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OBSERVATION POST

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Vol. 57 Issue 46

Purple Heart presented to 'Magnificent Seventh' Marine

Lance Cpl. Alejandro Bedoya
Combat Correspondent

Col. Jay M. Barger, commanding officer, 7th Marine Regiment, presented Sgt. Christopher Travis, intelligence targeting chief, Headquarters company, 7th Marine Regiment, and a native of Myrtle Beach, S.C. with a Purple Heart medal at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Nov. 27. Travis earned the medal for injuries sustained while deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"It is an honor to receive this significant award," Travis said. "It is an award not many Marines want because of what has to happen to

It is an award not many Marines want because of what has to happen to receive it, but it truly is an honor to wear this."

— Sgt. Christopher Travis

receive it, but it truly is an honor to wear this."

The Purple Heart medal is one of the noblest medals awarded today. The medal is earned by service members or civilian nationals of the United States who are severely wounded or killed while under the authority of one of the United States Armed Services.

Travis suffered from a traumatic brain injury and loss of memory after being hit by an improvised explosive device.

"I can't remember much after the explosion," Travis said. "I remember taking fire after we got hit but after that it is a blur."

Travis and the Marines with him were engaged in a fire fight until their unit's quick reaction force arrived to provide support.

"I am very proud to say one of my

See **AWARD** page A4

Thanksgiving DAY

STATE-SIDE, IN-COUNTRY

3/7 Marines bond during Thanksgiving

Cpl. Corey Dabney
Combat Correspondent

DELARAM, Afghanistan — Marine Cpl. Alex Martinez is thankful for a lot of things this Thanksgiving — but mostly for the people he celebrated it with.

Like most Marines in Afghanistan, Martinez spent Thanksgiving at work, standing security and supervising his fellow Marines. But Martinez, an infantryman serving with 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, didn't want to let work overshadow the holiday for him and his fellow Marines.

Following his six-hour shift, Martinez invited each Marine in his squad, unbeknownst to them, to join him for a Thanksgiving meal in his barracks room.

Martinez said he thinks of each Marine in his unit as a brother, an extension of family that isn't related by blood. He said he wanted Thanksgiving in Afghanistan to be reminiscent of home and wanted each Marine to experience it together.

Martinez set up a small, plastic table in his room and set out what little food they had — steak, turkey, mashed potatoes and cornbread stuffing. The Marines gathered around the table and Martinez led them in saying grace.

Martinez then asked each Marine to say one thing that he was thankful for this year.

Saying what one is thankful for is a tradition Martinez has done since he was a little boy. Growing up in Arcata, Calif., Martinez and his family always

See **3/7** page A4



KELLY O'SULLIVAN

Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School students relax in the rose garden gazebo at Roughley Manor Bed and Breakfast in Twentynine Palms, Calif. after the B&B's annual Thanksgiving dinner Nov. 28

Marines celebrate Thanksgiving at Roughley Manor

Kelly O'Sullivan
Correspondent

Pfc. Fred Glass savored every morsel of a traditional Thanksgiving meal he and more than 100 fellow Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School students from the Combat Center were treated to Nov. 28 at Roughley Manor Bed and Breakfast.

Two full plates and three desserts later, the 24-year-old South Bend, Ind., native stood with fellow MCCES students in front of the manor, talking and enjoying the 65-degree weather.

"It reminds me of home," Glass said about the food, echoing the sentiments of many of the 103 Marines who attended. At the event, 40 volunteers dished up 11 turkeys, 70 pounds of mashed potatoes, 30 pounds each of stuffing and sweet potatoes, 15 pumpkin pies and eight dozen deviled eggs along with assorted sides, rolls, relish trays and desserts.

Glass's favorite part of the meal was the green bean casserole.

It tastes exactly like mama's," he said.

Marines filled tables set up in the outdoor garden setting, eating, chatting and laughing with one another and volunteers, getting up occasionally to

See **MANOR** page A4

Adopt-A-School



[Left] Seaman Mike Gerasmiovich, corpsman, Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital, runs alongside students at Joshua Tree Elementary during an adopt-a-school visit Wednesday. [Right] Cpl. Matthew Riedel, unmanned aerial vehicle operator, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1, makes friends with Ryan Biggs, 6, and Richard Biggs, 6, first graders at Joshua Tree Elementary Wednesday.

'Watchdogs' promote physical fitness

Lance Cpl. Paul S. Martinez
Combat Correspondent

Marines with Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 participated in a visit to Joshua Tree Elementary as part of the adopt-a-school program Wednesday.

The squadron, which officially adopted the school, took the opportunity to exercise with children of grade levels one and two during the scheduled Pacer Test, a physical trial that measures cardiovascular ability.

"We're here to spend time with the school we have adopted," said Sgt. Jason Williams, flight lead, VMU-1. "I like kids, I like to be out here and be a good example for them."

The Marines and students gathered

at the school's basketball court to begin the Pacer Test, which consisted of a series of progressively fast runs across the court. When instructed to begin, all students sprinted, with the Marines following alongside them.

"Having the Marines here is fun," said Andrew King, second grade student, JT Elementary. "They were making us laugh, and I really like how we ran together with them."

The Marines' school visit inspired the kids to actively participate.

"I think this is an awesome program," said Debbie Motts, teacher, JT Elementary.

"The kids really look forward to it and the Marines interact very well with

See **SCHOOL** page A4

LIGHT FESTIVAL COMBAT CENTER PARTICIPATES IN ANNUAL PARADE



LANCE CPL. KASEY PEACOCK

Members of the community watch as the 19th Annual Tree Lighting ceremony commences in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Tuesday.

Lance Cpl. Kasey Peacock
Combat Correspondent

Local community and service members, along with their families attended the 19th Annual Twentynine Palms Winter Light Parade and tree lighting ceremony in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Tuesday.

The parade made its way through the downtown business district from Adobe Road to Highway 62 with many different floats on display, including those from local businesses, clubs, the fire department and the Combat Center.

While the parade normally is its own event, this year they combined with the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony at City Hall to promote maximum participation.

"Each year this event provides a great opportunity for our community members and service members to get together and enjoy the spirit of Christmas," said Cynthia Truitt, executive director, Twentynine Palms Chamber of Commerce.

Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 7, 1st Marine Logistics Group, decorated two military vehicles with Christmas

See **LIGHTS** page A4

VET CLINIC

BOLSTERS CAPABILITIES



LANCE CPL. CHARLES J. SANTAMARIA

Army Capt. Erin C. Stough, officer in charge, Veterinary Treatment Facility, and Vanessa Leachet, animal health technician, treat a wound on a German shepherd during an appointment in the veterinary clinic Wednesday.

Lance Cpl. Charles J. Santamaria
Combat Correspondent

As service members move all over the United States and throughout the world, finding medical care for their pets has proven to be challenging and a very important issue. Pets often become companions to their owners and a cherished part of the family. This makes finding a reliable veterinary care clinic an important mission among service members.

The Combat Center Veterinary Treatment Facility is open to schedule appointments for pets of service members and families. The facility has recently hired new technicians and a veterinarian to be able to provide treatments for more patients such as vaccinations and emergency response.

The larger staff allows for more versatility in the facility and gives service members on base more opportunities to receive care for their pets.

"Having civilian workers opens up our appointment schedule for patients," Capt. Erin C. Stough, officer in charge, Combat Center Veterinary Treatment Facility. "We've been able to schedule about three-times the amount of appointments with the new staff on board."

The Combat Center facility allows for a discounted price for the care of animals and medicine that may be needed.

"The cost of veterinary treatment can be expensive," said Veronica Getty, veterinarian, Combat Center Veterinary Treatment Facility. "There are expenses that many clinics off base must pay for that the Combat Center facility doesn't have to pay."

The clinic prepares service members for future care of pets at their new duty stations by streamlining the experience of going to the pet clinic with consistent filing of the pet's health and prior health history. The file stays with the family of the animal wherever the owner may transition to next.

"Being more available and open for appointments for the pet owners on base puts their minds at ease," Stough said. "It gives them a place where they know they can find care for their companions."

The facility is open from Monday through Wednesday and Friday from 8:30 to 4:00. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, you can contact the facility at 760-830-6896.

Baby Shower

HELD FOR COMBAT CENTER MOTHERS

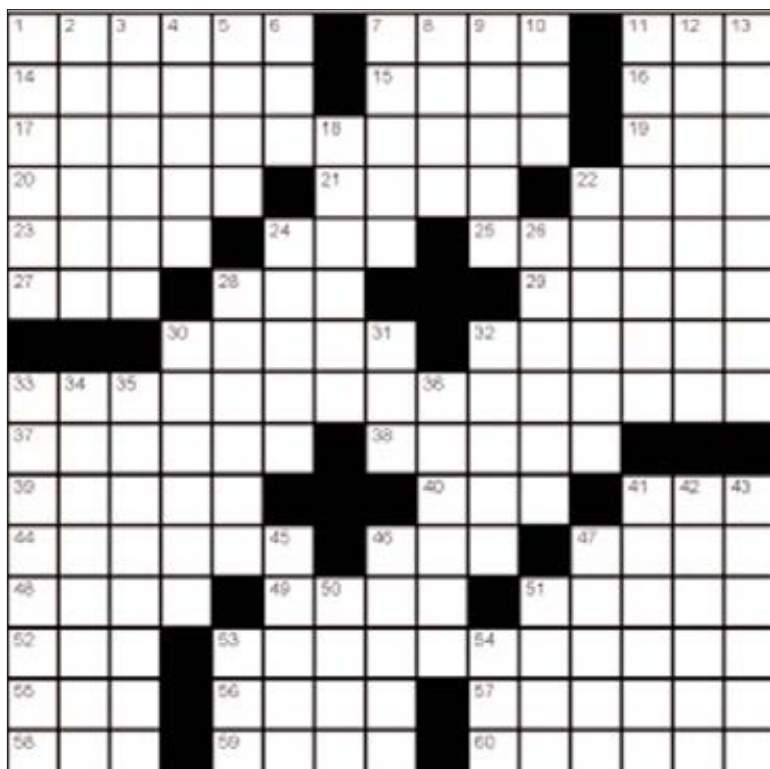
— Photos by Lance Cpl. Kasey Peacock —



[Top] Raymond Moore, War Casualty Family Assistance Fund representative, congratulates Analuisa O'Leary, Marine spouse, on her pregnancy during a "Christmas Baby Shower" luncheon at the Renaissance Esmeralda Resort and Spa in Indian Wells, Calif., Monday. [Above] Gift packages for 20 pregnant military spouses are displayed Monday during the luncheon. Twenty military spouses received several gifts for their unborn babies including wicker baskets, bibs, wipes, monitors, teddy bears and more. [Left] Col. James Hanlon, Chief of Staff, Combat Center, listens to a presentation during the baby shower Dec. 2.

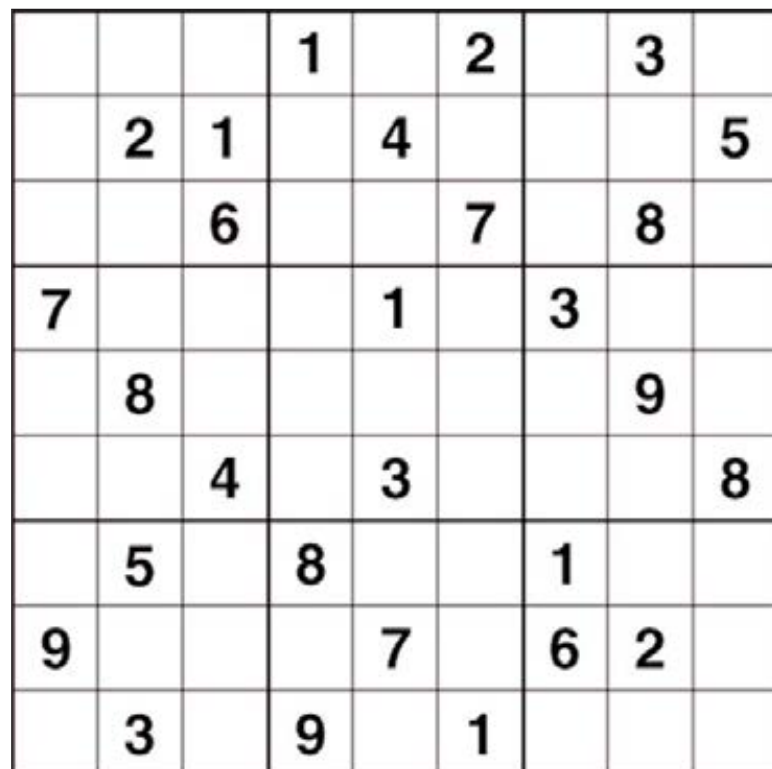
CELTIC CROSSES

- ACROSS**
- Hazzard County police officer
 - Shocked sound
 - Size between small and large: abbr.
 - Animal prized for its wool
 - Possessing power
 - Blvd. cousin
 - Toast-and-cheese dish
 - "___ the season..."
 - Prepares a fishing line
 - Money with interest attached
 - Marquis de ___
 - Semicircles
 - Put on TV
 - Minnesotan
 - "Marble" bread
 - Little bear
 - Old-fashioned contraction
 - Verify, IRS-style
 - New Hampshire-born president
 - Certain Monopoly token
 - Participates in a summer camp activity
 - Banks of baseball
 - Signs of the future
 - Newspaper people, for short
 - Dollop
 - Makes good on one's debts
 - They hook up IVs
 - Location
 - Dirt
 - Dante's "Divine Comedy," for instance
 - Adam's madam
 - Drink topped with whipped cream
 - "Just a ___" ("hold on")
 - Slam ___ (impressive basketball feat)
 - "Murder on the ___ Express"
 - Prior to, in poems
 - Iowa State University's town
 - Razor targets
- DOWN**
- One place for seafood
 - Mrs. ___ (owner of an infamous cow)
 - Do some genetic engineering
 - Fills roles for a movie
 - Newspaper publisher Adolph
 - Listening device?
 - Zsa Zsa or Eva
 - "Waterloo" singers
 - Injured arm's support
 - Garfield or Marmaduke
 - Infamous Dutch spy
 - Proof
 - Person who's way off-base?
 - Courtroom defenses
 - Ball
 - Autobahn vehicles
 - Brother and husband of Isis
 - Affectedly adorable
 - Hard to listen to, maybe
 - Most common English word
 - Awaits judgement
 - "Raging Bull" director Martin
 - Visited
 - Like some bathing suits
 - Long, narrow hole
 - Be unlike
 - Show up for
 - Harasses
 - Antitoxin
 - Puts on the line
 - Bulgaria's capital
 - Tree with needles
 - Possibly apocryphal history
 - Journalist Tarbell
 - Kernel's home



See answers on page A4

SUDOKU 3109D



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

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OFF-LIMITS ESTABLISHMENTS

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.
 - Whispering Palms Apts., 449 E. Arenas Road
 - NYPD Pizza, 260-262 N. Palm Canyon Drive

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

Miguelangel

Napa Valley, Calif. field wireman, 20

GARCIASANDOVAL



- > **I grew up in California** and it is all I really knew for a while. (Napa Valley) is wine country so it was pretty unique.
- > **I would go** to Mexico every year to visit family until I joined the Marine Corps. I would always go around Christmas time and every year they had a big soccer tournament between different villages around Mexico. I would play on a team with all of the people coming from Napa Valley.
- > **The only thing** that was very different about soccer in Mexico, compared to playing in the States, are the fields. In the United States, most fields have grass or are made of artificial turf. The fields in Mexico are all dirt. You would be lucky to play on a grass field.
- > **Growing up**, I really didn't like the sport. My dad would always buy me jerseys and soccer balls and I eventually couldn't help but to start liking it. He was a defender and loved to play so I was also around it.
- > **When I was young**, my dad would make me play against older kids so that I would have a harder time. It was good for me because once I played against kids my age, it was a lot easier.
- > **After a while**, I stopped getting playing time with the older kids so my dad took me off their team and decided to make his own. Having my dad as my coach was a great experience in itself. He was always helping me improve before he became my coach but as soon as he made his team, it made it a lot easier to kick the ball around with him.
- > **Any time I could** spend kicking the ball, I would. I strongly believe the more you do something, the better you will become.
- > **I can play just** about any position. The only position I don't really like playing is where my dad played, defender.
- > **He truly played** a huge part in my life. Not only because he is my dad but because he has

GARCIA SANDOVAL WAS INTRODUCED TO SOCCER AS A CHILD, BY HIS FATHER. HE GREW UP PLAYING IN NAPA VALLEY, CALIF., AND IS NOW A FIELD WIREMAN IN THE CORPS PURSUING HIS PASSION OF THE SPORT.

made me the person I am today.

- > **(Soccer) truly is a beautiful game.** You don't have to be the tallest, strongest or fastest person to play the sport. It helps bring people together. I have met many of my friends today through my different soccer experiences.
- > **I played club soccer** throughout my younger days and then played for my high school once I got old enough. My whole career was very competitive, but a lot of fun.
- > **One of my greatest** memories from playing high school soccer was the last game of my senior year. We were playing our biggest rival and we were tied one to one. I scored the game-winning goal in the last couple of minutes. It is a great and almost addictive feeling when you win a game of that scale, in the last minute, in front of your team and fans.
- > **My favorite team** is Barcelona. The way they play is absolutely amazing. It is so quick and everyone seems to be on the same page, all the time. They dominate almost every team they play against. It would be a dream come true to play on their team. Even if I only got the chance to kick the ball around with them, that would be a crazy experience. Not many people can say they have met or played with the best team in the world.
- > **When it comes to Mexican teams**, my team is the Chivas. People in Mexico are very passionate when it comes to soccer and their teams. It is pretty unique to have a stadium full of people jumping up and down for 90 minutes cheering for you just because of the jersey you are wearing.
- > **One of my friends** who played on my club team in Napa Valley is actually currently playing with the Chivas. He has made it to the big leagues like all kids dream of doing.
- > **I got a chance to go** to an international game between the United States and Mexico. They are big rivals so the atmosphere was amazing. There were seas of green representing Mexico and seas of red, white and blue representing America. I like when the stadiums are split between fans because it makes it that much more intense for the players. Usually when a team is playing in another teams stadium, they are heckled all game, especially in a rivalry.
- > **The passion behind** the sport is what truly drives it. No matter where you are from, what language you speak or the color of your skin, people are united through this game. It brings a smile to my face and has opened many doors for me throughout my life. I don't know where I would be without it. Soccer is life.

Interviewed and photographed by Lance Cpl. Alejandro Bedoya
Nov. 18, 2013

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KELLY O'SULLIVAN

[Left] Pfc. Angel Ayala of San Antonio, Texas, holds out his plate as Irene Cruse, Combat Center protocol officer, serves rolls and deviled eggs during Roughley Manor Bed and Breakfast's fifth annual Thanksgiving dinner Nov. 28. **[Right]** Approximately 50 volunteers cooked and served a traditional Thanksgiving meal to the Marines.

MANOR, from A1

refill a plate or grab something to drink.

Afterward, they explored the grounds and clustered in groups, continuing conversations, and calling and texting home as they waited for the buses that would take them back to the Combat Center.

Roughley Manor owners Jan and Gary Peters have hosted the annual meal for Marines with help from family members and friends for the past five years.

"We are tied to the Marine Corps," said Gary Peters, who bought the historic 1928 home with his wife and turned it into a B&B after retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 1997 after 32 years of service. "We believe that they deserve any special treatment they can get."

Former city councilman John Cole, whose wife, Marsha, oversaw much of the cooking, gave the blessing and Twentynine Palms Mayor Joel Klink spoke to the Marines and sang the national anthem before the start of the meal.

Having the mayor on hand was a welcome surprise for Pfc. Vincent Engel, 19, of Howard Beach, N.Y.

"I'm from New York. To run into the mayor anywhere is a big thing," Engel said. "But to have him come out ... wow."

Pfc. Ryan Deisz of Geneva, Ill., said the event reminded him of his hometown's hospitality.

"Everybody's really caring," he said. "It was important to make us feel at home."

"It was a definite spirit-lifter," added Pfc. Ronald Hinson, 21, of Lancaster, S.C.

The Marines' weren't the only spirits lifted.

Pvt. Kyle Hashbarger, 19, of Fredericksburg, Va., spent much of the day texting his mother, assuring her he was being well taken care of on his first Thanksgiving away from home.

"She's glad," he said, adding, "I'm definitely glad I came."

Twentynine Palms businesswoman Mary Jane Binge, who joined the legion of volunteers for the first time this year, said she enjoyed every minute.

"It feels very good to be of service," she said.

Jan Peters, who is no stranger to hosting large events, said she loves that her family and friends work together to make Thanksgiving away from home a little brighter for the Marines.

"It's an honor for us to be able to do this," she said.

3/7, from A1

celebrated Thanksgiving as a special holiday. Each year, they would come together to watch the Macy's Day Parade, play Trivial Pursuit, and watch homemade movies.

Martinez said he will miss being home for the holidays this year, but is glad to spend it with his fellow Marines.

"These Marines are my brothers," said Martinez. "They are as much a part of my family as anyone."

Several of the Marines said the Thanksgiving meal provided an excellent opportunity for them to come together and build camaraderie as a unit.

"It's nice to be able to bring a piece of home to Afghanistan," said Cpl. Kenton Zerr, a team leader within the Security Force Assistance Advisor Team and native of Grainfield, Kan. "Even though the food wasn't as good as our families cooking, the intent was still the same. We all got together and bonded. I'm going to remember this Thanksgiving for a while."



CPL COREY DABNEY

Marines with 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment's Security Force Assistance Advisor Team, pray before their Thanksgiving dinner, Nov. 28.

SCHOOL, from A1

them. The kids become more involved and more engaged."

For the Marines, acting as playful mentors made the experience just as rewarding.

"My Marines can learn better leadership by teaching these kids and setting the example for them," Williams said. "It directly correlates to what we do."

As the Pacer Test continued to increase in speed, Marines only encouraged the children to keep going; reminding them they were with them every step of the way.

"Every visit is positive for both the Marines and the children," Motts said. "The Marines are good mentors, and great role models for the kids to look up to. It shows the success the kids can one day achieve."

The Marines are already anticipating more activities to be held with their school.

"This school is great," Williams said. "I've got good Marines out here, and we hope to be back."

AWARD, from A1

Marines received this award," Barger said. "Now we get back to training and prepare for the next time we are called into action."

Travis plans on continuing his career by transferring to Marine Aircraft Group 26.

LIGHTS, from A1

lights to participate in the parade.

"It was a great experience for me to see all of the kids waving at us as we drove by," said Cpl. Carlos Ochoa, landing support specialist, CLB-7. "It made me realize how important this event is to the community each year."

The parade and tree lighting event are designed to bring everyone together as a community and get everyone in the spirit of the holidays.

"It's an honor to see everyone coming out here supporting our local community as well as our military," said Capt. Robert Moore, Combat Center Fire Department. "I love what I do, being able to protect the families of our military, and it is great to see all of the support from everyone else in the community for what we all do."



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CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

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

SUDOKU SOLUTIONS

WeekINPhotos

East Coast Marine Corps Combined Band



SGT. A.J. RASURE

[Top, left] Staff Sgt. Mark Bender leads the East Coast Marine Corps Combined Band through the streets of New York in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade Nov. 28.

[Above] The East Coast Marine Corps Combined Band marches 2.5 miles through New York in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade Nov. 28. **[Bottom, left]** The Tuba Section, East Coast Marine Corps Combined Band, marches the 2.5-mile trek through the streets of New York in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade Nov. 28.

[Bottom, right] Comprised of 80 instrumentalists from the Marine Corps' three largest east-coast installations; Marine Corps Bases Quantico, Va., Camp Lejeune, N.C., and Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N. C., Marines participated for the second time in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Nov. 28.



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BOLD — *in the* — COLD

TIPS FOR STAYING FIT, SAFE IN THE WINTER MONTHS

Story by

LANCE CPL. ALEJANDRO BEDOYA

The Marine Corps is known for its demanding physical fitness standards throughout the ranks. Marines are urged to train throughout the year to maintain these physical fitness requirements. Even though the weather conditions change drastically in the desert, physical training will continue, and precautions should be taken to avoid injury.

“Many people think exercising in the cold is different from doing it in the heat,” said Petty Officer 1st Class Lilia Gardner, physical therapy technician, Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital. “You still have to do a proper warm up, dynamic stretches and hydrate to prevent injuries.”

When exercising in the cold, there are a variety of precautions a person must take. They must pay attention to what they wear, the parts of the body that will get colder at a faster rate, and the conditions in which they will be conducting their activities. A few basic precautions will help Marines conduct physical activities safely in cold weather.

WHAT TO WEAR

A person's attire is important when exercising in cold-weather conditions. It is recommended to dress in layers but also avoid dressing too warmly. When exercising, the body generates a considerable amount of heat. The ideal types of layers should be easily removable once the person is warmed up. Keep those removable layers nearby because your perspiration may create a frosty exterior. To avoid this issue, layer up again or use synthetic fabrics, such as polypropylene, which draws sweat away from the body. Try to avoid wearing cotton because once cotton materials become wet, they tend to hug the skin and retain moisture.

People may experiment before finding a combination of

clothing that works well based on their exercise intensity. Another thing to consider is that conducting stop-and-go exercises may make a person more vulnerable to the cold because they are repeatedly working up a sweat and then stopping.

BLOOD FLOW

Cold weather conditions cause the body to concentrate on heating the body's core. This natural reaction causes the hands, feet and ears to become vulnerable. Wearing a pair of gloves or mittens while warming up will help prevent frostbite or other injury. Once warmed up, remove the gloves or mittens to avoid sweating. To help feet, wear thermal socks or simply wear an extra pair. Headbands or hats are also ideal to help keep warm.

WIND CHILL AND OTHER CONDITIONS

Avoid getting wet when exercising in the cold. Cold temperatures and wind chill can increase the risk of hypothermia when a person's clothing gets wet. Dressing warmly is encouraged but wind chills can penetrate clothing and remove the warm air that surrounds the body. Any exposed skin is vulnerable to frostbite if the temperature gets low enough.

According to the Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital, proper preparation is important when training in any weather conditions, especially the cold.

Combat readiness is essential in the Corps, but safety always comes first. Without taking appropriate precautions, the consequences could be severe, but with proper planning and understanding, working out in the winter is worth the effort.



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INDOOR SOCCER



LANCE CPL. KASEY PEACOCK



LANCE CPL. KASEY PEACOCK



LANCE CPL. CHARLES J. SANTAMARIA

End of season sparks playoffs

Written by
Lance Cpl. Alejandro Bedoya

When the Combat Center soccer league began, the slate was clean. All of the teams were seen as equals. Players were ready to represent their units and ultimately battle for the indoor-soccer championship. All the teams fought head-to-head during the season. There were big wins, upsets, and a couple of standout players but with the season coming to a close, only the top eight teams will move on to the playoffs.

With the intense playoff competition and the pace of the sport, the results may be surprising. Taking an outdoor sport and moving it indoors changes the dynamics.

"Indoor soccer is unique," said Cpl. Hugo Antunez, defender, Headquarters Battalion Team 2. "It is very fast and requires a lot of skill. It is a lot of fun to be able to play with Marines in my unit and have the chance to compete for a championship."

This year's season was the second the Combat Center has hosted.

"There was a big turnout this year," said Jillian Stoker, coordinator, Semper Fit, Marine Corps Community Services. "Last year we had a good turnout by having nine teams but this year, we almost doubled it by having 16."

With 16 teams competing for the same trophy, competition was intense. There were a few teams who rose above the others and showed they had their eyes on the prize. Headquarters Battalion

Team Two was the top team of the league. Throughout seven regular-season games, HQBN Team Two scored 92 goals, gave up 14 goals and were undefeated.

The second seeded team was 'Mollie Whoppers,' which is also from HQBN, but were placed in a separate bracket from HQBN Team Two. The 'Mollie Whoppers' scored 70 goals and gave up 8 throughout their regular season. They were also undefeated.

The third team amongst the elite was Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School Team One. They scored 57

the next level. The league's top three goal scorers are Alejandro Bedoya, HQBN Team Two, 37 goals, Thomas Salukombo, HQBN Team Two, 25 goals, and Hugo Vargas, Mollie Whoppers, 24 goals. The top three goal scorers happen to be from the two teams who are in the championship round.

"We didn't get a chance to compete in the playoffs," said Cpl. Samuel Duncan, forward, 'The Mob.' "But I am still going to try and watch the playoffs. I am excited to see who will walk away with the trophy."

[Top, left] Daniel Logan, Headquarters Battalion Team-2, attempts to make a goal during the indoor soccer league's playoff game Wednesday at the East Gym and Fitness Center.

[Top, right] Headquarters Battalion Team-1 work together to dribble the ball up the indoor field during the playoff game at the East Gym Wednesday.

[Above] Soccer players with Headquarters Battalion gather before the start of an indoor soccer match at the East Gym Wednesday.

We are all in this together.

-Thomas Salukombo

goals and gave up 19. MCCES Team One's season consisted of only one loss to HQBN Team Two.

"When you read the scores or rankings you see team names, not individual players," said Lance Cpl. Thomas Salukombo, forward, HQBN Team Two. "It is an honor to be amongst the top goal scorers but it is my team who makes me look good. We are all in this together."

Soccer is a team sport but sometimes there are key players among the team. Every role is important but those who score goals help their team advance to

After four weeks of fierce competition, the playoffs are also coming to a close. Each goal is worth more than just a point. Each goal will get that team one step closer to the championship.

HQBN Team Two and the Mollie Whoppers faced off Thursday for the championship. Supporters from all around the Combat Center came to cheer on the two teams competing.

For more information on the winners of the Combat Center's indoor soccer league championship, see next week's Observation Post.

[Bottom, left] Thomas Salukombo, Headquarters Battalion Team-2, dribbles the ball toward the goal during the playoff match Wednesday at the East Gym.

[Bottom, right] John Vasquez, soccer player, Tactical Training Exercise Control Group, prepares to kick the ball during an indoor soccer match against Headquarters Battalion Team-2 at the East Gym Dec. 3.



LANCE CPL. KASEY PEACOCK



LANCE CPL. CHARLES J. SANTAMARIA



Liberty Call

Vince Vaughn goes for warm & fuzzy as a fantastically fertile father



COURTESY PHOTO

Combat Center Events

Winter festival

The festival originally began as an outreach to families of deployed service members during the holidays. It has grown into a base-wide holiday festival attended by more than 2,000 patrons.
 When: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 7.
 Where: Del Valle Field
 Call (760) 830-5086 for more information.

Sunnylands Butterfly Family Day

Take a trip down to the garden at historic Sunnylands Center and Gardens in Rancho Mirage. Bring a blanket along and enjoy a barbecue lunch. This is a free parent/pre-schooler event.
 When: 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 10.
 Where: 37977 Bob Hope Dr., Rancho Mirage, Calif. 92270
 Call (760) 830-5086 for more information.

Booksigning with R. Lee "Gunny" Ermey

Meet Ermey in person and have your copy of his book signed.
 When: 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 11.
 Where: Main Exchange

Holiday Family event

Come see Santa. There will also be face painting and caricature artists.
 When: 4 p.m. - 8 p.m., Friday, Dec. 13
 Where: Main Exchange

For more events visit <http://www.mccs29palms.com>

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Dec. 6

6 p.m. - Free Birds 3-D, PG
 8:30 p.m. - Ender's Game, PG-13
 11:30 p.m. - About Time, R

Saturday, Dec. 7

10 a.m. - Free Admission A Christmas Story, PG
 12:30 p.m. - Free Birds 3-D, PG
 3 p.m. - Ender's Game, PG-13
 6 p.m. - Escape Plan, R
 9 p.m. - The Counselor, R
 11:30 p.m. - Carrie, R

Sunday, Dec. 8

12:30 p.m. - Thor: The Dark World 3-D, PG-13
 5 p.m. - Sneak Preview Lone Survivor, R
 8:00 p.m. - Last Vegas, PG-13

Monday, Dec. 9

7 p.m. - Sneak Preview Grudge Match, PG-13

High Desert

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 (760) 363-3343.

A Christmas Carol

Classic seasonal story performed live
 When: 7 p.m., Fridays & Saturdays, Nov. 15 - Dec. 14
 Where: Theatre 29
 73637 Sullivan Rd., Twentynine Palms, Calif.
 For more information, call (760) 316-4151

Low Desert

Moscow Battlet

A performance of the Nutcracker
 When: 8 p.m., Friday, Dec. 20
 Where: Agua Caliente Casino, Resort and Spa
 32-250 Bob Hope Dr., Rancho Mirage, Calif.
 For more information, call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>

Golden Boy Boxing

Boxers compete for Super Featherweight Title
 When: 4 p.m., Friday, Dec. 13
 Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
 84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio, Calif.
 For more information, call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>

Charo

Iconic Spanish-American singer, comedian performs
 When: 9 p.m., Friday, Dec. 13
 Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
 49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon, Calif.
 For more information, call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinoresort.com>

The Oak Ridge Boys

Country and gospel coal quartet performs
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 14
 Where: Spotlight 29 Casino
 46-200 Harrison Place, Coachella, Calif.
 For more information, call 866-377-6829 or visit <http://www.spotlight29.com>

NEIL POND

"Delivery Man"

Starring Vince Vaughn, Chris Pratt and Cobie Smulders
 Directed by Ken Scott
 PG-13, 105 min.

When Brooklyn meat delivery-truck driver David Wozniak (Vince Vaughn) discovers that anonymous sperm donations he made to a fertility clinic some decades ago have resulted in more than 500 now-adult children, he decides to check them out. Not all of them - just the 142 New Yorkers who are suing to find out the true identity of their dad.

So the deliveryman who's sewn his seeds over the Big Apple goes off to see how they've sprouted - without letting any of them know who he really is.

This remake - by the same director - of a 2011 French-Canadian flick called "Starbuck" (after a champion stud breeding bull) follows Wozniak as he interacts with his offspring. He encourages the street musician, cheers for the historical reenactor, gets a manicure

from the salon worker, and subs for the barista at a coffee shop so the aspiring actor can skip work and go to an audition.

He even saves the heroin addict from an overdose. There's also a subplot about how Wozniak's latest get-rich scheme has resulted in a massive debt to some sleazy loan sharks, and about his girlfriend (Cobie Smulders of "How I Met Your Mother"), who's pregnant with his baby but not really expecting her screw-up of a partner to be much of a co-parent.

Can "Starbuck" turn his life around and become the man he needs to be - and the father he already is, 500 times over?

Vaughn, whose acting career has generally been defined by playing slouchy, raunchy man-child slackers, takes a decided turn toward the warm and fuzzy here, but still retains enough of his trademark comedic brand to not totally surprise anyone expecting to see a "Vince Vaughn movie." It's Chris Pratt, however, a supporting player on TV's "Parks and Recreation," who snatches most of the laughs right out from under him as his best friend and lawyer buddy.

There's something creepy about a grown man sneaking around, spying on dozens of barely 20-somethings, sneakily tweaking their lives. There's something implausible about just how swell, well adjusted and full of sunshine all these kids are, even the heroin addict. And the scenes in which Vaughn interacts with his severely disabled son (Sébastien René, reprising his role from the original movie), meant to show Wozniak's love for ALL his kids, instead come off as manipulative and mawkish.

Ultimately, this tall tale of a fantastically fertile lug and his epic leap into the nether-reaches of fatherhood has a message about family, connectivity and belonging that wraps around its comic center like one giant group hug. But "Delivery Man" makes you slog down a long road of soppy, artificially sweet goop to get to it.

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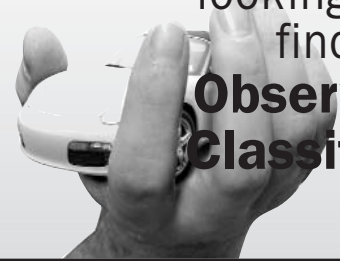
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HOLIDAY

treats for

TROOPS



[Left] Michele Chamberlain, spouse of Capt. Travis Chamberlain, helps two Marines with the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, decorate sugar cookies at the Combat Center's Officer's Club in support of the Treats for Troops event Tuesday.

[Bottom] Local Girlscouts participate in the Treats for Troops event at the Combat Center's Officer's Club Tuesday.



arine Corps Community Services Food and Hospitality Catering and Events began the Holiday Treats for Troops event at the Combat Center's Officers Club, Tuesday. Volunteers consisting of Combat Center Marines, sailors, and civilians, came together to make holiday treats for the spouses of deployed service members and Marines that will be spending their holidays in the barracks.

"It's all hands on deck for anyone who wants to participate or volunteer," said Candice M. Coward, director, Food and Hospitality Catering and Events. "It's our way of spreading holiday cheer for those whose families are either not with them or too far away for them to spend time with."

By the end of the event, there will

be approximately 13,500 cookies and 6,800 pretzels made by volunteers and coordinators from several units aboard the Combat Center.

The coordinators of the event aim to distribute the cookies, pretzels and ginger bread men this holiday season. The event is open to anyone who wants to volunteer. For those who have already volunteered, the cookies and pretzels mean more than just a holiday snack.

"Although it's only a small package with only a couple cookies and a pretzel, it's a way for us to say thank you and to show service members that they aren't alone for the holidays," said Allison Barber, supervisor, Food and Hospitality Catering and Events.

MCCS plans to host the event again on Tuesday and Dec 17th for anyone else who may be interested in

contributing. For information on how to volunteer or participate, call MCCS Food and Hospitality, Catering and Events at 760-830-8429.

