Frankenweenie, Rated PG
 3 p.m. - Hotel Transylvania 3D, Rated PG
 6 p.m. - Taken 2, Rated PG-13
 9 p.m. - Looper, Rated R
 Midnight - End of Watch, Rated R

Daniel Craig stars in the most sensational Bond movie in ages



In "Skyfall," the smartest, slickest, most sensational Bond outing in ages, the lord of the spies grapples with changing times, the limitations of his own battered body, the emotional tug of mortality, and a super-villain who spreads cyber-terror through a digitized network of global computer hackery.

NEIL POND

"Skyfall"

Starring Daniel Craig, Judi Dench and Javier Bardem
 Directed by Sam Mendes
 PG-13, 143 min.

After all this time, it's not surprising James Bond is showing a bit of his age. This 23rd movie about the world's most famous secret agent comes exactly 50 years after the first one ("Dr. No") in 1962. Over the decades, several actors have stepped into the iconic role. And now Daniel Craig makes his third appearance as 007, the dapper British MI6 officer with a license to kill.

In "Skyfall," the smartest, slickest, most sensational Bond outing in ages, the lord of the spies grapples with changing times, the limitations of his own battered body, the emotional tug of mortality, and a super-villain who spreads cyber-terror through a digitized network of global computer hackery.

James Bond, it might appear, is an old dog out of place in a modern world of new tricks.

After an audaciously thrilling pre-credits sequence (that reportedly took three months to film) in which Bond pursues a bad guy across the sprawling

rooftops of Istanbul on motorcycle before finally coming to blows atop a speeding train, the movie settles into its groove. Someone has stolen a computer drive with information that could compromise the entire British Secret Service, and M (Judi Dench), Bond's boss, becomes the target of a mysterious psychopath (Javier Bardem) with chillingly personal reasons for his mad rampage.

On a tropical hiatus due to his presumed death, Bond returns to Her Majesty's service after hearing that M is in danger. But circumstances dictate that he has to reapply to get his old job back. That includes re-passing the fitness test—which turns out to be quite a task, leaving him huffing and puffing and nursing his recently banged-up arm and shoulder.

"It's a young man's game," Bond's reminded by Gareth Mallory (Ralph Fiennes), the bureaucrat in charge of hauling the British espionage division into the 21st century.

Seeing if 007 is up for the job will keep you glued to your seat as the plot shifts from London to Shanghai, then to the island lair where Bond meets his nemesis, and finally to the moors of Scotland for an emotionally charged standoff where Bond must not only defend the empire, but also confront his own past.

Director Sam Mendes integrates sweeping action, solid characters, spectacular scenery, a bountiful sense of clev-

erness, and a pitch-perfect tone of self-reference to the long line of Bond pop-culture mythology. With his performance in this movie, Craig, certainly the best action star to ever take on the role made famous by Sean Connery, will surely move even higher up the best-Bond ranks for many fans. He brings out facets of the character that other actors have simply never found before.

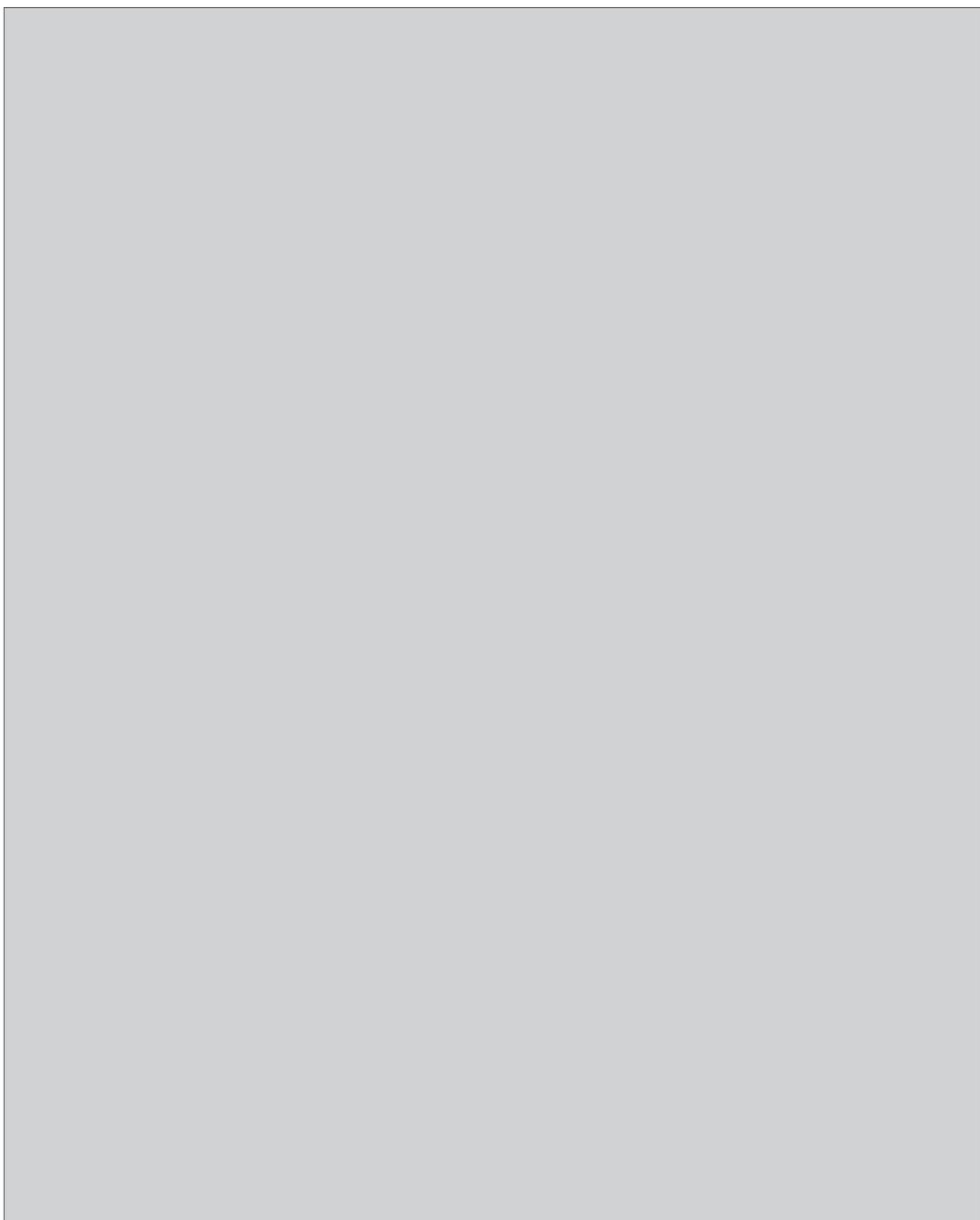
Bardem, so memorable as the creepy killer in "No Country For No Men," adds another memorable creepy killer role to his resume as the soft-spoken sadist Silva, a swishy, blonde-haired demon who taunts Bond with the prospect of England's old cloak-and-dagger crumbling underneath his new world order of servers and software.

"It's amazing the panic you can cause with a single computer," he coos.

"Skyfall" is full of surprises, including the meaning of its title, the new details it reveals about Bond's childhood, the emotional range it allows 007 to span, and the identity of a female character who turns out to be...

Oh, you'll just have to find out for yourself!

But the most surprising thing is just how fresh a 50-year-old franchise can be with one brisk, crisp new slap. Bond is back, and it's been a long time since he's seemed anywhere near this alive...achy old joints and all.



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6-4-8

Combat Center runners complete second race in series



[Above] Runners take off at the starting line of the 4-mile race of the 6-4-8 Race Series at the Combat Center's obstacle course Nov. 15. This was the second installment in the race series with the final race to be run on Nov. 29.

[Left] Arthur Schocken, unmanned aerial vehicle operator, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1, sprints to the finish line at the 4-mile race of the 6-4-8 Race Series at the Combat Center's obstacle course Nov. 15.