

Commandant promotes new chaplain of the Corps

Christianne Witten
 Chief of Navy Chaplain Public Affairs

Capt. Brent W. Scott was promoted to the rank of rear admiral by the Commandant of the Marine Corps and assumed his duties as 19th Chaplain of the Marine Corps/deputy chief of Navy chaplains at Marine Barracks Washington, July 25.

During his remarks, Gen. James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, welcomed Scott back to the Marine Corps after serving as battalion chaplain with 3rd Marine Air Wing in Yuma, Ariz. early in his career. Amos also acknowledged Scott's ministry to Marines as staff chaplain at Naval Station Rota and later as command chaplain on USS Ronald Reagan.

After administering the oath of office, Amos presented Scott with a copy of the U.S.

Brent Scott brings with him a wealth of experience to his new role. He is just as passionate and concerned for the welfare of our people and shares my love and admiration for our Marines.

— Rear Adm. Margaret G. Kibben

Constitution, signed by the Commandant and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, as well as Scott's flag as a newly promoted flag officer.

As the senior Navy chaplain serving in the Marine Corps, Scott will oversee nearly 300 chaplains and 250 religious program specialists currently supporting the spiritual needs of Marines. He will also serve as a key advisor to the commandant on religious accommodation, morals and ethics, and the spiritual welfare of the force.

Rear Adm. Margaret G. Kibben, outgoing chaplain of the Marine Corps, shared her enthusiasm for her successor.

"Brent Scott brings with him a wealth of experience to this new role. He is just as passionate and concerned for the welfare of our people, and he shares my love and admiration of our Marines," said Kibben.

During her remarks, she shared the importance of Scott's position, "as an extension of the commandant but, more importantly, an

See **CHAPLAIN** page A7

SAVT SIMULATOR IN ACTION

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIA



Capt. Travis Onischuk, company commander, 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, and Lance Cpl. James Hutsell, field radio operator, 1/1 call, in a situational report during a Mobile Assault Course in a corridor of the Combat Center's training area, July 25.

Polish Army officers visit Combat Center to observe training

Coordinates are communicated between members of a fire support team and relayed back to the support aircraft. The pilot's voice is heard through the speaker of the radio: "10 seconds till impact." The room falls silent as a puff of smoke rises in the distance, signaling the forward observer to indicate a hit with the word, "splash."

Polish Army leaders visited the Combat Center during Integrated Training Exercise 4-14 to observe Marine Corps fire support teams and how they incorporate advanced calls for fire and train, from Saturday to Tuesday.

The officers observed a FiST with 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment in action during a mobile assault course in the Combat Center

training area. The team's role in the course involved calling for fire on an area target utilizing mortars, artillery and aerial strikes.

"The mobile assault course challenges a company commander to integrate direct, indirect and aviation fires in a realistic combat environment," said Capt. Charles Olmsted, assistant operations officer, Tactics Training Exercise Control Group. "The FiST is essential to coordinate the desired effect on the enemy, such as suppression, so the commander can commit his Marines to maneuver on the enemy."

Using the Combat Center's Supporting

See **SHOOTER** page A7

Having a simulator that is available gives fire support teams more opportunities to develop and train.

— Capt. Jorge Colon

Marine Corps' Top Shot

Every week, thousands of fans vote for the best photograph, posted on the Corps' facebook page.

This week's top shot comes from Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va.



STAFF SGT. EZEKIEL KITANDWE

Lance Cpl. Ryan Trejo, Company E, 4th Reconnaissance Battalion, responds to a simulated ambush during a live-fire exercise at Camp Upshur, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., July 21. The training exercise was part of a week-long jump, dive, breach, and shooting package conducted around various exercises on MCB Quantico.

1ST LEB AND BASE K-9 TRAIN MWSS-374



Cpl. Paul Kelley, working dog handler, Provost Marshal's Office, points at different sections of a vehicle for Colli, military working dog, to search during a class on checkpoint searches with military working dogs for the Engineer Company, MWSS-374, at Camp Wilson, July 25.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIA

A gray truck slowly comes to a stop at a checkpoint where military policemen are conducting vehicle searches. The moment the vehicle is ready, military working dog Colli leaps out of the police vehicle and begins sniffing his way through the truck while guided by his handler.

The Provost Marshal's Office K-9 Division conducted a class on vehicle searches for members of Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, July 25. The Engineer Company of MWSS-374 has been receiving classes on various forms of flight line security from 1st Law Enforcement Battalion to better prepare air stations for security while deployed.

"Since the Camp Bastion incident, there has been a call for wing units to learn more detailed security procedures for air base ground defense," said 1st Lt. Matthew Gonzales, platoon commander, 1st LEB.

See **LEB** page A7

This Week in Combat Center History



Reprinted from the
Observation Post
Vol. 13, Issue 31
Aug. 1, 1969

Nine Leathernecks decorated

Courtesy Story

Nine 29 Palms Marines received combat and achievement awards and seven others retired to the Marine Corps Reserve in a ceremony July 29.

The awards were presented by Brig. Gen. Carl W. Hoffman, commanding general, in front of the Headquarters Building.

A Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V" was presented to 1st Lt. Troy A. Lucas, HQ Co., for service in Vietnam with 3rd MP Bn, force Logistic Command, from April 1968 to May 1969. Lucas coordinated matters connected with various 3rd Marine Amphibious Force Sections.

Cpl. Donald L. Edgar, 9th Comm Bn., for service in Vietnam while he was an aerial gunner with Marine Air Base Squadron 16, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, from Dec. 1, 1967 to Dec. 13, 1968.

Cpl. Gerold W. Tullos, H&S Bn., for service in Vietnam as an ammunitions technician with the Force Logistic Support Group A, from April 1968 to May 1969. Cpl. Tullos supervised activities at the major ammunition storage dump located at the An Hoa Combat Base and ensured all units their proper quality and quantity of ammunition.

A Navy Achievement Medal with Combat "V" was presented to

Sgt. Michael C. Leinweber, H&S Bn., for his actions in Vietnam from February 1968 to March 1969. Sgt. Leinweber served as Supply administrative clerk with the 3rd Shore Party Bn., 3rd Marine Division.

Three other men received the Navy Achievement Medal with Combat "V." They were Sgt. William F. Wells, 5th FAG, for the performance of his duties in Vietnam from May 1968 to June 1969. Sgt. Wells served as motor transport shop chief with the 3rd Bn., 1st Marines, 1st Marine Division.

Cpl. Elliot A. Frehner, H&S Bn., for his service in Vietnam as administrative clerk with the 3rd Tank Bn., 3rd Marine Division, from February 1968 to March 1969.

And Cpl. Manuel Villagomez, 9th Comm Bn., for his actions in Vietnam from May 1968 to April 1969. Cpl. Villagomez served as a radio operator with the 2nd Bn., 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division. He utilized his radio in eight major combat operations including Baxter Garden, Mameluke Thrust and Henderson Hill.

The Republic of Vietnam presented the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with a Silver Star to Capt. Richard W. Shulz, HQ Co., for service as assistant chief of staff, G-1, Task Force Yankee in Vietnam.

Pfc. Royce J. Beck, 2nd LAAM Bn., received the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry for his service in Vietnam as a field radio operator with the 1st Field Artillery Group, 1st Marine Division, from December 1967 to January 1969.

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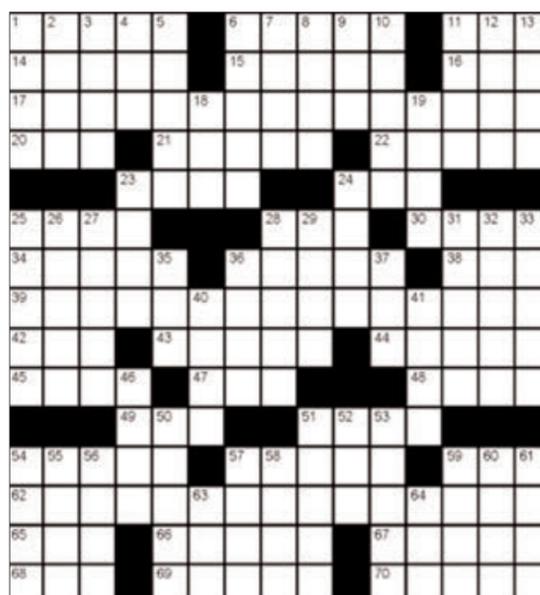
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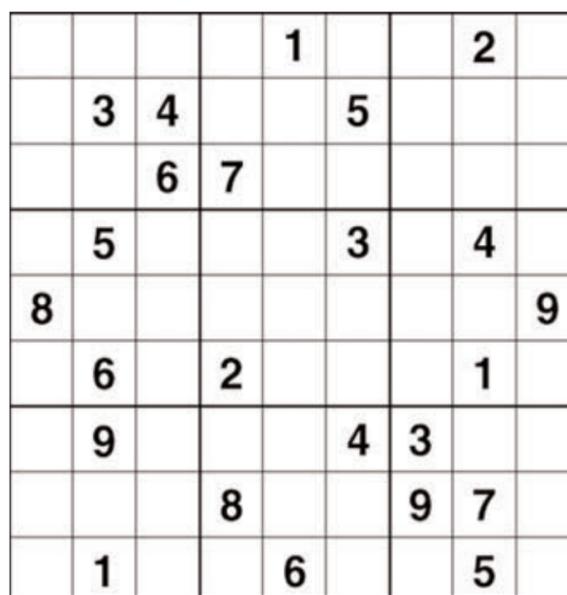
See answers on page A6

- Across**
- 1 The Mamas & the _____
 - 6 Posed a question
 - 11 Egg _____ (December drink)
 - 14 Fast Amtrak train
 - 15 Willing to believe anything
 - 16 Night before a big day
 - 17 Dr. Seuss book
 - 20 "A mouse!"
 - 21 Stories
 - 22 Harnesses the wind
 - 23 Actress Winslet of "Titanic"
 - 24 Kitty or puppy
 - 25 Store event
 - 28 Kind of poem
 - 30 "Woe is me!"
 - 34 Theater items
 - 36 Extreme dislike
 - 38 Every last bit
 - 39 Dr. Seuss book
 - 42 "First of all..."
 - 43 More than months
 - 44 Resort lake that's also
 - a Chevy SUV
 - 45 Grandma
 - 47 Soap ingredient
 - 48 Slithering creature
 - 49 Delivery company
 - 51 "The _____ Show"
 - 54 Instrument for Billy Joel
 - 57 Number of Olympic medals in each
 - 59 Ending for real or surreal
 - 62 Dr. Seuss book
 - 65 "Sands of _____ Jima"
 - 66 Stands against a wall
 - 67 Attempts
 - 68 Young fellow
 - 69 Cheese with holes in it
 - 70 Transmits
- Down**
- 1 Chapter part
 - 2 Land measurement
 - 3 Quick look
 - 4 Ginger _____
 - 5 Mrs. Claus's man
 - 6 It may be 90 degrees
 - 7 Herb that sounds wise
 - 8 Smooch
 - 9 Actress Longoria
 - 10 Tightly-packed
 - 11 Soda brand
 - 12 Racetrack shape
 - 13 Valuable rocks
 - 18 Consume
 - 19 Facts
 - 23 Held onto
 - 24 _____ Plus (shampoo brand)



- 25 Watch through binoculars, for example
- 26 Stadium
- 27 Sultry Sophia
- 28 Earth tone
- 29 Impersonates
- 31 Wood shop tool
- 32 Permit
- 33 Scary driving weather
- 35 Sneaky
- 36 Remain
- 37 Pecan or cashew
- 40 Long fish
- 41 Hit the bell
- 46 Dad's sister, to his
- daughter
- 50 Places to swim
- 51 Blades in a field
- 52 "_____ the ramparts ..."
- 53 Homes for robins
- 54 TV's Dr. _____
- 55 Des Moines' state
- 56 Baseball nickname
- 57 Cuisine that uses peanuts
- 58 Egg layers
- 59 Victorious cry
- 60 Structure to store tools in
- 61 Tree growth
- 63 _____ Hampshire
- 64 "What _____ you doing?"

SUDOKU 3347 D



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 - 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

Aaron Medina

San Diego, tank crewman, 1st Tank Battalion, 21

MEDINA



> It's been a pretty cool experience

serving in the Marine Corps; I got to travel to many places and work with other countries.

> **A part of the military** is also who you work with. I've met so many people from different backgrounds and you see the reasons why they joined as you get to know them.

> **Before I joined the Marine Corps**, I began to have an interest in guns and started shooting on local ranges where I lived.

> **All the weapons** I saw Marines use actually became one of the reasons I joined.

> **While in highschool** I enjoyed playing football, swimming, and shooting.

> **Druing my sophomore year** in high school I decided I wanted to enlist in the Marine Corps.

> **My step dad** was active duty Navy and he would always tell me stories about Marines and what they did and I thought it was cool. I'm proud to be the first Marine in my family.

> **The dynamic of working** with different countries was also really cool. An example of that was when we trained with the Australian Army. Their mindset was to advance behind tanks while Marines never have anyone behind the tank. Seeing those differences was very interesting, while deployed in training.

> **I remember when I was younger** watching the news and seeing Marines made me always think about joining because of all the things I would see them do.

> **When I got to "1st Tanks"** I was taken care of by my NCO's and they guided me in the right direction. I wanted to make sure I did the same with the junior Marines I have.

> **One of the things** the Marine Corps has taught me is realizing all people learn differently. For me Hands-on learning and teaching always worked the best.

MEDINA KNEW FROM HIS SOPHOMORE YEAR IN HIGH SCHOOL THAT HE WANTED TO JOIN THE MARINE CORPS. HE IS THE FIRST GENERATION OF HIS FAMILY TO SERVE IN THE MARINE CORPS. HE ENLISTED SEPTEMBER 7, 2010.

> **I learned a little bit about cars** while at "Tanks." I know when I needed some work done, I could go to the mechanics in the battalion, who were really good with cars, and saved me from a lot of headaches.

> **I love old muscle cars.** And I want to eventually buy an old Camaro SS and fix it up.

> **My favorite position** in the tank crew was the loader. You were doing everything, keeping track of the radio, throwing more rounds in, and passing ammo, it was very active.

> **I have Marines** who have grown and become gunners. They come to me asking questions and, in a way, I'll miss helping Marines and being there for them.

> **One of the things I will take** with me after the Marine Corps is leadership. All the things I learned from training junior Marines was very valuable and I've enjoyed all the experiences I've had.

> **Taking care of my Marines** was always important to me. I made sure to always have my door open for questions or advice.

> **I grew up with all sisters** and I never really had that brother figure; I got that in the Marine Corps and I'll really miss being that brother figure for others.

Story and photo by Cpl. Charles Santamaria, July 30, 2014

See page B2 for
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movie
schedule



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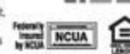
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Paws to Read

Photos by Cpl. Ali Azimi



[Above] Brian Henen, ecologist, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Division, teaches kids about the Combat Center's delicate ecosystem during a Paws to Read event at the Lifelong Learning Library, July 25.

[Far, left] Kids pet and feed a desert tortoise during a Paws to Read event at the Lifelong Learning Library, July 25. The event featured a presentation from Brian Henen, ecologist, NREA, about the Combat Center's environment and history.

[Left] Natalya Gomez, 5, daughter of Staff Sgt. George Gomez, creates an elephant mask during the arts and crafts portion of a Paws to Read event, July 25.

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PHOTOS BY CPL. ALI AZIMI

Memorial honors memory of Bobby Kirchner

Cpl. Ali Azimi
Combat Correspondent

A crowd of family and friends gathered to honor the life of Bobby Kirchner during a memorial held at Luckie Park in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Saturday.

Kirchner was considered to be one of the primary players on the "Super Team" in the Desert Winds Golf Course's maintenance crew, where he served as a supervisor.

"He kept the Desert Winds Golf Course in place as a major contributing component to the quality of life aboard this installation," said Brad Brimhall, director, Semper Fit. "Bobby had passion for what he did out there and it showed in his attitude and in his work."

In memory of Kirchner, Brimhall asked Semper Fit employees to wear their Semper Fit black shirt polos every Tuesday for the duration of the year.

"His presence on the team mattered, made a difference, and left a positive mark," Brimhall said.

The memorial provided family and friends outside the Semper Fit circle an occasion to celebrate the life of Kirchner in their own way. The gathering resembled a family reunion. Guests welcomed

each other, their hands filled with plates of food they had brought.

They smiled, told stories and lined up to see the collage of pictures displayed in the front of the audience. Surveyors smiled as they looked at the man featured in the photos, each one a snapshot of a loving memory.

The tables were soon packed with people awaiting the beginning of the ceremony.

Kirchner's son and daughter, Matt and Katie, stood alongside their uncle, Kenny Kirchner, as Matt stepped up to the microphone to speak about his father.

"When he would tell a story, it was never just, 'Hey, I just got to tell you something,'" said Matt. "His whole body would get into it and would tell it with all the passion he possibly could."

A wave of laughter spread over the crowd as the memory of the well-known story teller took life.

They continued with their stories as Kirchner's favorite songs were played through the loud speakers. Guests ate, talked and wrote loving words in a book passed around the crowd.

As the sun touched the horizon, it marked the end of the memorial, though the memory of Bobby Kirchner lives on.



[Top, left] Matt Kirchner, son of Bobby Kirchner, speaks during his father's memorial at Luckie Park in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Saturday. The event honored the memory of Bobby with stories, food and some of his favorite songs played over the loudspeakers.

[Top, right] Guests look at a collage of pictures from the life of Bobby Kirchner during his memorial at Luckie Park in Twentynine Palms, Calif., Saturday.

[Bottom, right] Guests welcome each other during the memorial of Bobby Kirchner at Luckie Park in Twentynine Palms, Saturday. The memorial honored the life of Bobby and was attended by a massive crowd of friends and family.



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Chamber of Commerce

Content provided by
the Twentynine Palms
Chamber of Commerce

Chamber Briefs

Chamber represents at tourism meetings

TWENTYNINE PALMS — The Twentynine Palms Chamber of Commerce continues to represent members and the city of Twentynine Palms at monthly Joshua Tree Gateway Communities and Desert Regional Tourism Agency meetings.

The Joshua Tree Gateway Communities recently consolidated under the umbrella of the Desert Regional Tourism Agency to work at improving the marketing and promotion of our area.

Thanks offered for Fourth of July fun

TWENTYNINE PALMS — Twentynine Palms Chamber of Commerce officials again gave thanks to the city of Twentynine Palms and those who worked diligently to make this year's July 4 celebration a huge success.

The event went off without a hitch as the chamber partnered with park and recreation to coordinate this year's festivities. The cham-

ber would like to thank all who donated prizes to the annual Duck Pluck. This year organizers were able to award 78 prizes from local and regional businesses and raise much-needed funds for the organization.

Promote your business on base

TWENTYNINE PALMS — Nonprofits, businesses and organizations offering family-friendly fare have a chance to promote themselves at several events at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center and at local schools.

Back-to-school nights are being organized and residents are asked to help inform new arrivals of the great things to do and see here in the area. Contact the chamber at (760) 367-3445 for how your business or organization can get involved.

Keep up to date by subscribing to the chamber's weekly eNews or by "liking" the chamber on Facebook.



COURTESY PHOTO

Twentynine Palms Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Cynthia Truitt, left, welcomes new members Molly and J.R. Thorpe of Patriot Motors.



COURTESY PHOTO

Twentynine Palms Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Cynthia Truitt, right, stands with Heather Lougon of new member Wonderfilled Web Design.

New members

Patriot Motors
Feathers 'N' Fur Wildlife Rehab Team
Send Out Cards Desert Hot Springs
Jeff Casto — AdvoCare Independent Distributor
Mojave Merchant Services
Sam's Club Palm Desert
Wonderfilled Web Design
Geddis Plumbing

Renewing members

Mojave Desert Land Trust
29 Palms Youth Club
Joshua Tree National Park Association
Copper Mountain College Foundation
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Dog Days: HQBN DEMO



[Top, left] Cpl. Paul Kelley, military working dog handler, Provost Marshal's Office, keeps a kong above the nose of Colli, MWD, to show levels of obedience, during a K-9 demonstration for Headquarters Battalion Marines and families at Del Valle Field, July 25.

[Above] Lance Cpl. Anthony Ciccino, military working dog handler, Provost Marshal's Office, maintains control of Cchaz, military working dog, as he shows the different levels of aggression during a K-9 demonstration for HQBN Marines and families at Del Valle Field, July 25.

[Left] Cpl. Paul Kelley, military working dog handler, Provost Marshal's Office, braces for impact as Cchaz, military working dog, latches onto his bite sleeve during a K-9 demonstration for HQBN Marines and families at Del Valle Field, July 25.

PHOTOS BY CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIA

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TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt



I am writing this week about Thomas K. Huls, proprietor of Big-O-Tires. Tom is a terrific guy. I liked him the minute I met him. I was delighted to learn that Tom was elected Chairman of the Board of the Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber could not have chosen a better man. He thoroughly enjoys life and his work. He and his lovely wife Karin live in Yucca Valley. They have four children and 13 grandchildren and spend many hours together as a family.

Tom and his staff at his highly successful store financially support many Community and national projects, including the yucca Valley Concerts in the Park. I have had more than one of our local "clean team" members tell me how Big-O-Tires accepts the tires and rims they collect at no charge. Tom has 10 employees including John Hughes, Ray Williams, Sandy Moody and Paul Chin Hing.

And now I am pleased to report that John Register has been added to the superior staff. John lives in Twentynine Palms and formerly worked at Roy's Tires. He is a wonderful addition to an already fabulous team.

I want you to also know that Tom and Big-O-Tires have the best guarantee possible in the tire industry. Their word is truly their bond. If you have any problem, whatsoever, they will take care of it immediately without question.

Tom's business continues to grow during this economically challenging time. I think I know why: He is a straight shooter, he loves people, and he is an expert at what he does.

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J. and M. have been wonderfully generous supporters for years. In their note, along with their check, they wrote "If we all do a little, we can get a lot done."

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POLISH, from A1

Arms Virtual Trainer, FiSTs can also refine their skills and train together to stay sharp for when their respective units utilize them.

“The SAVT is fiscally easier to use and quicker to set up as opposed to organizing live-fire exercises with ordinance,” said Capt. Jorge Colon, fire support coordinator, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion. “Having a simulator that is available gives fire support teams more opportunities to develop and train.”

The Polish officers saw the value in the Marine Corps’ joint terminal attack controller and close air support skills and want to improve their system by incorporating their own JTACs at the battalion level.

“For us, the big question is how to prepare commanders to utilize joint fires from both the ground and air,” said Col. Jaroslaw Gromadzinski, Chief of Land Forces Use and Analysis Division, J3, General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces. “We want to take concepts from multiple sources to create a new system and improve education on these methods to include the army college. This includes learning from the Marine Corps and the experience they have from modern warfare.” The simulator had a panoramic screen with the optics and equipment needed to fully support a FiST. The simulator can generate vehicles and targets that can be moved and adjusted to generate combat situations. The instructors also change conditions to make each simulation more challenging.

“The instant feedback from the simulator adds to the realism of the training and although nothing can replicate using the tactics in the field, it is a very effective alternative,” Colon said.

The Polish officers also expressed long-term goals of creating a specialized JTAC and forward observer training center in Europe, with a purpose of developing a multinational school house for more than just Polish service members.

“Everyone has to know the same procedures and techniques when conducting joint fires,” said Maj. Jerzy Kania, training staff, J-7 Training Directorate, General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces. “Making a universal understanding of the procedures helps our ground units when communicating with pilots or aircraft of allied militaries.”

The Marine Corps’ experience with fires support is one of the reasons the Polish Army decided to come to the Combat Center and observe training.

“We chose to observe the Marine Corps because out of all the units we cooperate with, we believe Marines execute joint fires the best,” Kania said.

Exercise controllers also see the benefit international visits from allied military units has on the Corps and the country. Building an understanding of procedures between allied countries can help in training and future operations.

“It builds familiarity between United States Marines and the Polish Army,” Colon said. “There are going to be situations where an American pilot will be supporting a Polish battalion and their JTAC has to communicate with the aircraft or vice-versa. Building familiarity ahead of time with partner nations is going to help fluidity in procedures when the day comes for us to work together.”

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WeekINPhotos

Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.



PHOTOS BY CPL. TODD F. MICHALEK

[Top, right] A Marine with Lima Company, Battalion Landing Team, 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, provides security during a nighttime raid exercise at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., Sunday.

[Top, left] A Marine with Co. L, BLT, 3/6, 24th MEU, controls a simulated detainee during a nighttime raid exercise at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Sunday. The 24th MEU is currently conducting Realistic Urban Training, the unit's first major pre-deployment exercise in preparation for their deployment at the end of the year.

[Right] Marines and sailors with Lima Company, BLT, 3/6, 24th MEU, load a simulated casualty onto a MV-22B Osprey at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., Sunday.



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MARINES, SAILORS ENSURE CAMP DWYER'S SAFETY



Story and photos by **Cpl. Cody Haas**

CAMP DWYER, Afghanistan— Improvised explosive devices and small arms fire from insurgents remain a threat to units patrolling in Helmand province.

Marines with Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, conducted an operation near commonly traveled routes near Camp Dwyer and the surrounding area in Helmand province, Afghanistan, July 19 to 20.

Insurgents have been known to use heavily traveled routes to carry small arms weapons and explosive materials throughout Afghanistan to use against Afghan and coalition forces.

"The operation gave enemy insurgents in the area a clear presence of our manpower and capability," said Lance Cpl. Mike Reams, machine gunner, Co. C. "The routes we covered were the main areas where insurgents have been seen recently."

Marines with Co. C used Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles during the operation for added protection against IEDs as well as small arms fire. They convoyed approximately two hours to the area of operation in Helmand province.

"The mission was a success because we were able to employ the (M252) 81mm mortar system with illumination rounds to deny the enemy the freedom of movement, hindering them from transporting weapons and narcotics on nearby routes," said Staff Sgt. Carl Therrien, platoon sergeant, Weapons Platoon, Co. C.

A mortar illumination round is a type of ammunition that when fired, burns a bright flame carried by a parachute.

With illumination rounds constantly fired throughout the night, machine gunners in MRAPs watched over a nearby route for any suspicious activity.

"As a machine gunner, it is my responsibility to be able to determine what is happening around me and the convoy to determine if there is a threat in the area," said Reams, a native of Kansas City, Missouri.

"Enemy insurgents tend to blend in with the local population living in villages near Camp Dwyer, so it is important for us to gain trust with the locals by letting them know why we are operating outside of their villages."

Co. C Marines deployed to Helmand province, Afghanistan, during February from Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif.

Although few in number, the leadership quality is high within the company.

"(Noncommissioned Officers) of Co. C are some of the best NCOs in the battalion," said Therrien, a native of Seminole, Okla. "Their drive and determination to complete any mission places them above all others. They make this company run."



Lance Cpl. Jordan Pettid, mortarman, Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, adjusts the sight on an M252 81mm mortar system during an operation in Helmand province, Afghanistan, July 19. During the two-day operation, Marines with Charley Co. watched over nearby routes close to Camp Dwyer and the surrounding area to help mitigate enemy insurgents smuggling small arms weapons and explosive material through the area.

Liberty Call



Combat Center Events

Sesame Street Tour

USO and the Sesame Street Workshop are bringing the Sesame Street/USO Experience for military families.
 When: Aug. 8, 2 p.m. & 6 p.m. and Aug. 9, 1p.m. & 5 p.m.
 Where: Sunset Cinema
 For more information, call 830-5086

Back to School Week

Back to school week offers a week of activities including the Education Fair, Pool Party, Fashion Show and Back to School Brigade.
 When: Aug. 12 to Aug. 15
 Where: Community Center
 For more information, call 830-5086

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Aug. 1

4 p.m. – Ironman, PG-13
 6:30 p.m. – The Fault in our Stars, PG-13
 9:30 p.m. – Tammy, R
 11:50 p.m. – Deliver us from Evil, R

Saturday, Aug. 2

10 a.m. – **Free Admission** Man of Steel, PG-13
 1p.m. – How to train your Dragon 2 3-D, PG
 3:30 p.m. – Jersey Boys, R
 6:30 p.m. – Think Like a Man Too, PG-13
 9:30 p.m. – Transformers: Age of Extinction 3-D, PG-13

Sunday, Aug. 3

12:30 p.m. – Earth to Echo, PG
 4 p.m. – **Sneak Preview** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 3-D, PG-13

Monday, Aug. 4

4 p.m. – The Fault in our Stars, PG-13
 7 p.m. – Deliver us from Evil, R

Tuesday, Aug. 5

4 p.m. – Earth to Echo, PG
 6:30 p.m. – Transformers: Age of Extinction 3-D, PG-13

Wednesday, Aug. 6

Preparation for the Leatherneck Comedy Tour

Thursday, Aug. 7

LEATHERNECK COMEDY TOUR



McCarthy is up for anything ... but is that a good thing?

NEIL POND
"Tammy"

Starring Melissa McCarthy & Susan Sarandon
 Directed by Ben Falcone
 R, 96 min.

Melissa McCarthy's breakout, in the raunchy hit 2011 comedy *Bridesmaids*, was an Oscar-nominated supporting role in which her character pooped in a bathroom sink.

As her star ascended, with Sandra Bullock in *The Heat* and Jason Bateman in *Identity Thief*, her humor didn't necessarily rise alongside it to a higher, classier level. Now, in her first bona fide star vehicle — which she co-wrote and produced and her husband, actor Ben Falcone, directed — she sticks with the type of character, for better but mostly for worse, her fans have come to recognize ... and expect.

We meet Tammy in the first scene driving her junk car, stuffing her face and jamming out to classic rock on the radio. She's a big, sloppy mess with a big heart — and big problems. Soon enough, she loses her job, finds her husband cheating with another woman, and sets off on a boozy cross-country road trip with her grandmother (Susan Sarandon) to see Niagara Falls.

It's all meant to be a custom-made template for the wide-open, plus-size shenanigans of the boldly physical McCarthy, who fearlessly charges and barges from one gag to the next. Tammy crashes a jet ski into a pier. Tammy brags about her irresistible sexual prowess — only to be flatly rebuffed by every guy she approaches in a bar. Tammy puts a greasy paper bag on her head to stick up a hamburger joint.

The story careens between crude, lewd slapstick, sentiment, and family woes so deep and dark

you'll have to remind yourself you're watching a comedy. The characters of Tammy and her grandmother are so poorly written, so badly formed, they seem to be different people at different times, sometimes during the same scene.

The supporting cast — Kathy Bates, Allison Janney, Toni Collette, Dan Aykroyd — loll about, pop in, pop out. But none of them are given anything of real significance to do, and I have to wonder what Kathy Bates was thinking as she delivered a ridiculous soliloquy to a piece of sporting equipment at a Viking funeral.

And, shades of *Thelma and Louise*, what is Susan Sarandon, wearing a grey wig that looks like it's on loan from the prop closet of TV's *Mama's Family*, doing here at all? She's a total pro, but she's barely 20 years older than McCarthy, and the movie wants us to believe she can be Tammy's grandmother? It's a colossal casting fail, and it further bungles this bumpy inter-generational road trip.

McCarthy and her director husband Falcone (who appears in an early scene as Tammy's boss) may enjoy working together, but it appears that what McCarthy really needs is someone who can funnel her comedic chops into something more focused and refined.

At one point, Tammy drives a car between two trees, where it gets stuck. But she keeps giving it the the gas, yelling, ripping off the rearview mirrors, denting the doors and the fenders, determined to get through — which she eventually does.

Like Tammy, McCarthy just keeps pressing, pushing, running, rolling, slamming and bashing — anything for a laugh, a chuckle, a giggle. Tammy may be one banged-up, scuffed-up, dented mess of a movie, but somehow, nonetheless, McCarthy makes it out, to the other side. To what, now, is the real question.

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