



OBSERVATION POST

MCAGCC TWENTYNINE PALMS



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CMC releases message concerning sequestration

Gen. James F. Amos
Commandant of the Marine Corps

Marines and Civilian Marines...the sequestration provision under the Budget Control Act is in effect as of March 2. In short, this means a reduction of roughly \$1.4 billion dollars to the Marine Corps for the remainder of the current fiscal year, with reductions of slightly more than \$2 billion occurring in each of the nine years. As I testified before Congress last month, cuts of this magnitude, due to their timing and methodology, will significantly impact Marine Corps readiness, both short and long term.

The Marine Corps plays a special role in protecting our Nation – we are America's Crisis Response Force, the Nation's insurance policy; we have a statutory responsibility to be the most ready when the Nation is least ready. As such, we will preserve the readiness of our Marines engaged in combat, we will keep deploying units fully manned, trained and equipped, and we will do our best to ensure that units preparing to deploy have the resources and training necessary for their next mission. The Marines Corps will remain ready to meet today's crisis, with today's force... today!

In order to ensure our continued readiness, we must make sacrifices in other areas. As we adjust to the realities of sequestration, I am very concerned about the impact of such cutbacks on our active duty and reserve Marines, our Civilian Marines, and our Marine families. While we are working hard to balance our myriad requirements, I want each of you to know that keeping faith with you and your families is a top priority of mine – I consider this a sacred responsibility. We are already a lean and frugal Service, thus every reduction that we make from this point forward will cut into bone – we are beyond muscle.

I want to assure each of you that despite today's fiscal challenges, we will remain the Nation's "911 Force." I ask that you stay focused on the mission while we work our way through the uncertainties of the future. Sergeant Major Barrett and I will release a short video next week with the latest and most up to date information available. In the meantime, I thank you for the sacrifices you and your families make every day on behalf of our Nation and our Corps. In its truest sense, I remain... Semper Fidelis

Helping Hands

Three-year-old Vanessa Duarte passed away Dec. 6, 1996 after falling ill from her second bilateral lung transplant. She was diagnosed with acute pulmonary hypertension. Her mother, then 23-year-old Sgt. Lawanda Hall, was grieving her child's death while being swarmed with bills from the hospitals, transplant coordinating team, critical care units, funeral costs and travel costs.

Cpl. Ali Azimi
Combat Correspondent

Greatly in debt, Hall looked for aid from the Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society, a nonprofit charitable organization sponsored by the Department of the Navy.

The NMCRS helped Hall create a budget for her family to pay off the debt that they had accumulated. They were later given a grant.

"The Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society was our hero in that whole ordeal. They were responsible for helping us bury our daughter," said Master Gunnery Sgt. Lawanda Hall, looking back nearly a decade. "Our families weren't in a position to help with any finances. We didn't qualify for any type of states' assistance. Our only option was the Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society.

"We provide financial and educational assistance to Marines, sailors and their eligible dependents," said Raymond Caldwell, Director, NMCRS Twentynine Palms. "We are an organization that provides interest-free loans. So it benefits the service member financially for absolute needs."

"We were really, really, really financially down and the Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society was able to provide us with grants that helped cover burial expenses, transportation and



CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON

so many different things," Hall said. "The Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society wiped away a lot of that debt that we had incurred."

"Grants are given based on a person's ability to repay a loan," Caldwell said. "If a service member has a verifiable need and does not have the means to repay us, we will issue a grant. If that person is that far in trouble, we want to be able to help."

The NMCRS has helped many sailors and Marines who face financial distress like Hall. The organization uses charitable contributions to help service members get out of debt and become financially fit. Many of these contributions are from the service members themselves.

"I learned that those contributions that I had been giving, \$2 a month, \$5 a month, for about four years at that time, helped people and I was the recipient of that help," Hall said. "You participate in something and sometimes you never really get to benefit from it. I benefited from it long before I realized how significant the program is, how much of a great impact it can have on a Marine's life."

The resources of the NMCRS are available to all active duty and eligible family members of deceased service members.

"These types of programs are in place because we all live

See **HELP** page A6

Sequestration hits tuition assistance

Lance Cpl. Lauren Kurkimilis
Combat Correspondent

Voluntary Education Tuition Assistance for the Marine Corps has been ceased. The Budget Control Act set into motion the automatic, government-wide cuts known as Sequestration, March 4, according to Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus. This is due to the lack of a budget deal being reached in Congress and also includes numerous other cuts DOD-wide.

"Given that reality and the associated impact of budgetary uncertainty imposed by an indefinite continuing resolution, the Department of the Navy intends to commence some reduc-

tions immediately," Mabus said.

"On Monday morning, we got a call from Headquarters saying to stop processing all Marine Corps TA," said Erin Keeran, Education and Career Specialist, Life Long Learning Center MCAGCC. "Requests that had been processed prior to that will still be honored but no new TA requests can be processed at this time."

This means that active duty Marines and

sailors, who are already enrolled in classes and have processed their TA forms

assigned to those classes, will be able to receive TA benefits for the remainder of those courses. For future class terms, they will have to find other means of paying for school if they intend to continue their education.

"There are still options out there to pay for school," Keeran said. "Some of the big ones

are the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and FastWEB."

FAFSA is free and available to anyone. The student can fill out the application at www.fafsa.ed.gov to determine which loans and grants are available. FastWEB is a free scholarship search engine. The student creates a profile at www.fastweb.com and answers various questions. Based on those answers, the web site finds scholarships for which the student is qualified.

"One of the best things that comes from the FAFSA is the Pell Grant," Keeran said. "And many junior Marines do qualify for it."

See **TUITION** page A6

Dedicated Marine, family man honored in Helmand



Story and photo by Sgt. Ned Johnson
1st Marine Division

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SHIR GHAZAY, Afghanistan — Marines and Georgian soldiers stood silent to honor a fallen comrade.

With a shout, Master Sgt. Gordon Plotzke, senior enlisted advisor, Georgian Liaison Team, 32nd Georgian Light Infantry Battalion, Regimental Combat Team 7, began the ceremony to honor the

life and sacrifice of Staff Sgt. Jonathan Davis, March 2.

Davis, a motor transportation chief with the GLT, died in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Helmand province, Afghanistan, Feb. 22.

A battle cross was assembled with boots, a rifle with fixed bayonet, a Kevlar helmet and dog tags.

"Staff Sgt. Davis will always be remembered for his warrior spirit, can-do attitude and fighter-leader mentality," said

See **HONOR** page A6

Women's History Month

Jeane Shaw



Story on B1

THE ESSENTIALS

A look inside a Combat Center unit

Story and photo by Cpl. William J. Jackson
Combat Correspondent

The History

Assault Amphibious Vehicles are tracked armored vehicles that can transport 24 Marines or 10,000 pounds of cargo in hostile land and water operations. The AAV is armed with the UGWS (up-gunned weapons station), which mounts an M2 .50 caliber machine gun and a Mk-19 40mm grenade launcher. AAVs can travel at highway speeds for up to 400 miles inland and at speeds of up to 10 knots through water. The AAV is the only armored vehicle in the U.S. that is fully capable of operating on land and in the ocean.

3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion was originally activated Sept. 16, 1942, and was assigned to 3rd Marine Division. The battalion was known as 3rd Amphibian Tractor Battalion until 1976, when the battalion was redesignated under its current name.

The battalion played a role in major conflicts in American history and has traveled extensively across the world during training and combat deployments. They have deployed to New Zealand, Guam, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and Vietnam, in addition to supporting Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Restore Hope, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

3rd AABn was reassigned to 1st Marine Division in 1971 and they are currently under the command of Lt. Col. Howard F. Hall.

The Job, 1833: Assault Amphibious Vehicle Crewman

Marines with 3rd AABn carry the surface assault element of a landing force and their equipment in a single trip during amphibious operations to inland objectives. After they hit the shore, the battalion conducts mechanized operations and related combat support.

Crewmen get the infantry where they need to go. They get them as close as possible while providing supporting fire as they assault an objective.

"We carry the infantry into the fight," said Sgt. David Williams, crew chief, 3rd AABn. "We provide heavy weapons and a mobile asset. We're like the overhead watch."

They provide sustained amphibious and ground mechanized support to the assault elements, as directed, and they are tasked to support units by clearing minefields and other obstacles during amphibious-operations.

In addition to their combat related duties, AAV crewmen are responsible for operating and maintaining their vehicles and weapons systems.

"The first thing a tracker takes pride in is his vehicle," Williams said. "If (the AAV) isn't up and running, you're



either humping or getting a ride with somebody else.

"Every day with an AAV is really maintenance, maintenance, maintenance," Williams said. "You always have to keep on top of the vehicle."

Crewmen constantly maintain their vehicles and are constantly training. They pass on their knowledge to ensure the future of the battalion.

"As an individual you take a lot of pride in your vehicle," said Cpl. Zachary Hendry, crew chief, 3rd AABn. "You want your Marines learning something new every time you're out in the field. You want them to know more than you do when they replace you."

Crewmen:

The AAV rear crewman, who prepares the AAV to employ troops and weapons during ship-to-shore movements and shore operations, performs maintenance on the vehicle and weapons station. The AAV driver operates and drives the AAV during movement, positions the AAV to fire on target, performs additional maintenance and operational duties. The AAV commander supervises all maintenance and operation of the AAV, assumes leadership and responsibility for the vehicle and crew as a whole.

The Essentials

Trackers rarely need anything extra. They can live with the bare essentials: combat vehicle crewman uniforms, steel toe boots, gloves, eye protection, flak, Kevlar, rifle, sling, 9/16ths wrench, 15/16ths wrench and a sleeping system. Everything necessary is already inside the AAV.

Outside of the gear that trackers are supposed to have, there isn't anything that they would need. But Williams has his essentials. He packs Monsters, Ramen noodles and a portable camp stove — necessities as he calls them.

Williams and Hendry also made it very clear that trackers never bring anything that has apricots in the ingredients aboard the AAV. Things just go wrong.

"Anything that has apricots in it and is brought on an AAV, it's bound to break down or sink," Williams said. "That's our kryptonite."

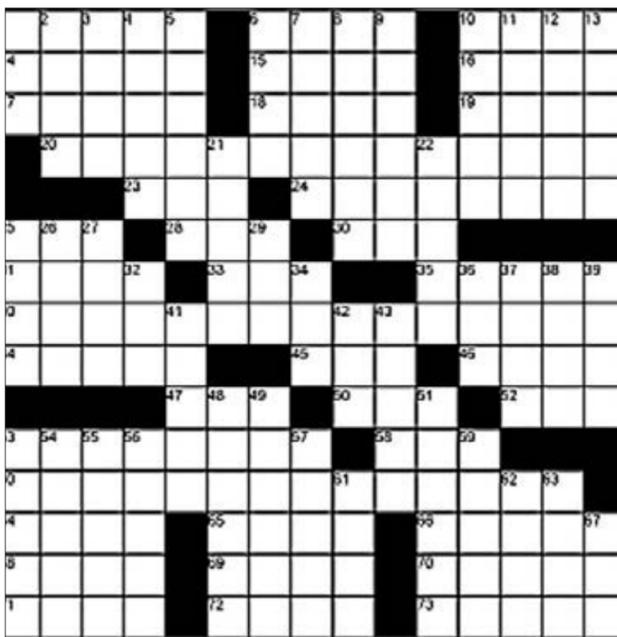
"That is true for AAVs Marine Corps-wide," Hendry said.

"But in all reality these are just old AMTRACKS," Williams said.

"It's the apricots," Hendry fired back. "(The AAVs) aren't old."

UP THE CORPORATE LADDER

- ACROSS**
- Peace treaties
 - School orgs.
 - They're dubbed
 - Martin's "That's ___"
 - Lily Pons specialty
 - Somali-born model
 - Flat sign
 - Cyber-browse
 - Kilauea output
 - Radio honcho
 - Part of a royal flush
 - Lamp fuel
 - Murphy's ___
 - LAX datum
 - Diarist Anaï's
 - Footnote abbr.
 - Brazilian hot spot
 - Dracula's title
 - Orchestra honcho
 - Lucy's pal
 - Gay Nineties, e.g.
 - Intro to marketing?
 - Surgery sites, briefly
 - Env. extra
 - "Lenore" poet
 - Treatment for the stressed-out
 - Driver's lic. info
 - School honcho
 - Deliver a tirade
 - List ender
 - Lose tautness
 - Director Preminger
 - Khartoum's river
- DOWN**
- Butter portion
 - Cookie man
 - Famous ___
 - Revolver inventor
 - Pick up the tab
 - Parlor piece
 - El ___, TX
 - Mastodon feature
 - B-29 crew
 - Sightsee in the Serengeti
 - Eliot's Marnet
 - Publicist's concern
 - Croaking bird
 - Part of Ringo's kit
 - IV part
 - Time being
 - Fruit for a twist
 - Touch on
 - Candle-blower-outer's thought
 - Have the blahs
 - Sputter and stall
 - Shelley work
 - Mo. to rake leaves
 - Lone Star State sch.
 - ___ contendere
 - Alder or elder



- Circulatory problems
- Ill will
- "Amazing" magician
- Turns edible
- Bombing run
- Treat like a
- mama's boy
- New England catch
- Make jubilant
- "Inferno" poet
- Fur tycoon
- 1960 Wimbledon champ Fraser
- Flat hat
- Malamute's tow
- Genesis boatwright
- Carroll's "slithy" thing
- A pop

See answers on page A6

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

- In Oceanside:**
- Angelo's Kars, 222 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054
 - Angelo's Kars, 226 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054

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

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

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

- In Twentynine Palms:**
- Adobe Smoke Shop, 6441 Adobe Rd.
 - STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Rd.
 - K Smoke Shop, 5865A Adobe Rd.

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

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

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

WHAT I'VE LEARNED



Andrea

Waikoloa, Hawaii FRO, 3/7, 35

TATAYON

- > **Growing up in Hawaii**, it's a very multicultural experience. What I enjoy the most about it is that they have a very strong sense of family and community that you don't tend to see in the states.
- > **My parents were divorced**, so every summer I would go to Hawaii. I went to school both there and California but eventually I moved there full time and graduated high school in Hawaii.
- > **On the island there's** that sense of community because you have to live near these people. It's an island; you're not really going anywhere. In California and the United States, it's so big that I feel it's easy to become disengaged with your community. You won't find that with an island community.
- > **Most of us know** each other because it's really small. Either you're related to somebody or you know someone that works with someone else. It's very interconnected.
- > **My favorite thing** about Hawaii, is it's probably the only place where you get just about every type of climate there is.

TATAYON CLIMBED MT. FUJI FOR HER 30TH BIRTHDAY. SHE HAS FOUR DAUGHTERS.

There's the desert side of the island; you can go up on top of Mount Akaya and find snow; there's the beaches, rainforests, plains.

> **When you're a kid**, all you really feel are the constraints of a rural area. You'd have to drive 45 minutes to go see a movie. But now I miss it.

> **They actually don't** have a high school in Waikoloa. It's one of those bedroom communities that's set up outside of the Gold Coast Hotels. So the nearest high school is in Honokaa.

> **My dad runs his own** bread baking business on the Big Island. He has a wood burning oven that he takes around town to different farmer's markets and then makes and sells fresh baked bread right there in front of everyone. That's what he does for a living. He quit his job as a pastry chef of one of the big hotels and started his own business.

> **Sandwich Isle Bread Company** is the name of his business and he actually had a write-up in the L.A. Times not too long ago recommending his bread to people looking to eat all natural foods on the island. It's a small community so he's pretty well known for what he does.

> **They speak English** in Hawaii. It's sort of a broken English that's used. It's such a mixed community. There's a lot of Chinese, Japanese and Portuguese. It's not just the Hawaiians anymore. It's a very mixed climate, so I think that's how this language of broken English has developed.

> **I don't think there's** a rift between the locals and visitors. It's just like with anywhere you travel. I grew up in Hawaii but of course I was an outsider. If you go there with the wanting to learn about their culture and with an open mind, they're going to accept you. I would see it all the time, where you'd get invited to their luaus and you'd become part of the family. But if you go there and you have the thought that you're better or you don't embrace the culture, they're not going to embrace you.

> **I moved away** (from Hawaii) for a couple of years, because you get island fever when you're younger but then I realized how much I missed it. When I moved back, that's when I met my husband. I met him in Oahu, where I was living and he was stationed at Kaneohe Bay at the time.

> **My husband was** with an infantry battalion when I first met him and he was already a sergeant when we got married. I think it helped a lot that he was a little bit older and waited a while to get married. We've been able to weather all of it from then to now where he's getting ready to retire.

> **After we got married**, we had the chance to either come here to Twentynine Palms or get orders overseas to Okinawa. I always wanted to live in Japan because we have a huge Japanese sub culture out in Hawaii and I just wanted to experience it for myself. I loved every minute I was out there.

> **I love to travel.** I think the world is a huge place and you have to see what else is out there. I love other cultures. I think I just like to see how things are done in other parts of the world.

> **I went to Europe on a cruise** that took me to five different countries. I got to go to Spain, Greece, Italy and Germany. I've also been to Hong Kong, Korea and Japan.

> **I actually** lived in Okinawa for six years.

> **I think that's one** of the best things about military life is embracing the opportunities that are given to you. It's sometimes easy to feel overwhelmed and feel sorry for yourself because maybe your husband is deployed or you have to move someplace new. Trust me, I've been there. I have four kids myself and I've had to deal with pregnancy during deployment and moving our whole family to the next duty station but I've also gotten my degree since being married to him. I've traveled places where I probably would have never had the chance to go. Life is completely what you make of it.

> **You've got to put** yourself out there. Go out and meet new people. Volunteer in the community and try to make where you live a better place. You really have to think outside the box to get the most out of this military lifestyle of ours. Use it for an opportunity for growth.

> **When my husband retires**, he's going to stay home with the kids and go to school and I'm going to continue to work as 3/7's Family Readiness Officer. We're getting ready to do another deployment and I don't want to leave my guys right before they go. I already went through a deployment with them so I know what to do and what to expect.

> **After that**, I'd like for us to go out and see more of the world. I have a friend in Singapore, so we plan to go there for a little while. I want to keep going down this path that I've set of seeing other cultures and meeting new people.

> **I have four daughters**; a two-year-old, a four-year-old, a 10-year-old and then a 12-year-old. Their names are Serene, Marisa, Ava and Vivienne and they are all about their dad. He is the king of the house. He loves it. He is definitely a kid person.

> **When other people** were deployed, he'd always be the one to watch our friends' kids so I could go out with the girls and let them have a break too.

> **I want to take** my kids places. I want them to look back and remember that we took them to Hong Kong and any other cool places we plan to go in the future. They'll look back fondly on the memories we've built together. Kids will never remember the most expensive gift you give them but they will always remember how much you're in their lives.

Interviewed by Lance Cpl. Lauren Kurkimilis
March 1, 2013

367-3577
For Advertising

READ ACROSS AMERICA



[Left] Lance Cpl. Liam McElroy, unmanned aerial vehicle technician, Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3, colors with a kindergartener at Joshua Tree Elementary March 1.



[Above] Lance Cpl. Abisai Ochoa, unmanned aerial vehicle operator, VMU-3, reads a book to 1st graders at Joshua Tree Elementary March 1. Marines with VMU-3 read to the students during National Read Across America Day, an observance in the United States held on the school day close to Dr. Seuss' birthday.



Joshua Price, 3rd grader at Joshua Tree Elementary, listens to Marines with VMU-3 read during National Read Across America Day March 1.

Marines from Combat Center open books, read to kids

**Story and photos by Cpl. William J. Jackson
Combat Correspondent**

Marines with Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3 took a day to read and interact with the children of Joshua Tree Elementary School during National Read Across America Day March 1.

The National Education Association's Read Across America is a reading program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading on March 2, the birthday of children's author Dr. Seuss. Seuss published 46 children's books in his career. His most celebrated books include Green Eggs and Ham, The Cat in the Hat, One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish, Horton Hatches the Egg, Horton Hears a Who!, and How the Grinch Stole Christmas!

"It's good to support the community. They support us and we just want to support them back," said Sgt. John Harrison, imagery analyst, VMU-3.

The Marines also spent time answering questions, coloring and telling stories to the students. The day gave students a break from a normal school day and time to celebrate Dr. Seuss's impact on children's literature.

"The last class we went to was quite lively," Harrison said. "We had a lot of questions about what we do. One student even gave us pencils as a souvenir. It's a great time."

The Marines were able to see the students in a classroom environment, a refreshing change from the Adopt-a-School Program where Marines and sailors join students at recess and physical education class.

"They love the interaction," said Daniele Hunter, principal, Joshua Tree Elementary. "Today was extra special because they got to be inside the classrooms. They've been looking forward to this for a few weeks."

The kids are always looking for positive role models, she added. "We really enjoy having (Marines) here. It's another way to increase the positive culture for our students."

4Q's FOR READERS

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK?

WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE LITERARY HERO?

WHAT INTERESTS YOU IN A BOOK?

WHY IS READING IMPORTANT?

LANCE CPL. DEREK MUNZENMAYER — VMU-3



Harry Potter and the Deathly Hollows. I read that whole book straight through.

The girl from The Hunger Games because she took her sister's place. That was pretty awesome.

It keeps your mind going. With books there is a lot more variety in the entertainment choices.

If you can actually picture what's going on it interests me. Everybody can read the same book and imagine it differently.

I don't know. That's too hard. I like too many of them.

There's too many, but Katniss Everdeen. She's awesome because she can kick butt and do anything.

Adventure and action.

Because it helps kids learn about things.



WINNIE KELLEY — 4TH GRADER, JOSHUA TREE ELEMENTARY

SGT. MELVIN SISK — VMU-1



The Poky Little Puppy. It gets to me but it also teaches a lesson.

Clifford and Curious George. They always face adversity and always come out on top.

I have to read everyday. It depends on my daughter, Arianna, and what she wants me to read.

It helps with verbiage and visualizing a story, you use your imagination. It helps with learning.

Any monster truck books because they're my favorite.

Superman because he can fly and save people.

I read two hours a day.

It helps you learn and gives you a happy life.



JESSE WILLIAMSON — 4TH GRADER, ONAGA ELEMENTARY

HONOR, from A1

Maj. Rudy Salcido, commanding officer, GLT. "He embraced the responsibility of caring for his Marines and sailors through leadership by example."

Davis, a Navajo Indian and native of Kayenta, Ariz., was remembered as a caring leader and as a family man. He spoke often of his wife, son and mother and left no doubt that he loved his family completely.

He was dedicated to his duties as a Marine. His fellow Marines recalled him being the last to return to the tent at night and the first to leave in the morning.

"It is important to acknowledge that Staff Sgt. Davis has provided us with the greatest gift, his leadership," Salcido said. "He took ownership of training (his Marines) to take the lead in his absence. The fight goes on just like Staff Sgt. Davis would have wanted it."

[Right] Sgt. Scott Cody, motor transportation mechanic, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 7, pays his final respects to a fallen comrade during a memorial ceremony for Staff Sgt. Jonathan Davis, March 2.

[Front page] Maj. Rudy Salcido, commanding officer, Georgian Liaison Team, 32nd Georgian Light Infantry Battalion, RCT- 7, and Georgian Army Lt.Col. Phridoni Tereladze, commanding officer, 32nd Georgian Light Infantry Battalion, pay their final respects to a fallen brother during a memorial ceremony for Staff Sgt. Jonathan Davis, March 2.

Commander Michael Williams, chaplain, RCT-7, reminded Marines that Davis' sacrifice must never be forgotten and should be carried on by future generations of Marines.

"How do we honor this man?" Williams asked. "We honor him by carrying the torch and continuing our mission, by upholding the high standards of this organization, and by staying true to who we are."

The silence after each time Davis' name was called represented his absence.

After the ceremony, Marines made their way to the battle cross to honor their fallen brother with silent prayers and solemn salutes. For the GLT Marines, their mission will continue.

"Staff Sgt. Davis has paid the ultimate sacrifice," Salcido said. "We will continue to honor him through our ruthless, selfless and unrelenting service to our fellow brothers-in-arms."



TUITION, from A1

Applying for these things is a lot easier than some think. You just write a short essay; some even make a video. There are also some scholarships that just require you to put your email address in a lottery and you could be selected that way."

Both the Montgomery and Post 9/11 GI Bills are options available to active duty service members as well.

"After two years of active duty service, the Montgomery GI Bill can be activated," Keeran said. "This gives the student a monthly stipend for up to 36 months and the student is responsible for paying the school themselves with that money. The Post 9/11 GI Bill lasts the same amount of time, except the tuition is paid directly to the school."

Once activated, both GI Bills can be deactivated at the student's request and all time used while on active duty will be deducted from the total 36 months available. Active duty service members will not qualify for Basic Allowance for Housing until after their End of Active Service date and if the Department of the Navy reinstates TA, no amount of the GI Bill or credits paid out of pocket will be reimbursed.

"Anyone that's considering activating their GI Bill should keep in mind that TA may be reinstated at any point in time," said Keeran. "We'll just have to see which way the wind blows with this one."

Apart from the elimination of new TA enrollments, sequestration also means a freeze on civilian hiring, the planning for civilian furloughs and the reduction of all training not related to the readiness of deployed or next-to-deploy forces, Mabus said.

"Navy Department leadership understands the uncertainty that these and other decisions create both amongst our people and in the defense industry upon which we rely," said Mabus. "The lack of legislative solution to avoid Sequestration is deeply regrettable. That said, we must endeavor to deal with the situation as we face it, not as we wish it could otherwise be."

The intent of Sequestration is to preserve support for those forces stationed overseas and currently forward deployed. Lower-priority forward operations and significant reductions in all other operations, training and maintenance have been selected for reduction with the intent that the if and when funding is restored that the Department of the Navy may then reverse or quickly restore the cuts that have been made, according to Mabus.

"In order to ensure our continued readiness, we must make sacrifices in other areas," said Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps. "As we adjust to the realities of Sequestration, I am very concerned about the impact of such cut backs on our active duty and reserve Marines, our civilian Marines and our Marine families."

"Everybody is worried about the budget, and I am one of those people," said Mabus. "Nobody knows for certain what will happen, but I can tell you some things. No pay or benefits for any active-duty military members will be cut. During this drawdown, nobody will have their enlistment cut, and no one will be told to go home before they want to go home."

Additional cuts include the deferment of Continuing Promise 2013, the United States Navy Ship Comfort's humanitarian deployment to Central and South America, the cancelation of Blue Angels shows and the reduction of Marine Corps Depot maintenance activities, to include within the non-permanent work force.

While we are working hard to balance our myriad requirements, I want each of you to know that keeping faith with you and your families is a top priority of mine," Amos said. "I consider this a sacred responsibility."

"We will continue to keep the safety and well-being of our people foremost in mind, even as we try hard to keep whole the force structure which supports them," said Mabus. "We will also continue to keep the fleet and Fleet Marine Force fully informed as follow-on decisions are made."

HELP, from A1

and life happens," Hall said. "I don't care how much planning you do, no one could have told me to be prepared for my daughter to die, be prepared for excessive expenses to occur. Life hap-

pens and we all need to be able to have a support system in place to help us."

The NMCRS operates in nearly 250 offices at Navy and Marine Corps bases throughout the world. The organization provides financial assistance to

eligible recipients through interest-free loans, grants and financial counseling.

The society's fund drive is March 12 through April 11.

For more information about the NMCRS call 830-6323 or visit www.nmcrcs.org

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

AIDAN JOHN THRASH
Born on: March 5, 2013
Born to: John and Jennifer Thrash

STEPHEN MATHEW AARON COOK JR.
Born on: March 5, 2013
Born to: Stephen and Kathryn Cook

BRYCE MICHAEL GULKE
Born on: March 2, 2013
Born to: Brett and Meaghan Gulke

PAISLEY BARBRAJEAN SAUNDERS
Born on: March 1, 2013
Born to: Joseph and Faith Saunders

BRYSON LYNN PFEFFER
Born on: March 1, 2013
Born to: Chris and Alycia Pfeffer

JARED ADRIAN BARBON
Born on: February 26, 2013
Born to: Chrisbert and Cesarlyn Barbon

CIAN BRYCE COLORINA
Born on: February 23, 2013
Born to: Delmar and Valentina Colorina

KINSEY JADE MAEDER
Born on: February 21, 2013
Born to: Ethan and Shea Maeder

DAMON RHONE NOLAND
Born on: February 21, 2013
Born to: Zak and Tammie Noland

JULIAN ANTHONY ORDONEZ
Born on: February 20, 2013
Born to: Michael and Duah Ordonez

HANNAH PEARL ST. LAURENT
Born on: February 20, 2013
Born to: Deven and Chelsea St. Laurent

JAXSON ANTHONY COKER
Born on: February 17, 2013
Born to: Anthony and Jennifer Coker





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



The Combat Center has its own Flickr photo and video streams. Find them at <http://www.flickr.com/thecombatcenter>

San Jose Marine 'workaholic,' 'great sense of humor'

Sgt. Ned Johnson
1st Marine Division

Some Marines join the military with plans to get promoted through the ranks and retire from the Marine Corps. Some Marines join with plans to serve their country honorably before they start a civilian career.

Corporal Ignacio Zamarron, administrative clerk with Regimental Combat Team 7, is in the second category.

Zamarron always wanted to join the military and serve, but he never had plans to make it a career. Instead, he wanted to gain the experience and benefits before going to college to become an accountant.

He loves numbers and has always been good with them, but he said nothing could replace the experience he has gained in the Marine Corps.

"I have had to learn to work with those who are (higher ranking) than me," said Zamarron, a 22-year-old native of San Jose, Calif. "I feel like I have matured because of this, and I know how to handle myself in a professional environment."

Zamarron wants to attend school in Los Angeles or San Jose, but hasn't made a final decision. He is sure he wants to be an accountant and he has even been reading a book titled "Rich Dad, Poor Dad," which advocates financial independence.

Zamarron's fellow Marines believe he will be successful after the Marine Corps no matter what he chooses to do.

"He has the best work ethic I have ever seen," said Sgt. Sunshine Yubeta, Classified Material Control Center chief with RCT-7. "He can do whatever he sets his mind to."

Yubeta, a 31-year-old native of Madras, Ore., called Zamarron a "workaholic," but said he also loves to make others laugh.

"If you only see him at work, you think he is always professional," Yubeta said. "But outside of work he has a great sense of humor, is hilarious, and is an all-around great guy to be around."

Professionalism during working hours is important in Zamarron's current position. He is the first Marine to begin work on Personnel Casualty Reports when a Marine is wounded in combat.

"He won't leave the office until everything is done," Yubeta said. "He will stay here until all the Personnel Casualty Reports are finished no matter how late into the night."

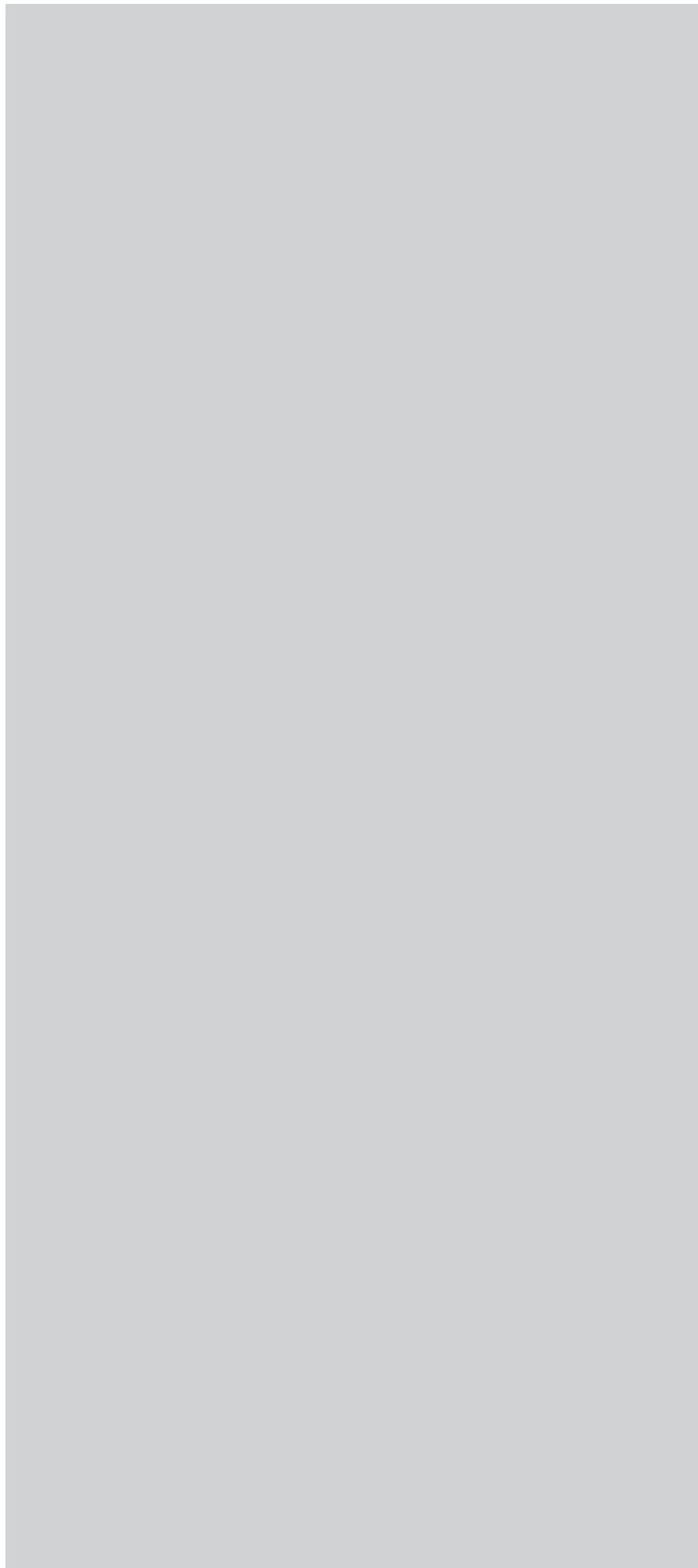
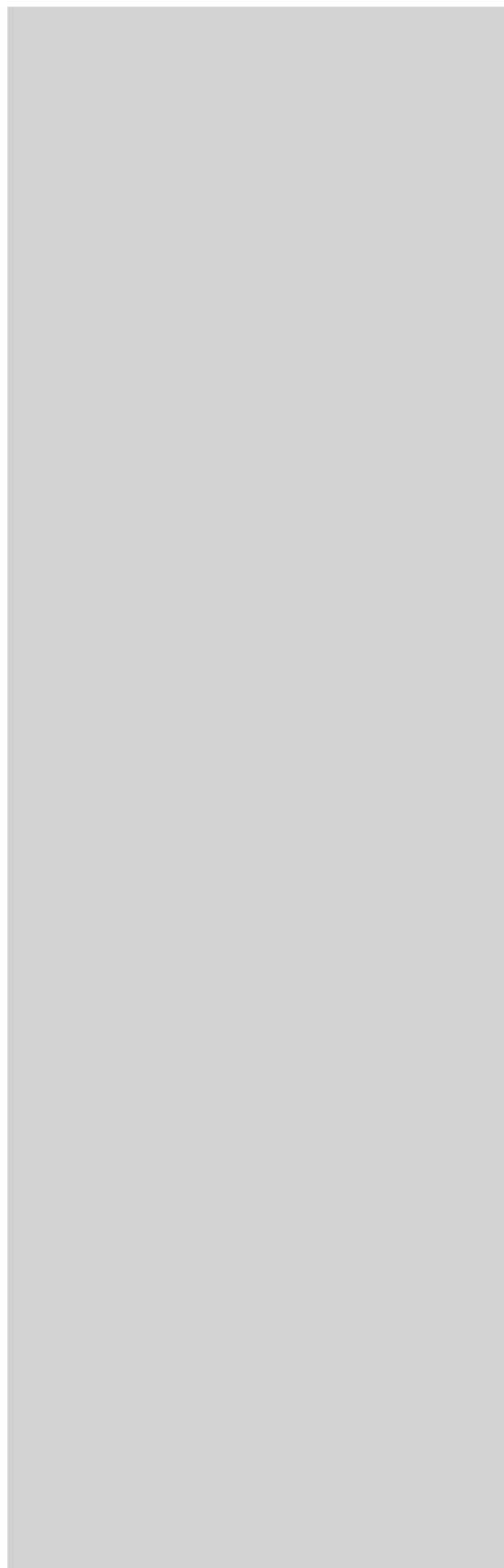
Zamarron plans to end his Marine Corps career when his contract ends in the summer having served honorably and completed a combat deployment.

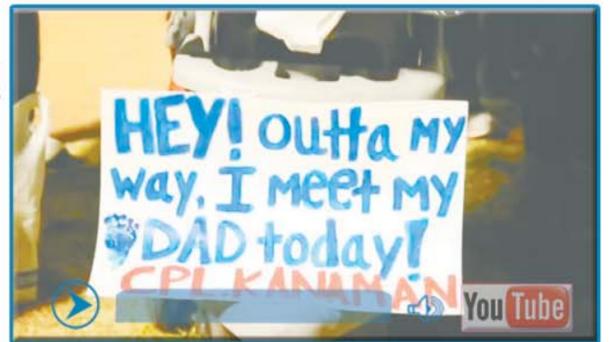
"I think the Corps has given me valuable experiences and skills to help me get a good job once I graduate," Zamarron said.

Zamarron said he hopes to be working as a financial planner someday in the future, but until then he will be hard at work at the gym, trying to make others laugh and in the administrative office each night until the work is finished.



Cpl. Ignacio Zamarron, administrative clerk with Regimental Combat Team 7 and a 22-year-old native of San Jose, Calif., has enjoyed his time in the Marine Corps and is preparing to attend college to get an accounting degree. "He has the best work ethic I have ever seen," said Sgt. Sunshine Yubeta, Classified Material Control Center Chief with Regimental Combat Team 7. "He can do whatever he sets his mind to."





Women's
History Month



**She Can
 Do It!**

Story and photos by
 Lance Cpl. Lauren Kurkimilis

Seventeen-year-old Jeanne is outnumbered and nervous but her face doesn't show it. Men's voices clamber around her as she steps in to the auto body classroom. When the instructor looks up and sees her standing in the door way, fumbling with her class schedule, he determines she's lost. "The band room is next door," he says. She clears her throat. "I'm actually here for the suspension class." she says coolly. The room goes quiet as they all turn to look.

Jeanne Shaw has had a passion for automobiles throughout her life. She has used this to follow a career and break the stigma of a normally male dominant profession.

"When I first started, I was younger and didn't have a lot of experience," said Shaw. "It was very hard to get someone to even take the time to talk to me just because I was a girl."

Shaw first learned about cars when she was just a child. Most little girls her age were interested in makeup. Automotive repair was a curiosity and passion sparked in her at a young age.

"I was really young when I got into cars," Shaw said. "My grandpa was my care giver growing up and he was a mechanic. So, when grandpa would be working on the car, I'd be right there with him."

Some of her earliest memories are of her and her grandpa in the garage or under the hood of a car.

"My grandpa had an Old Willy's Jeep and the whole front end of those can be taken out with a phillips head screwdriver," Shaw said. "One day, he handed me a screwdriver and said, "Go away. Go play."

"I remember him saying he needed to change a headlight so I went and dismantled the whole front end for him. I had everything laid out and organized just the way that he did it when he was working. I went up to him and said, 'Grandpa, you can change your headlight.' When he came outside and looked at it, the look on his face told me I was in trouble but then when he saw that everything was all in order, I think he was impressed."

From that moment on, she knew she had a passion for cars and she didn't know why, but no one could keep her out of the garage.

"Early on, I did a lot of brakes, oil changes, tune-ups, you know, the simple stuff and then when I was in high school I took auto shop and I learned to rebuild engines," she said. "When I was in high school I always chose automotive as my elective because that was my thing. I've always been the only girl in the class. It wasn't so bad back then because we all knew each other."

When Shaw was 16, she became pregnant with her first son and was faced with the challenge of getting an education and working full time to support her new family. Her continuation in this male dominated occupation was not only driven by passion, but by the need for her and her child to survive.

"It was scary," Shaw said. "I wasn't ready to grow up and everything stopped abruptly. I think it was most difficult the first six or seven years because I did a lot of growing while I was raising my son. I have two boys now, Michael, who's 24 and Jorey who's 9."

During the first three years of her son's life, Shaw got her diploma and an associates in arts degree in automotive technology.

"This was all while taking care of a baby and working full time," Shaw said. "It wasn't easy, but I knew what I had to do. No matter what anyone else told me, I wasn't going to give up," she said. "I knew I couldn't."

Shaw is now Automotive Service Excellence certified and has worked in numerous auto shops in the area to include on base as an Auto Skills Center mechanic. With support from friends and family, she has proven herself as a mechanic along the course of her career.

"Sometimes I would get so frustrated because guys I worked with would always give me crap," she said. "But I've had a couple of people who helped push me through my career and never gave up on me even if I may have given up on myself."





Liberty Call

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

Joan Rivers

Comedic performance
 When: 9:00 p.m., Friday, March 8
 Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
 49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon, Calif.
 For more information call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinoresort.com>.

Rhythm of the Dance

The National Dance Company of Ireland performs
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, March 9
 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>.

Gordon Lightfoot

Canadian singer-songwriter performs
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, March 23
 Where: Spotlight 29 Casino Resort
 46-200 Harrison Place, Coachella, Calif.
 For more information call 866-377-6829 or visit <http://www.spotlight29.com>

Matchbox 20

Pop-rock band performs
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, March 30
 Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
 84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
 For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, March 8

6 p.m. - Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band. FREE

Saturday, March 9

10:30 a.m. - Free Matinee Toy Story 3, Rated PG
 12:30 p.m. - Mama, PG-13
 3 p.m. - Hansel and Gretel 3D, Rated R
 6 p.m. - The Impossible, Rated R
 9 p.m. - Parker, Rated R
 Midnight - Broken City, Rated R

'The Rock' anchors tale of father who goes undercover to help free son



COURTESY PHOTO

NEIL POND

"Snitch"

Starring: Dwayne Johnson and Susan Sarandon
 Directed by Ric Roman Waugh
 Rated PG-13, 112 min.

A parent's valiant effort to help his son has a sobering message underneath its action-movie surface — and behind the marquee power of its muscle-bound leading man.

Dwayne Johnson, the former pro wrestler sometimes still known as The Rock, stars as John Matthews, the owner of a big-rig transportation company whose 18-year-old son, Jason (Rafi Gavron), goes to prison after accepting delivery of a large amount of the drug ecstasy from one of his friends, who has cooperated with federal agents to set Jason up in a raid.

Sentenced under rigid federal "mandatory minimum" laws, Jason's only possible way to lighten his prescribed 10-to-30-year sentence is to help the Feds ensnare other drug buyers. Refusing to become a "snitch," and not really having anyone to snitch on, Jason must accept the grim reality of his prison term, much to the horror of his parents.

His dad, however, has other ideas, setting up an appointment with the local U.S. District Attorney (Susan Sarandon) with a proposal: If the son can't snitch, maybe the father can. John offers to go undercover to reel in a "big fish" for the Feds in exchange for reducing his son's prison sentence.

If that sounds like a typically preposterous, unbelievably over-the-top, only-in-Hollywood idea for another slam-bang action movie, consider this: It really happened — at least partially. "Snitch" is based on a true incident, chronicled in a 1999 episode, also titled "Snitch," of the acclaimed PBS documentary series "Frontline."

As you'd probably expect, and the movie does put a great deal of good ol' Hollywood spin on the tale, including an ending that, unfortunately, didn't happen in the actual case.

Through one of his company's employees, the ex-con Daniel (Jon Bernthal from the hit Showtime series "The Walking Dead"), John hooks up with the local drug-thug king-

pin (Michael Kenneth Williams of "Boardwalk Empire"), promising him smooth interstate sailing for his goods on his company's rigs. Soon he's connected with El Topo (Benjamin Bratt), the notorious leader of the Mexican cartel at the head of pipeline feeding into his hometown hub of Jefferson City, Mo.

Though it all leads to shootouts and a slam-bang highway conflagration, "Snitch" is much less action-y than you'd likely expect for a movie headlined by an actor known for action movies. (If you're disappointed, don't worry: The Rock's next flick, "G.I. Joe: Retaliation," coming March 28, will be more of a return to form.)

Instead of nonstop gunfire and explosions, we get a much more tense, taut, thrilling — and sometimes even touching — exercise in just how far a father, an everyday guy (albeit one who happens to be built like The Rock), is willing to go for his son. Johnson's character is never cocky, sometimes frightened and frustrated, and ever aware that he's in a secretive situation that's extremely dangerous and even deadly — but also one that is his only recourse to help his son.

The drama is well-played all around, especially in the subplot of John's ex-con employee Daniel, a father himself also trying to do the right thing for his own young son by trying to stay away from a criminal past that John desperately needs him to re-enter. Barry Pepper plays the federal agent working with John to bring down El Topo, secretly worrying that the trucking businessman is "way out of his depth" and "if he crosses that border" into Mexico, "he's never coming back."

The movie, like the PBS documentary from which it took its inspiration, hopes to stir audiences to question the government's mandatory sentencing laws, under which small-time offenders are sent to already overcrowded prisons for lengthy, perhaps unjustly harsh terms — and which perpetuate the cycle of snitching by which relatively nonviolent "fish" are easily snared while bigger, more dangerous predators continue to swim free.

And as for Dwayne Johnson, "Snitch" shows that The Rock can indeed flex his acting chops beyond doofus comedies and brainless brawn if given the opportunity. Here's hoping he gets more of them.

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Women's History Month

Jeanne, from B1

The instructor of her college suspension class was strict and well known for not going easy on his students. Because Jeanne was a female, he made her prove herself just a little bit more so she would rise above her peers and have a fighting chance after college.

“He did it because he had to,” Shaw said. “I took a lot of crap and abuse from the guys in college. When I would go to him about it and I felt like giving up, he would just say, ‘You’re going to give up because of a couple comments? They’re just comments; comments coming from idiots.’ He helped me realize that I was better than to let their insecurities get to me. He’s been a great role model for me and has mentored me throughout my entire career.”

Beginning her career was a challenge not only because of the limited auto shops in the area, but also because people would doubt her abilities because she’s a woman.

“I’ve gone into auto shops before, looking for a job, and I’ve literally seen people laugh and throw my application in the trash before I could even get out the door,” she said. “Those were the moments where I really wanted to give up. I thought I would never get over trying to be a female in a man’s world. Eventually I’d suck it up and say, ‘I know I’m better than you, and I’ll prove that I am. I’ll get more than you and do more than you.’ It wasn’t easy. I really had to prove myself.”

Shaw prides herself in her work ethic and ability to think outside the box. Her methods aren’t always orthodox but where one mechanic might give up, she works around an issue until she gets the best results.

Shaw has worked at the Combat Center’s Automotive Skills Center for more than three years now and she says she enjoys the change of pace and passing on her professional skills to the local community.

“Give a man a fish; you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, you feed him for life,” Shaw said. “That’s how it works



here. I’ll have people come up to me and say, ‘I don’t know how to take my tire off.’ They’ll know in theory but they’ve never actually done it. Then I get to teach that guy how to change a tire, change his oil or do brakes. Now he’ll come in and have all these skills in his tool belt forever.”

Shaw prides herself in her expert knowledge of brakes and suspension. Co-workers from every shop she has worked in, have said her skills in this area are superior. This is often hard for some male customers to accept.

“A guy came in here once and told me about a problem he was having with his car,” she said. “When I told him how to fix it, he sort of just gaffed me off. He goes to a couple of

guys that work here and they said, ‘Oh, well Jeanne is our brakes expert over there. You’ll have to ask her.’ He then had to walk all the way back over and ask me the question again because he didn’t listen to what I said the first time. I guess he assumed because I was a female that I didn’t know what I was talking about.”

Shaw defies the stigma that women don’t belong in the automotive world. She believes it’s her attitude, passion, and diligence that set her apart from the rest, not her gender.

“I try to be upbeat and positive,” said Shaw. “There’s always another way to do something. I keep true to myself, ignore other people’s judgments and I never give up.”

