



LANCE CPL. KASEY PEACOCK

Justice Harth, 7, gets her face painted by Riley Winslow, painter, Desert Dream Parties, during the Headquarters Battalion Hippity Hoppity Family Day event at Desert Winds Golf Course, April 4. The family day was open to HQBN Marines and their families.

Family day brings smiles, laughs to Headquarters Battalion

Lance Cpl. Kasey Peacock
 Combat Correspondent

The Headquarters Battalion family readiness officer hosted the Hippity Hoppity Family Day event for HQBN Marines and families at Desert Winds Golf Course, April 4.

The event offered various Easter-themed events including an egg hunt, face painting, inflatable bounce houses, zip lining, a petting zoo and pony rides, laser tag and more.

"These events are about showing our appreciation for the Marines and their families," said Meaghan Bishoff, family readiness officer, HQBN.

"Our Marines do so much, and their families have to sacrifice a lot as well, so these events are great for everyone involved."

Prior to the family day, Marines were offered the opportunity to play a free round of golf at Desert Winds Golf Course.

100 spots were allotted for the Marines to play 18 holes, allowing them to build camaraderie with each other prior to the family day.

The event officially began at 3 p.m. During the

family day, Marines and their families could be seen enjoying the festivities.

Marines with HQBN work countless hours supporting the live-fire combined arms training, urban operations and joint level integration training that promotes operational force readiness.

"If non-commissioned officers are the backbone of the Marines Corps, then this battalion is the backbone of this base," said Maj. Gen. David H. Berger, Combat Center Commanding

General. "I want to thank the Marines for everything they do, and the families as well, for everything they do."

For the Marines involved, the family day was a chance to break away from the stress of a work day, according to Lance Cpl. Chris Matthews, military policeman, HQBN.

"Stuff like this is a well-needed break for Marines and their families," Matthews said. "These events are very enjoyable, and my family always has a great time. I can look around at the faces of all the kids and service members, and they always look

See FAMILY, A6

These events are about showing our appreciation for the Marines and their families."

—Meaghan Bishoff

Marines, sailors help clean local community

Cpl. Ali Azimi
 Combat Correspondent

Approximately 60 Marines and sailors with 1st Tank Battalion and 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, teamed up with Reach Out Morongo Basin for a community clean-up, April 4. The clean-up gave service members the opportunity to give back to the community at 25 different locations ranging from Twentynine Palms, Calif., to Yucca Valley, Calif.

"It shows another side of the Marine Corps," said 1st Sgt. James Petty, company first sergeant, Company B, 1st Tank Battalion. "We are not just warfighters but outstanding citizens as well. It shows a different aspect ... we do like to get out and touch the community."

The Marines and sailors split up to visit homes throughout the Basin and provide their services to citizens in need. The volunteers fixed up homes, made repairs and did yard work and landscaping.

All of the volunteers admitted to having a sense of satisfaction, helping out the community. However, one Marine got more than he bargained for.

Lance Cpl. Brian Godward, anti-tank missileman, 1st Tanks, was helping World War II veteran James

"We are not just warfighters but outstanding citizens as well ... we do like to get out and touch the community."

— 1st Sgt. James Petty

Poole with some house work when he found something surprising in the garage.

"We took down the rest of a pool and stacked some wood," Godward said. "Then he opened his garage to a '68 Mustang."

Poole let Godward get in the vehicle to start it up.

"It's every boy's dream to get to start up a '68 Mustang," Godward said. "It was well worth the work."

While Godward and Poole bonded over a classic car, a few blocks away two Marines with 1st Tanks helped save the roof of a home.

"I got estimates from painters and they said that it would cost as high as \$1,200," said Jeffrey K. Smithling, a disabled homeowner. "My sister heard about the program and signed me up."

The Marines spent hours scraping and painting the trim of Smithling's house, helping protect it against the desert sun and the need for costly repairs in the future.

These are just a few of the many stories of bonds and connections made between Combat Center service members and the citizens of the Morongo Basin.

"They saved my house," Smithling said. "I'm thankful for programs like this."

Heritage Palms invites Marines for food, golf

Cpl. Ali Azimi
 Combat Correspondent

INDIO, CALIF. — The lush green grass of Heritage Palms Golf Club and cool air of the morning were a refreshing change of pace from the usual desert environment. The sun was out and the sky was clear, a perfect day for a game of golf.

Thirty-six Combat Center Marines were invited for a free day of golf at Heritage Palms' 7th Annual Marine Day, April 3.

"We came up with this seven years ago," said Bob Bolz, a former Marine and the creator of Marine Day. "Each year we add something to it. It's

so good having the Marines here."

The day started with a breakfast buffet. The Marines and community members sat down together and began to get to know each other better. Some Heritage Palms residents who previously served in the military, talked about the Corps past and present and the different branches.

Golf began after breakfast. The Marines were integrated into teams with the members of Heritage Palms for a four-player scramble. They traversed the course in golf carts, driving the ball down the greens, hole after hole. The traditional golf flags on the greens were replaced with American flags to commemorate the Marine

presence at the course.

After a long day of golf, the Marines and club members once again sat down together for a meal, this time joined by Maj. Gen. David H. Berger, Combat Center Commanding General.

"What [the people of Heritage Palms] do, [they] do out of the selflessness of their hearts," Berger said.

During lunch, a ceremony featured the Desert Hot Springs High School Junior Reserve Officer's Training Corps Color Guard and the Heritage Palms Choir, which sang the national anthem. At the end of the day's events, the golf winners were

See GOLF, A6



OFFICIAL MARINE CORPS PHOTO

Former commandant leaves legacy

Courtesy Story
 Headquarters Marine Corps

WASHINGTON D.C. — Gen. Carl Epting Mundy Jr., beloved father and grandfather, passed at his home in Virginia on April 3. He is survived by his three children, Mrs. Elizabeth Gunter, Brig. Gen. Carl Mundy III, and Col. Timothy Mundy, together with 11 grandchild-

dren and great-grandchildren. Mundy's wife of 56 years, Linda Sloan Mundy, died on June 26, 2013.

Mundy was born July 16, 1935, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Epting Mundy of Lake Junaluska, N.C. After graduation from Auburn University, he married his fourth-grade sweetheart and began his life as a newly

See COMMANDANT A6



CPL. ALI AZIMI

Cpl. Perry Baxter, squad leader, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, is playfully attacked by students at the playground at Oasis Elementary School, April 3.

Marines, sailors volunteer at local school

Cpl. Ali Azimi
 Combat Correspondent

It was a war zone unlike any other. Cpl. Perry Baxter, squad leader, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, was trekking through the sand. As he made his next turn, he was ambushed. The next thing he knew, he was on the ground, unable to get up, covered in a pile of third-graders.

Marines and sailors with 3/4, visited students at Oasis Elementary School

in Twentynine Palms, Calif., as part of the Adopt-a-School program, April 3.

"It's a nice change of pace," said Cpl. Marvin Rodriguez, squad leader, Company L, 3/4. "We get to give back to the community. We are warfighters but this allows us to show that Marines can do things other than just fight."

The unit has been a part of the program since February, visiting the

See SCHOOL A6



CPL. ALI AZIMI

Sgt. Maj. Abel Leal, battalion sergeant major, Headquarters Battalion, leads a three-mile physical training run along the Physical Fitness Test track, April 4. Approximately 400 enlisted Marines within the battalion participated.

Battalion physical training builds unit cohesion

Lance Cpl. Paul S. Martinez
Combat Correspondent

More than 400 enlisted Marines with Headquarters Battalion gathered April 3 for a battalion motivational run along the Physical Fitness Test track at Del Valle Field.

Companies of Marines stood in their boots and utilities, ready for, as the Marine Corps would put it, good old-fashioned physical training. The run was the first battalion PT session held since Sgt. Maj. Abel Leal, battalion sergeant major, HQBN, assumed duties last year.

Staff non-commissioned officers led warm-up exercises, and soon all were ready to get moving. Marines stepped out to call cadence to motivate and unite the Marines, to the avail of thunderous shouting and boot-stomping all along the route.

Leal led the three-mile run to foster esprit de corps within the battalion, build unit cohesion and condition physical performance in preparation for the annual Marine Corps physical fitness test.

"This was motivating," said Cpl. Paul Kelley, military working dog handler, Provost Marshal's Office. "I came from a field unit and there was a lot of camaraderie. When you see the companies get together like this, it builds morale and brings the Marines together."

For HQBN, this is only the start. Leal plans to make battalion physical training, and the advantages it provides his Marines, a routine.

According to Leal, the battalion may start going around the base or into the mountains as we progress is made. Cadence calling and large numbers of Marines present will continue.

Leal also encouraged the Marines to continue doing their part in keeping the battalion and the base effective, recognizing their long hours and dedication.

"[This battalion] puts in a lot of work," Leal said. "We do just as much work, if not more, than any other Marine Corps battalion."

Headquarters Battalion is slated to hit the ground running yet again next month, when a third battalion run is held for Lt. Col. Michael Bowers, commanding officer, HQBN, who is slated to leave the Combat Center this summer.

The volume and eagerness to exercise demonstrated by the Marines proved that motivation was high. Events like battalion PT are just one of many ways for Marines

Advertising Consolidated Casting Tour coming to Combat Center

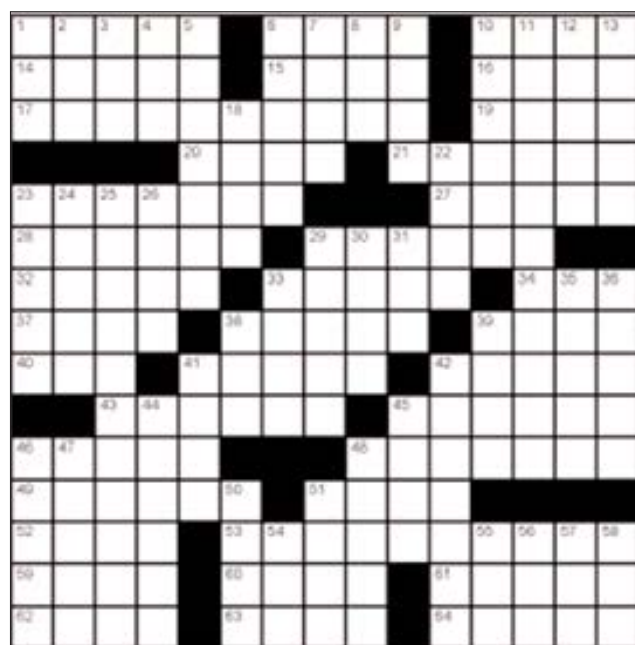
Marine Corps Recruiting Command is seeking quality Marines of all ranks, military occupational specialties, ethnicity, gender and background whom will best represent the face of the Marine Corps to the nation. Furthermore, MCRC is requesting the support of local unit commanders to find the most qualified and diverse group of Marines and allow their participation. The intent of the on-site casting is to conduct a pre-screening of Marines who are interested in participating in advertising projects. This will be held at the MCX 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. April 25. If a Marine is selected by MCRC for a particular advertisement, a MARADMIN will be released requesting approval from their commands as well as instructions for completing the command screening form. For more information, contact Capt. Wesley Jagoe (703) 432-9434/ (703) 432-9033 or via email at wesley.jagoe@marines.usmc.mil. Tour information, pre-screening forms, casting guide and point of contacts can also be found on www.mcrc.marines.mil/casting.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

<p>JESUS DANIEL ARAGON Born on: March 20, 2014 Born to: Jesus and Carolina Aragon</p>	<p>COLTON DALE ELWART Born on: March 22, 2014 Born to: Derek and Brandy Elwart</p>	<p>RAEGAN LEIGH RIPLEY Born on: March 22, 2014 Born to: Logan and Rachel Ripley</p>	<p>ADLEY MICHELLE CARROLL Born on: March 24, 2014 Born to: Michael and Stephanie Carroll</p>
<p>RYAN JOSHUA WILSON Born on: March 21, 2014 Born to: Jeremy and Melissa Wilson</p>	<p>GAGE WYATT ELWART Born on: March 22, 2014 Born to: Derek and Brandy Elwart</p>	<p>MADISON CLAIRE HANLA Born on: March 23, 2014 Born to: Timothy and Brandy Hanla</p>	<p>IRIS LAYLA MARIE NAVARRETTE Born on: March 26, 2014 Born to: Ronald and Jasmine Navarrette</p>

“WHERE TO?”

- Across**
- 1 One of Obama's daughters
 - 6 Earth
 - 10 Train stops: abbr.
 - 14 Excuse
 - 15 Former science magazine
 - 16 Goo Goo Dolls song "Livin' in ____"
 - 17 You can take a trip down it while reminiscing
 - 19 Person who saves the day
 - 20 Squint
 - 21 Person from Salt Lake City or Ogden
 - 23 Happens to
 - 27 Come up
 - 28 Cat, dog or lion
 - 29 It brews in a cup
 - 32 Hubby's lady
 - 33 Acrosses and ____ (crossword entries)
 - 34 "The Cat in the ____"
 - 37 Back muscles, for short
 - 38 Clay of "American Idol" fame
 - 39 Elm or oak
 - 40 Place to learn: abbr.
 - 41 Kills, in the Bible
 - 42 Coastline
 - 43 Greek god for whom a theater in Harlem is named
 - 45 Common ankle
- Down**
- 1 Uncle ____
 - 2 Ginger ____
 - 3 ____ City (popular video game series)
 - 4 "Girls" network
 - 5 Time on the radio
 - 6 Shoe parts
 - 7 Actor Sharif
 - 8 Holiday ____ (hotel chain)
 - 9 In ____ of (replacing)
 - 10 World's largest desert
 - 11 You can "take it" by not getting involved in petty squabbles
 - 12 Surrounding glows
 - 13 Rock
 - 18 Shout
 - 22 Keep ____ on (watch closely)
 - 23 Cries like a baby



- 24 Early computer, whose name spelled backwards is English actor Michael
- 25 Candy bar that doesn't require any travel
- 26 Iowa city
- 29 Japan's capital city
- 30 Sheepish ladies?
- 31 Landers of advice
- 33 Soap brand
- 35 Eagle's home
- 36 High school students, mostly
- 38 Every last bit
- 39 Drive-____ window
- 41 Musical piece for one
- 42 Blot of paint
- 44 Cute black-and-white animals
- 45 Gets an eyeful of
- 46 Morocco's capital
- 47 Person from Baghdad
- 48 In a sarcastic way, perhaps
- 50 Office worker just for a short time
- 51 Norway's capital
- 54 Be sick
- 55 Greek letter
- 56 A, in Germany
- 57 Moose's cousin
- 58 "____ the season..."

See answers on page A4

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



OBSERVATION POST

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

- In Oceanside:**
- Angelo's Kars, 222 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054
 - Angelo's Kars, 226 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054
- In San Diego:**
- Club Mustang, 2200 University Ave.
 - Club San Diego, 3955 Fourth St.
 - Get It On Shoppe, 3219 Mission Blvd.
 - Main Street Motel, 3494 Main St.
 - Vulcan Baths, 805 W. Cedar St.
- In National City:**
- Dream Crystal, 15366 Highland Ave.
 - Sports Auto Sales, 1112 National City Blvd.

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

- In Twentynine Palms:**
- Adobe Smoke Shop, 6441 Adobe Rd.
 - STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Rd.
 - K Smoke Shop, 5865A Adobe Rd.
- In Yucca Valley:**
- Yucca Tobacco Mart, 57602 29 Palms Hwy.
 - Puff's Tobacco Mart, 57063 29 Palms Hwy.
- In Palm Springs:**
- Village Pub, 266 S. Palm Canyon Dr.
 - 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

Simon

Detroit, Mich. administrative specialist, Headquarters Battalion, 20

KELLOGG

>Everybody talks about Detroit not being the best city in the world. To me, it is great, and there is no place like home.

>Growing up, we didn't have a lot of money. I can remember times where my family and I were reaching out to shelters for a place to stay.

>While it wasn't always easy, I wouldn't change a thing about the way I grew up because it made me the man I am today.

>My parents always stressed making good decisions and being a good person. Even though it was hard for us at times, I did my best to live my life that way. They always wanted the best for me, and I strived to achieve the best for myself. I had this stigma of needing to break away from this barrier and be successful.

>Before I joined, I remember the perception of Marines was that they were the best. I originally wanted to be an air traffic controller, but I ended up doing an open contract.

>Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island was a total change of pace for me. I remember appreciating the structure that the Marines offered me. For the first time, I didn't have to be right about everything and I felt like I could listen, learn and follow orders.

>When I got orders to the Combat Center, I was excited. I wanted to come to the West Coast because I had never experienced this part of the world. For the first time, I felt like I was away from home and out of my comfort zone, and I had a world of opportunities open to me.

>Since I been out here I have done things I never thought I would have.

I participated in the Marine Corps birthday run where I ran 29 miles, and I started taking college courses through the American Military University.

>In school, I have been studying history because I have always been interested in it. I eventually want to get my associates degree while I'm still here.

>A lot of Marines are not very motivated about working in the (Installation Personnel Administration Center), but I do everything I can to make the best of it. I look at it as there is a lot of knowledge I can get out of it to put towards my future. I do a lot of work with computers and meet a lot of different people which will ultimately help me in the future.

>My plan right now is to continue on with my associate's degree and eventually go into Marine security guard duty. Once I complete that, I want to apply for the Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Educational Program.

>If I get accepted for the MECEP program, I would love to pursue my degree at the University of Michigan. If I don't get accepted, I plan to get out of the Marine Corps and continue with my education.

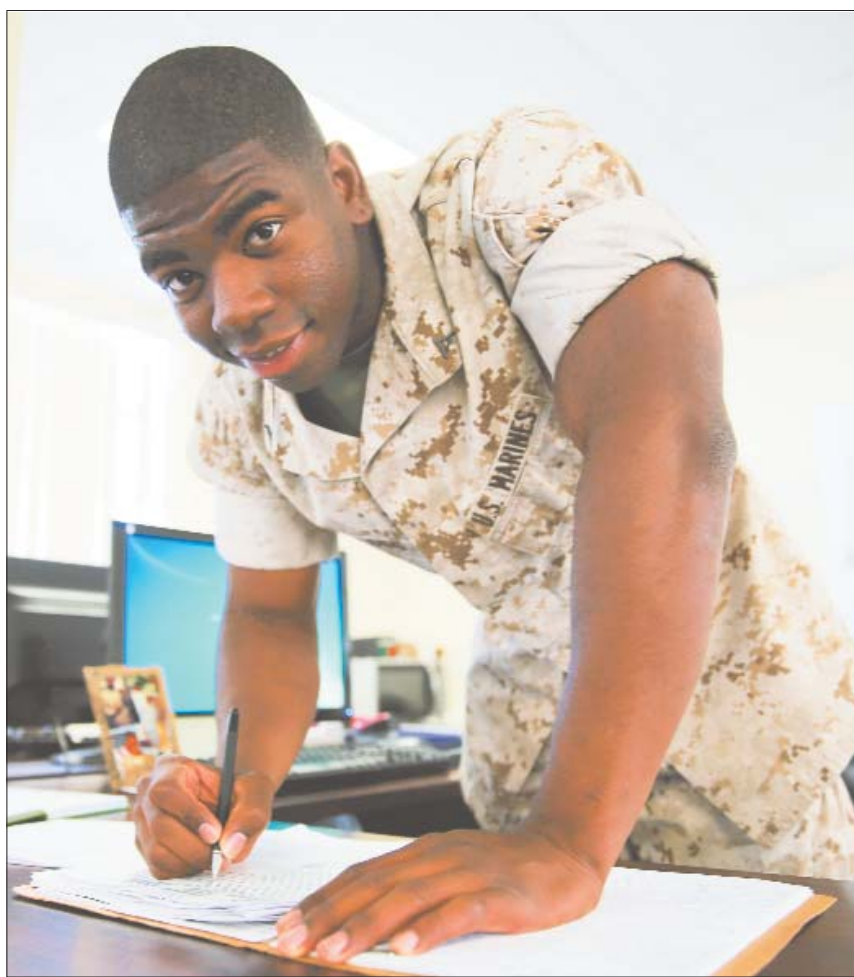
>Coming up in the Marine Corps, I have always heard that the best officers were enlisted first. It makes you a better-rounded officer.

>Since I have been here, I also became a part of the Combat Center Color Guard. I love doing that because it gives me the opportunity to represent the Marine Corps at events.

>With work, extra-curricular stuff and being the part of the color guard, that takes up a lot of my time. I always try and keep myself busy. I feel like if I'm not doing something, I'm missing out on opportunities.

>While I enjoy being out here in California, there is nothing better than that feeling of going home and letting people see that you are doing something good with your life. In my neighborhood back home that is a rare thing.

KELLOGG IS AN ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST WITH HEADQUARTERS BATTALION WHO GREW UP IN A LOW-INCOME AREA IN DETROIT. SINCE JOINING THE MARINE CORPS, KELLOGG HAS TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF EVERY OPPORTUNITY AND STRIVED TO BECOME A BETTER PERSON AND MARINE.



Interviewed and photographed by Lance Cpl. Kasey Peacock April 8, 2014



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

18-Hole Showdown

HQBN Marines swing away during free golf session

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Paul S. Martinez



A swing of the golf club sends the ball hurling down the fairway and a satisfied Marine steps to the side to make way for the next player. A swing and a miss are a strong implication that some are better at golf than others. The group shares a laugh and prepares to try it again, since they've got 18 holes to navigate.

service] like that anywhere else." According to Mastropalo, golf events for Marines held aboard the Combat Center are popular.

Marines with Headquarters Battalion enjoyed 18 holes of golf April 4 as a pre-cursor to the unit's family day at Desert Winds Golf Course.

"We've had eight units in the past month," Mastropalo said. "We're planning ahead for other events as well."

A maximum of 100 spots for Marines to play were provided and filled up, according to Meghan Bishoff, family readiness officer, HQBN.

HQBN's event quickly turned into a friendly competition, even for those who had little experience with the game.

"I've never really been into golfing, but I play every once in a while," said Lance Cpl. Christopher Vozzo, ammunition technician, Center Magazine Area, HQBN.

"It's a time for everyone to just hang out."

— Pvt. Devon York

"Some Marines might think [family day] is just for those with kids," Bishoff said. "I wanted to make sure there was something other than kid games."

"It's a time for everyone to just hang out," said Pvt. Devon York, aviation ordnance systems technician, CMA, HQBN. "[Family day] is not just limited to one unit but the whole battalion."

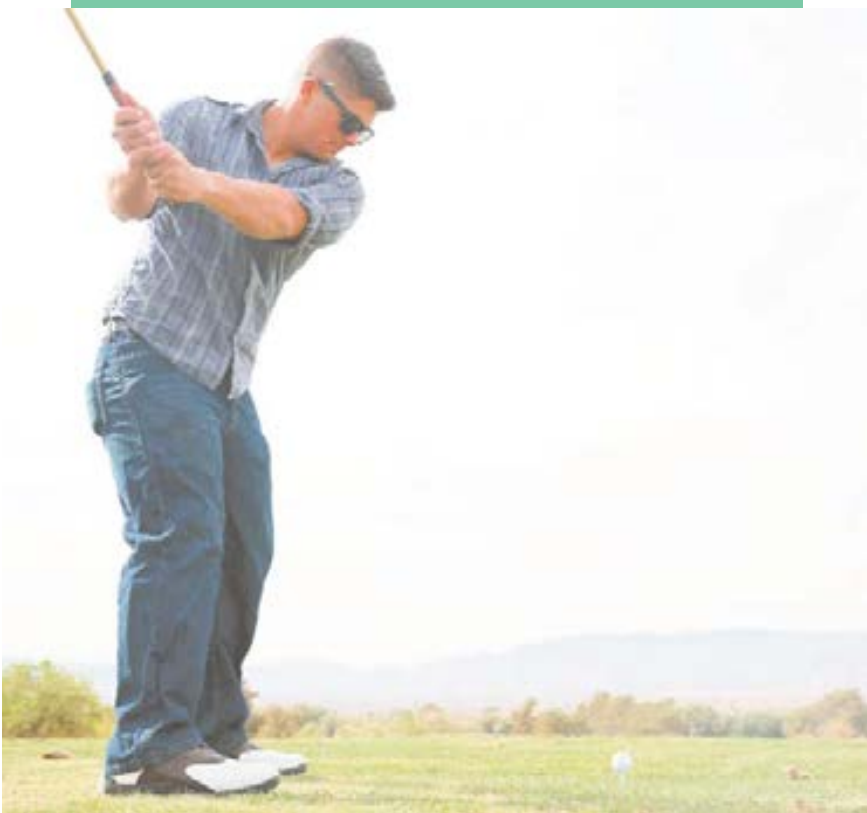
Marines took full advantage of the opportunity, and were afforded caddies, clubs and golf balls for use on the course, free of charge.

Recreational events such as sports and family days are offered to boost morale and unit cohesion, and in this instance, left a positive effect on the Marines of HQBN.

"What we do is set everything up and walk through the process of what we have where and guesstimate where everyone will be," said Chuck Mastropalo, manager, DWGC. "You can't find [a

"It's good for the Marines to get away from work and their stresses and remember how to have fun," Bishoff said.

[Above] Lance Cpl. Christopher Vozzo, ammunition technician, Center Magazine Area, Headquarters Battalion, tees off during a free, 18-hole round of golf at Desert Winds Golf Course, April 4. **[Below]** Lance Cpl. Anthony Leandro, ammo tech, CMA, HQBN, prepares to strike a ball during a free, 18-hole round of golf at Desert Winds Golf Course, April 4. **[Right]** Lance Cpl. Reid Alonzo, ammo tech, CMA, HQBN, finishes his turn during a free, 18-hole round of golf at Desert Winds Golf Course, April 4.



LOOKING for local entertainment?
See page B2 for our **LIBERTY CALL** section

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

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SUDOKU SOLUTIONS

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LOOKING for local entertainment?

See page B2 for our **LIBERTY CALL** section

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

Month *of the* Military Child

CDC hosts carnival for Combat Center children

Story and photos by **Cpl. Charles Santamaria**

Combat Center children rushed outside to the parking lot of the Child Development Center where they saw Hula-Hoops, sack races and other attractions set up during a carnival held April 4 to celebrate the Month of the Military Child.

Some CDC employees assisted in running the events while others guided each age group through the game stations. The event was open to all children enrolled in a course at the CDC.

“The event always has a great turnout,” said Yvonne Risper, deputy administrator, Children’s Youth and Teen programs, CDC. “One of the goals of our celebrations is to open it up to all children in the community so everyone can enjoy the festivities.”

The carnival featured bounce houses, bean bag tosses, sack races and tricycle races for families to enjoy. Children and teenagers participated in the events and won prizes.

“The parents are out here with their kids and it’s so exciting seeing the participation here,” said Melodie Chambers, family child care monitor, CDC. “At the end of the day, it’s all about the children. We do the military child events to show our appreciation for the families and some of the challenges children of military families go through.”

Approximately 300 children attended the carnival. Food stands provided



Darion Wren, 5, throws bean bags into Hula-Hoop targets during the Month of the Military Child Carnival hosted by the Child Development Center, April 4. Approximately 300 children attended the event.

snacks like popcorn and cotton candy for families to enjoy during the festivities.

Throughout April, the CDC will hold weekly events to celebrate the Month of the Military Child. The next event is the Youth and Teen performance from April 14 to 16 which will feature poetry readings, artwork from children in the programs and skits.

“Most bases just choose one day for the month-long event, but we decided to celebrate all month long and we love the participation we see from the families,” Risper

said. “After years of hosting these events, we realized that if it is a month of appreciation, then we should have festivities just as long. We do as much as we can for these families, because for me, it is an honor to be able to serve our military families.”

“The parents are out here with their kids and it’s so exciting to see the participation.”

— Melodie Chambers



[Left] Children prepare for a tricycle race during the Month of the Military Child Carnival hosted by the CDC, April 4. The carnival was one of many events scheduled at the CDC throughout April.

[Below] Children participate in a sack race during the Month of the Military Child Carnival hosted by the CDC, April 4. The children had to race each other by hopping to the finish line inside a cloth sack.



COMMANDANT, FROM A1

commissioned Marine Corps officer. Over the succeeding years, Mundy commanded at every level and served in a variety of staff assignments, fought in Vietnam with the 3rd Battalion, 26th Marines, at Khe Sanh and Con Thien, and capped his service by accepting the appointment to serve as the 30th Commandant of the Marine Corps from 1991 to 1995. Throughout his distinguished career, he proved to be a genial leader of extraordinary ability; a consummate professional and a Marine for all seasons. After retiring, Mundy served as the chief executive officer of the United Services Organization from 1995 to 2001, as the president of the Marine Corps University Foundation, and served on the board of directors of several corporations. As a retired senior leader of the Corps, his strategic insights were greatly valued and continued to guide and influence Marine leaders until his death.

To those who knew and loved him, Mundy was first and foremost a loving father, grandfather and great-grandfather

who took great delight in the time spent with his family. For countless others, he was a devoted friend, mentor and man of honor, compassion and integrity whose wise counsel was a towering source of strength. He got along with everyone, even those with whom he disagreed, amassed legions of admirers, and his quick wit and ability to find humor in any circumstance will be sorely missed.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation will provide a meaningful contribution that preserves the legacy of the institution that he loved so much and to which he devoted his life.

Mundy's service to his country and the Corps will be honored in a military tribute on at 11 a.m., Saturday, at the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Va. Following, his family will accompany him to Garrett Funeral Home in Waynesville, N.C. He will lie in state at 1 pm followed by a funeral service at 2 p.m., April 19, at the First United Methodist Church. Following the service, he will be interred in Green Hill Cemetery next to his beloved wife, Linda.

GOLF, FROM A1



CPL. ALI AZIMI

Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Fernandez, utilities officer, 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion, tees off on the 9th hole during the 7th Annual Heritage Palms Marine Day in Indio, Calif., April 3. The Marines competed against each other, but Fernandez went on to win the tournament.

announced. Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Fernandez, utilities offer, 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion, and his team won first place by one point.

"This is the second time I've won," Fernandez said. "It's great. The golf course is awesome, the people are awesome. I couldn't ask for anything better."

FAMILY, FROM A1



LANCE CPL. KASEY PEACOCK

Hayden Bush, 4, hugs the Easter Bunny during the Headquarters Battalion Hippy Hoppity Family Day event at Desert Winds Golf Course, April 4. "These events are about showing our appreciation for the Marines and their families," said Meaghan Bishoff, family readiness officer, HQBN.

like they are having fun."

Throughout the event, the Easter bunny interacted with kids and offered photographs at an established photo booth.

"My favorite part of the day was meeting the Easter bunny," said Justice Harth, 7. "I also liked getting my face painted and getting my picture taken at the photo booth."

The HQBN family day is conducted annually, usually with a holiday theme. Last year it was cele-

brated near Halloween, and this year was near Easter.

The family day concluded with various prize giveaways for the Marines and their family members. Prizes included sporting equipment, children's games, kitchen appliances and a video game system.

While the family day was a success, Marines with HQBN know that there is a time for play and a time for work. Starting next week, the Marines will continue playing their part in keeping the Combat Center operational.

SCHOOL, FROM A1

school twice every month. During their visits, the Marines and sailors interact with students inside and outside the classroom.

"Usually it's one teacher with 25 kids, and they love it when a Marine takes three or four kids and reads to them or helps them out with their homework," said Navy Lt. Kenneth Jewell, battalion chaplain, 3/4. "Some of these kids are out and about and don't have any other kids to play with, so the teachers have expressed an interest to have the Marines teach them sharing and teamwork."

According to Jewell, the battalion is the most deployed unit since 9/11 and

recently returned from Afghanistan in October 2013. The break from typical infantry training was not only welcomed by the Marines and sailors, but the students as well.

"They come out here with us and we get to have fun with them," said Elijha Ferrel, fourth-grade student, Oasis Elementary School. "They are like role models to us and they can help us with a lot of different things."

The battalion is scheduled to be decommissioned at the end of May, scattering its members to different units across the Corps.

Ferrel said he was sad to hear the Marines were leaving, but he looks forward to the possibility of Marines from a different unit visiting school after 3/4 leaves the Combat Center.

Looking for the right job for you?

Check the Observation Post Classified section

Safety Division informs Combat Center of Distracted Driving Month

Bobby Piirainen
Base Safety

April is Distracted Driving month. Safety Division would like everyone who owns a cell phone and operates a vehicle to take a moment to think about the potential consequences and the other lives they may be disregarding when they make a phone call or send a text message when they're behind the wheel.

Most of us assume when we talk about distracted driving we are talking about using our cell phones to text or talk. And you would be correct, however, there are many additional things that we do while driving that are equally distracting and dangerous.

Some examples include talking to others while driving, dealing with a child, eating, using your GPS, reading a map and putting on makeup or shaving. This list goes on and on. While it may seem like there is no way to stop doing some of

these things while we are driving, we should do everything we can to limit those activities.

You don't really need to have an in-depth conversation or an argument with someone while you're driving. Save that for when you get to your destination.

Unless your child is in harm's way, let them be until you can pull over and take care of the problem.

Your GPS talks to you. Why do you need to stare at it? If you're using a GPS, you are probably in an unfamiliar area and you should be paying attention to the road. And remember, your GPS isn't always correct.

Save shaving or putting on makeup for when you get to your destination. Better yet, take care of it before you start driving.

Distracted driving is deadly behavior. Federal estimates suggest that distraction contributes to 16 percent of all fatal crashes.

Multitasking for the brain is a myth. Human

brains do not perform two tasks at the same time.

They switch from task to task. Every time you concentrate on something other than driving, you are at risk.

Now let's talk about cell phones. You are four times more likely to crash when you're using your cell phone while driving. According to the National Safety Council and the American Automobile Association, in 2012, cell phone usage contributed to 1.6 million crashes resulting in 645,000 injuries and more than 5,000 deaths. And remember ... if you get caught using your cell phone on base, either texting or not using a blue-tooth, you will be restricted from driving any vehicle on base for at least 30 days, and you will have to complete a remedial driving class.

If you use your cell while driving off base, you will be fined, or if you are distracted enough, you may become another statistic.

On the road, off the phone; it just makes sense.



[Left] Cpl. Coleman Plummer, military police patrol supervisor, Provost Marshal's Office, writes a citation to a Combat Center resident for failure to stop at a posted stop sign. All traffic laws on base are enforced by the Combat Center directive CCO1630.8D, as well as California Vehicle Codes.

[Bottom, left] According to a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study, applying makeup while operating a vehicle, reading, cell phone use and looking at an object or an event outside of the vehicle are the principle actions that cause distracted driving and lead to vehicle accidents.

[Bottom, right] Texting while driving and any use of a cell phone, unless it is hands free, is restricted aboard all Marine Corps installations.

CPL. NICOLE A. LAVINE



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY SGT. MELISSA WAGNER



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY AMEESHA FELTON



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The Combat Center has its own YouTube channel. Find it at

<http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO>

Whatever you're looking for, you can find it in the [Observation Post Classified section](#)

WeekINPhotos

2nd Law Enforcement Battalion



PHOTOS BY MASTER SGT. CHAD MCMEEN

[Left] Moroccan soldiers and Marines with 2nd Law Enforcement Battalion, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade, II Marine Expeditionary Force, form a unified shield line in response to simulated protesters during a capabilities demonstration for distinguished visitors during Exercise African Lion 2014, in the Tifnit training area of Morocco, April 4. Exercise African Lion 14 is a multi-lateral, combined-joint exercise between the Kingdom of Morocco, the U.S. and other partner nations designed to strengthen relationships with participating countries by increasing understanding of each nation's military capabilities.

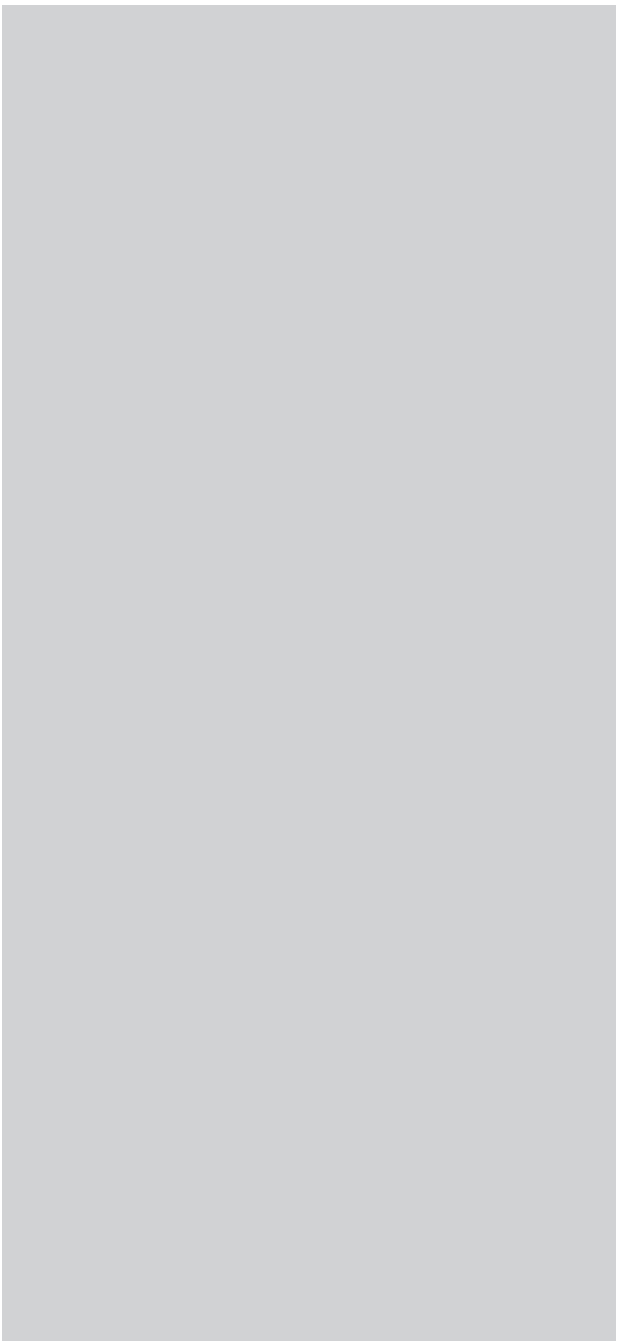
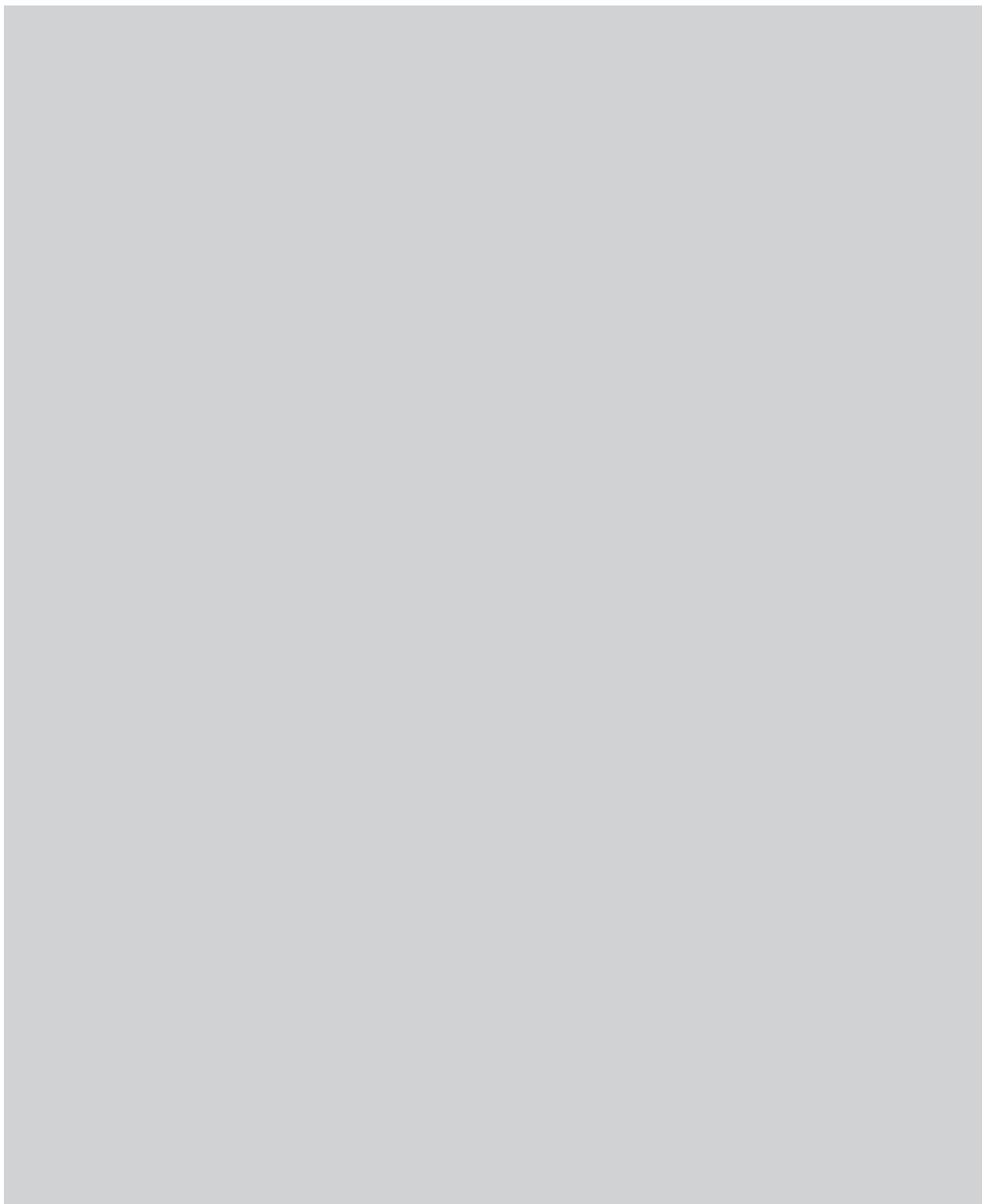
[Top, right] Moroccan soldiers, Marines with 2nd LEB, 2nd MEB, II MEF, along with U.S. Air Force and Army augments prepare for a suspicious vehicle at a simulated entry control point during a capabilities demonstration during Exercise African Lion 2014 in the Tifnit training area of Morocco, April 4. The military-to-military portion of the exercise includes: command-post exercises with humanitarian aid and disaster relief themes; stability operations, such as nonlethal weapons training and respond-to-crisis drills; and an intelligence capability-building workshop.

[Bottom, right] Moroccan soldiers, Marines with 2nd LEB, 2nd MEB, II MEF, along with U.S. Air Force and Army augments, advance from a staging area in response to simulated protesters during a capabilities demonstration for distinguished visitors during Exercise African Lion 2014 in the Tifnit training area of Morocco, April 4.

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http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter		http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO		http://www.flickr.com/thecombatcenter	

Relax with the paper

 The Observation Post





Any Clime and Place

'First Team' infantry leader guides Marines

Cpl. Joseph Scanlan
Combat Correspondent

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan - Noncommissioned officers are often considered the backbone of the Marine Corps. One NCO, Sgt. Warren Sparks, currently has a crucial role as an infantry squad leader with Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

Sparks was raised in Baton Rouge, La., by a family with generations of military service. His great-uncle and grandfather served during World War II, and his father served in the Army. Sparks chose to continue his family's legacy in 2007 when he became a Marine.

Upon graduating Central High School in Baton Rouge, he pursued a college education at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette. During his time in college, he signed a six-year infantry enlistment on Sept. 11, 2003, but was removed from the delayed entry program shortly after he tore his anterior cruciate ligament and broke his hand. With thoughts of joining the military still lingering in his mind, he continued to pursue an education and earned a bachelor's degree in business administration with a specialization in land and resource management. With his newly earned degree, he did something unique.

"I was 24 years old at the time and I didn't want to look back on my life and regret not doing things, so I chose to become an enlisted Marine," Sparks said. "I wanted to do my first four years as an enlisted Marine, and then become a commissioned officer. I didn't want to become a platoon commander with limited experience; I wanted the edge of being enlisted first and leading the trade from the ground up."

Sparks enlisted as a rifleman and attended boot camp at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C. Following boot camp, he trained at the School Of Infantry - East and was screened for the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon. After graduating SOI as a 0311 rifleman, he received orders to Marine Barracks, Washington D.C., and became part of the prestigious platoon.

"I traveled across the world for two years and was able to represent the Marine Corps," Sparks said. "I had a great time with the Silent Drill Platoon. I don't like to drill, but I do like looking sharp. When we traveled abroad, we represented America, and we did it well."

After completing his tour with the Silent Drill Platoon, Sparks received orders to 1/7, at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif. He quickly proved his leadership abilities and became a squad leader before deploying in support of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit in Okinawa, Japan.

"Sgt. Sparks is a tier-one Marine, but I'm still extremely hard on him," said 1st Sgt. Michael Grassl, Co. B first sergeant. "I expect more from him because he is not just an average sergeant. He is a very knowledgeable and wise individual."

Sparks' contract was close to expiring while he was in Japan, so he had to make a choice after re-enlisting to stay with 1/7, which was slated to deploy in support of another MEU, or to become an instructor at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center at Bridgeport, Calif. He chose the latter.

"Bridgeport is not for the faint of heart and

it's not for the weak," said Grassl, a prior instructor at the MWTC. "People don't volunteer to go to Bridgeport because they want to have a break. It's extremely challenging as an instructor, mentally and physically."

Mountain leaders at Bridgeport are the sole individuals advising 160 to 200 Marines on tactics, operations and how to move from one point to another over difficult terrain. They lead rock climbing during the summer and survival skiing during the winter. Not only was Sparks a mountain leader, he instructed the Mountain Leader Course for Marines to become instructors.

"Bridgeport is the best place to be in the Marine Corps," Sparks said. "It's shaped a lot of who I am, how I operate, and it's changed how I view things."

Although Sparks cherished his time as an instructor at Bridgeport, he desired a combat deployment before Operation Enduring Freedom concluded. When his time as an instructor ended, there were only two units left that were slated to deploy to Afghanistan. Coincidentally, one of them was 1/7, and he chose to return to the Combat Center.

For the following months he was continuously in training environments in Yuma Proving Grounds, Ariz., and the Combat Center, to prepare for the upcoming deployment. Early in March 2014, his hopes came true and he left the United States for Afghanistan.

"I remind my men of how many other Marines would love to be in our position right now," Sparks said. "People are fighting to get orders to these last battalions that are deploying because combat deployments are coming to an end. I'm very thankful to be on this deployment."

His current mission with the battalion is to conduct limited offensive operations and set conditions for the transfer of full security responsibilities to Afghan National Security Forces as well as



CPL. JOSEPH SCANLAN

Sgt. Warren Sparks, squad leader, Company B, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, is currently deployed to Helmand province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Sparks was raised in Baton Rouge, La., by a family with generations of military service.

security force assistance to defeat enemy forces throughout their battlespace in Helmand province. After his deployment in Afghanistan, Sparks plans to continue to teach, motivate, mentor and inspire Marines wherever the Marine Corps takes him.

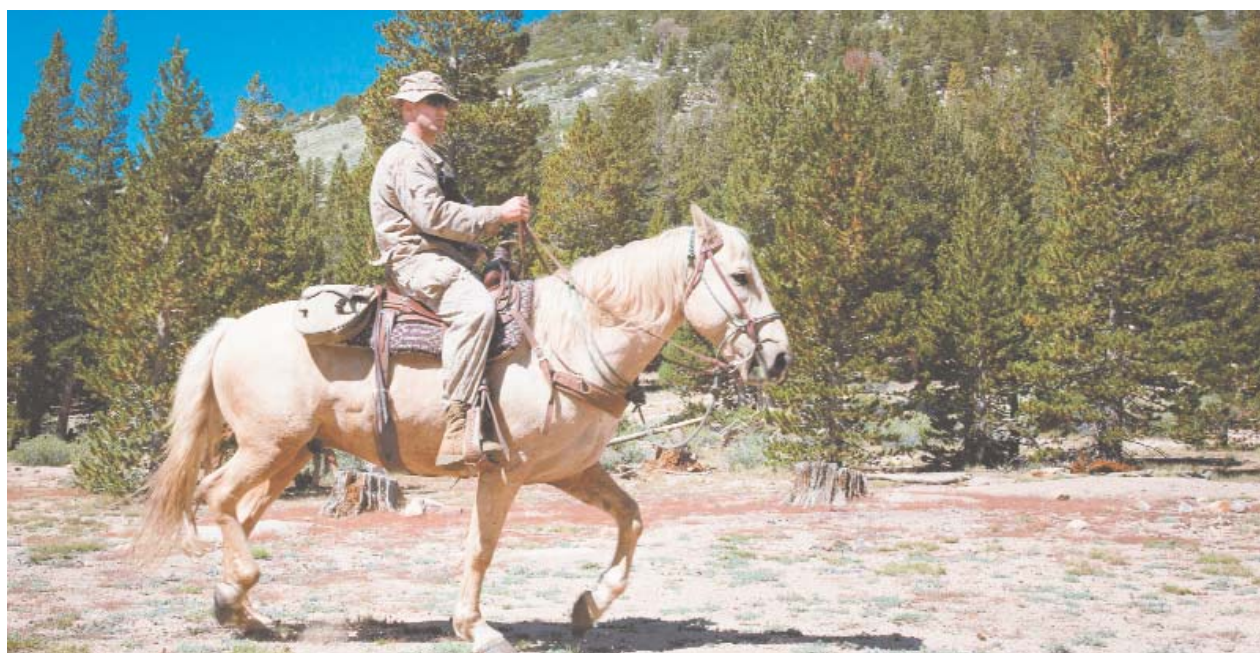
"One of the things I tell my Marines is to not be afraid to stand up for what they believe in," Sparks said. "Commanders don't want lambs, they want lions. They want Marines who stand up for what they believe in, and do what is right. Making the right choice isn't always easy and an individual may not be liked because of it, but they will be respected."



CPL. JOSEPH SCANLAN

[Above] Sgt. Warren Sparks, squad leader, Co. B, 1/7, directs Marines to move to their next objective during a live-fire exercise on Range 400 at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., Oct. 23, 2013. The Marines conducted a company attack on fortified positions to conclude their training evolution during the Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course.

[Left] Sgt. Warren Sparks, animal packer instructor, leads a group of Marines across the Sierra Nevada mountain range on his mule, Trigger. Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center Bridgeport, Calif., trains Marines and other service members to move across various terrains at altitudes between 8,000 and 11,000 feet.



SGT. KUANDE HALL

Liberty Call



Combat Center Events

Chief's Show and Shine

Enjoy an evening of drinks and cool cars with a performance by The Burning of Rome at 1 and 3 p.m. The event is free of charge and open to all hands.

When: April 12

Where: Hashmarks Parking Lot

For more information, call 830-5086

Family & Marine Safety Fair

This informational event will help increase safety awareness of military families. K-9 demonstrations can be seen, do-it-yourself child ID kits and more.

When: April 28

Where: MCX and PMCU Bank Parking Lot

For more information, call 830-5086

We Salute You Celebration

This family-friendly concert will feature artists Brett Eldridge, Craig Morgan and Shuggah Pies. Food concessions and other activities will be available on site.

When: May 17

Where: Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field

For more information, call 830-5086

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

When: Tues. 2 - 3:30 p.m. and Thurs. 9 - 10:30 a.m.

For more information, call 830-5035

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

Sunset Cinema

Friday, April 11

4 p.m. – Free Admission Frozen, PG

6:30 p.m. – Tyler Perry's Single Mom's Club, PG-13

9 p.m. – Pompeii, PG-13

11:30 p.m. – 300: Rise of an Empire, R

Saturday, April 12

10:30 a.m. – Free Admission Coudy With a Chance of Meatballs 2, PG

1 p.m. – Pompeii 3-D, PG-13

3:30 p.m. – Son of God, PG -13

6:30 p.m. – Non-Stop, PG-13

9 p.m. – 300: Rise of an Empire, R

11:30 p.m. – 3 Days to Kill, PG-13

Sunday, April 13

12:30 p.m. – Muppets Most Wanted, PG

3 p.m. – 3 Days to Kill, PG-13

6 p.m. – 300: Rise of an Empire 3-D, R

8 p.m. – Need for Speed 3-D, PG-13

Monday, April 14

6 p.m. – Tyler Perry's Single Mom's Club, PG-13

Tuesday, April 15

6 p.m. – Need for Speed 3-D, PG-13

Wednesday, April 16

6:30 p.m. – 300: Rise of an Empire 3-D, R

Thursday, April 17

5 p.m. – Pompeii, PG-13

7:30 p.m. – Non-Stop, PG-13



Puppet Power: Muppets still serve 'entertainment for everybody'

NEIL POND
"Muppets Most Wanted"

Starring Ricky Gervais, Tina Fey & Ty Burrell
 Directed by James Bobin
 PG, 107 min.

The Muppets have been around since 1955, and their creator and longtime driving force, Jim Henson, the puppeteer who brought them from TV's "Sesame Street" to Hollywood and beyond, died in 1990. But Henson's original idea that his Muppets offer "entertainment for everybody" is still very much alive and well.

The troupe's eighth movie is yet another family-friendly, something-for-everyone affair, a rollicking roundup of trademark put-on-a-show shtick, gonzo sketch comedy, toe-tapping musical numbers and a zany bombardment of guests. As always, the felt-and-foam antics of Kermit the

Frog, Miss Piggy and the other familiar Muppet cast are bolstered by a parade of Hollywood pop-ins, which helps freshen up some of the vaudeville-style gags.

The cameos come fast, and often last only for an instant — step out to the lobby even for a moment and you could easily miss Tony Bennett, Lady Gaga, Zach Galifianakis, Saoirse Ronan, Salma Hayak, Ray Liotta, Stanley Tucci, Chloë Grace Moretz, Josh Grobin, Celine Dion or a number of others who all seem eager for even a small part of the fun and a moment in the Muppet sunshine. Ricky Gervais, Tina Fey, and Ty Burrell have more substantial roles in the story, which concerns a nefarious Kermit look-alike who infiltrates the ensemble, beginning a trans-European crime spree and sending everyone's favorite show-biz amphibian away into shivery Siberian exile.

Of course it sounds preposterous. But you do understand we're talking about a bunch of talking, singing, dancing puppet animals...right?



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Military base residents, visitors required to register vehicles

Lance Cpl. Norman Eckles
Combat Correspondent

ROCKLIN, Calif. - If someone is not legally able to drive in the state of California, they will not be able to get on a military installation.

"If you have a car in the state of California, then you must register the vehicle in California," said James White, California Highway Patrol officer. "It is essential for you to get the registration because officers of the law, whether on base or off, will pull you over and give you a (ticket)."

There are multiple things you need to legally drive a car in the state of California. These include: a valid driver's license, current insurance, and proper registration, explained White. However, there are exceptions to this law.

"The only people that are allowed to have non-California registration are active duty military and their spouses, reservists on active duty, and people that live within 50 miles of the state line," said White. "If you move here from another state and establish a residency, you must register your vehicle in this state."

A person has established residency if they have been in The Golden State for

more than six months, have a home of record in California or are registered to vote in the state, he further explained.

"If you have done any of these things, then you are required by law to register your vehicle in the state of California, even if you are an employee under the Department of Defense," White said.

To gain access to a military installation is no different, said Denise Gutierrez, pass and identification clerk, Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif.

"If you try to come onto the installation without (a driver's license, proper registration and insurance) you will be denied access to the base," said Gutierrez. "If you are a DoD employee who works or lives on the base, then your vehicles must have DoD stickers."

There are consequences for not having proper registration on or off base, explained White. The most common one is a citation, which requires a person to appear in court after fixing their registration. However, if a person never fixes the registration, their vehicle may be towed and impounded.

"If you live in California and (don't have up-to-date registration), you are susceptible to being pulled over and will be fined; so, save yourself the trouble and get proper registration," concluded White.



How to apply for a driver's license (18+)

According to the California Department of Motor Vehicles, if you become a California resident, you must get a California driver's license within 10 days. Residency is established by voting in a California election, paying resident tuition, filing for a homeowner's property tax exemption, or any other privilege or benefit not ordinarily extended to non-residents.

To apply for an original driver license if you are over 18, you will need to do the following:

- Visit a DMV office (make an appointment(s) for faster service)
- Complete application form DL 44 (An original DL 44 form must be submitted. Copies will not be accepted.)
- Give a thumb print and have your picture taken
- Provide your Social Security number. It will be verified with the Social Security Administration while you are in the office.
- Verify your birth date and legal presence.
- Provide your true full name
- Pay the application fee
- Pass a vision exam
- Pass a traffic laws and sign test. You have three attempts.

You will then be issued a permit if you have never been licensed before. When you practice, you must have an accompanying adult who is 18 years of age or older, with a valid California license. This person must be close enough to you to take control of the vehicle if necessary. It is illegal for you to drive alone.

If you have a license from another country, you will be required to take a driving test. If you have a license from another state, the driving test can be waived.



LANCE CPL. NORMAN ECKLES

Cpl. Lonnie Marney, police officer with the Marine Corps Police Department on Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., checks for proper registration, insurance and identification from a driver trying to access the installation, April 3.

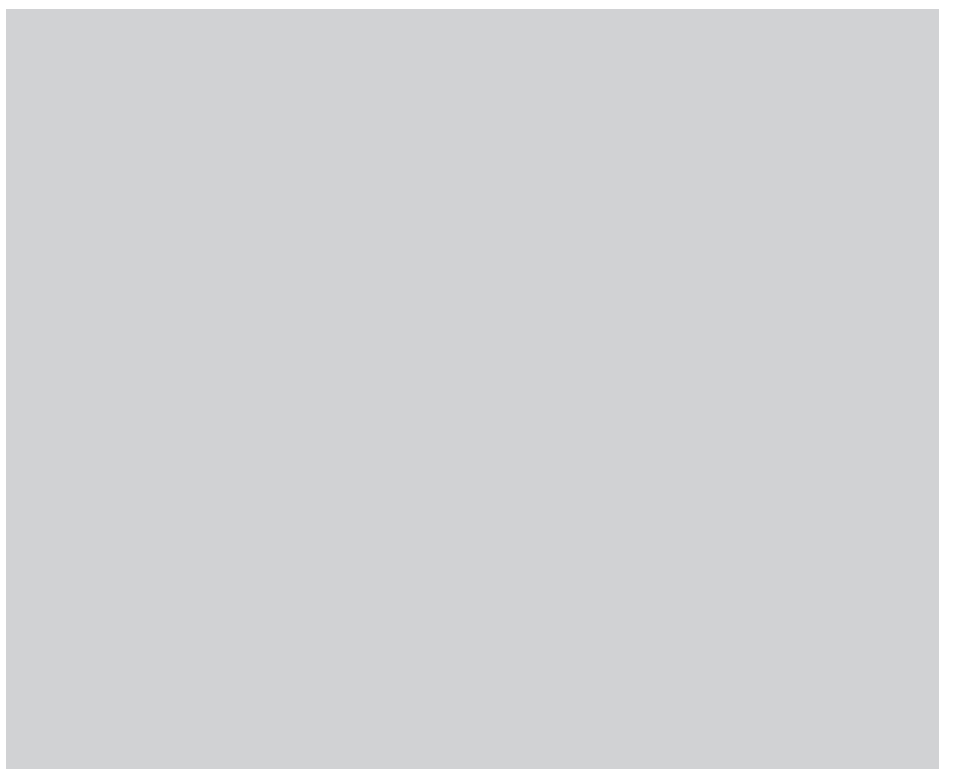
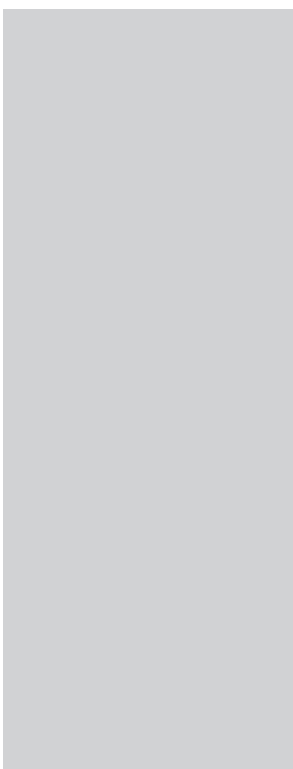


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Relax with the paper

The Observation Post



HIGH INTENSITY TACTICAL TRAINING



Cpl. Lauren Kurkimilis
Combat Correspondent

PHOTOS BY CPL. LAUREN KURKIMILIS

The primary focus of the High Intensity Tactical Training program is to enhance operational fitness levels and optimize combat readiness and resilience for the Marine Corps. This strength and conditioning program takes into consideration the physical demands of operational-related activities in order to optimize physical performance while in combat. By implementing training methods and scientific principles, the HITT program focuses on enhancing athleticism for today's tactical athletes, the Marines.

[Top] Lance Cpl. Antwan James, logistics clerk, Headquarters Battalion, uses battle ropes as a part of a High Intensity Tactical Training exercise at Del Valle Field, Wednesday.

[Above, left] Eduardo Rangle, HITT coordinator, holds a bar above his head while squatting during a HITT exercise at Del Valle Field, Wednesday.

[Above, right] 1st Sgt. Adam Gharati, company first sergeant, A Company, HQBN, navigates an agility course during a HITT exercise at Del Valle Field, Wednesday.

LOOKING for local entertainment? See page B2 for our LIBERTY CALL section

