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Marines hone responding skills

Lance Cpl. Paul S. Martinez
Combat Correspondent

The United States Department of Homeland Security defines an active shooter as “an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area.” Generally, there is no specific pattern to choosing victims.

There are, however, established guidelines to help individuals survive with the situation. If caught in the midst of a hostile active-shooter situation, there are three approaches to maximize your chances of survival and assist in the apprehension of the shooter.

The first approach to surviving an active shooter situation is hiding. It is imperative to first observe your surroundings, and seek a room for shelter. Immediately lock the door, and improvise a barricade with nearby furniture if necessary. Ideal furniture can include chairs, podiums, or desks. When it is safe to do so, contact emergency authorities and remain in place.

The first thing the victim needs to do is relay to the first responders as much information as possible

— Capt. Ben Gutek

While cellular devices can be considered useful, they present both an advantage and a threat to surviving in an active-shooter situation.

“It is important to keep cell phones on silent,” said Niki McBain, emergency manager, Force Protection, G-7. “If a cell phone rings or makes any noise, it can give away your location to the shooter.”

If someone seeks cover during an active-shooter scenario, placing the cellphone on vibrate or silent mode increases their chances of staying hidden, according to McBain.

The second approach to making it through an active-shooter situation is fleeing the danger zone.

In this instance, one must observe any accessible escape routes, and seek to leave the premises if possible. Leave any and all personal possessions behind, and if possible, lead other co-workers out.

Once successfully away from harm or danger, seek the assistance of

See **SHOOTER** page A6



Cpl. Jason L. Dunham was honored at the Combat Center Tuesday, with a dedication ceremony and the official opening of the Cpl. Jason L. Dunham Memorial Mess

Dunham honored in ceremony

Cpl. Ali Azimi
Combat Correspondent

Marines with 4th Platoon, Company K, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment were conducting a reconnaissance mission in Karabilah, Iraq, April 14, 2004. After the ambush of their commanding officer's convoy, Cpl. Jason L. Dunham, squad leader, led his Marines to provide fire support and were met with returning fire. Dunham was attacked by an insurgent and in the struggle the attacker released a grenade, which Dunham covered with his helmet and body to protect his fellow Marines. He saved the lives of at least two Marines and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military honor.

Dunham's bravery was recognized during the dedication ceremony of the Cpl. Jason L. Dunham Memorial Mess Hall at the Combat Center, Tuesday.

The ceremony began with an invocation by Navy Cmdr. Michael Williams, chaplain, 7th Marine Regiment, and marching of the United States and Marine Corps colors. Dunham's Medal of Honor citation, which described his heroic actions, was read to the crowd.

The ceremony was attended by Dunham's parents, Dan and Debra Dunham, as well as Lt. Gen. John A. Toolan, commanding general, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, Maj. Gen. Larry D. Nicholson, commanding general, 1st Marine Division, Brig. Gen. Vincent A. Coglianese, commanding general, 1st Marine Logistics group, Brig. Gen. Carl E. Mundy, deputy commanding general, 1st MarDiv,

Brig. Gen. James W. Bierman, commanding general, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and the Combat Center Commanding General, Maj. Gen. David H. Berger.

“Marines like Jason, every one of them are volunteers,” Berger said. “Every one of them felt a calling to serve their nation in a time of need. They didn't have to. They could have chosen the easy route.”

After the completion of the ceremony, Dunham's parents shook hands and talked to Marines in the crowd. Having a mess hall named after him was only fitting, they said.

“Jason liked to eat so [the mess hall] is a good thing,” said Debra. “He called home one day and said, ‘the Navy has the best food,’ and I think he is really missing out on a good thing here.”

The 21,840 square-foot mess hall can fit 440 patrons and provides inside and outside seating areas. Construction on the building started in June 2011 and ended in February. Its modern design and dynamic architecture provides natural lighting and a unique dining atmosphere.

At the entrance of the mess hall, Dunham's citation and picture hang as a permanent fixture.

“Deb and Dan provided us with a great portrait of Jason in his combat gear,” Berger said. “It's a great reminder of what true sacrifice really means.”

Dunham knew the dangers he faced when joining the Marine Corps. His bravery while serving Corps and country will always be remembered and his name and story fixed to the mess hall for all to see.

'First Team' Marines presented medals

Cpl. D. J. Wu
Combat Correspondent

Distinguished guests and members of 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, gathered at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field, Tuesday to honor four Marines who went above and beyond the call of duty during their last deployment to Afghanistan.

The four Marines, 1st Lt. Kenneth Conover, platoon commander, Staff Sgt. Joshua Brodrick, platoon sergeant and Sgt. Kenneth Ricks and Nicholas Brandau, all with Co. D, “First Team,” received medals for valor for their actions during an operation in Qaleh-ye Gaz, Afghanistan.

“Some of you might know the story of Qaleh-ye Gaz,” said Lt. Gen. John A. Toolan, commanding general, I Marine Expeditionary Force. “Qaleh-ye Gaz was a bad place and a bad neighborhood. It is a place that will remain in the history of our Corps. For anyone that served in Afghanistan, they know



1st Lt. Kenneth Conover, Staff Sgt. Joshua Brodrick, Sgt. Kenneth Ricks and former Sgt. Nicholas Brandau stand in formation after receiving medals of valor at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field Tuesday.

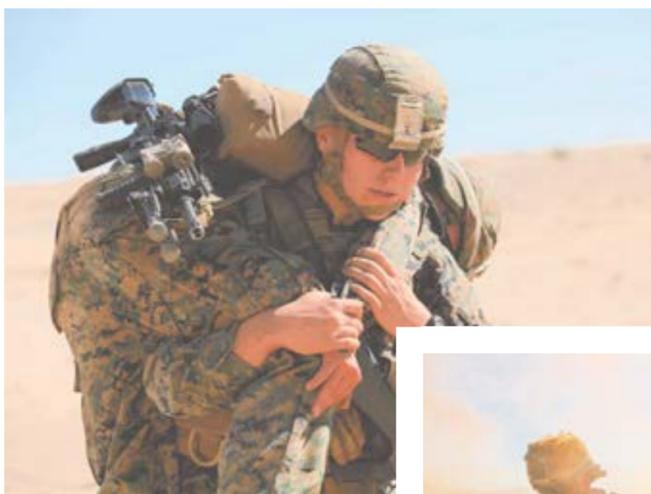
that it's one of the worst places there.”

Ricks and Conover received the Silver Star Medal and Brandau and Brodrick received the Bronze Star Medal with combat distinguishing device. The four Marines with Company D, 1/7, Marines led a night air-assault on an enemy stronghold.

The Marines engaged the enemy nearly non-stop for six continuous days. They were under heavy resistance, but pressed on and saved the lives of their endangered comrades.

The Marines receiving the awards were humble upon the presentation. They credit the Marines of Co. D as a whole and pay homage to the ones who didn't make it back.

“I wear this award for all the Marines in 1/7,” Conover said. “This is not something that I could have done alone. They are the reason I'm receiving this award.”



A Marine with Company E, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, performs a fireman carry with a fellow Marine during a squad competition aboard the Combat Center, Feb. 12. The competition included clearing and maneuver while suppressing the enemy forces.

A Marine with Company E, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, disembarks a CH-46 Chinook helicopter aboard Range 701 as part of a squad competition aboard the Combat Center, Feb. 12.



PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIAA

2/7 Marines hold squad competition

Lance Cpl. Charles Santamaria
Combat Correspondent

Every step was a fight as squads of Marines traversed the desert terrain of the Combat Center's ranges. Their boots began to feel like lead after approximately nine miles of travel in full gear and equipment. The Marines were timed and tested in building clearing, operation of an M203 grenade launcher and maneuver while suppressing enemy stops along the way to their destination. But as their breath shortened, their strides became longer and their determination to beat their fellow squads in the competition only grew.

Staff non-commissioned officers and officers with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, organized a squad competition for Marines and sailors within the company, Feb. 12, aboard the Combat Center. The competition began with each squad running an obstacle course twice. From there, Marines moved to a landing zone to be transported by a CH-46 Chinook helicopter to Range 701.

“We wanted to include the basics of warfighting in the competition,” said 1st Lt. Tyler Mojer, executive officer, Co. E, 2/7. “That's why the Combat Center's ranges are so useful because Marines can use the 100

See **COMPETITION** page A6



The Honorable Mr. Dennis McGinn, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Energy, Installations and Environment, gets an overview of the Integrated Training Exercise from Col. Andrew Kennedy, director, Tactical Training Exercise Control Group, at Range 210, Feb. 12.

Assistant SECNAV observes ITX

Story and photos by **CPL. D. J. WU**

The Honorable Mr. Dennis McGinn, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Energy, Installations and Environment, visited the Combat Center to observe Integrated Training Exercise 2-14 during his tour of military installations on the West Coast, Feb. 12.

McGinn, a retired Navy vice admiral, wanted to see how Combat Center Marines are effectively using their energy resources in expeditionary environments. He also wanted to see how Marines train during the ITX to familiarize himself with their operations.

“Mr. McGinn is out on the West Coast to participate in training events directed by the Secretary of the Navy,” said Katie Hantson, analyst, Expeditionary Energy Office. “He actually extended his trip to visit Twentynine Palms. As a former naval officer, he understands the Navy, but in his new position as assistant secretary, he wanted to educate himself on Marine Corps operations to be better in his position.”

The assistant secretary met with Maj. Gen. David H. Berger, Combat Center Commanding General, before heading out to Range 210 to observe aspects of the ITX. Col. Andrew Kennedy, director, Tactical Training Exercise Control Group, showed McGinn what the ITX does for the Marine Air Ground Task Force and how the training

See **VISIT** page A6

Lt. Gen. John Toolan, commanding general, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, oversees the reenlistment of Staff Sgt. Timothy Williams, section leader, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, during an award ceremony held at Camp Las Flores, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. Jan. 7. The Marine Corps has changed its business practices when it comes to reenlisting during fiscal year 2014. Marines currently have until February 28, to put in their reenlistment or extension packages to stay in the Corps.



Corps' FY 2014 Reenlistment Challenges

Lance Cpl. Norman Eckles
Combat Correspondent

MARINE CORPS LOGISTICS BASE BARSTOW, Calif. — The Marine Corps has changed its business practices when it comes to reenlisting during Fiscal Year 2014.

Marines currently have until Feb. 28 to put in their reenlistment or extension packages to stay in the Corps.

“Per Marine Administrative Message 026/14, the update to the FY14 Enlisted Retention Campaign, all Marines with an Expiration of Active Service during FY 2014, who desire to reenlist or extend, are required to submit the request to their career planner no later than Feb. 28,” said Master Sgt. Matthew Spencer, career planner, Marine Corps Installations West. “Requests submitted after Feb. 28 may not receive favorable consideration for further service.”

The reason for this MARADMIN is the Marine Corps trying to downsize, according to Spencer. By the end of FY 2014, the Corps’ goal is to have 188,500 Marines,

which needs to be met by Sept. 30 of this year. There are currently 192,841 Marines.

With the new MARADMIN, the rate of approval has changed for everyone, Spencer said. This year will take longer for a Marine to find out if he or she will get to stay in the Corps.

“There is no difference in the rate of approval between first-term or career Marines,” Spencer added. “Normally, a reenlistment or extension request would get approved (or denied) within 30 days from the date it was submitted. Now, with the Executive Review Period in place, these requests are taking up to three months to get approved.”

“This makes it more competitive for both first-term Marines and career Marines to be retained,” said Sgt. William Koeppe, career planner, Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow. “This means competition becomes fiercer.”

“Be the best Marine you know how to be, always (strive to) improve, complete your professional military education, improve your physical fitness test and combat fitness test scores, and seek off-duty education,” Spencer

said. “Talk to your non-commissioned officers, staff non-commissioned officers, and officers about how to get better proficiency (and) conduct marks. If your record speaks for itself, you will be given the opportunity to stay (in the) Marines.”

Nothing can prevent a Marine from submitting a reenlistment, extension or lateral move request, Koeppe said. However, Marines who have compromising issues on contract could be denied further service, depending on the situation.

Headquarters Marine Corps will make the final determination on who gets to extend or reenlist for each military occupational specialty.

While waiting for a response from HQMC, Marines need to attend the Transition Readiness Seminar, 12-14 months from their EAS date and complete all civilian transition requirements. However, attending TRS does not mean they will automatically be disapproved for retention beyond FY 2014, Koeppe said.

For more information, contact your local career planner or refer to MARADMIN 026/14.



BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS



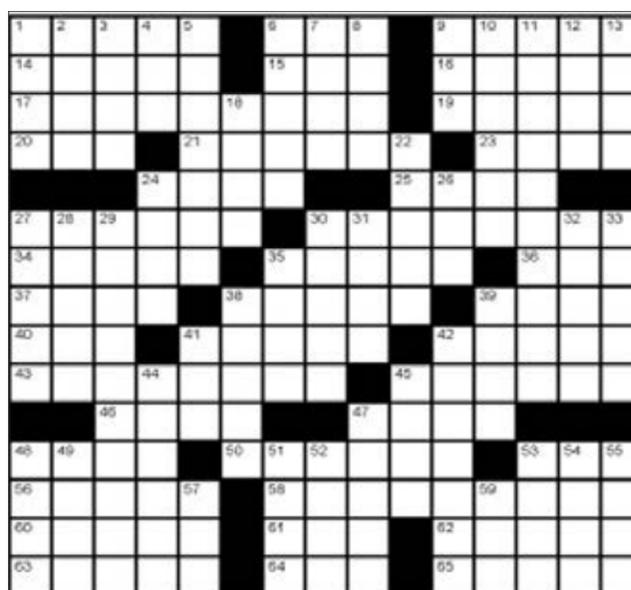
ADDISON ROSE RICHARD
Born on: Feb. 6, 2014
Born to: Derek and Bailey Richard

NOACH ANTHONY SNIDER
Born on: Jan. 24, 2014
Born to: Nathaniel and Jessica Snider

ANNABELLE JOAN ANDRADE
Born on: Jan. 27, 2014
Born to: Ajay and Ashley Andrade

BEST BUDS

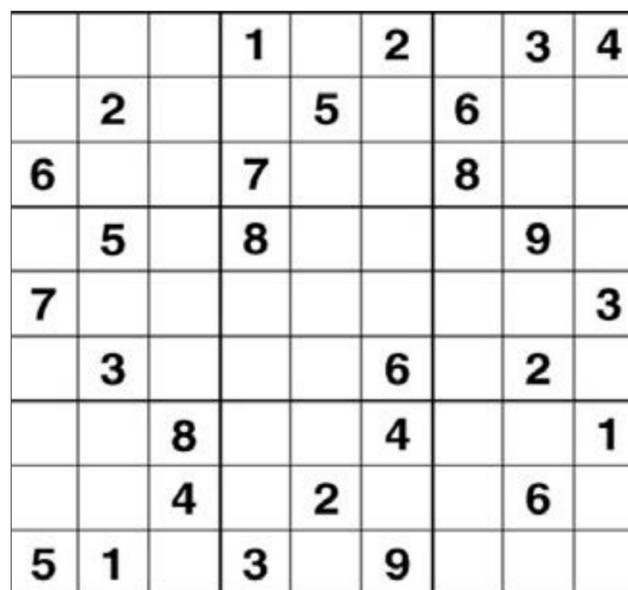
- Across**
- 1 "Leaving Las ____"
 - 6 The Fountainhead novelist Rand
 - 9 Plus
 - 14 Taken ____ (shocked)
 - 15 Ghost's word
 - 16 Not experienced in
 - 17 Old sailors
 - 19 ____ Lakes
 - 20 Peeper
 - 21 Word on a bathroom door
 - 23 Electric ____
 - 24 He works without words
 - 25 After-dinner treat
 - 27 Summer camp shelters
 - 30 Meteorologist's concerns
 - 34 Wonderland girl
 - 35 Cries loudly
 - 36 "Nicely done!"
 - 37 Baptism or communion
 - 38 Theme of this puzzle
 - 39 Penny or quarter
 - 40 Permit
 - 41 Number of Stooges
 - 42 "Same here"
 - 43 Sixteen ounces
 - 45 ____ and yon
 - 46 Kitchen or parlor
 - 47 Aching
 - 48 iPhone downloads
- Down**
- 1 Flower holder
 - 2 Website to sell and buy
 - 3 Dorothy's last name, in "The Wizard of Oz"
 - 4 Part of a play
 - 5 City's horizon
 - 6 Humble home
 - 7 Word before Bear or Berra
 - 8 Sniffer
 - 9 Lee behind the camera
 - 10 Williams with Wimbledon wins
 - 11 Chocolate lover's weak spot
 - 12 And others
 - 13 Tater ____
 - 18 River blockers
 - 22 "I'm about to take



- 14 Lobster soup
- 15 Electronics letters
- 16 French-speaking island nation of the Caribbean
- 18 Borscht addition
- 20 Poker announcement
- 21 Mauna ____, Hawaii
- 22 Dance it takes two to do
- 23 Alternatives to suspenders
- 24 Finish
- 25 Low pair?
- 26 Flower holder
- 27 Website to sell and buy
- 28 Dorothy's last name, in "The Wizard of Oz"
- 29 Part of a play
- 30 City's horizon
- 31 Humble home
- 32 Word before Bear or Berra
- 33 Sniffer
- 34 Lee behind the camera
- 35 Williams with Wimbledon wins
- 36 Chocolate lover's weak spot
- 37 And others
- 38 Tater ____
- 39 River blockers
- 42 "I'm about to take your picture!"
- 43 Cheese lovers
- 44 Types to
- 45 Monte ____
- 46 UFO traveler
- 47 Tough thing to swallow
- 48 Prepared to burglarize
- 49 Word in some beer names
- 50 Top of the line
- 51 Mister, in Mexico
- 52 Raise red flags
- 53 Hitchhiker's finger
- 54 Name as a source
- 55 Also
- 56 Emulates 9-Down
- 57 Brand of sticky notes
- 58 One of 24
- 59 Team
- 60 Melville captain
- 61 Not tan
- 62 It's surrounded by water
- 63 Any moment
- 64 Nevada city
- 65 Actor Nicolas of 1-Across
- 66 Famous ____ cookies
- 67 Connections
- 68 Crowd's cheer

See answers on page B4

SUDOKU 3186D



OBSERVATION POST

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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

Clay

Florence, Ala. Personal and professional development instructor, 40

BARBER



- > **I'm a retired Marine.** I served more than 20 years and I last served as a communications chief. I've been on this base forever.
- > **I like football,** Alabama football. I grew up there and I really enjoy my state. All Alabama football, high school or college, it doesn't matter. I love it.
- > **I like to stay active.** I play a lot of sports. I feel better now that I'm retired. My body is not as broken down as it was. I'm just an average Joe.
- > **I took this job** because it's a way to still help Marines. To put it into perspective, once you retire you're constantly being fed that you're not a Marine anymore. This is still a way for me to give back. Whether it be a brotherly hug or the fatherly swift kick in the pants.
- > **The tenants of this job** are just that, helping a human being from where they are to where they want to be. This is America where everyone gets the right to choose where they want to be.
- > **I grew up in northwest** and central Alabama, mostly around my grand parents. I grew up in blue-collar America. My family is full of veterans. That was always something to think about and be proud of.
- > **My dad is a truck driver.** I grew up around that for most part. My grandfather retired from the military and then he worked in the hydroelectric business on the rivers.
- > **My grandparents spoiled us** rotten. We'd go fishing and hang out on the porch... being Southern.
- > **Being Southern is being proper.** Behave yourself, have manners and try to succeed but not get wrapped up around the axel of success. That's a good way to put it.
- > **Keep your pace slow.** You tend to run into less issues because you're able to see the issue and deal with it before it becomes that. I like to impart that to people, I think that's important.
- > **I started with football** on day one. My grandfather was a huge Alabama football fan and I've been a fan ever since. I like all sports. There really isn't a sport that I don't like but I love football. Alabama football is a way of life.
- > **I played here and there** when I was growing up. I enjoyed it. I played quarterback

CLAY BARBER IS A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSTRUCTOR AT THE COMBAT CENTER'S EDUCATION CENTER. BEFORE HIS CURRENT CAREER, HE SERVED IN THE MARINE CORPS FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS.

that was all ever played. I wouldn't say I was the best but I was far from the worst.

- > **I'm a forward liver.** The lessons of yesterday are really just the building blocks for tomorrow. I try not to relive all of the past experiences. They're in the past for a reason.
 - > **I joined the Marine Corps** as a young one. It's the only thing I've done in my adult life. I wasn't an adult when it all started, I wasn't even 18.
 - > **When I came in,** I was a mainframe operator, which meant nothing. It meant you could get farmed out doing this, that or another thing for various units. The gear we were using was already becoming antiquated. When you're in an antiquated (military occupational specialty) you become whatever they need you to be.
 - > **It was fun.** I enjoyed that. I started off with an open contract. I had no idea what I was going to be and I didn't rightly care. I was under the impression that everyone was a Marine and that was the important thing.
 - > **In the end,** I got to finish out my career at the school house, where we make our own so to speak. It was good to see it on the back end and help make what we need to have.
 - > **I don't consider what** we do teaching. I consider it mentoring. The class function is sometimes teaching or facilitating or guided discussion. It can be a lot of things. It takes on many different forms and what I see and do as a whole is mentoring.
- I like taking someone's idea and helping them realize it or sometimes help them identify red flags from my training and experience. We do that a lot with education here. We like to see people realize that people are willing to help them through the process and it excites them. That's fun.
- > **I wasn't taught a lot** about being proper from the Marine Corps. I already knew them because I was raised that way. To do what I was told, as quickly as I could do it was not a foreign concept. When my grandfather said jump my whole family said how high. We did what we were supposed to do and we did what we were told.
 - > **Forward thinking to me** is simply not ever being bogged down by the past. Whether it is educational, professional or personal, it's important not to get bogged down by those decisions.
 - > **It's all about the buildup** for tomorrow. Whatever tomorrow brings, I'll be ready for it.

Interviewed by Cpl. D. J. Wu Feb. 5, 2014



For more Combat Center photos, visit the official MCAGCC facebook page at

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

Faces in the Crowd

Photos by KELLY



[1] Chris Verbel, instructor, Joint Improvised Explosive Device Organization's Mobile Counter-IED Interactive Trainer, explains to visiting Morongo Unified School District Transition Partnership Program staff members how the simulator works before putting them through a scenario, Tuesday.

[2] Shanna Valenzuela, job coach, Morongo Unified School District Transition Partnership Program, works to carry out a planned attack against Chris Verbel, instructor, JIEDO Mobile Counter-IED Interactive Trainer, Tuesday.

[3] William Gossman, job coach, talks to the driver of the vehicle behind him as he searches for IEDs while Lisa Harper, instructional assistant, Morongo Unified School District Transition Partnership Program, navigates a city street in the JIEDO Mobile Counter-IED Interactive Trainer, Tuesday.

[4] Morongo Unified School District Transition Partnership Program staff members talk with Chris Verbel, instructor, JIEDO's Mobile Counter-IED Interactive Trainer about their experience in the JIEDO Mobile Counter-IED Interactive Trainer, Tuesday.



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



LANCE CPL. KASEY PEACOCK

[Top, right] Students from high schools within the Morongo Unified School District watch a K9 demonstration at the Combat Center training tank during the 11th Annual Job Shadowing Event, Wednesday. The three students expressed interest in law enforcement as a career and learned about K9 training.

[Above] Mark Serpa-Cardenas, 17, 12th grader in high school, measures pasta at the Combat Center Officer's Club during the 11th Annual Job Shadowing Event, Wednesday. "I enjoyed my time with the Job Shadowing | program because it helped me to gain a new perspective on what the military actually does," said Liz Evans, a 12th grader in high school, who shadowed a Combat Center journalist. "It helped me to further understand my career interest and how they conduct interviews and use different sources. It was useful, and I enjoyed it very much."



LANCE CPL. KASEY PEACOCK

Students get hands-on experience during job shadow

Lance Cpl. Kasey Peacock
Combat Correspondent

High school students from across the Morongo Unified School District visited the Combat Center for the 11th Annual Job Shadowing Event, Wednesday.

The annual job shadow event allows the students to get hands-on work experience in their requested occupational fields, and gives them an opportunity to learn about military life aboard the Combat Center.

"I think it is very important for all students at this age to figure out where they are going and what they want to do in life," said Amber Felli, restaurant manager, Combat Center Officer's Club. "We are giving the kids first-hand experience on business operations, food preparation, customer service and sanitation. The greatest thing about this event is that not only do the kids get job experience, but also a better understanding of the military."

While the students were learning about their job interests, teachers from the school district, who accompanied the students, were invited on a base tour to learn about different aspects of the Combat Center.

The students had the opportunity to choose from a

variety of occupational specialties including mechanics, artillery, food services, medical, interior design, aircraft maintenance, photography, journalism, K9 handling, welding and more.

"I have always admired the hard work and dedication of police officers, and that's why I want to become one," said Steven Levitt, a 12th grader in high school. "It was interesting to watch the military K9 dog handlers conduct their training in the water. My plan is to take college law enforcement courses and then proceed to the police academy."

During the event, students were separated into their job interest fields. At the end of the day, all students met back up to enjoy a meal at the Phelps Mess Hall to discuss their experiences with each other.

"I enjoyed my time with the job shadowing program because it helped me to gain a new perspective on what the military actually does," said Liz Evans, a 12th grader in high school, who shadowed a Combat Center journalist. "It helped me to further understand my career interest and how they conduct interviews and use different sources. It was useful, and I enjoyed it very much."

VISIT, from A1

is applied to forward operations.

McGinn also visited the Battle Simulation Center, where he observed and participated in simulated vehicle operations and rollover training at the Combat Center's simulation center. Being a former naval aviator, McGinn had a particular interest in visiting the Air Combat Element. He sat down with the commanding officers of Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 and Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 to talk about the functions of an Air Base Ground Defense.

While speaking with Marines participating in ITX 2-14, McGinn was particularly focused on how energy was being used in their day-to-day operations. His concerns included the use of fuel and batteries, and how efficient they are to the individual Marine. He is curious to see how we can lessen the combat load, according to Hantson.

"Any time you get to go out into the field with Marines, it's great," McGinn said. "The realism of the training, the seriousness with which everybody takes it, is really impressive and is so critical for ITX. I wanted to get a good understanding of how we train Marines. What I saw today was the culture of dedication, competency, teamwork and the fact that everyone is focused on the mission."

During his time at the Combat Center, McGinn spoke with enlisted Marines with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment; 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, and MWSS-374. He sought to get to know some of the Marines

that are going to deploy and wanted to hear their thoughts and see how they were preparing for their upcoming deployment.

McGinn came to the Combat Center to get the Marines' point of view with how energy is being used. Energy is just one aspect of McGinn's job and he wants a better understanding from a Marine standpoint.

"I wanted to get a sense of where we are producing and how we are using energy," McGinn said. "I wanted to understand that the mission of the Marine Corps has so many dimensions and to see how things have happened and changed during the course of 10 years of war. The Marines I met today were absolutely dedicated and enthused. We are fortunate to have this quality of American in our Armed Forces but especially the Marine Corps. It was very impressive."

McGinn learned a lot in his short time observing ITX. He got a taste of what the Combat Center has to offer. He experienced what Marines do when a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected Vehicle rolls over, convoy operations, and consuming a Meal Ready to Eat.

McGinn left the same day to fly down to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., to visit the installation and to view energy projects before heading back to the nation's capital.

"I'm going to tell (Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus) that the Marine Corps is doing extremely well," McGinn said. "They're flexible and thinking about what new challenges await them ... they are focusing on the future."



Marines with Company E, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment conduct a live-fire exercise utilizing M16A4 service rifles and hand grenades aboard Range 701 as part of a company squad competition aboard the Combat Center Feb. 12, 2014. The competition included live-fire in addition to physical endurance as a test of the Marines' operational capability.

COMPETITION, from A1

series of ranges for training like the squad battle course that encompasses several scenarios and allows us to evaluate."

The Marine Corps will always find competition as a way to sharpen skills and improve unit cohesion, even in times of peace.

"This is what the Marine Corps is going back to," said 1st Sgt. Turay Idris, first sergeant, Co. E, 2/7. "Whenever the Marine Corps isn't fighting, we are competing against each other to sharpen our skills and see who is the best platoon, company, or unit. Competitions like this are creative ways to keep ourselves ready."

The company introduced live-fire to go along with the physical challenge of the competition. Another part of the course was tests given at the end of each range exercise, which included questions about weapons systems, first aid, hand and arm signals and memory challenges that had Marines recalling the features on different pieces of equipment.

"I was a little nervous about the competition," said Pfc. Fernando Porras, infantryman, Co. E, 2/7. "It's a long way but I'm ready for any mental and physical challenge my squad and I will encounter."

"Because of the success of our fireteam competition, we wanted to bring it to a bigger scale by introducing live-fire ranges and a longer distance to travel," said Capt. Will T. Kerrigan, company commander, Co. E, 2/7. "The biggest things Marines can take from this course is that they can push themselves significantly further than they thought they could mentally and physically."

Camaraderie, trust, and team building forges an effective unit and when Marines come together to accomplish a common goal, it makes for a competitive spirit that is unrivaled, according to Kerrigan.

"I could not be prouder of every Marine and sailor in this company," Kerrigan said. "It is amazing to see the amount of drive that everyone in this company possesses to succeed. To go that distance and still finish with a smile demonstrated the toughness and grit of the company. Easy company, we hold here."

SHOOTER, from A1

authorities. At this point, keep hands visible and slowly approach first responders. If any are wounded nearby, leave them in place and seek attention from first responders to assist. Cooperation with first responders is vital. Give any details that may assist with identification and apprehension of the shooter.

"The first thing the victim needs to do is relay to the first responder as much information as possible," said Capt. Ben Gutek, operations officer, Provost Marshal's Office. "Anything that will paint the picture, whether it is how many victims are alive or injured, or where the shooting is taking place."

If all else fails, and only if one's life is in imminent danger, it is advised to take action against the shooter to increase

your chance of survival.

"Fleeing and hiding are important," McBain said. "To fight is the absolute last solution to dealing with an active shooter."

Improvise weapons if possible, and seek to incapacitate and disarm the shooter. Commit to your actions once they have begun.

If incapacitation with an active shooter is successful, contact the authorities when it is safe to do so. The phone number for Combat Center emergency is 830-3333.

"Everyone must remain calm and know what they need to do," Gutek said. "Rehearsals help in this scenario. If people follow instructions, it helps the first responders be more effective in the performance of their duties."

For more information about guidelines in an active shooter scenario, visit <http://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness>.



Mr. Dennis McGinn, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Energy, Installations and Environment, speaks with Pfc. Christopher Hunter, infantryman, Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, at Range 210 during his visit to the Combat Center, Feb. 12. McGinn came to observe operations surrounding the Integrated Training Exercise.



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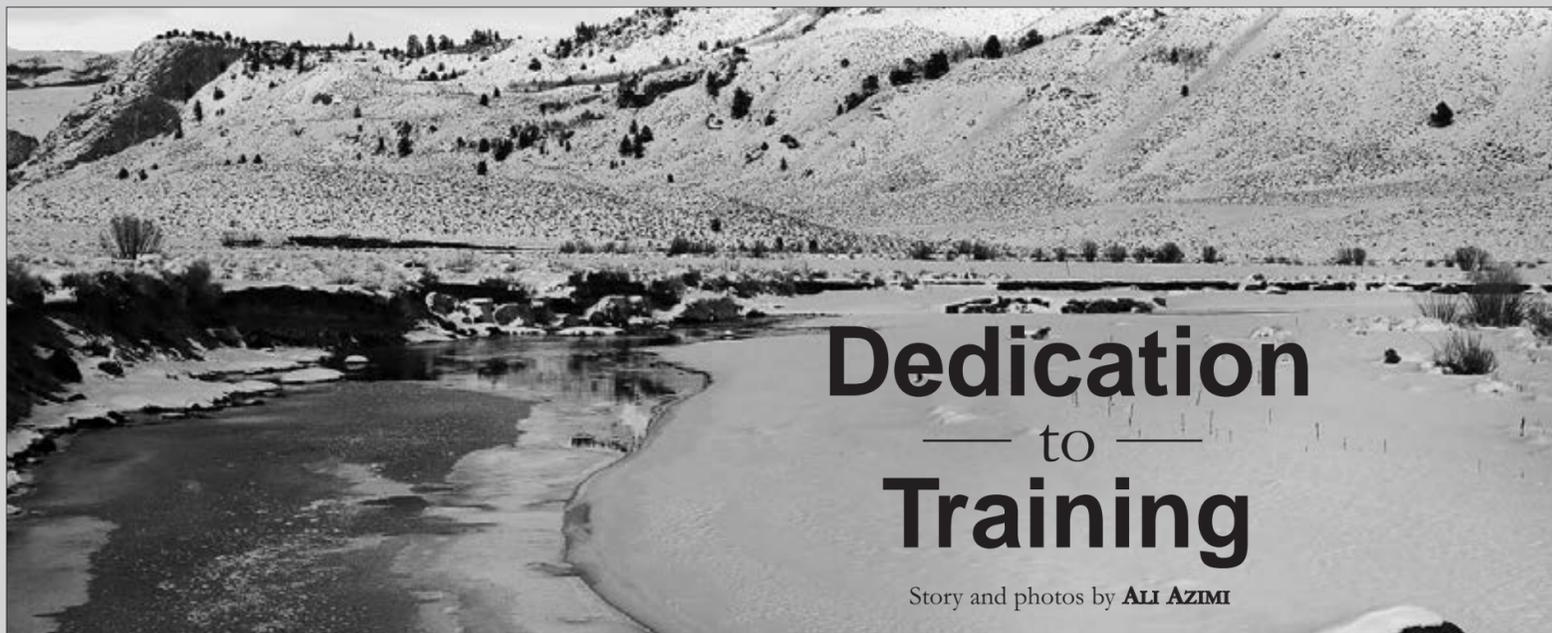
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Dedication — to — Training

Story and photos by **ALI AZIMI**

MCMWTC protects environment

The Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center prepares units within the military branches for operations in mountainous, high altitude and cold weather environments. It is unlike any other Marine Corps base in the world.

The 60,000 acres of training land is owned by the forest service and provides units with cold-weather and mountainous terrain they may encounter overseas. In order to continue training in the vastly diverse training area, the MCMWTC personnel work with the California Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to make environmental protection one of their top priorities.

THE ENVIRONMENT & THE PUBLIC

The base's natural resources are water and air quality, erosion, vegetation and how it is affected by training is battled by their dedication to the environment and maintaining the land for future mountain exercises, as well as public use.

"The forest service that we're in is about a million acres and we're on 60,000 of those acres," said Andrew M. Irvin, natural resources manager, MCMWTC. "You look on some forest service websites and it'll say, 'the Bridgeport Winter Recreation Area is open to snowmobiling, back country skiing and ice-fishing.' It's a multifunctional area."

The vast mountain ranges are a great destination for hikers, campers and fisherman. The West Walker River, which runs through a large portion of the training areas, is one of the top rated fly-fishing spots in the world.

"It's world class," Irvin said. "People come from all over the world. Marines aren't allowed to fish without the proper licensing."

The base uses monitoring wells to track nitrate levels and any contamination in their rivers. They also have a water treatment center that discharges into a drain field in order to keep the rivers clean.

On land, the environment is home to more than 100 species of animals and plants. The California Fish and Game counts the number of animals within each acre to track any changes in counts or migration to certain areas.

"What's unique about this place is we don't have the protection that other bases have where they have their integrated natural resources management plans that can keep fish and wildlife away from their training areas," said Melanie L. Bengtson, environmental director, MCMWTC.

In addition to the California Fish and Game's count, the MCMWTC's environmental office also conducts their own research into the wildlife and vegetation.

"The funding is coming from the Marine Corps," Irvin said. "These projects are for our knowledge and to better manage our resources."

TRAINING

To add to the safety measures already in place, units are briefed on the environmental aspects and procedures they must follow. Instructors are trained up on environmental safety and oversee units during their training in the mountains.

"What the instructors try to emphasize [to training units] is leave no trace," Bengtson said. "It makes sense tactically, not to let the enemy know where you've been."

Gathering their gear, trash and brass from the blank rounds they fire is environmentally sound and a big part of their training.

Marines taking the survival schools taught at the training center are given permission by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service via the California Fish and Game to fish on the training areas. However, their experience in the water is far from recreational.

"They're not given a rod, reel and bait," Irvin said. "They actually have to use shoe string or whatever they can find to catch food. But they are licensed to fish in those creeks and keep whatever they catch."

The environmental office of the MCMWTC is kept busy maintaining the 60,000 acres of land and the units that train on it. They continue to develop its Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan as they continue to survey the land and animals.

"We're doing it because it benefits us," Bengtson said. "We're not just doing this for the forest service's benefit."

WeekINPhotos

III Marine Expeditionary Force



CPL ZACHARY SCANION

[Above] U.S. Marines infiltrate a beach head as part of an amphibious demonstration at Hat Yao Beach, Kingdom of Thailand, during Cobra Gold 2014, Feb. 14. Working together, joint and multinational training is vital to maintaining the readiness and interoperability of the Thai, U.S. and other participating military forces.

[Top, right] Marines attached to Combat Assault Battalion Amphibious Assault Vehicle General Support Platoon, drive an amphibious P7 Ram RS vehicle off the USS Denver (LPD 9) as part of an amphibious assault exercise.

[Bottom, right] Royal Thai, Republic of Korean and U.S. assault amphibious vehicles lay a smoke screen during an amphibious demonstration at Hat Yao Beach, Kingdom of Thailand during exercise Cobra Gold 2014, Feb. 14.



COURTESY PHOTO



CPL ZACHARY SCANION



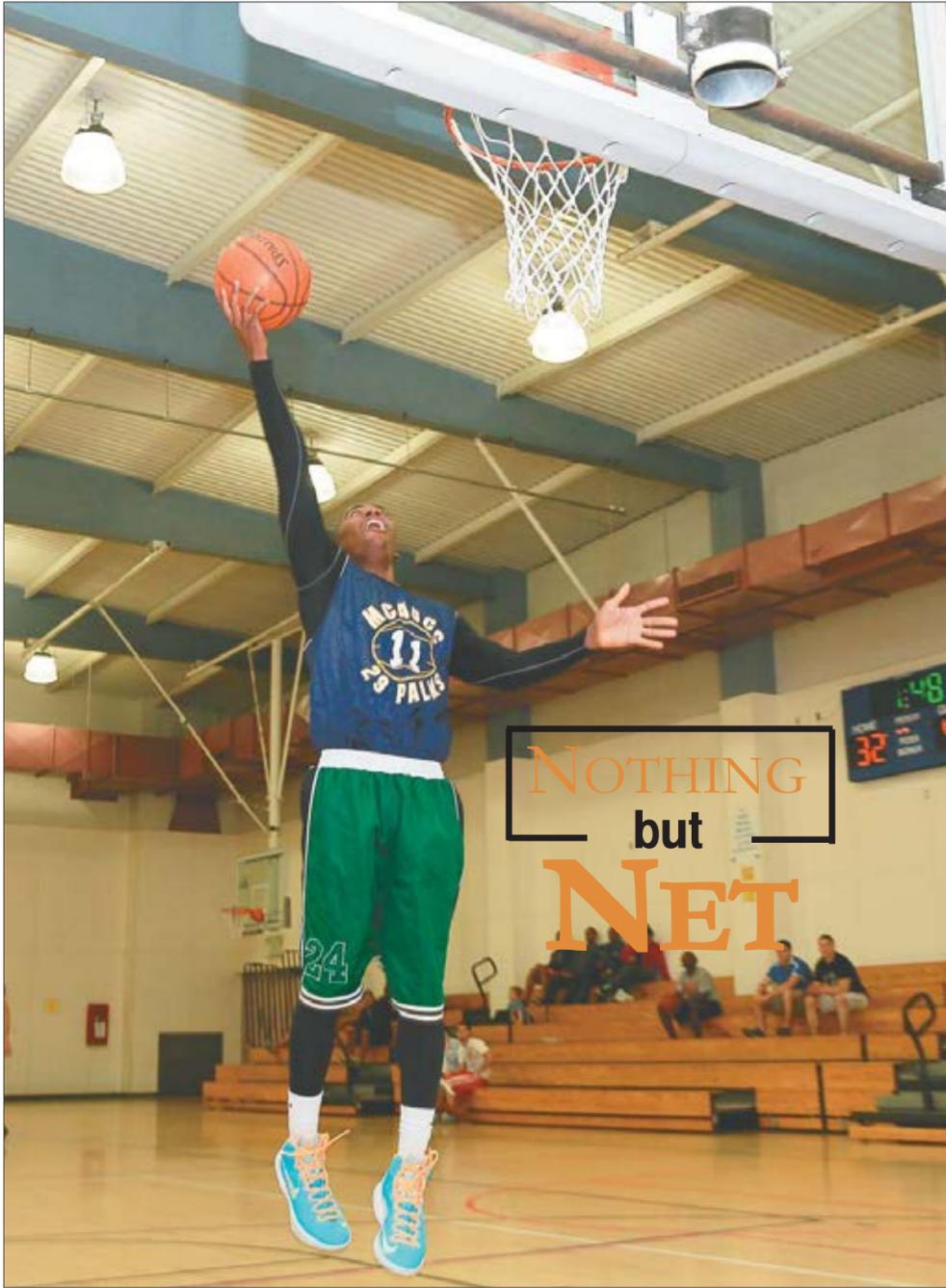
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MCCS starts Basketball League

Story and photos by LANCE CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIA

Marines scrambled up and down court as their sneakers screeched against the hardwood floor. Players from both teams passed the basketball between each other, almost instinctively anticipating each other's moves. Arms and hands waved through the air for the chance to block the pass and return the ball to the opposing team's hoop. Players dribbled, whistles were blown, and sweat from the brow of each player hit the floor. Every lay-up, jump shot, and assist was calculated and timed. Just as any other sport, players pushed with every step to outdo and out-manuever their competitors.

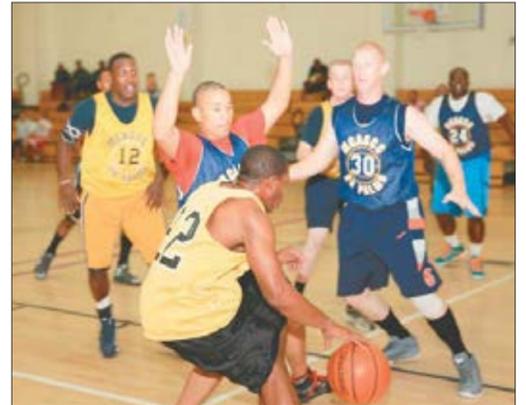
Marine Corps Community Services began the Basketball League Jan. 6, and has 17 teams participating this season. The games for the league are held at the East Gym's indoor basketball court.

MCCS Sports runs several intramural sport leagues on base for service members and their families to take part in, giving them a chance to compete and embrace the values of teamwork.

"We welcome as many people to participate as possible," said James Burke,

head official, MCCS Sports. "We want Marines to come out and stay active by doing these sports. If we can give Marines a way to stay in shape while having fun in their free time, we've accomplished what we're trying to do."

Allowing all Combat Center patrons to participate in the league allows for more diversity and a deeper roster for the coordinators to work with. Having more teams in the league also increases the level of competition.



Chief Warrant Officer Timothy Gardner, communication-electronics maintenance, 1st Tank Battalion, sets up defense during a basketball game at the East Gym Feb. 6. The Basketball League began Jan. 6 aboard the Combat Center and is hosted by Marine Corps Community Services.

"At the beginning of the season we started out with 20 teams," said Thomas Burke, coach, Too Tight Basketball team. "Now that we're a month in, the teams are getting more intense about each game and you can see it in the performance. The league currently has approximately 200 players."

MCCS Sports holds the basketball league annually and intends to not only host a series of games but also a championship at the end of the season.

"At the end of the season, we're taking the best teams from both divisions of the league and putting them head-to-head," James said. "It's good to see the competitiveness of Marines on the court. Many of them played in high school or college and after they joined the military, they stopped playing. This league gives them an opportunity to play the sport they cherish."

The championships at the end of the season will also have a runner up bracket.

"We want Marines to come out and stay active by doing these sports."

— James Burke

et for teams to still play for a title if they do not advance past the playoffs.

"Offering the secondary brackets allows the teams, whose record during the season wasn't that great, to still compete for something," James said.

For the coordinators, intramural leagues not only provide a competitive sports environment, but also a way for Marines to take their minds off of the stressful day-to-day workplace, according to Thomas.

"At the end of the day, we're here for the service members and we hope sometime, down the road, the season gets longer or we host more," James said. "We encourage Marines, sailors, and their families to come out and watch or join their unit's team to participate. The basketball league is for people to go out and have fun and we want to be able offer that to those on base."

The league is scheduled to conclude in mid-August.



Combat Center Events

Intramural Soccer League

Registration has begun and will end March 3 at noon. A coach's meeting will be held February 25. The league is open to service members, dependents and civilians.

When: Begins March 10

Where: Felix Field

For more information, call 830-4092

UFC 170

Enjoy a night of mixed martial-arts, and food and drink specials. Purchase tickets advance at the SNCO club starting Feb. 5.

When: 5 p.m. - 11 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 22.

Where: SNCO Club

For more information, call 830-6875

Coping with Work and Family Stress

This workshop will cover a wide range of active coping skills and ways to make better use of social networks.

Where: Bldg. 1530, Classroom 303

For more information, call 830-5035

Nurturing Parenting Class 2014

This class is an evidence-based and family-focused program that is recognized internationally for enhancing self-worth, empathy, discipline and empowerment.

When: March 12 and 19.

Call 830-7622 for more information

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

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Feb. 21

6 p.m. - Paranormal Activity: The Marked Ones, R

8:30 p.m. - The Legend of Hercules, PG-13

11 p.m. - Lone Survivor, R

Saturday, Feb. 22

10:30 a.m. - Free Admission A Bug's Life, PG

1 p.m. - The Nut Job, PG

3 p.m. - The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, PG

5:30 p.m. - August: Osage County, R

8:30 p.m. - Lone Survivor, R

11:30 p.m. - Ride Along, PG-13

Sunday, Feb. 23

12:30 p.m. - Ride Along, PG-13

3 p.m. - Her, R

6 p.m. - I, Frankenstein, PG-13

8:30 p.m. - Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit, PG-13

Monday, Feb. 24

6 p.m. - Lone Survivor, R

Tuesday, Feb. 25

5 p.m. - The Nut Job 3-D, PG

7:30 p.m. - Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit, PG-13

Wednesday, Feb. 26

5 p.m. - The Legend of Hercules 3-D, PG-13

7:30 p.m. - I, Frankenstein, PG-13

Thursday, Feb. 27

5 p.m. - The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, PG

7:30 p.m. - Paranormal Activity: The Marked Ones, R

High Desert

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Learn to dance the night away

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Where: Willie Boy's Saloon and Dance Hall

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Director, star, producer & writer brings true WWII tale to life

NEIL POND
"The Monuments Men"

Starring: George Clooney, Matt Damon, Bill Murray & Cate Blanchett
 Directed George Clooney
 PG-13, 118 mins

This tale of WWII treasure hunters is "monumental" in more ways than one for George Clooney. As the star, director, writer and producer, he'll take the bows if it flies — or the boos if it flops. He's obviously big on the story, based on a 2009 non-fiction book of the same name by Robert Edsel and Bret Witter.

Historically, the Monuments Men were a group of artists, art historians and museum curators commissioned by the American and British forces during World War II to help protect historic monuments of Europe from Allied bombing. After the war, they fanned out on a five-year mission to recover, catalogue and return millions of precious artifacts — paintings, sculptures, tapestries and religious relics — that had been stolen by the Nazis.

The movie takes a few creative liberties with the facts and timeline, but it's mostly true, and the characters are mostly based on, or inspired by, real people. Clooney and his cast mates (Matt Damon, Bill

Murray, John Goodman, Cate Blanchett, Bob Balaban, Hugh Bonneville and Jean Dujardin) make a fine-looking international ensemble, even if sometimes the movie's star power, combined with overly familiar war-movie scenes, sometimes feels like "Oceans 11" plus "Saving Private Ryan" divided by "Raiders of the Lost Ark."

Ironically, in the midst of its "bigness," so much of the movie seems small. Its series of disjointed, scattered moments never really come together into a larger, dramatic whole; the humor is flat, the emotion sappy and the drama tepid; and although the Monuments Men are supposed to be on the war's front lines, they rarely seem to be, or behave like, they're in real danger.

"The Monuments Men" isn't going to win any awards, but it does shine a high-profile Hollywood light on a little-known chapter of history — and a fact of wartime looting and cultural pillaging that still happens today.

"Was it worth it?" Clooney's character is asked at the end of the movie. Thirty years from now, his superiors wonder, will people remember all that went into recovering some 5 million pieces of European civilization?

Thanks to George Clooney's big, ambitious movie, perhaps now they will. It's just too bad that, given such a great group of actors and such a monumental story, it doesn't do so much more.

367-3577 For Advertising



CPL. ALI AZIMI

Combat Center supports physical fitness

Cpl. Ali Azimi
 Combat Correspondent

Marines are warrior-athletes. For this culture, being physically fit and combat-ready is part of the job. Marines and sailors aboard the Combat Center can always be seen on the track or at the gym, making sure they are always mission-ready.

There are many programs and tests that keep Marines physically ready to complete the mission.

The Physical Fitness Test and Combat Fitness Test assess the physical aptitude of Marines. They are required annually and Marines train for them year-round. It is currently PFT season and Marines fill the track and gym to get the best score they can on each portion of the test: pull-ups, crunches and a three-mile run.

"I play basketball pretty much every day and that gets my cardio," said Lance Cpl. Brian Thompson, motor vehicle transport operator, 1st Tank Battalion. "At work, we have a pull-up bar and every chance I get, I bust out 10."

Unit physical training provides Marines a rigorous daily schedule that builds camaraderie as well as speed, strength and endurance. However, for those looking to add to the daily unit PT, the Combat Center provides the High Intensity Tactical

Training Program which trains Marines how to be mentally and physically fit. HITT challenges Marines with short and intense work outs that work both the body and the mind. The Combat Center also offers four facilities to perform physical fitness.

The East and West Gyms and Fitness Centers provide the equipment and venue to work out, whether you want to bench-press or play a pick-up game of basketball. The gyms also provide personal trainers to meet personal fitness goals, such as improving your PFT and CFT scores.

Driving through the Combat Center, motorists can always spot at least one person running. Day or night, rain or shine, there is always one, and in an environment that can easily rise to more than 100 degrees, the determination to stay physically fit is a testament to the Marine mindset.

The Marine Corps Martial Arts Program is a Corps-wide program that teaches Marines efficient hand-to-hand skills, including effective use of bayonets, knives and blunt objects. It is a combination of building physical fitness and combat efficiency, a depiction of the warrior-athlete.

Even in the harsh desert environment of Twentynine Palms, Marines find ways to meet the physical standards of the Marine Corps. They push themselves to become better and always stay fit for the mission, wherever it may take them.



CPL. ALI AZIMI

[Top, left] Marines with Combat Logistics Company 13 practice their slash at the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program training area, Feb. 12. The MCMAP training area provides a pit, bags and space to safely practice techniques.

[Above] Lance Cpl. Brian Thompson, motor vehicle transport operator, 1st Tank Battalion, plays basketball at the West Gym and Fitness Center, Feb. 12. Thompson says he plays basketball everyday and it helps him with his cardio.

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