



February 15, 2013

Vol. 57 Issue 06

Cut to U.S. force in Afghanistan

Karen Parish
 American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, — U.S. troops in Afghanistan will decrease by 34,000 over the coming year, President Barack Obama announced Tuesday in his annual State of the Union address.

“After a decade of grinding war, our brave men and women in uniform are coming home,” he said early in his remarks to a joint session of Congress. Later in the speech, the commander in chief outlined his plan for troops in Afghanistan, now numbering about 66,000.

“Already, we have brought home 33,000 of our brave servicemen and women,” he said. “This spring, our forces will move into a support role, while Afghan security forces take the lead. Tonight, I can announce that over the

“After a decade of grinding war, our brave men and women in uniform are coming home.”

— President Barack Obama

next year, another 34,000 American troops will come home from Afghanistan. This draw-down will continue. And by the end of next year, our war in Afghanistan will be over.”

The president credited “the troops and civilians who sacrifice every day to protect us. Because of them, we can say with confidence that America will complete its mission in Afghanistan, and achieve our objective of defeating the core of al-Qaida.” America’s commitment to a unified and sovereign Afghanistan will endure beyond 2014, Obama said, but the nature of that commitment will change.

“We’re negotiating an agreement with the Afghan government that focuses on two missions: training and equipping Afghan forces so that the country does not again slip into chaos, and counter-terrorism efforts that allow us to pursue the remnants of al Qaeda and their affiliates,” he noted.

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta, in a statement, said he welcomes the commander in chief’s announcement. The figure was based, he said, on Marine Corps Gen. John Allen’s strategic recommendation of a

See **CUTS** page A7

MARINES BEHIND ITX



Coyotes run ITX training, keeping Marines safe

Amidst the Marine Corps’ premiere pre-deployment Integrated Training Exercise, stands a group of Marines who teach, coach and mentor every Marine Corps unit which passes through the Combat Center training areas. They call themselves Coyotes.

Wearing their signature neon-orange flak jackets, the Coyotes, with Tactical Training Exercise Control Group, are divided into two teams, Team West and East. Their focus is to observe and assess training, ensuring the Marines are safe and fully combat ready for their deployment.

“Our stated purpose is threefold, to provide a safety back stop, paint the range to life and provide an assessment of the exercise forces’ actions,” said Capt. Gary Slater, Team West

Coyote, TTECG. “We have a unique mandate to assess every deploying infantry battalion. We have a unique perspective on the Marine Corps in that capacity. We are familiar with the events but with every unit that comes through here, it’s their first time doing it.”

Part of the job is presenting a scenario to a training unit, watch how the unit responds to the situation and add resistance to the scenario to keep the Marines on their toes.

“We paint a picture of the battlefield for them,” said Cpl. Daniel Warbritton, Team East Coyote, TTECG. “We can build a scenario, if they have a plan, we can throw in friction points to that plan to see how

See **COYOTE** page A7

New community center to open

Cpl. Ali Azimi
 Combat Correspondent

The Combat Center’s Vista Del Sol Community Center officially opened today with the center’s ribbon cutting ceremony.

The Vista Del Sol residency is made up of 600 units and has approximately a 97 percent occupancy of Combat Center service members.

The new community center adds to the three on-base centers available for use by service members and their families.

The 7,600-square-foot area, located between Two Mile Road and the Aztec Housing areas, provides a spacious area for service members and families to enjoy. The center includes a media room, fitness center, full kitchen and a dog park, available to all VDS residents.

“The Community Center was constructed to give the residents of Vista Del Sol a place to relax and have fun away from their home,” said Kenneth Tinquist, family housing director, G-4. “It is hoped this new facility can be a place for service members and their families to relax and

“The Community Center was constructed to give the residents of Vista Del Sol a place to relax and have fun away from their home.”

— Kenneth Tinquist

have fun and that it will improve their quality of life while they enjoy their stay as residents.”

Construction began approximately a year ago, during January of 2012, and has cost several million dollars. It utilizes a 34 kilowatt photovoltaic array on the roof for energy efficiency and to help reduce carbon footprint.

The facility has a full sized pool, gym with a child care area, a game room and an outdoor patio with a fireplace to allow residents to enjoy fresh air and the beautiful views of the landscape.

“The atmosphere and the aesthetic of the new center are inviting and warm,” Tinquist said. “The construction of the Community Center will provide a great venue for residents to get out of the house and enjoy some time together with friends and family.”



JIEDDO conducts explosives training

Cpl. William J. Jackson
 Combat Correspondent

Improvised explosive devices are a persistent threat on the modern day battlefield. Every year, the Marine Detachment, Joint Center of Excellence, Joint IED Defeat Organization, guides a countless number of Marines and sailors, from the individual level to the regimental level, through Counter IED operations aboard the Combat Center.

In a broad sense, JIEDDO is the Department of Defense’s executive agent for CIEDs, said Craig McDonald, deputy officer in charge, JCOE, JIEDDO. The Combat Center’s Marine Detachment is the only one of its kind in the Marine Corps.

“We’re the Marine component of the Joint Center of Excellence,” McDonald said. “JCOE is the training arm of JIEDDO. When it

comes to home station training, pre-deployment training, it’s really our job to find the best way to insert (CIED) into the training pipeline.”

Aboard the base, JIEDDO trains and facilitates the Marines preparing for Unit Deployment Programs, Marine Expeditionary Units and those deploying in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Throughout this effort, they conform to a commander’s training agenda.

“That entails coming up with training systems and material systems to counter the IED problems,” McDonald said. “JIEDDO has put a lot of money and time into capabilities that help us attack the IED threat.”

The capabilities also include gathering training equipment and new technologies like different handheld devices, explained

See **IED** page A7

Father, daughter time



[Above] Isabel Shockey, 4, plays with her father Sgt. Benjamin Shockey at the Combat Center’s Father Daughter Dance Feb. 8 at Building 1707. The father daughter couples who attended the dance took pictures with professional photographers, danced underneath balloon archways all night and took breaks for much needed cookies and juice boxes.

[Right] A young girl stands next to her father at the Combat Center’s Father Daughter Dance Feb. 8, at Building 1707. There was no specific dress code so fathers dressed up in a variety of outfits, including their favorite uniforms or business suits. Nearly 400 father-daughter couples attended the dance.

For the full story see page A5



BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS



ISAAC MATHIAS
Born on: January 18, 2013
Born to: Kayla and Daniel Mathias

WILLIAM EDWARD GARRETT
Born on: December 26, 2012
Born to: Kristi and John Garrett

RYLEIGH KATHLEEN DANIELSEN
Born on: January 18, 2013
Born to: Amanda and Chad Danielsen

CAMDYNN ANTHONY PENINGTON
Born on: December 24, 2013
Born to: Rachel and Anthony Penington

MOLLY REAGAN COOPER
Born on: January 14, 2013
Born to: Brandi and Stephen Cooper

DANIEL DAVID JONES LYLE
Born on: December 21, 2012
Born to: Brittany and Daniel Jones Lyle

ISABELLA SOPHIA MUSICK
Born on: January 8, 2013
Born to: Amanda Harr Musick and Matthew Musick

GARRETT ANDREW BUSS
Born on: December 18, 2012
Born to: Amy Parker Buss and Jonathan Buss

HALLIE ANN GIBSON
Born on: January 7, 2013
Born to: Alyssa and Peter Gibson

EDEN MARIE SANTILLAN
Born on: December 11, 2012
Born to: Olivia and Eduardo Santillan

JOSSELYN ROSE DEMONACO
Born on: January 3, 2013
Born to: Jennifer and Joseph DeMonaco

INDIANA CASH DODSON
Born on: December 8, 2012
Born to: Jasmine and Brandonn Dodson

DAMIEN FREDRICK GINTER
Born on: January 5, 2013
Born to: Elizabeth and Zane Ginter

HAILEY JADE PATTEE
Born on: December 5, 2012
Born to: JoAnne and Jason Pattee

SHANE JEFFREY STUART
Born on: January 3, 2013
Born to: Allison and Brandon Stuart

DAKOTA JAMES MESSNER
Born on: December 5, 2012
Born to: Crystal and Corey Messner

SOPHIA YOLANDA MARRERO
Born on: January 2, 2013
Born to: Yuko and Willibald Marrero

MADDIELYNN ANNMARIE HIBLER
Born on: December 4, 2012
Born to: Elise and Jager Hibler

SAVANNAH ROSE FORD
Born on: January 1, 2013
Born to: Carly and Seth Ford

CAMERON OTTO MANDEL
Born on: December 3, 2012
Born to: Katie and Marc Mandel

GABRIELLA NICOLE HARDMAN
Born on: December 30, 2012
Born to: Kelsey and Brian Hardman

JAYCE ARION GARRETT
Born on: December 1, 2012
Born to: Karen Chavez-Garrett and Thomas Garrett

NATALIE GRACE WILMOTT
Born on: December 29, 2012
Born to: Christina and Eric Wilmott

CHARLIE BRIANN PHELPS
Born on: November 29, 2012
Born to: Dakota and Josh Phelps

NOAH JACK GEE
Born on: December 27, 2012
Born to: Cristina Gee Syms and Daniel Gee

AVERY WILLIAM PERKINS
Born on: November 28, 2012
Born to: Angela and Calvin Perkins



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

SUDOKU 2818-D

			1	2			3	
				4			2	
5		6			7			8
		1		9			7	
2		3			8			6
		7		6			5	
1			6				4	7
		9		1				
	8			5	2			

See answers on page A8

COLLECTION AGENCY

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14					15					16			
17					18					19			
20						21				22			
		23			24		25		26				
	27	28					29				30	31	32
33					34				35				
36					37			38	39			40	
41			42				43				44		
45					46	47			48				
			49					50					
51	52	53			54		55		56		57	58	59
60					61			62					
63					64					65			
66					67					68			

ACROSS

- Ralph's sitcom wife
- South American capital
- Nightclub in a Manilow hit, for short
- Toga sporter
- Green Party issue: Abbr.
- Rah-rah
- Is creative, like a collector?
- Rip apart
- Decide to withdraw
- Born, in bios
- HST or RMN
- Have to have
- Golden Fleece ship
- Checks ID, like a collector?
- Kunta Kinte's slave name
- Up to, informally
- Three-time AL batting champ Tony
- Docs' org.
- States confidently
- Pince-__ glasses
- Soldier in gray
- __ loss for words
- Realty unit
- Gets mad, like a collector?
- Worth a D, maybe
- Magi guide
- "Bummer, man!"
- Cambridge sch.
- Puts on cloud nine
- Loser to Braddock in "Cinderella Man"
- Makes vacation plans, like a collector?
- Descartes quote word
- Model Macpherson
- Be'te __ (bugbear)
- Run like heck
- Be dependent
- Packing a piece

DOWN

- With the bow
- Stunt pilot's maneuver
- Faux: Abbr.
- Church office
- Came next
- "Ben Hur" novelist Wallace
- Something to click on
- Dr. in an H. G. Wells novel
- Trees with catkins
- Fuel-saving commuter group
- Walkie-talkie word
- Air freshener scent
- Tags on
- Alamogordo blast and others
- Orator's place
- Old muscle cars
- Sleighmate of Cupid
- Addis __
- Freshly washed
- Walk daintily
- Navratilova rival
- Use a wrecking ball on
- Swabbies
- Bowser's bowlful
- I-95 and others
- Has a bite of
- Hirohito or Akihito
- Aquarium bubbler
- Melancholy
- Camden Yards player
- Singer-actress Lola
- Assist in crime
- __ Krishna
- Prefix with tons or bucks
- Motorist's payout
- Tonsorial touch-up
- De Valera's land
- Went like the dickens
- ALT or ESC

Students job-shadow Marines



CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON

Students James Ritchie and Joseph Viscuso watch Cpl. Jose Rivera, K-9 handler, Provost Marshal's Office, apprehend a simulated suspect with Rex, military working dog, as part of the Combat Center's Job Shadowing Program Feb. 12. This is the Combat Center's 10th year of having students from high schools in the high desert area job shadow base personnel.



For photos, videos and updates, visit the official MCAGCC facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter>

OBSERVATION POST

Commanding General - Maj. Gen. David H. Berger
Public Affairs Officer - Capt. Nick Mannweiler
Deputy Public Affairs Officer - 1st Lt. Sin Y. Kook
Public Affairs Chief - Gunnery Sgt. Leo A. Salinas
Press Chief - Cpl. Ali Azimi
Editor/Layout, Design - Cpl. D. J. Wu

Correspondents
 Cpl. William J. Jackson
 Cpl. Sarah Dietz
 Lance Cpl. Lauren Kurkimillis

The Observation Post is published by Hi-Desert Publishing, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of Defense or the United States Marine Corps, under exclusive written contract with the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. This commercial enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the military services. Contents of the Observation Post are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the United States government, the DOD, or the United States Marine Corps. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts and supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the DOD or Hi-Desert Publishing of the services advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. Editorial content is prepared by the Public Affairs Office, MCAGCC, Twentynine Palms, Calif. 92278. All photos, unless otherwise indicated are Official USMC Photos. Questions can be directed to the Public Affairs Office, located in building 1417, during normal working hours at 830-6213 or FAX 830-5474. The Observation Post is made with 60 percent recycled paper.

OFF-LIMITS ESTABLISHMENTS

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

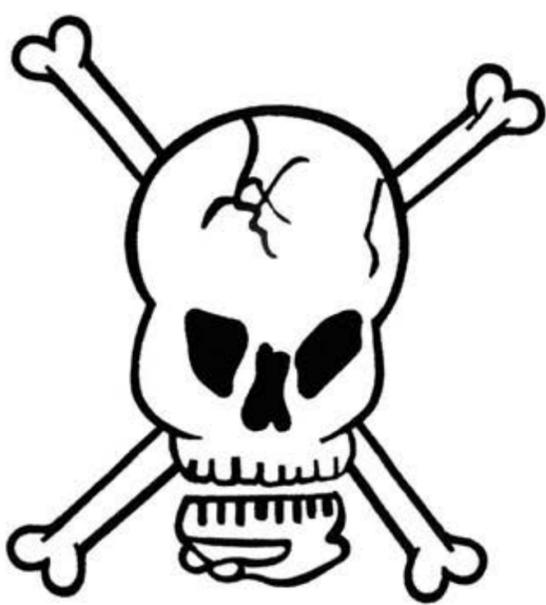
Local off-limits guidance prohibits service members from patronizing the following locations.

- 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.

- 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.29palms.marines.mil>

THE HISTORY OF SUICIDE CHARLEY



1ST BATTALION, 7TH MARINES

STORY BY CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The lore of Suicide Charley began in 1942 with one of the most well known Marines in the Corps. Lt. Col. Chesty Puller was assigned the task of setting up a defensive perimeter around Henderson Field in Guadalcanal. Charley Co., 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, had dug in and was flanked by Baker Co. on the left and Animal Co. on the right. In the distance, a mass of Japanese soldiers waited to strike.

On October 24, at about 10 p.m., three Japanese regiments and a portion of a brigade breached their perimeter. The Marines of Charley Co. received the brunt of the attack but held their ground despite a terrible loss of their own.

The next day the defensive line was still intact while the Japanese licked their wounds. After the onslaught, a flag made of a white, silk parachute flew over Charley Co.'s area bearing a skull and crossbones with the words "Suicide Charley" written underneath.

"When I checked in all I heard about was the tra-

dition of Suicide Charley," said Sgt. Cody Waldroup, assaultman, section leader, 1/7. "They take it very seriously and it's something to be proud of. You don't see it in a lot of units. In Suicide, there's not a lot of chest pumping when it comes to being the best, it's more of a quite professionalism. It doesn't matter what you've done. When you're a part of Suicide Charley, you have the reputation to uphold."

The guidon was not seen again until the battle for Peleliu in 1944. During one particular phase of the battle, a replica flag of the original skull and crossbones appeared to inspire the Marines. From that day on, the flag was used as a motivational tool for war torn Marines.

"It's kind of crazy to think about what you're upholding and the tradition you're carrying on for the WWII veterans," said Sgt. Jesse Rodriguez, mortars section leader, 1/7. "It's exhilarating and humbling at the same time. Not many things can compare to that tradition you uphold for that specific guidon. It makes you feel like you have to earn your place to walk behind that guidon."

A sense of pride embodies the Marines of Charley Co. because they know the Marines before them never stopped regardless of how bad a situation was.

"I first learned about Suicide Charley when I was at The Basic School," said 1st Lt. Deven Ravel, weapons platoon commander, 1/7. "My staff platoon commander was a platoon commander when he was with Suicide Charley. I looked up to his professionalism. It made me want to know more about Suicide Charley and be a part of it."

The guidon exists because of the men who shed blood on the battlefields of Guadalcanal and Peleliu. Their memory lives on in the minds of the Marines today that carry the name Suicide Charley into battle.

"Just like Sgt. Waldroup, I came from another unit," said Staff Sgt. Carl Therrien, platoon sergeant, 1/7. "Everybody has their own traditions but coming to Suicide Charley, it's something extra. It's something special that I hold dear and I have to make sure that (the traditions) continue on."



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



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

Daddy daughter dance

Gunnery Sgt. Cecil Melton is a Marine tough-guy. He has been deployed with Marine tough-guys. For the last 17 years, he has trained Marine tough-guys. And Melton plays with dolls. Laugh at your own risk. There is a 6-year-old girl that can bring him down to his knees when she wants to.

Her name is **Nijah**. His daughter.

**Story and photos by
Cpl. Sarah Dietz**

Combat Correspondent



Gunnery Sgt. Cecil Melton dances with his 6-year-old daughter, Nijah, during the Combat Center's Father Daughter Dance Feb. 8 at Building 1707. This is the first time Nijah went to a dance with her father.

For more photos from the Father Daughter Dance visit our facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter>.

"I plan to take her on her first date and buy her first diamond."

Nijah is the youngest of the brood, the baby girl of the bunch.

"I have three boys and she's my baby girl. Because she's the only girl, we have a special bond," Melton said. "She has made me actually enjoy playing with baby dolls – with her of course."

Finding time in a military schedule with family can be a daunting task. The Melton household emphasizes the importance of family time among busy schedules and the unpredictability of military life.

"My wife and I both work," Melton said. "I am in school and my children are involved in many extracurricular activities. Since our day is so busy, I ensure that we make time to pray as a family. We kneel around my bed and pray every night at 8:45 p.m. This is a great time because after our prayer, we always seem to have the craziest conversations before the kids go to bed. It's our bonding time and the kids really look forward to it. So do Tamika (my wife) and me."

Melton does find that special time to spend with Nijah. She remains special to him, his "Baby Girl" as he affectionately calls her.

"I tell her I love her every chance I get," said Melton. "She will never have to wonder how it feels to be loved because I am going to make sure she knows she's always loved."

However, a special day is on the horizon. Melton is taking Nijah to her first dance. They are going to get dressed up, dance with other fathers and daughter, and have a good time. Melton is taking her to the Combat Center's Father Daughter Dance. It's not a costume ball, but they are going to be in character. Melton as a super dad and Nijah as a princess.

The Dance

Nijah twirled around in the middle of the dance floor. Her world is perfect, just her and him. Her first dance is with the one man that will mean the most.

Her father.

She dressed in an aqua blue dress with black floral accents with matching earrings, makeup and hair done and feeling like a princess.

"I truly feel it's my responsibility as her father to show her what to expect from her future husband," said Melton.

The dance, sponsored by Lincoln Military Housing, gave the dads across the Combat Center a chance to take their little princesses out for a special night away from the family.

"We've never had a base-wide father daughter dance," said Jessica Arthur, the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Family Readiness Officer. "I never expected the emotion from seeing all these dads taking their little girls to an event that we were fortunate enough to put on for them. Not only was that very touching, but that says a lot about how much an event like this was needed."

A date night out also helped the fathers step away from their busy work schedule and focus on their children.

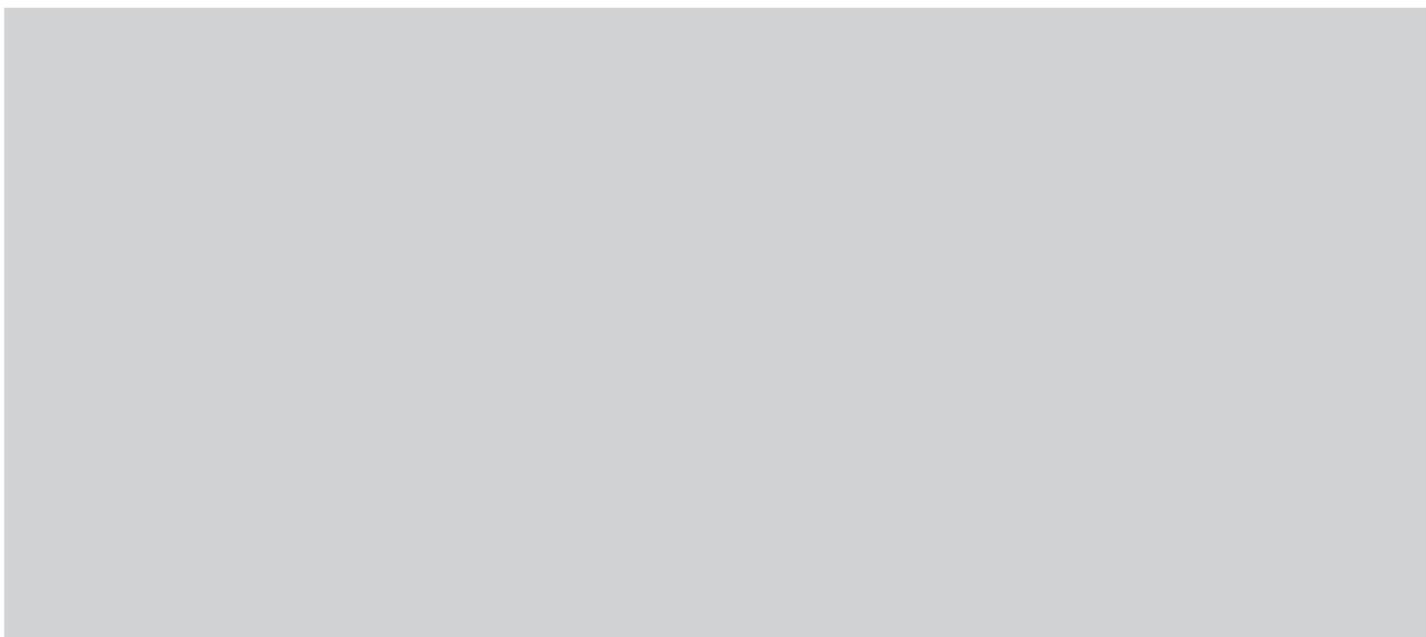
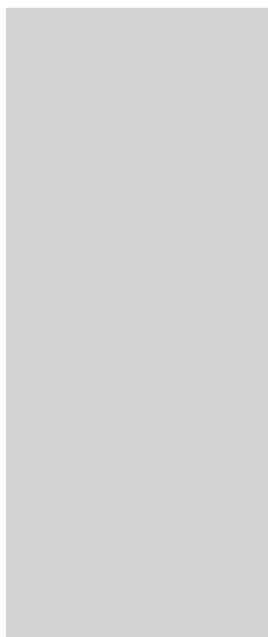
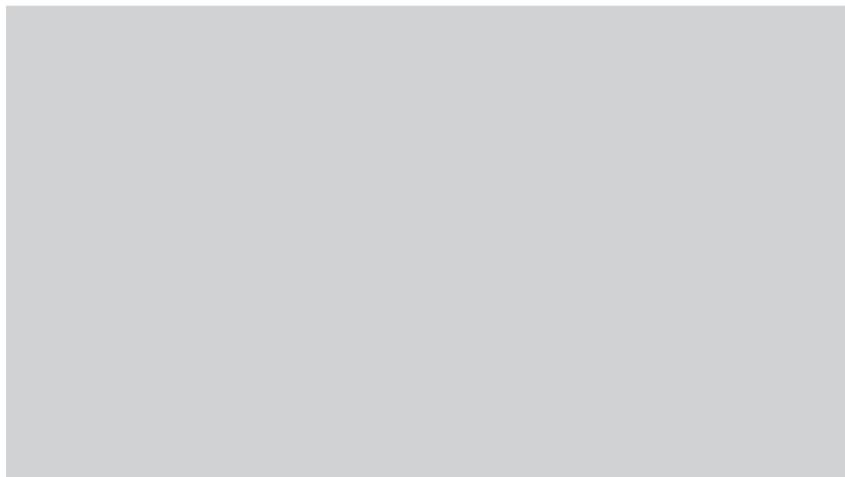
"They are a healthy male role model, but not only that, the majority of them are active duty service members," Arthur said. "They are gone so much more than we realize. Being able to spend that time with each other and enjoy their little daughters. Giving their daughters opportunity to have one-on-one time with their dad is priceless."

Nearly 400 father and daughter couples attended the dance. Photographers took portraits of them, the dance floor was decorated with colorful flowers and balloons, a DJ played the kids' favorite popular songs and refreshments were lined up, complete with juice boxes.

The dress code was formal with no specific uniform or outfit to wear. The goal was to focus on family.

"I don't care if you're wearing dress blues or if you're wearing a suit," Arthur said. "You're coming there to make memories with your daughter, have fun, spend time together and enjoy time together."

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





Adopt a School

MCCES Marines play with students

Story and photos by
Cpl. Sarah Dietz
Combat Correspondent

the kids to have fun playing with adults, other than their parents or teachers.

"I made lots of friends today," said Marc Hightower, 4th grader, Condor Elementary School. "We ran and we picked up that guy (Garcia). He was heavy. I want to tell them thank you for coming."

In addition to the fun and games, the Marines aided the students in preparing for their version of the Physical Fitness Test, the State Fitness Test. The test is a mandate of the California Department of Education and promotes young kids to stay physically fit.

It challenges kids in a number of exercises testing their strength, cardio and flexibility.

Marines encouraged the students during their regular one-mile run and kept up beside them as they made their laps around the school's playground. The Marines continued running until the last child had finished.

The Adopt-a-School Program is held at local elementary schools throughout the high desert and is a community service program Marines can get involved in. For more information on how to get involved, call Kristina Becker at 830-3765.

Marines with the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School took a day to spend with the kids of Condor Elementary School Feb. 6, as part of the Adopt-a-School Program.

Adopt-a-School is a continuously run program throughout the year which introduces elementary school students from the high desert to Marines in a day of fun activities.

"It helps the kids understand the military isn't just about wars," said Pfc. Zachariah Garcia, student, MCCES. "It's also good for Marines to get away and remember why we are also fighting."

The day gave the Marines an opportunity to interact with their community and present themselves as positive role models to the children, as well as show the kids a different side of the Marine Corps.

MCCES Marines played catch, danced and got a chance to interact with them during down times in the class. It was a chance for



--[Top, left] Pfc. Stan Stafford, student, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, runs beside Marc Hightower, 4th grader at Condor Elementary School during the kids' Physical Education class Feb. 6 as part of the Adopt-A-School Program.

[Top, right] Marines with MCCES run with students of Condor Elementary School during the kids' P.E. class Feb. 6 as part of the Adopt-A-School Program. The Marines were encouraging the kids during their usual run, preparing them for the State Fitness Test.

[Above] Marines with MCCES line up with 4th graders of Condor Elementary School before joining them on a one-mile run, Feb. 6.

IED, from A1

McDonald.

JIEDDO's CIED training starts well before the detonation period. Intelligence can be gathered which leads to who funds, builds and places IEDs, which is an integral part of attacking the network. This evolution can take weeks or even months. During this time the pertinent information gathered by the small unit level is then recycled back to higher headquarters to further paint the picture of IED threats.

"There is a whole chain of events that goes into the IED fight prior to that IED ever making it in the ground," McDonald said. "The number of attacks has gone up, but the number of casualties per attack has gone down. The increase in attacks is tied to an increased presence. We look at that as we're making it harder and harder for our enemies to be successful."

The organization works closely with the Combat Center's tenant commands to reinforce the concept of attacking the network that drives the IED threat through intelligence gathering, defeating the device through fundamental knowledge of CIED techniques and training the force through repetitive CIED work-ups.

"Every time we find a device, every time we investigate a blast we gather a lot of information," McDonald said. "We have an entire organization inside of JIEDDO, called Counter IED Operations and Intelligence Integration Center, that's our intelligence cell. That information that we gather from that device feeds right back into our intelligence cycle.

Through our intelligence office, we feed that intel back through the unit staff so we can paint a picture (of the enemy) which in turn helps units go outside the wire."

In the pre-deployment training evolutions, COIC repre-



CPL WILLIAM J. JACKSON

Paul Mitchell, counter-improvised explosive device instructor, speaks with Staff Sgt. Ariel Delacruz, senior instructor, 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion, about the importance of the sickle stick. The sickle stick is an extendable device that helps Marines and sailors find IEDs safely.

sentatives work very close with and can embed with deploying units to expand upon the unit's CIED operations.

JIEDDO works in parallel with the Marine Corps' four

block training concept. It starts with the individual Marine's skill set, moves to the squad and platoon size element, the company and battalion sized element and the regimental size element.

In block two, squad and platoon size elements are reinforced with training like route clearance patrol organization and squad and platoon size immediate action drills. These types of preparation help ensure IEDs remain less of a danger on the battlefield.

"Then you have block three, company and battalion level skills," McDonald said. "As you get up to the company level you have more resources, more information flow that can help small units during patrols and other missions."

JIEDDO also facilitates training of higher level commands, like the regiment, to employ their higher echelon resources to create a better picture for the Marines in the fight. JIEDDO continues to ensure CIED events are appropriately represented during larger exercises such as Unified Endeavor, Large Scale Exercise and other service and combatant commander events.

"The rubber meets the road where the IED fight is at, the small unit level," McDonald said. "We want to give the Marines those individual skills to recognize an IED, to understand where they might find it and to be vigilante. However we cannot fail to recognize the contributions and the capabilities of the higher headquarters in shaping the battlefield and supporting their subordinate units."

For any CIED related training questions or information on JIEDDO, contact Dave Patterson at 830-3620.

CUTS, from A1

phased approach to decreasing the force, now numbering about 66,000.

Allen turned over command of NATO's International Security Assistance Force and U.S. forces in Afghanistan to Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr. during a Feb. 10 ceremony in Kabul, Afghanistan.

The secretary said in his statement that in consultations with the president and his national security team, "I strongly supported General Allen's recommendation and I believe the president's decision puts us on the right path to succeed in Afghanistan."

Panetta said he is confident Dunford will have the combat power he needs to protect coalition forces, continue building up Afghan forces, and "achieve the goal of this campaign to deny al Qaeda a safe haven to attack our homeland."

"After more than a decade of great sacrifice and hard-fought progress, we are now on a path to an Afghanistan that cannot be used as a launching pad for attacks against our nation,"

— Defense Secretary Leon Panetta

Panetta noted the United States, NATO and the Afghan government agreed in Lisbon in 2010, and affirmed in Chicago in 2012, that Afghanistan will assume full responsibility for its security by the end of 2014.

"We are on track for that goal," he said, "and we will maintain a long-term commitment to Afghanistan including through the continued training and equipping of Afghan forces and counter-terrorism operations against al Qaeda and their affiliates."

The American people should never forget 9/11 is the reason their men and women are fighting in Afghanistan, Panetta said.

"After more than a decade of great sacrifice and hard-fought progress, we are now on a path to an Afghanistan that cannot be used as a launching pad for attacks against our nation," the secretary said.

"Our troops on the ground will continue to be in a tough fight, and they will continue to face real challenges, but our fundamental goal is now within sight," he concluded. "Thanks to their continued dedication and sacrifice, I believe we will prevail."



CPL SARAH DIETZ

Sgt. Joshua Shannon has been a Coyote with Technical Training Exercise Control Group for over a year. TTECG watches over Integrated Training Exercise training and other major exercises held at the Combat Center.

COYOTE, from A1

they react to something outside the normal and expected."

Training to become a Coyote is tedious and repetitive. The long days and training ensure they can effectively assess the Marines going through ITX as well as keep them safe.

"We have academics training, practical application training and we have a fairly in depth Coyote qualification process. It's where you observe a training event, then you backseat a Coyote who is controlling his segment for the training event. Then, you front seat that training event. Finally, you take the training wheels off and you run that training event from your lane, by yourself," said Slater, a native of Eden Prairie, Minn. "It's pretty detailed and pretty rigorous. It's to ensure quality control and to make sure that a coyote is fully prepared for that task, for that range, for that event and fully qualified.

"It is a process. It takes several ITX's. It takes a complete ITX to be introduced to every range. By your second or third ITX is when you complete your qualification," Slater added. "It is a lengthy process, a lot of time invested in it."

The TTECG Marines are from all over the Marine Corps. They are selected from many different Military Occupational Specialty fields.

"Respective occupational fields and MOSs typically screen and send the appropriate people to TTECG so they're going to get a high quality of professionals who are subject matter experts in their field," Slater added. "It's a

blend of warfighting functions and other elements of the Marine Air Ground Task Force. To be selected to be a Coyote, it's supposed to be a prestigious billet."

The day of a Coyote is long. Breaks are rare during an ITX cycle.

"We are busy," said Warbritton, 22, native of Peoria, Ill. "We usually get up when it's dark, we get home after dark. We'll work every day during ITX. We are there to make sure they stay safe while on the range and to point out the faults and tell them where they need improvement."

Slater said between ITX training cycles, the TTECG Coyotes conduct internal After Action Reports to improve practices and procedures and to improve exercise design and scenario development. The Marines are continuously looking to improve and facilitate better training.

"All the Marine Corps is represented here," Slater said. "We work long hours together, everybody needs to know everybody else's job and have to work together as a team."

The long hours and work build a sense of camaraderie among the Coyotes.

"You work with some really good people," Warbritton said. "Coyotes cover down on the Marines, at some point or another, lowest rank to highest rank, we've all been there at some point or another. It's a lot of shared experiences."

"I've always had a mix of respect and pity for the coyotes because of the long hours and what they have to go through to become a Coyote to maintain their proficiency and high level of professionalism," Slater said.



4	7	8	1	2	5	6	3	9
9	1	3	8	4	6	2	7	5
5	2	6	9	3	7	1	4	8
8	6	1	5	9	4	7	2	3
2	4	5	3	7	8	9	1	6
3	9	7	2	6	1	5	8	4
1	3	2	6	8	9	4	5	7
7	5	9	4	1	3	8	6	2
6	8	4	7	5	2	3	9	1

Did you know?

The Liberty Call page on B2 now has Combat Center club information

Excursions
Enlisted Club

Bloodstripes
NCO Club

Hashmarks 29
SNCO Club

Combat Center's
Officers' Club

flickr

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

YouTube

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

facebook

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

Looking for the right job for you?

Check the Observation Post Classified section

Prefer your news from the web?

Visit op29online.com or 29palms.marines.mil



FORE!

Combat Center Marines, sailors tee off at Vintage Club

CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT



“Pink shirt”

Professional golf has its personal flare when it comes to fashion. Rickie Fowler, the young faced golfer who always has the brightest and boldest outfit on the course. Tiger Woods who always wears red in the final round of a tournament because his mother told him it's his power color.

These aren't just their quirks, it's their personality.

Here you have Pink Shirt, a seemingly fashionable man wearing pinstriped pants to go with black and brown golf shoes, a black scaly cap and a bright pink polo, because he's not afraid to say, “real men wear pink.”

His attire rivaled Fred's, a Vintage Club member, whose outgoing personality proudly matched his flashy plaid pants and red and blue Adidas golf shoes.

The crowd of golfers laughed as the two eccentric golfers were paired up. They proved to be the rowdiest of the bunch.

Some choose to call golf a sport while others will fight to the death to say otherwise. Regardless of any personal opinions, golf is a mental game. When things are going right it's tranquil and peaceful. Players drive the ball straight; they hit the fairways and can sink a putt like a professional. On the flipside, when things go wrong during a round of golf it becomes a raging battle inside their once-cool and collected mind.

Players begin to overthink. They make small adjustments to their swing, change their stance and power through the ball instead of having a solid, fluid motion. Concentration is key whenever it comes to golf and mind-over-matter plays into every opportunity during a game.

Playing against your own strengths can make golf unlike the peaceful game it's known to be. Each stroke is different, just like each course is different. The mentality behind a round of golf is what makes the average player grow.

To counteract any of these things some players kick-start their golf mindset by dressing the part of the aforementioned golfer. Does it work? Maybe.

Forty Marines and sailor from the Combat Center exemplified just that, a mixture of veteran players and some teeing off for the first time. One thing they all had in common was they dressed the way they thought golfer do.

See more photos on page B8

“Grey Fedora”

The man with the grey fedora sported a scarf, cargo shorts and a matching pullover.

He wore nothing that resembled golf attire. He wasn't dressed the part and he didn't play the part.

He was a lefty, one of the only left-handed golfers on the course. His swing was rough and wasn't tuned like the club members in his group. Instead of the fluid motion people see from professional golfers, his swing resembled that of a lumberjack who was feverishly hacking at a tree to gather kindling for a fire.

He had better things to do, like continue his career as a high school physics teacher.



“Redneck 24/7 hat”

At the beginning of the day, Redneck 24/7 Hat looked like he was an inexperienced golfer.

He powered through his swings at the driving range. He threw more power into his swing than Rocky hitting frozen slabs of meat.

While most Marines and sailors sported semi-casual golf attire, Redneck 24/7 Hat wore cargo shorts, Nike running shoes with an orange sole and a grey polo.

Unlike most others golfing, he had his pocket knife tucked into his left pocket. Who knows why. Maybe he felt like cutting a few blades of grass away from his golf ball while he was in the rough, who knows.

He actually played pretty well. It goes to show you can't really tell a golfer by the way he dresses himself. Though, in most cases, you can.



“Argyle Sweater”

Singling him out as “Argyle sweater” isn't really fair. He dressed the part. That's an important first step.

At least he looked like he knew what he was doing. There must have been a memo because he wore khakis like everyone else. He matched it with an argyle sweater and a tan scaly cap.

Yep, that's a golfer.

You could tell he was going to have a good time come drive, putt, or shanking it in the water.

Argyle sweater wasn't going to play well, but he was going to look good doing it.



For golf opportunities on base or are interested in lessons contact Deserts Winds Golf Course at 830-6132



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.

Gypsy

When: March 8 through April 6
 Where: Theatre 29
 73637 Sullivan Rd., Twentynine Palms, Calif.
 For more information call 316-4151
 or visit <http://www.theatre29.org>

Lower Desert

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.morongocasinoresort.com>.

Jeff Dunham

Popular comedian performs
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 16
 Where: Agua Caliente Casino Resort Spa
 32-250 Bob Hope Dr., Rancho Mirage
 For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Willie Nelson

Legendary country musician
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, March 1
 Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
 84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
 For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Charlie Wilson

American R&B singer performs
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, March 2
 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, February 15

6 p.m. - Guilt Trip, Rated PG-13
 9 p.m. - Django Unchained, Rated R
 Midnight - Silver Linings Playbook, Rated R

Saturday, February 16

10:30 a.m. - Free Matinee Cars 2, Rated PG
 12:30 p.m. - Parental Guidance, Rated PG
 3 p.m. - Texas Chainsaw, Rated PG R
 6 p.m. - Les Miserables, Rated PG-13
 9 p.m. - Jack Reacher, Rated R
 Midnight - This is 40, Rated R

Teenage zombie love story puts hip new twist on Romeo & Juliet



COURTESY PHOTO

NEIL POND

"Warm Bodies"

Starring: Nicholas Hoult, Teresa Palmer & John Malkovich
 Directed by Jonathan Levine
 Rated PG-13, 97 min.

A zombie tale with a young-love twist, "Warm Bodies" puts a contemporary spin on an old story — a really old story. This hipster horror yarn about "forbidden romance" between would-be lovers from two worlds never meant to mingle is a straight-up, post-apocalyptic reworking of Romeo and Juliet spiked with modern-day mojo for audiences weaned on Hollywood's starry-eyed "Twilight" movies about love between humans and not-so-humans, as well as the rotting-corpse funhouse of TV's hit "Walking Dead" series.

Our lead zombie (Nicholas Hoult from "X-Men: First Class" and "A Single Man") is the narrator. Although his flesh has started to turn pale, he walks with a slow, stilted shuffle and communicates only through grunts, some of his brain is still functional — and we're able to hear his running soliloquy of morbidly entertaining inner thoughts.

Turns out he's pretty bummed about how things have turned out, although he's blank on the Armageddon-ish details (Viral outbreak? Nuclear war?), and he's forgotten his name, although he thinks it began with an "R." So we go with that.

When we first meet R, zombie-shuffling through other shuffling zombies in a deserted, dilapidated airport that's become zombie central, he sounds like just another mopey teenager...just one

that happens to be a zombie. "What am I doing with my life? I just want to connect," he says. "Why can't I connect with people? Oh...right — I'm dead."

A few miles away, in the fortified downtown of an unnamed city that's obviously been fighting the zombies for some time, a group of young warriors is preparing to leave on a scavenger mission for supplies. One of them is the beautiful daughter (Teresa Palmer from "I Am Number Four" and "Bedtime Stories") of the compound's tough-as-nails military leader (John Malkovich).

The daughter's name is Julie. And guess what? R and J meet outside the city walls, setting off an unexpected chain reaction that ultimately leads to a transformative experience for zombies as well as humans — and all because two crazy kids took a chance on love.

The cast also includes Rob Corddry as R's zombie best-bud M (as in the "Romeo and Juliet" character of Mercutio), and Analeigh Tipton as Julie's friend Nora (The Nurse, in old-school R&J cast terms). M and Nora get many of the best laugh lines of the movie, just as their respective characters did in the play.

Dave Franco, actor James' younger brother, plays Julie's boyfriend, Perry (Paris, on the stage), who appears mostly in flashback after his initial encounter with R turns him into a meal — and a recurring source of memories as R noshes on the bits of his brain later that he's taken to-go, tapping into the stored recollections of its synapses.

Director and co-writer Jonathan Levine, who previously directed the critically acclaimed "50/50" starring Joseph Gordin-Levitt, juggles the mix of humor, heart and horror clichés with just the touch of flip, campy trendiness for his target audience. I sense that "Warm Bodies" will be a date-night hit with teens and young adults.

But it's also worth checking out for anyone who'd like to see just how well an old, cold bard can reheat for a new generation when given the right rub of imaginative seasoning — even if it's about zombies.



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

Relax with the paper

Wednesdays and Saturdays with the Hi-Desert Star

Thursdays with The Desert Trail

Fridays with The Observation Post



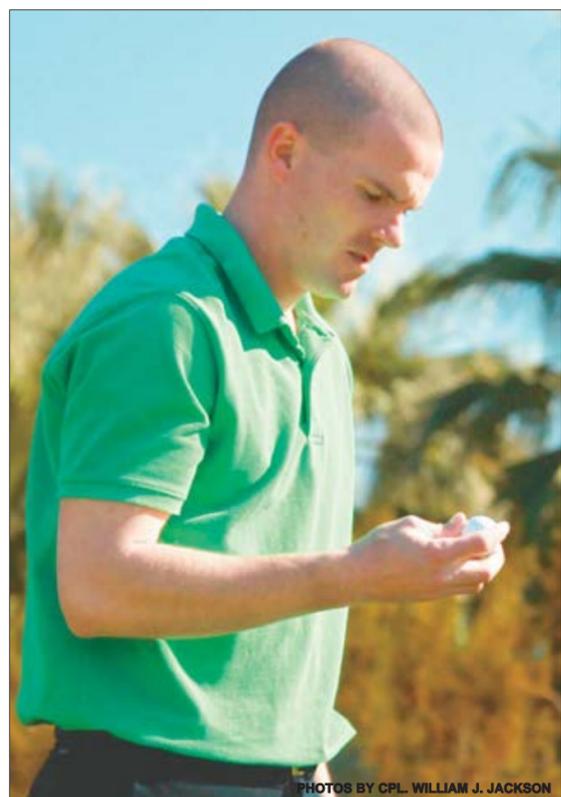
Hi-Desert Publishing Co.

Your community newspapers working to serve you better

facebook **WeekINPhotos**

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





PHOTOS BY CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON



[Far, left]
A golfer takes a look at his golf ball before teeing off at The Vintage Club's desert course in Indian Wells, Calif., Feb. 9.

[Top, left]
Marc Shelton applauds members of The Vintage Club for their hospitality. 40 Marines and sailors from the Combat Center went to the Vintage Club in Indian Wells, Calif., to play a round of golf with the members and guests of the club Feb. 9.



[Bottom, left]
The Vintage Club hosted 40 Marines and sailors from the Combat Center to spend a day hitting the links and enjoy the afternoon granted by their generous hosts.

Relax with the paper
 Wednesdays and Saturdays with the Hi-Desert Star
 Thursdays with The Desert Trail
 Fridays with The Observation Post

Hi-Desert Publishing Co.
Your community newspapers working to serve you better

367-3577 For Advertising

Prefer your news from the web?



Visit 29palms.marines.mil or HIDesertStar.com/Observation_post/

Looking for the right job for you?



Check the **Observation Post Classified section**