



OBSERVATION POST



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First ITX

Corps initiates new pre-deployment training

Cpl. William J. Jackson
Combat Correspondent

Since the early 1990s, the Combat Center has provided thousands of Marines with the necessary training to conduct combat operations in a combined arms environment. Training exercises have given Marines the readiness to adapt to an ever-changing battlefield. As the requirements and missions for the Marine Corps changed during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, so did the training requirements. As a whole, the Marine Corps has developed a program to compete with changing war fighting tactics.

The Combat Center launched the first Integrated Training Exercise as the Marine Corps' leading pre-deployment training, Jan. 11. More than 15 units, Marine Corps wide, began ITX 1-13, the successor to Enhanced Mojave Viper. ITX still maintains much of the same, or slightly modified fundamental



LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

Marines with Company F, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment perform company-sized attacks July 29, 2012 at the Combat Center's Range 400 during Enhanced Mojave Viper.

core events previously found in EMV.

"ITX is new and it is still evolving," said Col. Andrew Kennedy, director, Tactical Training Exercise Control Group. "ITX 1-13 will be different from ITX 1-14. ITX looks very similar to EMV right now. We are still training OEF-bound units along with non-OEF-bound units."

The Corps is taking a new step in training evolutions and pre-deployment preparation. During ITX, Marines will be trained to support general contingency operations for service in the Unit Deployment Program and on Marine Expeditionary Units.

"The transition to ITX is focused on keeping

See **ITX** page A6



Change of Command

CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON

Maj. Gen. David H. Berger, Commanding General, Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, hands the MAGTFTC/MCAGCC colors to Sgt. Maj. Matthew B. Brookshire, MAGTFTC, MCAGCC Sergeant Major, as Berger assumes command at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Jan. 11.

Combat Center welcomes new Commanding General

Cpl. William J. Jackson
Combat Correspondent

Maj. Gen. David H. Berger took charge of the Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command and Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, after relieving Brig. Gen. George W. Smith Jr., during a change of command ceremony Jan. 11, at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field.

In the 18 months as commanding general, Smith oversaw pivotal changes and modernizations in both the training and installation missions and capabilities of the Combat Center. His leadership led to the extensive construction and modernization efforts aboard the installation, including the construction and renovation of five bachelor enlisted quarters, a new family housing neighborhood and the renovation of recreational and family centers that support Combat Center families and staff.

"This is a special place," said Smith. "I didn't know how special it was until I took command and started moving about the Combat Center. It's a special place well beyond many unique capabilities and training opportunities that present [themselves] here. It's a special place because of the people.

Because of this, I would call it a unique land of uniformed and civilian staff that accomplishes the mission each and every day."

Five platoons of Marines from Headquarters Battalion, Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center, Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One, Marine Corps Logistics Operations

"This is a special place. I didn't know how special it was until I took command and started moving about the Combat Center."

— Brig. Gen. George W. Smith Jr.

Group and Marine Corps Tactics and Operations Group marched onto the field as the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing band played. Each platoon represented the five commands that make up MAGTFTC. They were followed by Smith and Berger who took their places in front of the hundreds of attendees.

Fifty state flags and six territorial flags whipped in the wind as rifles cracked from the rifle manual on the field. Distinguished

guests, families and friends watched the exchange of the MAGTFTC colors, symbolizing the passage of command from one general to another.

Berger, now Commanding General of the 28,000 person installation, took time to address the crowd and recognize the efforts put forth under Smith's command and spoke about his future plans at the Combat Center.

Berger last served as the Commanding General of 1st Marine Division (Forward) in Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan. He was responsible for the day-to-day ground combat operations across Afghanistan's Helmand province.

"It's an honor to serve with the 'Blue Diamond' again," said Berger. "I look forward to working with everybody here. This is kind of coming back home for me. Although I've never lived here, I feel like I have because I've trained in it my entire career. I'm very blessed to be here."

Before leaving the field that day, Smith took a moment to address the Combat Center and his parents for their support.

"I'd like to take a minute just to recognize my parents [retired] Maj. Gen. and Mrs. George W. Smith," said Smith. "I've

See **CG** page A6



Service uniforms to be worn every Friday

Cpl. Nana Dansa-Appiah
Marine Forces Reserves

MARINE CORPS SUPPORT FACILITY NEW ORLEANS --Beginning Jan. 4, 2013, all non-deployed Marines and sailors assigned to Marine units, regardless of component, active or Reserve, will be required to wear the appropriate seasonal service uniform each Friday.

"Unlike the utility uniform, the service uniforms are form fitting, and this characteristic provides leaders with an opportunity to frequently evaluate the personal appearance of their Marines without inducing a work stoppage," said Sgt. Maj. Michael E. Sprague, senior enlisted advisor for Force Headquarters Group, Marine Forces Reserve.

The Service B uniform, otherwise known as "bravos," consists of a long-sleeve khaki shirt with a tie and trousers and is worn November through March. The Service C uniform, popularly referred to as "charlies," consists of a short-sleeve khaki shirt with trousers and is worn during daylight savings time.

"Watching Marines square their gig line away and adjust their uniform is indicative of the 'spit and polish' pride we seem to have strayed from," Sprague said.

Marines are not just known for their battlefield prowess, but for their high standards of professionalism and sharp personal appearance.

According to Marine Corps Order P1020.34G, all Marines, including Reservists, are required to maintain their uniforms in a neat and serviceable condition and "by their appearance, set an example of neatness and strict conformity" with uniform regulations. This means that Marines must not only abide by the proper wear of the uniform, but also pay attention to their personal and physical appearance and must fully comply with the service's grooming and weight control standards.

Commanders may make case-by-case exceptions to the wearing of service uniforms on Fridays on operational requirements, but for the most part, the rule is service uniform Fridays.

Marines should direct questions to their unit leaders for further clarification on how their units will implement the new policy.

Watching Marines square their gig line away and adjust their uniform is indicative of the 'spit and polish' pride we seem to have strayed from,"

— Sgt. Maj. Michael E. Sprague

Owning Firearms

Combat Center regulations for weapons on base

Cpl. Ali Azimi
Combat Correspondent

In wake of the tragic shootings in Conn. there has been much talk among politicians about increasing restriction on the purchase and registration of firearms.

It is important to stay informed and up-to-date on laws and regulations. Currently, base policy concerning gun ownership remains the same, but it is subject to change as state and federal laws change.

The Combat Center order regarding weapons defines firearms as a small arms weapon from which a projectile is propelled by gunpowder or air pressure. Many of the laws on base regarding firearms parallel California's laws, according to Scott Pryor, deputy police chief, Provost Marshal's Office. The Provost Marshal's Office is required to track weapons coming onto the Combat Center for the safety of its residents and officers responding to residences.

Any weapons banned by the state are also prohibited aboard the base. After the purchase of a firearm, Marines are required to register their weapons at the Vehicle Registration Office, located in Bldg. 901. They need to provide paperwork showing the weapon has been registered in the state as well as fill out a weapons registration form available at the vehicle registration office. The form must be properly filled out and signed by a command representative.

Upon registration, the owner of the firearm is given a Weapons Registration Card. This card must be kept on the person any time they are in possession of their firearm.

Marines living in the barracks are required to store their

See **GUNS** page A6

This week in Combat Center History



Reprinted from the Observation Post dated Jan. 15, 1988 Vol. 32 Issue No. 02

CMC sets Basic Warrior Training for all Marines

Staff Sgt. Dwaine Roberts
Combat Correspondent

Some major changes are in the making for the way Marines are trained. Gen. A. M. Gray, Commandant of the Marine Corps, want the Corps to "get back to basics."

Plans are being drawn up for a concept called Basic Warrior Training (BWT) which will significantly alter training in the Corps as it is known today. All Marines will be involved — officers, females, active duty and reserves.

"In today's Marine Corps there are no longer rear areas and front lines. With terrorism and guerilla warfare, every place will be a front," Gen. Gray said recently to a group of Marines. "That's why every Marine must be a warrior first, no matter what their military occupational specialty is."

Most of the upcoming training changes are directed to gunnery sergeants and below, but some changes will affect senior staff NCOs and officers.

Accordingly, the Corps will take giant steps back into the past. "Old-timers" are familiar with the infantry training course which they completed after regular recruit training, but the practice was discontinued in 1972. However, in the mid-February, recruit training at Parris Island and San Diego is scheduled to take the first step when BWT is phased in without extending the 10 and one-half-week training cycle.

Some topics will be reduced in hours or transformed to video cassettes (such as Marine Corps History) to be taught during the evening hours when recruits have little to do. This will make time for the added week of in-the-field warrior training.

"We won't do it overnight, but we are going to do it. Every recruit will receive infantry training. I want my Marines to be able to take care of themselves and to take care of others." The Commandant added. "You're either going to be good enough to wear this uniform... or give it

up and join another outfit."

After graduation, recruits will see more warrior training as they attended the School of Infantry (SOI) at Camp Lejeune or Pendleton, formerly Infantry Training School. The SOI training could take as long as a month, and will include women but not in coeducational sessions. Marines will be living in the field full-time, if possible, during this period as if they were in a combat situation.

"We've some tweaking yet to do on the program of instruction," said BGen. Frederick E. Sisley, in charge of the Marine Corps training. He explained that the added task of introducing "warrior training" to all other Marines is still being refined, but methods are expected to be set by the end of this summer.

Some sweeping changes are also expected in the area of essential subjects testing. Testing in the 13 subjects will be phased out and replaced by 22 BWT subject areas.

Things may change, but as of now, the proposed subjects are Code of Conduct; military justice and the law of war; history, customs and courtesies; close order drill; security; field sanitation; first aid; uniform clothing and equipment; physical fitness; NBC warfare; marksmanship; tactical measures; intelligence; land navigation; leadership; water survival and swimming; close combat; field indoctrination; worldwide threats; individuals weapons, crew-served weapons; hand grenades, mines and pyrotechnics; and communications and night-vision devices.

Therefore, the time is at hand when Marines will again be first and foremost warriors. We will have to be proficient, not only in our MOSs, but also in the topics of basic warrior and infantry skills.

"We are warriors," Gen. Gray insists. "That's what I want and what the nation demands. I don't care what your MOS is, you're first going to be a warrior, and then whatever else you do."

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

SUDOKU 2790-M

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	7			9		4		
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See answers on page A6

IT'S IN THERE

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
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71					72							73		

ACROSS

1. Cartoon collectibles
5. Be petty
10. Hold jacks or better
14. Cosmetics "caller"
15. Put up with
16. Curly veggie
17. Emaciated one
19. Diva's delivery
20. Staffordshire stink
21. Lamb, notably
23. Crammers, in short time
26. Anderson's "High _ _"
27. Scarecrow stuffing
29. Thumb through, as pages
34. Tooth care org.
37. Bar intro?
38. Great Lakes tribesmen
39. Life, in a "Forrest Gump" simile
44. High standard
45. Right-angle bend

DOWN

1. Explorer John or Sebastian
2. Steer clear of
3. Bits of business card art
4. Pigs' rooting tools
5. Semi section
6. Blood-typing letters
7. Jungle transport
8. i.e., for long
9. Rent collector
10. "Sure, why not?"
11. _-mutuel
12. Dubya and class--mates
13. Clutter-free
18. Fingerboard ridge
22. Israel's Sharon
24. Grid great
28. Dickerson
25. Obi, e.g.
28. Courter
30. Lobster _ Diavolo
31. Starts' partner
32. Lecher's look
33. Old US gas brand
34. "This won't hurt _ _"
35. Bird clubbed to extinction
36. Gives walking papers to
40. Western

Hemisphere gp.

41. Like a base- stealing threat
42. Decked out
43. Word on shoppe signs
48. It keeps things apart
50. What "there oughta be"
51. Pistol's kickback
53. Rubberneck
55. "Girls Lie Too" country singer Clark
56. Violinist Mischa
57. Fresh-mouthed
58. Needle-nosed fishes
59. Carrier to Ben-Gurion
60. Turn in chess
61. Hobo fare
62. Slaughter in baseball
66. Words of praise
67. Hardly any

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

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- 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.

- 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.

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Thomas Wise

Cork City, Ireland — administrative specialist, 20

- > **I grew up** in an Irish family. I'm proud of being Irish. I was born there.
- > **I was around seven** or eight when I moved to America.
- > **We lived on farm** land in Springfield, Ill. We lived in a bigger city in Ireland so it was a change moving here.
- > **In Ireland** it was mostly me and my mom. When we moved to the states we had more family here. My grandparents already lived here and my cousins too.
- > **I had an accent. I can hide it.** I learned to hide it kind of quickly because I got made fun of for it. It was in fourth grade when I could fully hide it.
- > **The biggest change** was learning to read and speak in America, because certain things are different in Ireland. Coming into first grade, they put me in writing and speech classes thinking I was dyslexic and that I was seeing the letters backwards. I wasn't. I'm Irish. It's like our "-er's" we spell them in reverse "-re"; like "centre."
- > **Back in high school** I took college-level German. My German is better than my Irish.
- > **They only taught German** and Spanish and I didn't like the way the Spanish teacher taught the class, so I went with German.
- > **It's come in handy;** with the foreign exchange student at my school and when I went all around Europe.
- > **When I was 16 years old** I went back over there to visit some of my cousins. I was over there for a month during my summer break and we were just like, let's go all over Europe. It didn't cost that much. All we had to do was get on a couple of boats and trains. We stopped in London and Paris for not too long and Amsterdam and Berlin. Berlin is where the German came in handy.
- > **I play rugby.** It's pretty big all over Europe. I was on the base rugby team.
- > **I'd always** had an interest in Bagpipes.
- > **One day my mom said** she had a surprise for me and took me to meet my instructor. I was 10 years old.
- > **I know how to play** 'Crazy Train' by Ozzy Osbourne, the Marines Hymn, Grand Old Flag, but mostly traditional Irish and Scottish songs.
- > **People react** two ways. Usually, they're shocked and awed and like, "Go Scotland!" Then I curse them out because I'm Irish. Second way is, "Shut up, it's annoying. Get out of here. It's too loud." There's no silencer for it. It goes full blast.
- > **I've been a part of** bag pipe bands. The one that I was in and most dedicated to had about 60 members. We did the parades and the fun stuff and only about half did competitions.
- > **I'd say I've done eight parades** for St. Patrick's Day in Springfield. In 2008, I was in the Chicago parade and that year it was the 3rd biggest St. Patrick's Day in the world.
- > **In Ireland, St. Patrick's Day** is a whole lot different. You have a few parades, but people aren't drinking so heavily like in America. There's a lot more masses and ceremonies. Then at night everyone goes crazy! Here everyone just goes crazy all day.
- > **People are surprised** I hate beef and cabbage. I guess that's what most people think Irish food is. My favorite dish from Ireland is just oysters.
- > **It's kind of a family tradition** for the eldest to join the military. My aunt was in the Army for Desert Storm, my grandfather was an Army Reservist, but I'm the first Marine.
- > **My grandfather sparked** my interest in history. When I was little, coming over here, I'd sit down and watch the History and Military channel. I might minor in it later in college, but I plan on taking fire sciences and become a firefighter.
- > **I have a lot of family** as cops and firefighters. I did the fire academy when I was younger and my vocational school was law enforcement, sort of like a junior police academy. I just like the firefighting side of things.
- > **I did the vocational** school for two years. They showed not only the fun stuff, like SWAT tactics, but also the paperwork side. I didn't really like it.
- > **My grandpa's brother was a captain** in the fire department. He said, "Why don't you just join the junior fire academy." So I did it and turned out to like it a lot more.
- > **Right now** I plan to get out and use my GI bill to become a firefighter.

 Interviewed by Cpl. Ali Azimi, January 16, 2013



Story and photo by
Cpl. Timothy Lenzo

Regional Command Southwest

Cpl. Ethan Sullivan, squad leader, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines, Regimental Combat Team 7, is currently deployed to Sangin, Afghanistan, and has gained significant infantry and leadership skills, which he hopes will prepare him for his next challenge.

"This is my third deployment in four years," said Sullivan. "But this is my first combat deployment."

Sullivan, from Santee, Calif., deployed twice with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit. Now, he is gaining knowledge in a combat zone.

"I'm thinking of being a combat instructor," said Sullivan. "I like the infantry and I want to teach Marines."

As a combat instructor, Sullivan would teach the basic fundamentals to new Marines. Originally a mortarman, Sullivan and his leadership believe he has much to offer the School of Infantry.

"He could pretty much teach anything in the infantry," said 1st Lt. Trevor Langley, 1st Platoon commander, Co. G. "Going from mortars to a rifle squad leader, he went from supporting the riflemen to leading the riflemen. He's done both jobs well."

Sullivan impressed his superiors as well as the Marines he leads with his ability to serve as a squad leader during his current deployment.

He seamlessly transitioned from a mortars section leader to an infantry squad leader.

"At first we were a little skeptical because he was a mortarman in charge of riflemen," said Lance Cpl. Austin Vandervegt, a machinegunner in Sullivan's squad. "We were all surprised how he took charge of the squad. He was able to uphold and take charge of a different billet and job, which is awesome."

For Sullivan, it is a chance to develop as a Marine and a leader.

"He's got the experience, technical knowledge and the personality to teach young Marines," Langley said.

Sullivan is in charge of eight Marines and one hospital corpsman. His squad regularly works with the Afghan Uniform Police, Afghan Local Police and Afghan National Army operating in the battalion's area.

"We've done a lot of partnered patrols," Sullivan said. "We go to their bases and talk to them. We discuss partnered operations, but in the end, they are the main effort."

Going on patrols and operating in a combat environment teaches Sullivan valuable lessons he hopes to pass on to junior Marines.

"Being over here helped a lot," Sullivan said. "I've seen combat and I'm getting a lot out of this deployment. I've learned how to deal with situations with junior Marines inside and outside the wire. I know how they react mentally and physically. No one knows how Marines will react in

combat (until they see it). I've seen that firsthand and know how to handle my Marines."

These lessons will help Sullivan as an instructor. With the end of the war in Iraq and the drawdown in Afghanistan, fewer instructors will have experience in combat.

"He's one of the few (noncommissioned officers) that will be pushing back from Afghanistan that has led his squad in combat situations," Langley said.

Sullivan will be able to use his experiences to share with the Marines he trains.

"When I was going through training, it was helpful to hear stories from my instructors of when they went through combat," Vandervegt said. "I think it will help him to have those stories."

Sullivan works hard to take care of his Marines. He checks on their gear and how they are doing both physically and mentally.

"He is passionate about what he does," Vandervegt said. "He cares about his Marines, and he makes sure we are all taken care of. I think he would make a great combat instructor."

Sullivan's squad has been in Afghanistan for several months. Since their arrival, he has patrolled with Afghan National Security Forces, stepped into a rifle squad leader's billet after being a mortarman, experienced combat and saw how it affected his Marines. As a combat instructor, he plans on using all of these lessons to better prepare new Marines.

Death

from below

Air defense community comes home

Story and photos by
Cpl. William J. Jackson

The classroom was well-maintained with photos of Low Altitude Air Defense gunners and shadow boxes preserving the memories of fallen Marines hung on the wall. The room was drab and the windows were blacked out, but the energy of the class was palpable.

For more than 50 years, the Marine Corps has trained Marines to operate its expeditionary surface-to-air weapons systems at the U.S. Army Air Defense School, Fort Bliss, Tx. The first ever LAAD class taught at the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School started its military occupational specialty specific training Monday.

According to Master Sgt. Anthony Gentile, LAAD course director, Company C, MCCES, the course moved from Fort Bliss, Tx. to the Combat Center because Twentynine Palms is well-suited to train the future Marines of the LAAD MOS.

Even though the initial training began on Nov. 20, 2012 with a three-week motor transportation class, it's the LAAD portion that sets these Marines apart.

"We're done with the Humvees and were done with the machine guns," said Sgt. Jeremy Simms, LAAD class advisor, Co. C, MCCES, to the class. "Now we're ready to get into the meat and potatoes on why you're all here. Much like myself, I'm sure that with this period of instruction you'll get the feeling that I get."

Students were shown everything from firing teams to S-shops to the breakdown of the two LAAD battalions in the Marine Corps. Here, the students got their first taste of what their future MOS will be.

LAAD Marines fire shoulder-launched stinger missiles to protect MAGTF assets from air attacks. When necessary, LAAD Marines serve as provisioned infantry for the Marine Aircraft Wings.

"We're an air defense job but it's open to so many aspects of the

Marine Corps," said Master Sgt. Michael Buxkemper, chief instructor. "We have our infantry side and we have our air wing side. We get to patrol, drive Humvees in all types of terrain and we get to fly in helicopters. It's all the fun stuff of all these different MOS' rolled up into ours."

LAAD battalions have two missions, explained Simms. They provide close-in, low altitude, surface to air fires in defense of Marine Air Ground Task Force assets, defending forward combat areas, maneuver forces, vital areas, installations or units engaged in special or independent operations. Secondly, LAAD gunners provide ground secu-



rity force in defense of MAGTF air sites when not engaged in air defense operations.

"If you take a second and think about what that means, we are the only ground unit that's a part of an air wing," Simms said. "We're a ground unit, the only battalion; everything else out there is a squadron. It's both sides of the Marine Corps."

The students were eager to learn about their new lives as gunners while Simms painted a picture of the LAAD community. From there, the students moved on to the weapons portion of the day. The components as well as the capabilities of the FIM-92 Stinger weapon system were broken down to

the students in great detail.

"It's their lifeline," said Staff Sgt. Justin Poole, senior LAAD instructor, Co. C, MCCES. "They're out there by themselves. Our whole job is air defense. If something fails and [the gunner] doesn't know what to do with that weapon, an aircraft can get by."

The excitement came from the students' first portion of LAAD training. The Stinger, as it is commonly known, is the LAAD gunner's primary weapon. The personal, portable infrared homing surface-to-air missile tracks and eliminates enemy aircraft.

"In this MOS we put a lot on the lance corporal, private first class and even young corporals," Poole said. "You have a lot of responsibility in this MOS compared to other jobs. Literally, your actions can wake someone up in the middle of the night if you make that wrong call. It takes a while for that to sink in. It's a big responsibility and that's what we try to instill in them from day one. The biggest thing [the students] need to get out of this is what they can and can't do with the weapon."

The LAAD community is small. On average, a battalion is the size of an infantry company.

"We're such a small community. We have the only job that does this in the entire Marine Corps," Buxkemper said. "If we don't learn to do our job perfectly and systematically, we're fighting for our own survival. We have to learn exactly what we need to do, that way when it does come time to need an air defense unit, we're ready to go."

The 60-day-long course is scheduled to end March 15 providing the Fleet Marine Force with the first LAAD Marines who graduate from the Combat Center.



[Top] Pfc. Devin McClure, Low Altitude Air Defense student, Company C, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, conducts a 13-point critical check on a field handling training version of the FIM-92 Stinger during class Tuesday.

[Left] Master Sgt. Michael Buxkemper, chief LAAD instructor, Co. C, MCCES, shows students the proper techniques to conduct a 13-point critical check on a field handling training version of the FIM-92 Stinger during class Tuesday.

[Above] Sgt. Jeremy Simms, LAAD class advisor, Co. C, MCCES, explains the importance of the torque screws on a field handling training version of the FIM-92 Stinger.

CG, from A1

been very fortunate to have my parents at a number of changes of command. Kathleen and I and our entire family have been really blessed to spend the last 18 months in close proximity to them. It's really been a blessing to our entire family."

Smith will next serve as deputy commander, II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) for security force assistance and will deploy to Afghanistan in late January.



CPL. ALI AZIMI

The Combat Center Color Guard marches onto Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Jan. 11, during the Comanding General's change of command ceremony. Maj. Gen. David H. Berger received command of the Combat Center from Brig. Gen. George W. Smith Jr.

ITX, from A1

the best parts of EMV while increasing the number of opportunities to integrate the tactical elements of the Marine Air Ground Task Force," Kennedy said.

ITX, however, has slightly different scenarios than its predecessor, EMV. It still involves the 400 series live-fire ranges with platoon and company-sized attacks, but training utilizes company support with a live-fire defense the following day, rather than that night.

"Most of the changes in the program apply to those other non-OEF bound units," Kennedy said. "Since the requirement for a heavy counterinsurgency focus is reduced in this demographic, time in the schedule for unit headquarters not involved in stability operations was re-allocated to additional MAGTF integrat-

ed events such as the Long Range Raid and the Small Scale Exercise."

Marines deploying in support of OEF will have training very similar to the previous exercises that involved Afghan role players and training scenarios.

"The transition to ITX is focused on keeping the best parts of EMV while increasing the number of opportunities,"

- Col. Andrew Kennedy

Clear, Hold, Build-3 became the final exercise, a battalion size attack. The battalion concludes an attack on day one of the FINEX and then sets up a defense to fend off a hostile

enemy. Finally, the battalion launches a counter-attack on day three.

"When the Marine Corps ends participation in OEF, the SSE will expand to involve that infantry battalion allowing the regimental combat team to operate with two battalions," Kennedy said. "This will serve as a link to the future Large Scale Exercises, set for summer 2014."

The nature of modern-day war continually changes. With that, the Corps must rise to the occasion and adapt and overcome. The Combat Center and Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command are ensuring Marines stay one step ahead of the enemy. ITX will continue EMV's efforts in shaping the Corps' forces that continue to deploying in support of OEF as well as any future combat operations.

GUNS, from A1

weapons within their unit's armory and are not allowed by any means to be kept in the rooms. Weapons are allowed to be kept within the homes of Marines residing in base housing, as long as they are properly stored. Proper storing means a locked box designed for the weapon.

This same definition of proper storage is required in the transportation of weapons on and off base, or to recreational areas on base.

Privately owned weapons are permitted to be transported in any vehicle, with the weapon unloaded and on safe in the locked trunk of the vehicle, properly stored in its container.

For more information about base policy on weapons, refer to CCO P1630.6E at:

[http://www.29palms.marines.mil/Portals/56/Docs/P1630_6E\[1\].pdf](http://www.29palms.marines.mil/Portals/56/Docs/P1630_6E[1].pdf).

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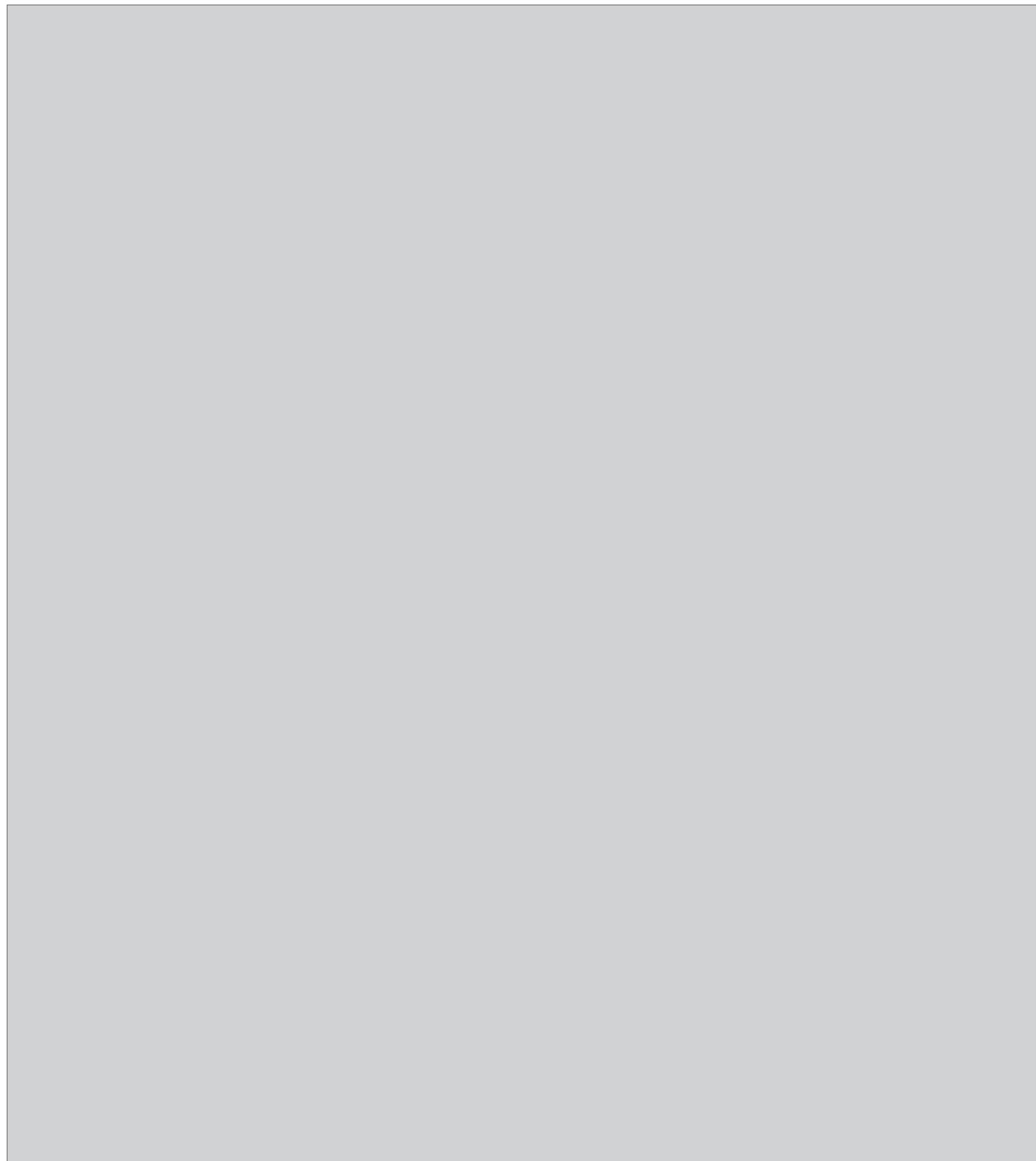
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Resolution Solution



The holidays are notorious for weight gain. Between Thanksgiving dinners and Christmas sweet treats, it's no wonder that the numbers on the scale have risen, leading to New Year's resolutions to get in shape.

Story and photos by
Cpl. Ali Azimi

Luckily, Semper Fit has programs to help quickly shed unwanted weight or reach your New Year's resolution to get in the shape you've always wanted.

The gyms on base have already seen a rise in patrons, mostly people with New Year's resolutions, according to Jacalyn McArthur, manager, East Gym and Fitness Center. They call this surge of patrons the tour season of the gym because within two months, those faces begin to disappear.

"Working out shouldn't be something you hate," McArthur continued. "You should find something you enjoy and that makes it that much more beneficial to yourself."

The East and West Gym and Fitness Centers provide a number of options for group exercise classes and one-on-one sessions with fitness experts to challenge you and help you reach your goals.

Personal trainers are available to Marines and spouses of the Combat Center at flexible hours throughout the work week. Sessions, which cost approximately \$50 or more at other gyms, are free of charge.

The first step is to set up an appointment with Semper Fit personal trainers at either gym. They conduct cardiovascular tests and measure body fat of their trainees to get a base line of their fitness levels.

From there, they sit down and talk with patrons about their fitness goals.

Each trainer holds a degree in exercise or nationally accredited certifications and can help patrons reach any goals, whether it's to lose some weight or train for a triathlon.

In addition to one-on-one sessions, the gyms and community center hold many different free group exercise classes, ranging from spin class, to kickboxing or yoga classes. Whatever the interest or fitness goal, there's a class offered to meet any interest.

"People need to take advantage of what they have here," McArthur said. "They may move and it could cost more or they won't have the same programs. You need to do this for yourself."

For more information on classes or getting a personal trainer, call 830-6440 or 830-6451.



[Top] Amalia Schocken, aerobics instructor, MCCS, teaches a kickboxing class at the Combat Center's Community Center Jan. 15.

[Above] Miyuki Hernandez works out during one of the many group exercise class taught at the Community Center Jan. 15.



[Above] Erin Larosa takes time in her morning to work up a sweat during a kickboxing class taught at the Community Center Jan. 15.

[Right] Silvia Oliva works out during a kickboxing class taught at the Community Center Jan. 15.



January Classes

Kickboxing

Tuesdays & Thursdays - 9 a. m. - Community Center

Cycling

Mondays & Fridays - 11:30 a. m. - East Gym

Tuesdays & Thursdays - 6 a. m. - East Gym

Yoga

Tuesdays - 10:15 a. m. - Community Center

Tuesdays - 5 p. m. - East Gym

Zumba

Tuesdays - 4:30 p. m. - East Gym

Wednesdays - 6 p. m. & Fridays - 12:15 p. m. - Community Center

Pilates

Mondays - 11:30 a. m. - Community Center

Thursdays - 5 p. m. - East Gym

Interval Training

Thursdays - 8:30 a. m. - Felix Field

Circuit Training

Fridays - 10:15 a. m. - East Gym

For a complete list and schedule, visit
MCCS29palms.com



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.

DEATHTRAP

When: Now- Feb. 9
 Where: Theatre 29
 73637 Sullivan Rd., Twentynine Palms, Calif.
 For more information call 316-4151
 or visit <http://www.theatre29.org>

Lower Desert

Clint Black

Famous Country singer performs
 When: 8 p.m., Friday, Jan. 25
 Where: Spotlight 29 Casino Resort
 46-200 Harrison Place, Coachella, Calif.
 For more information call 866-377-6829 or visit <http://www.spotlight29.com>.

Lea Salonga

Critically acclaimed singer performs
 When: 9 p.m., Friday, Jan. 25
 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>.

Earth Wind & Fire

Classic 70's band performs
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 2
 Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
 84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
 For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Boyz II Men

R&B / urban soul group performs
 When: 9:00 p.m., Friday, Feb. 15
 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, January 18

6 p.m. - Monsters Inc, Rated G
 9 p.m. - Twilight: Breaking Dawn Part 2, Rated PG-13
 Midnight - Killing Them Softly, Rated R

Saturday, January 19

10:30 a.m. - Free Matinee Hotel Transylvania, Rated PG
 12:30 p.m. - Life of Pi, Rated PG
 3 p.m. - Monsters Inc 3D, Rated G
 6 p.m. - Playing for Keeps, Rated PG-13
 9 p.m. - Twilight: Breaking Dawn Part 2, Rated PG-13
 Midnight - Red Dawn, Rated PG-13

Sunday, January 20

12:30 p.m. - Free Monsters Inc, Rated PG
 3 p.m. - Cirque Du Soleil: Worlds Away, Rated PG
 6 p.m. - The Hobbit 3D, Rated PG-13
 9 p.m. - Killing Them Softly, Rated R

Monday, January 21

7 p.m. - The Hobbit, Rated PG-13

Tuesday, January 22

7 p.m. - Cirque Du Soleil: Worlds Away 3D, Rated PG

Wednesday, January 23

5:30 p.m. - Playing for Keeps, Rated PG-13
 8:30 p.m. - Red Dawn, Rated R

Thursday, January 24

5:30 p.m. - Life of Pi, Rated PG
 8:30 p.m. - Twilight: Breaking Dawn Part 2, Rated PG-13

Tom Cruise too cocky as dark angel of justice

NEIL POND

"Jack Reacher"

Starring Tom Cruise & Rosamund Pike
 Directed by Richard McQuarrie
 PG-13, 130 min.

A young sniper trains his high-powered rifle on a group of unsuspecting citizens in a crowded plaza, scans possible targets through his scope and then opens fire. Five victims fall, including a young woman carrying a small child.

That's the opening scene of "Jack Reacher," the new movie based on the justice-dispensing vigilante created by British author Lee Child and appearing in a series of 17 crime novels.

Timing can be everything, and the makers, stars and distributors of "Jack Reacher" couldn't have known that their movie, with its release date pre-set months in advance, would roll out to a nation still reeling from the shock and horror of Sandy Hook, Conn., when just weeks earlier another young man and his gun took the lives of 20 children and six adults.

That dreadful bit of scheduling isn't the only problem with "Jack Reacher," an often outlandish, overly talky crime-procedural drama that seems like a vanity project its marquee star, Tom Cruise, must have wanted to do with his director buddy, Christopher McQuarrie, while cooling their heels until their next "Mission Impossible" collaboration started production.

The plot is based on one of Child's "Reacher" novels, "One Shot," about the seemingly open-shut case against the sniper, whom the police round up, along with plenty of incriminating evidence, almost immediately after his Pittsburgh shooting spree. But just when the D.A. thinks he's getting a signed confession, the sniper is instead scribbling a message: It reads "Get Jack Reacher."

Reacher, we find out, is a "ghost," a phantom-like, near-mythical former military policeman and decorated war hero who served in Iraq but then went off the grid after his discharge, roaming the country as a dark angel of justice with only a toothbrush, one shirt and some crazy-mad fighting, weaponry and crime-solving skills.

Since he lives "off the grid" with no identification, address, phone or other traceable information, no one can reach Reacher. Then, boom, he just shows up. Hey, that was easy!

Reacher's convinced the sniper suspect is guilty, but then he's convinced he's not. Then he's convinced the shooter been framed—and he's been framed, too. Are you confused yet?

You will be bogged down in some murky conspiracy details, and become sidetracked in the daddy issues of the suspect's buxom defense lawyer (Rosamund Pike) and her district attorney father (Richard Jenkins).

And that's all before you come across Robert Duvall as a crusty gun-shop owner who has no clear motivation for helping Reacher in the epic showdown that involves rescuing the damsel in distress, driving a speeding car backward into a battery of gunfire, and throwing down his weapon to deliver a bone-crushing, bare-knuckled beat-down in the pouring rain.

The production values aren't much above TV primetime, the story seems like little more than an extended version of a "C.S.I." episode, the action sequences are few and far between, and the barrage of back-and-forth blah-blah-blah will tax even the most attentive viewers.

Cruise seems like he's, well, cruising, playing Reacher with his trademark clean-cut, smug and cocky sense of self-assurance that's completely at odds with what we're supposed to think of his character as darker and much more conflicted, someone whose moral compass doesn't point "true" to anything and who has no qualms about ending lives to even scores.

In the books, Reacher is a loner, always slipping back into the murky darkness and disappearing at the end of each story...until the next time. Likewise, at the end of the movie, we see Cruise on a bus, headed out of town.

"Jack Reacher" is supposedly the beginning of a movie franchise, the seed for more adventures to come, but unless

everyone involved with it can get their act in better shape, perhaps it's better if Jack just stays off the grid.

Cinema 6
 Showtimes Effective
 1/18/13 - 1/24/13

The Last Stand
 (R)
 Everyday: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00

Mama
 (PG13)
 Everyday: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00

Zero Dark Thirty
 (R)
 Everyday: 2:30, 6:00, 9:00

Gangster Squad
 (R)
 Everyday: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00

1 (760) 365-9633
www.cinema6theatre.com

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

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MLK: A voice remembered

Lance Cpl. Lauren Kurkimills
Combat Correspondent

Every year in January, the nation takes a day to honor the memory of a man whose voice rang out through history, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He was a man who devoted his life to the equal rights of men and women of all colors.

Many know Dr. King for his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, which he delivered from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963, a defining moment in the American Civil Rights Movement. But there are things not many know about him.

King was born on Jan. 15, 1929 as Michael, and later changed his name to Martin in order to follow in his father's footsteps. He graduated high school at the age of 15 and at the age

of 36 became the youngest man to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

He earned a B.A. in 1948 and went on to study theology at Crozer Theological Seminary where he was elected president of his senior class, which was predominantly comprised of white students.

King held multiple bachelor's degrees and a doctorate, earning him the title of doctor in 1955.

That December, he led the first modern African-American nonviolent demonstration in the United States, the bus boycott. The boycott lasted 382 days during which he was arrested, his home was bombed and he was physically abused. Approximately a year after the beginning of the boycott, the Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional for law to require segregation on buses.

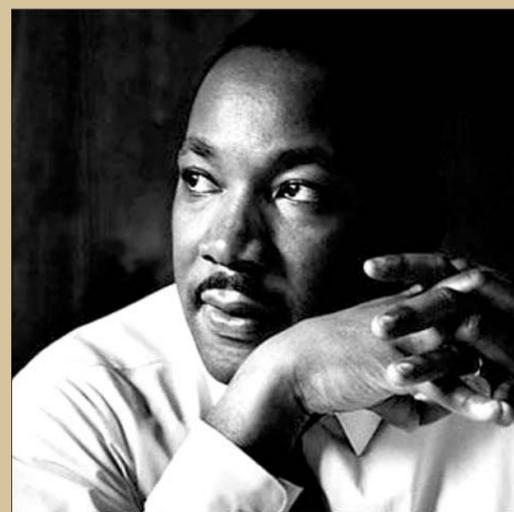
Throughout his equal rights campaign he was arrested more than 20 times,

assaulted at least four times and was named Man of the Year by Times magazine in 1963. He was not only a symbolic leader of the American civil rights movement but also a world figure.

Between 1957 and 1968, he spoke more than 2,500 times wherever there was protest and injustice. He wrote five books and numerous articles.

On the evening of April 4, 1968, as King stood on the balcony of his motel in Memphis, Tenn., he was shot and killed. He dedicated his life to his faith and the furtherance of civil rights. The way he lived his life, despite the way it was tragically taken, was a beacon of inspiration for peaceful assembly.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a leader that fought for freedom and equality and ultimately, gave his life in support of those efforts. We continue to honor him for all his accomplishments and his sacrifice.



Every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness. I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear."



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