

LARGESCALE EXERCISE 14

1st MEB ready to kick off LSE-14

Cpl. Ricardo Hurtado
 Combat Correspondent

Marines with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Brigade are equipped and arranged to begin Large Scale Exercise 2014 aboard the Combat Center. LSE-14, which concludes today, is a bilateral training exercise conducted by 1st MEB to build U.S., British and Canadian forces' joint capabilities through live, simulated and constructive military training activities.

Brig. Gen. Carl E. Mundy III, the MEBs commanding general, leads the force. The MEB is designed to respond to crises around the world in the same manner as a Marine Expeditionary Unit or a Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force with further sustainability.

One of the MEB's capabilities is to provide boots on the ground within 24 to 72 hours including setting up a command and control post. Through LSE-14, 1st MEB looks to develop its command element's expeditionary capabilities.



CPL. RICARDO HURTADO

Lance Cpl. Jared Oden, left, from Pleasant Grove, Ala., and LCpl. Francisco Partida from Perris, Calif., both military policemen with 1st Law Enforcement Battalion, 1st Marine Expeditionary Brigade, post perimeter security during Large Scale Exercise 2014 in Camp Francis aboard the Combat Center, Aug. 5.

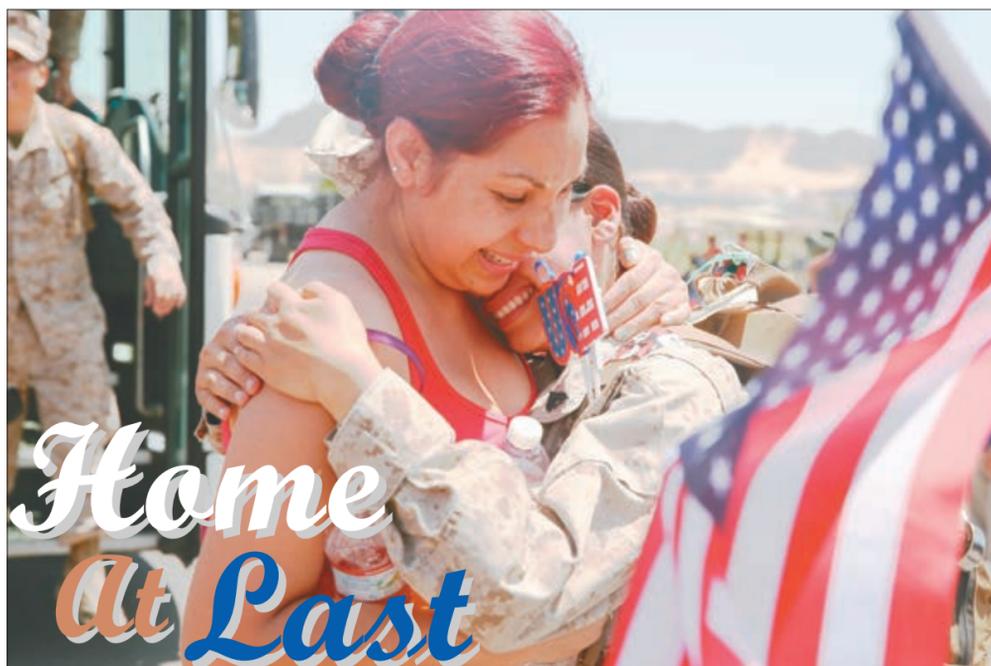
LSE-14 revolves around a notional scenario in which the fictitious land of Acadia, a U.S. ally, has been invaded by their neighbor to the north, Dakota, in what seems to be an aggressive step in a larger plot to seize control over a great swath of land currently governed by Fredonia, another fictional ally.

"We're in the fictitious land of Acadia which is represented by Southern California," said Lt. Col. Doug "Lucky" Luccio, G-3 current operations officer with 1st MEB. The Dakotians have moved into Acadia and have occupied the land, so we have to fight to push them out."

The exercise will serve as a way to experiment different fighting techniques at the command element level.

Luccio said the event takes Marines from the garrison environment and places them in a tactical setting. Once in the field, Marines are forced to run into the same type of logistical challenges they would face in a forward-deployed scenario,

See **LSE** page A6



Combat Logistics Battalion 7 returns to Combat Center

Cpl. Charles Santamaria
 Combat Correspondent

A crowd of families slowly gather at the edge of the parking lot as a white bus begins to come into view. Family members begin waving American flags and signs that read "Welcome Home" as the sound of the buses' breaks pumping begin an uproar of cheering from families eager to see their Marines. As the bus door opens, Marines who have returned from deployment rush to embrace their loved ones and the two groups merge into one.

The last group of Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 7 returned from Afghanistan after a seven-month deployment with a homecoming at Desert Winds Golf Course, Sunday. The Marines returning represented the final portion of Headquarters and Service Company.

"I'm excited to finally be back and it feels great to be home. I'm full of emotion," said Sgt. J.P. King, supply administration chief, CLB-7. "Yes we were the last group but it is what it is. Everyone that stayed back had a part to play and not everyone can leave at the same time because the mission still has to be completed."

CLB-7 worked mostly out of Camp Leatherneck and several other parts of Afghanistan to begin retrograding assets throughout the country by reorganizing to other bases.

The Family Readiness Officer played a key role in keeping family and loved ones informed of the unit's progress and activities during their deployment.

"I'm just so happy I can help the families in this way," said Keeter Moss, Family Readiness Officer, CLB-7. "Watching the families reunite at homecoming events is the best part of my job. Since this is the last group, a lot of the anticipation has built up and everyone is really excited."

The event featured music, free snacks and beverages, a bounce house, unit shirts, American flags and snow cones for family members as they waited for their loved ones to arrive from the armory.

"My kids are so excited to see their father come

See **CLB-7** page A6



PHOTOS BY CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIA

[Top] Caden Thomason, son of Cpl. Christopher Quatromani, motor transportation mechanic, Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, looks at Adam, a dog that was present for the Combat Logistics Battalion 7 homecoming at Desert Winds Golf Course, Sunday.

[Above] Cpl. Michael Mendez, data network specialist, picks up his nephew, Branden Mendez, 3, during the CLB-7 homecoming at Desert Winds Golf Course, Sunday. This homecoming celebrated the last group of CLB-7 Marines returning from Afghanistan.

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 II Marine Expeditionary Force



CPL. VICTOR A. ARRIAGA

Marines with Marine Wing Support Squadron 271 take cover behind a protective blanket during breach training at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point's demolition range, July 31, 2014. The Marines breached doors using various explosives such as oval charges and donut charges during the training.

Combat Center hosts Leatherneck Comedy Tour

Cpl. Alejandro Bedoya
 Combat Correspondent

"The Marine looked me straight in the eyes and said, I'll make sure you get home safe, don't worry sir," said Sam Fedele, comedian. "It really hit me at home. I was just doing a show for them in Iraq and he was protecting me from anything that might harm me. To think this is what they do every day is truly amazing. Performing and making them smile is the least I can do."

Combat Center Marines and sailors were invited to the Leatherneck Comedy Tour, a show sponsored by the Single Marine Program, at the base theater, Aug. 7.

"We truly appreciate what service members do for us and our country," said Lovetta Scipio, coordinator, SMP. "Everything taking place here today is for our heroes."

The service members were welcomed by coolers full of drinks and the smell of barbecue. A free meal was offered to all of the service members attending. After finishing their meals, the attendees entered

the theater and were greeted with music played by Disk Jockey Big Mike. During the performance Big Mike invited service members on stage to pass out t-shirts and dance to a variety of music ranging from country to techno. Once the music came to an end, the comedians were introduced.

The two comedians performing for the service members were Sam Fedele and Mark Viera. The laughs roared through the theatre as each comedian told their jokes and shared personal stories.

The comedic acts were followed by a "sing and dance" performance by the Purrfect Angelz. The Angelz danced to various genres of music and changed outfits to fit the songs' themes.

The last performance of the day was by Lit, an American alternative rock band. The attendees rushed to the front of the stage to dance and listen to the music.

After the performances were finished, the comedians, rock stars and dancers came to the

See **COMEDY** page A6



Reprinted from the Observation Post

Vol. 22, Issue 30 Aug. 13, 1978

GySgt Richard Leigh Ray

The Camp Commander is a lady!

In today's integrated Marine Corps, firsts for women are becoming increasingly rare. However, MCAGCTC has one to add to the list.

First Lieutenant Jean Milinovich is the Headquarters Company Camp Commander during the current Palm Tree 4-78 exercise. She is assigned to 7th Motor Transport Battalion, First Force Service Support Group, Camp Pendleton.

The lieutenant's command is responsible for the support of the First Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment while in the field for the exercise. This includes resupplying the men with transportation fuel and, in some cases, food.

Among Lt. Milinovich's Command of approximately 82, six are women Marines from Support and Maintenance Battalions, FSSG.

Prior to entering the Corps, Jean Milinovich instructed high school physical education classes for four years just outside her hometown, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. After that she went into business management and sales for a couple of years and then thought she'd like to move onto something else.

A talk with her younger sister, Anne, who had investigated all the services, persuaded her to see the local marine recruiter. She enlisted the next day.

"I never considered the other services when I decided to join. I have always felt that the Corps was physically and mentally the best. It also had to do a lot with my background in physical education," the lieutenant added.

The advance party arrived Feb. 17 and begun laying communication wire, putting up tents and building berms and, according to Lt. Milinovich,

"The women were right in there with the men, on top of the tents putting in electrical wire and generators and doing what Marines are supposed to be doing."

Women in the field have their own billeting area within the men's sector.

As for special security, there is none. Lt. Milinovich says, "The male Marines here feel that the women are carrying their own weight, but at the same time they look out for them and don't abuse the fact that the women are just that, women."

On occasion the women

have heard a wolf whistle or two, but when they've returned to "compliment," the men have retreated to safer ground.

Lt. Milinovich had quite a bit to say about women in the field. "The women have handled themselves well. They have not become overly concerned about snakes or spider, things that bother some males by the way. We don't want to be set apart from the men, whether in the field or at main side!"

"I've often been asked whether I'm a woman or a Marine first. I can't let my sex complicate or interfere in doing my job as a Marine, but I and other women Marines are just that, women," she added.

As for field duty, the lieutenant feels this is the true aspect of the corps and that it's "just great," she says.

"Main side duties have to be performed, but to me this is the closest thing to the real Marine Corps."

The corps is putting women in nearly every MOS but that of combat arms. And judging from the women here at MCAGCTC for Palm Tree 4-78, the Corps is moving in the right direction.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Melissa Moreira
Born June 5, 2014 at 8:34 a.m.
to Gabriel & Caroline Moreira

Avery Ann Richards
Born June 5, 2014 at 10:06 a.m.
to Justin & Rachel Richards

Ethan Andrew Larson
Born June 7, 2014 at 2:15 a.m.
to Eric & Brianna Larson

Avery Mandela Walker
Born June 9, 2014 at 8:23 a.m.
to Justin Walker & Allison Lee

Margaret Jolene Lemons
Born July 15, 2014 at 2:11 a.m.
to Brent Lemons and Meghan Willcox

Jax Ashton Freeland
Born July 18, 2014 at 2:43 a.m.
to Jordan and Tara Freeland

Quinn Rowan Lili Vokalani Enderton
Born July 18, 2014 at 6:03 p.m.
to Matthew & Stacy Enderton

Lily Grace Samaio Bauer
Born July 23, 2014 at 8:29 a.m.
to Kristopher Bauer & Lucianna SempioBaue

Jayden Lee Jones
Born July 24, 2014 at 8:59 a.m.
to Pernell and Kayla Jones

Mikaela Catalina Mele QuickReyes
Born July 24, 2014 at 7:15 p.m.
to Kimo & Michelle QuickReyes

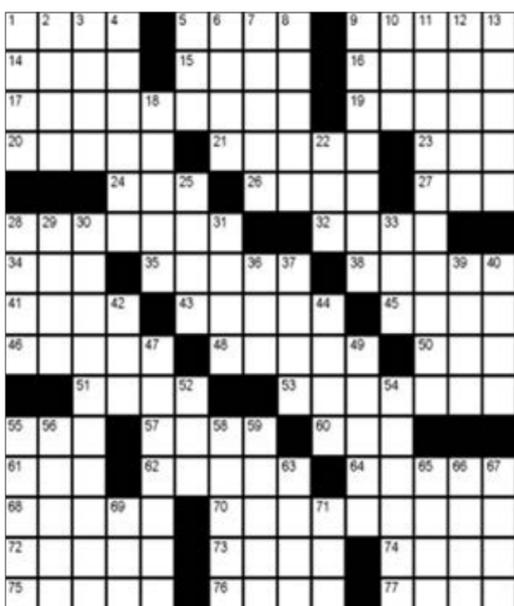
Darwin Emery Smith
Born July 26, 2014 at 11:59 a.m.
to Brian & Alesha Smith

Brynlee Loraine Bernard
Born July 26, 2014 at 3:32 p.m.
to Brandon & Kessa Bernard

"HOW ABOUT S'MORE?"

See answers on page A6

- Across**
- 1 Victorious statement
 - 5 Walked
 - 9 Walks into the water
 - 14 Try again
 - 15 Enjoy
 - 16 "Uncle!"
 - 17 Know who's ahead
 - 19 Funny O'Brien
 - 20 Bowling achievement
 - 21 Palin or Vaughan
 - 23 Put numbers together
 - 24 Pained cries
 - 26 Prefix with circle
 - 27 "For ___ A Jolly Good Fellow"
 - 28 Shakespeare play
 - 32 Affirmative statement
 - 34 Pie ___ mode
 - 35 "When it ___, it pours"
 - 38 Dull pains
 - 41 A lot
 - 43 Tire groove
 - 45 Days of ___
 - 46 South American mountain range
 - 48 ___ Allan Poe
 - 50 Will Smith's music
 - 51 Talks endlessly
 - 53 World's tallest mountain
 - 55 Talking-___ (admonishments)
 - 57 ___ bean
- Down**
- 1 Bothers
 - 2 Cry
 - 3 Conception
 - 4 "That's fine!"
 - 5 Kindness, in three letters
 - 6 Rivers: Sp.
 - 7 Southern vegetables
 - 8 John of tractor fame
 - 9 Kansas city
 - 10 "Many years ___"
 - 11 TV host who sang "See the U.S.A. in your Chevrolet!"



- 60 Flightless bird
- 61 Choose
- 62 Use one end of a pencil
- 64 "Wait ___ Dark"
- 68 Came up
- 70 Nighttime request
- 72 Bobby of "Mack the Knife"
- 73 "The King ___"
- 74 God of love
- 75 Gets rid of
- 76 Southwest geological feature
- 77 Monthly bill
- 12 Keep away from
- 13 Transmits
- 18 Waste tunnel
- 22 "Who ___ kidding?"
- 25 RBI or ERA
- 28 Papa's mate
- 29 Actor Alda
- 30 Place to buy bubblegum
- 31 Bring on board
- 33 Cold
- 36 Homer's neighbor
- 37 Wise person
- 39 Times of history
- 40 It's after Aug.
- 42 Vote in the Congress
- 44 Mr. Letterman
- 47 Bodily organs
- 49 Romulus's brother
- 52 58-Down counterpart
- 54 Jogger
- 55 Frog cousins
- 56 Ms. Winfrey
- 58 52-Down counterpart
- 59 In unison
- 63 Comes to a conclusion
- 65 Ripped
- 66 Pressing need?
- 67 "___ we forget"
- 69 Comic Caesar
- 71 ___ Maria

SUDOKU 3354 D



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



OBSERVATION POST

- Commanding General** - Maj. Gen. Lewis Craparotta
- Installation Sgt. Maj.** - Sgt. Maj. Karl Villalino
- Public Affairs Officer** - Capt. Justin Smith
- Public Affairs Chief** - Staff Sgt. Dorian Gardner
- Media Chief** - Cpl. Lauren A. Kurkimilis
- Layout/Design** - Cpl. Lauren A. Kurkimilis
- Press Chief** - Cpl. Charles J. Santamaria

The Observation Post is published by Hi-Desert Publishing, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of Defense or the United States Marine Corps, under exclusive written contract with the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. This commercial enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the military services. Contents of the Observation Post are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the United States government, the DOD, or the United States Marine Corps. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts and supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the DOD or Hi-Desert Publishing of the services advertised.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. Editorial content is prepared by the Public Affairs Office, MCAGCC, Twentynine Palms, Calif. 92278. All photos, unless otherwise indicated are Official USMC Photos. Questions can be directed to the Public Affairs Office, located in building 1417, during normal working hours at 830-6213 or FAX 830-5474. The Observation Post is made with 60 percent recycled paper.

OFF-LIMITS ESTABLISHMENTS

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

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

- 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.

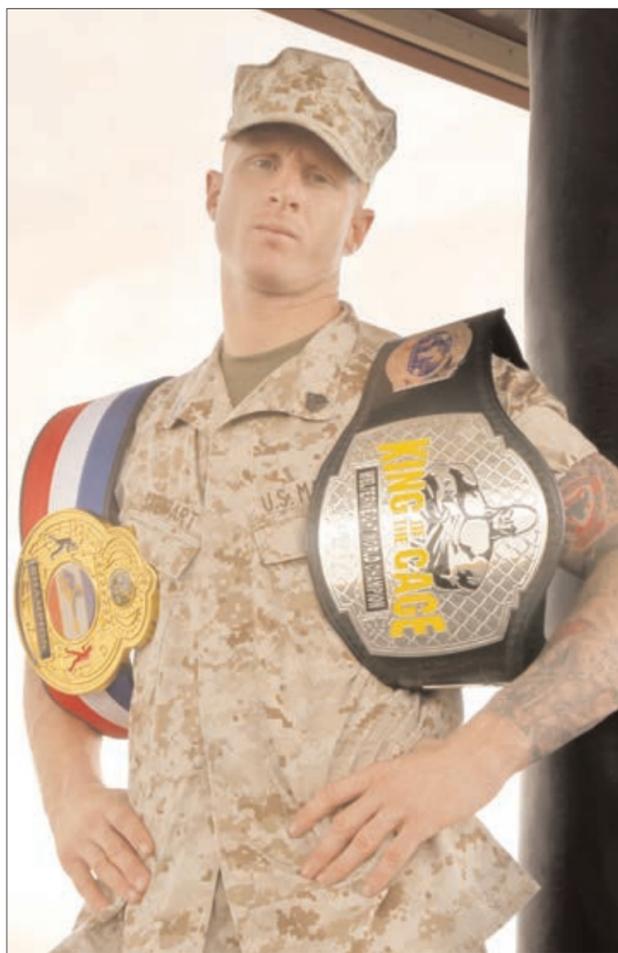
- In Twentynine Palms:**
 - Adobe Smoke Shop, 6441 Adobe Rd.
 - STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Rd.
 - K Smoke Shop, 5865A Adobe Rd.
- In Yucca Valley:**
 - Yucca Tobacco Mart, 57602 29 Palms Hwy.
 - Puff's Tobacco Mart, 57063 29 Palms Hwy.
- In Palm Springs:**
 - Village Pub, 266 S. Palm Canyon Dr.
 - Whispering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

Kyle STEWART

Gilbert, Ariz. machine gunner, 7th Marine Regiment, 25



> **Everything for me** has been a gradual stepping stone; I didn't jump straight into the cage and begin with mixed martial arts. If I did that I would have lost a lot, but it was easy for me to transition with all the grappling experience I began getting from tournaments and training.

> **I'm preferably a striker;** I did karate as a kid for 13 years and then went into boxing and kickboxing from there, leading up to submission wrestling before I joined the Marine Corps.

> **I grew up training as** a striker and I was good at it, so I thought I would do well in MMA. Once I began grappling with other fighters and losing in the ground game, I told myself, 'Wow, if I don't learn to grapple, people are going to take me to the ground and choke me out.'

> **I joined the fight club** on base back in 2010 and that's where I began to improve and learn more about grappling, jiu jitsu and overall ground game. I started participating in grappling tournaments with Fight Club 29. From there, we did pankration tournaments which are amateur MMA with no strikes allowed to the head and I went on to win the 2012 All Armed Forces Pankration Championship at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

> **I went into MMA with my first 'Smoker'** which is an MMA fight that doesn't count toward your record. I knocked the kid out with a leg strike to the head and that was the moment I realized I can do pretty good at this.

> **From that point I began** [competing in] actual MMA fights and entered King of the Cage where I'm 7-1 and currently the amateur welter-weight champion.

> **Growing up, my karate instructor taught me** a lot about hard work and competing through pushing me. It kind of planted that seed to keep training and become better at fighting.

> **Since joining Fight Club 29** in 2010, I have begun taking on more of a leadership role in the club. When I first went to the fight club, one of the first things I noticed were all the skilled and athletic fighters on the team. The Marine Corps has many athletes, on our team we had college or high school wrestlers, boxers, or Marines from the athletic Marine Corps-wide teams.

> **When we train we take things from** each other and learn together by suggesting moves or techniques from all the fighting styles on the team. I took a little bit from all of them and now I can pass all that knowledge on.

> **I'm excited for the future;** I also hope to make a trip to Thailand to train with kickboxers who have been doing it their whole lives.

> **Everyone wants to jump** right into the cage and start fighting but that's one of the worst things you can do.

> **For a Marine who wants to begin** an MMA career as they transition out of the military I would say take it slow and don't be in a rush to do your first fight. There are fighters out there who just eat, sleep and train, Marines don't have that luxury. Learn each component and work up the ladder until you're ready.

Story and photo by Cpl. Charles Santamaria, Aug. 12, 2014.

LIVE AT THE ROCK
FREE CONCERT
TONIGHT!
FRIDAY, AUGUST 15TH
8:30PM
SUMMER CONCERT SERIES
JUST DAVE BAND

TOMORROW!
SATURDAY, AUGUST 16TH
\$1,000 GRAND PRIZE
9pm
HOURLY DRAWINGS
5pm - 8pm
PLAY WITH YOUR CLUB 29 CARD IN TO WIN

CASH BONANZA

TAKE IT to the STREET 2
SUNDAY, AUGUST 31ST at 8pm
WIN A KAWASAKI NINJA 300
HOURLY DRAWINGS
4pm - 7pm
★ SEE CLUB 29 FOR YOUR FREE DAILY DRAWING TICKET! ★

TortoiseRockCasino.com
73829 Baseline Road, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277
Management reserves the right to alter or cancel a promotion at any time. Some restrictions may apply. See Club 29 for details. Must be 18+.

TORTOISE ROCK CASINO
It's all right here.

STORAGE

State of the Art Security Control with Full Time Resident Managers, Household Storage, RV, Boat & Auto

SPECIAL MILITARY PRICING ON ALL UNITS!

• Ground Level Units • Controlled Gate Access
• Large Moving Truck Friendly • Month-to-Month Rentals

760 **367-2510**
5020 Adobe Rd • 29 Palms

AA BUNKER STORAGE

InSight Nutrition & Fitness

TAKE YOUR BODY TO THE NEXT LEVEL!

10% OFF Supplements

Personal Training
Build Muscle
Weight Loss

Nutritional Sports Supplements
Muscle Tech • Muscle Pharm
Cellucor • Optimum Nutrition
Muscle Sport International
and many more
*Only authorized dealer in the high desert.

58132 29 Palms Hwy Unit C Yuca Valley CA
MON-FRI 11AM-7PM • SAT 11AM-5PM

760 266-5100

Sponsored by **Spirit & Truth**

Back to School Giveaway

Backpacks & School Supplies (K-12) will be at the following locations on August 16th from 8 - 10 am

- El Paseo Apartments 72952 El Paseo Dr
- Hacienda Mobile Home Park 4561 Adobe Rd.
- Twentynine Palms Apartments 5862 Bagley Ave
- Adobe Villas 73747 Raymond Way
- Spirit & Truth Worship Center Church (Clothing @ this site) 4751 Adobe Rd

For more info - Call or Text 760.361.2450
Twentynine Palms www.STWOnline.org

LARGESCALE EXERCISE 14



CPL COREY DABNEY

Navy Lt. Jeoff Dick, representing the future operations and training officer of Expeditionary Strike Group 3, and Navy Lt. Patrick Grumley, naval gunfire liaison officer with I Marine Expeditionary Brigade, practice coordinating fire missions during Large Scale Exercise 2014, Sunday. LSE-14 is a bilateral training exercise being conducted by 1st MEB to build U.S. and Canadian forces' joint capabilities through live, simulated and constructive military training activities. The exercise also promotes interoperability and cooperation between joint, coalition and U.S. Marine Forces, providing the opportunity to exchange knowledge and learn from each other, establish personal and professional relationships and hone individual and small-unit skills through challenging, complex and realistic live scenarios with special focus on building combat power ashore.

Marines, sailors project sea power ashore at LSE-14

Story by: Cpl. Corey Dabney

Marine Corps and Navy personnel have worked side-by-side since the inception of the Marine Corps. So, it's a common sight to see Marines and sailors working closely together. What isn't a common sight is to see a Marine Expeditionary Brigade and sailors from an Expeditionary Strike Group working alongside one another ashore.

Such a sight can be witnessed here, as Marines with 1st Marine Expeditionary Brigade and Sailors with Expeditionary Strike Group 3 work together to complete Large Scale Exercise 2014.

An Expeditionary Strike Group combines

cial focus on building combat power ashore.

The Marine Corps and Navy are teaming up to get back to those amphibious roots, said Lt. Cmdr. Jonathan Long, the acting fires officer representing ESG 3 here. If the MEB deploys to respond to a crisis anywhere around the world it may need an ESG to help transport it in a timely manner.

"Let's say a natural disaster occurred, and sending a Marine Expeditionary Unit doesn't have the capabilities or man power to effectively improve and sustain the situation — then the Marines will send a MEB which brings a larger range of capabilities," said Long. "When the MEB is sent it needs an equivalent amount of naval force to transport them to the location."

The Marines and the Navy then team up to

That's what makes the Marine Corps and the Navy such a dynamic force, because we have the capabilities to get anywhere in the world in such a short amount of time."

-Lt. Cmdr. Jonathan Long

the surface, submarine, and patrol capabilities of a Naval Amphibious Ready Group with the combat power of a Marine Air Ground Task Force scalable to a particular contingency.

LSE-14 is a bilateral training exercise being conducted by 1st MEB to build MAGTF and Canadian forces' joint capabilities through live, simulated, and constructive military training activities.

The exercise also promotes interoperability and cooperation between joint, international, and U.S. Marine Forces, providing the opportunity to exchange knowledge and learn from each other, establish personal and professional relationships and hone individual and small-unit skills through challenging, complex and realistic live scenarios with spe-

ensure they have the most capable force on the ground within a 72-hour window, said Lt. Jeoff Dick, the future operations and training officer representing ESG 3 here.

"That's what makes the Marine Corps and the Navy such a dynamic force, because we have the capabilities to get anywhere in the world in such a short amount of time," added Long. "We are also battlefield changers because we bring that tenacity to the fight."

With the war in Afghanistan dwindling, the Marines Corps and the Navy have begun to cater their training toward conventional warfare and humanitarian response. By working together throughout LSE-14, the duo can learn from one another and continue the Navy-Marine Corps team's legacy of being the most ready force in the world.



At Azusa Pacific, we're committed to serving military members, veterans, and their families.

If you're seeking a top-ranked local university that goes the extra mile for our nation's military heroes, look no further. Azusa Pacific University has been named a Military Friendly School by *G.I. Jobs* magazine, placing it among the top 15 percent of schools in the country helping military students reach their educational dreams.

Programs

APU offers master's degrees, credentials, and bachelor's degree completion programs in:

- Business
- Education
- Leadership
- Nursing
- Psychology
- Theology

Locations

Our seven Southern California locations and online programs provide convenience and flexibility, so you can earn your degree when and how you want.

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| Azusa | Murrieta |
| High Desert | Orange County |
| Inland Empire | San Diego |
| Los Angeles | Online |

Azusa Pacific is a Yellow Ribbon University and a Servicemembers Opportunity College.



CONTACT US TODAY!
 Tammy Olivic
 Director of Military and Veterans Outreach
 (626) 815-4631 • toluvic@apu.edu
 apu.edu/military



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

Morongo Unified School District Homeschooling and Independent Study Program



I

ndividualized
 Lessons and pacing for each student

C

ommitted
 To academic progress and success

E

ducation
 That is relevant and comprehensive

ICE currently has openings for grades 1 – 12 families who wish to pursue a home-based education and be able to participate in their neighborhood school sports teams, clubs and social events. ICE provides text books, teacher support and tutoring at no cost.
ICE-EAST 760.367.3709 ICE-WEST 760.228.2261
 Proudly serving 29 Palms, Joshua Tree, Yucca Valley, Morongo Valley, Landers

"Parted, but never apart."
You wear one half - She wears the other.

Forever As ONE

ONLY at Harris!
 Sterling Silver and 10K Yellow Gold with a Genuine Diamond and Sapphire.
ONLY \$31 per payday*
 Retail \$699

HARRIS JEWELRY.com

*Estimated payment shown is based on 18 month terms and includes an optional Lifetime Warranty as well as estimated finance charges, taxes and shipping. Actual payment may be higher or lower. \$50 minimum monthly payment required to open an account. Please call 1-800-539-3575, visit www.harrisjewelry.com or a store near you for complete details. ALL CREDIT SALES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL. www.harrisjewelry.com



Topeka Marine aids in construction of LSE-14

Story and photos by:
Lance Cpl. Angel Serna

On a hot day in the Mojave Desert, many service members participating in Large Scale Exercise 2014 prepare for the day to end, but one Marine decides it's the perfect weather to bring out his tools and some spare wood to create something from scraps of nothing.

Cpl. Tanner Lechner, a combat engineer with Combat Service Support Company, 1st Brigade Headquarters Group, 1st Marine Expeditionary Brigade, said he enjoys his time out in the field regardless of the weather because he gets to practice and improve his construction and creativity skills.

Before the Marine Corps, Lechner lived in Topeka, Kan., up to his early adulthood. Lechner said after high school, he wanted to take charge of his life and do something he enjoys.

His life-changing decision was inspired by his grandfather, who retired as a captain in the Marine Corps, Lechner said. His grandfather would tell him stories of his career. Those stories motivated him to the point where he decided to join the Marine Corps in 2011.

"I picked combat engineer as my Military Occupational Specialty when I joined," said Lechner. "It wasn't my first choice, but I couldn't do reconnaissance because I was color blind. My recruiter mentioned to me, 'As a combat engineer, you'll get to build things and blow stuff up,' so I said, 'Yeah! Put me there.'"

After graduating recruit training and MOS school, Lechner moved on to the Fleet Marine Force which

gave him the opportunity to deploy and perform his job.

"We made what we would call a 'triple nickel forty' out of cratering charges on a partially dry lake bed in the Philippines," Lechner said. "When this thing went off, it made this massive crater and all of the water that was underground came rushing in. It instantly filled with water and we were like, 'Hey, we made a big pond.'"

After realizing how much he enjoyed his job, Lechner said that one of his best decisions was joining the Marine Corps.

"My job is the best job in the Marine Corps," said Lechner. "Whether the ground needs to be blown to bits, a house needs to be repaired, or a simple plaque needs to be created, I could do it all."

Lechner added people often question their decision to enlist, but he said he was glad he joined because it helped him mature. That alone gave him an advantage over a lot of people he knows. It also gave him one of the strongest families that he'll ever have.

"Lechner is a good guy," said Quentin Sanders, also a combat engineer with 1st MEB. "We're like brothers because I've been with him since day one. That guy is a hard worker and he takes a lot of initiative."

The exercise is a tool used to build U.S. and Canadian forces' joint capabilities through live, simulated and constructive military training activities, which was held Aug. 8 and concluded today aboard the Combat Center.

Lechner said he supports the MEB by building things that aid with the setup of the camp. Now at three years into his contract, Lechner is participating in

LSE-14, a bilateral training exercise being conducted by 1st MEB.

"Pretty much anything wooden you see out here, we made it," said Lechner. "We made the billboards in the command operations center, the benches and tables in the shower rooms and the little tables next to the [restrooms] that hold hand sanitizer. We build those things that help you out, and it's hardly noticeable, but it's those little things that count."

Lechner said he enjoys the work he is tasked with during the exercise because it allows more room for creativity and it's different than a typical work day on Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

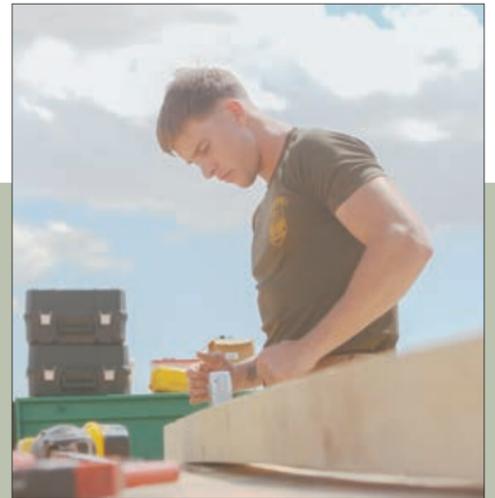
"Building things during LSE-14 can be fun," said Lechner. "It's also good practice for when I get out of the Marines."

Lechner said he plans on making a career out of construction after his enlistment because he likes his job so much.

"After I get out of the Marine Corps, I'm going to start some college classes and join an apprenticeship program," said Lechner. "I want to become a journeyman and then work my way to the top from there."

Lechner said he wants to own his own construction company to buy and rebuild older houses. After the restoration process, he said he hopes he can rent his homes out to eventually live off that money and retire at an early age.

Lechner said he will continue doing what he loves, whether building benches and tables at Marine Corps exercises, or rebuilding homes and easing into retirement. Either way, he said he is grateful to have honed his craft in service to his country.



Corporal Tanner Lechner, combat engineer, Combat Service Support Company, 1st Brigade Headquarters Group, 1st Marine Expeditionary Brigade, prepares his work station to create a "gear tree" during Large Scale Exercise -14 aboard the Combat Center, Aug. 4. A gear tree is made for storing body armor and a Kevlar helmet.



Families flourish here.

Young families. Growing families. Extended families. Outdoorsy families. Busy families. Fun-loving families.

Why? Because Sundance offers so much — a central location close to shopping, recreation, and great schools, wonderful parks, convenient access to mountains and desert, and three new neighborhoods with some of the most ingenious floorplans around. It's the perfect support system for modern-day life.

Maybe that's why so many kinds of families are happy to call Sundance home.



SUNDANCE



LivingSmart Homes®
Estrella
3 to 4 Bedrooms
2.5 to 3 Baths
1,630 - 1,919 sq ft
From the low \$200s



LivingSmart Homes®
Sundance
3 to 7 Bedrooms
2 to 4 Baths
1,900 - 3,099 sq ft
From the mid \$200s



Woodmont
3 to 6 Bedrooms
3 to 3.5 Baths
GenSmart Suites
2,385 - 3,681 sq ft
From the \$300s



To learn more, call our
New Home Specialist at
951.264.0127 or visit
PardeeHomes.com

Masterfully Planned by

PardeeHomes®



All square footage is approximate; pricing subject to change. Models do not reflect racial preference. Information is accurate as of the date of the publication. Not all features are available in all homes. Map not to scale. CA Contractor's License #251810.



We're on **facebook**

more than 34,000 likes



Join the online community

Visit us at www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter

It's that time again!

Reader's choice awards presented by Hi-Desert Publishing Co., to recognize the Basin's BEST businesses, restaurants & services.

YOU, our readers will choose your FAVORITES!

New this year!
Vote for your favorites and be entered to win a **\$50 gift card!**

Only ballots with 20 or more categories voted for will be entered.

VOTE HERE! for your favorites

BEST of the BEST in the Basin Categories! clip  here



1. BEST Art Gallery or Framing Shop	19. BEST Entertainment Venue	37. BEST Place to See a Movie
2. BEST Auto Retailer	20. BEST Financial Services, Taxes, and/or Bookkeeping	38. BEST Place to Stay
3. BEST Auto Services	21. BEST Fitness Center	39. BEST Psychological Service/Therapist
4. BEST Barber	22. BEST Florist	40. BEST Print News Source
5. BEST Beauty Salon	23. BEST Hearing Aid Office	41. BEST Radio Station
6. BEST Business Providing Building Improvements & Repairs	24. BEST Insurance Office	42. BEST Local Real Estate Office
7. BEST Catering Company	25. BEST Landscaper	43. BEST Recreation or Sporting Goods Store
8. BEST Chiropractic Office	26. BEST Legal Services	44. BEST Large Retail Store
9. BEST Cleaning Service	27. BEST Local Non-profit/Service Organization	45. BEST Small Local Retail Store
10. BEST Contractor	28. BEST New Business (Open 6 Months Or Less)	46. BEST Senior Care Facility
11. BEST Copy and Print Shop	29. BEST Optometrist Office	47. BEST Tattoo Shop
12. BEST Cultural Attraction	30. BEST Pest Control Service	48. BEST Tire Services/Sales
13. BEST Cup Of Coffee	31. BEST Pet Service (Non Medical)	49. BEST Veterinarian
14. BEST Daycare/Preschool	32. BEST Pharmacy	50. BEST Web Design
15. BEST Dentist Office	33. BEST Photographer	51. BEST Yard Clean Up & Hauling
16. BEST Doctor's Office	34. BEST Place to Buy Groceries	52. Write In Nomination
17. BEST Dry Cleaner and/or Alterations	35. BEST Place To Drink	
18. BEST Electronic News Source	36. BEST Place to Eat	

Voting thru 8/25/14
Only one ballot per person, bring or mail original paper ballots (no copies please) or go online to **hidesertstar.com** or **deserttrail.com** to place your votes!

Please submit newspaper ballots or go online. Must vote in a least 20 categories to qualify for gift card. One vote per person. No copies accepted.

Hi-Desert Publishing Co.
(760) 365-3315 or (760) 367-3577
People you know, news you can trust
www.hidesertstar.com • www.deserttrail.com

Ballot submitted by: _____
Please note: Contact information required to be entered into participant prize drawing. Participant must vote in a minimum of 20 categories for the ballot to be counted. **Businesses for consideration must be in operation for a minimum of 6 months.**
Name: _____
City/State: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Yes, I would like to receive future email notifications of special advertising offers and upcoming events.



LSE, from A1

having to overcome them while accomplishing the mission.

The exercise will also sharpen the MEB's effectiveness when coordinating strategies in a joint environment.

"We expect that the exercise will challenge us to deal with things such as displaced personnel, the management of logistics, coordination of fire support, and cross-boundary coordination with adjacent units," said Luccio. "We have the 5th Canadian Mechanized Brigade out here, which is our adjacent organization."

A MEB is a force scalable to a particular mission, and can include vast numbers of Marines working in tandem under a single commander toward a common goal. To save time, manpower and money, 1st MEB will simulate some of the scenarios encountered during LSE-14.

"There are about 4,000 people participating in this exercise. If you look at the big picture, in order to deploy the entire MEB you're looking at closer to 20,000 people total," said Luccio. "You're saving the manpower of about 16,000 people to do this exercise by simulating some of the training."

1st MEB will employ a convoy simulator constituted by five Humvees and a logistics truck, each represented by a room with a Marine in it, and the

computer-based simulation replicates the sights and sounds of a real convoy while providing tactile feedback to the operator. That simulated convoy—and every other simulated aspect of the exercise, from close air support to enemy actions—will be reflected in the real-time data fed to the MEB Combat Operations Center.

"We'll have aviators get in a flight simulator; they will fly a mission we've tasked them, look for the enemy, engage the enemy, provide reconnaissance and give us some feedback on what they see," said Luccio. "Everything the pilots see in the flight simulator, whatever the logistics guys see in the convoy simulator will all get fed into the operations center."

Luccio added that even though parts of the exercise will be simulated, thanks to the technological capabilities of 1st MEB, it will feel real to the command element at all times.

"The primary training during LSE-14 is for the command element of the 1st MEB," said Luccio.

1st MEB will continue to stand ready for future operations around the globe, preparing for future exercises in support of the I Marine Expeditionary Force and maintaining the high levels of proficiency and standards that makes the Marine Corps America's force in readiness.

CLB-7, from A1

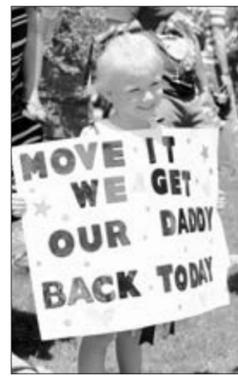
home," said Michele Godfrey, wife of Maj. Jerry Godfrey, operations officer, CLB-7. "Keeping track of what the unit was doing was awesome because the kids and I were able to track where their father was going."

CLB-7 changed over with CLB-1, Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton during their deployment to continue the process of retrograding Marine Corps assets in several regions. Deployments bring military families together through a shared experience of having loved ones away for months at a time.

"The parents of this deployment have come together and formed this real tight-knit community," Moss Said. "I keep in contact with these families throughout the deployment and it's on this day that I finally get to meet them and put a face to the name. I feel so fortunate and blessed to have this job especially when Marines come home."



PHOTOS BY CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIA



[Above] Master Sgt. Jose L. Valentine, senior enlisted advisor, Marine Corps Tactics Operations Group, helps Caden Thomason, son of Cpl. Christopher Quatomani, motor transportation mechanic, Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, put American flags in the ground during the Combat Logistics Battalion 7 homecoming at Desert Winds Golf Course, Sunday.

[Left] Autumn Burrell, 4, daughter of Staff Sgt. Nathan Burrell, operations chief, CLB-7, holds a sign for her father to see during the CLB-7 homecoming at Desert Winds Golf Course, Sunday. This homecoming was for the last group of CLB-7 Marines returning from Afghanistan.



CPL. RICARDO HURTADO

Lance Cpl. Jevon Hudson, left, from Chicago, Ill., and Jose A. Jimenez, from Sherrill, N.Y., both digital multi-channel wideband transmission equipment operators with 9th Communication Battalion, Brigade Headquarters Group, 1st Marine Expeditionary Brigade, raise an AN/MRC-142c digital wideband transmission system 50-foot antenna, which is used to transmit data, during Large Scale Exercise 2014 aboard Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., Aug. 5. LSE-14 is a bilateral training exercise being conducted by 1st MEB to build U.S. and Canadian forces' joint capabilities through live, simulated, and constructive military training activities from Aug. 8-14.

COMEDY, from A1

seating area to meet the service members attending. The performers also offered to take photos and sign autographs for anyone who was interested.

"Coming out here and meeting these service members is awesome,"

said Kevin Baldes, bass player, Lit. "I think it is crazy because we come out here and all they do is thank us but that's what we are trying to do to them. We are trying to thank them for everything they do. This is our way of trying to give back and say thank you for fighting for our great country."



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



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

If you are active duty, retired military or a family member you can place a FREE ad in our Combat Center Trader Ads
See page A7 for details and limitations

JOIN US IN WORSHIP MORONGO BASIN

<p>The EPISCOPAL CHURCH WELCOMES YOU</p> <p>Joseph A. In thea 563120 naga uccalaly 7603657133 exjunc@aol.com</p> <p>Jane L. Crase, Vicar Holy Eucharist Sunday 10:00 a.m. Bible Study Friday 10:00 a.m. Mutual Ministry 3rd Fri of the month 9:00 a.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">THIS WEEK'S SPOTLIGHT CHURCH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"find hope in Jesus"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">firstsouthern Baptist Church of Yucca Valley</p> <p>Sun. 9:15 AM Life Groups Sun. 10:30 AM Worship Wed. 6:00 PM Bible Study</p> <p style="text-align: center;">56374 Onaga Trail in Yucca Valley (760) 365-5771 www.fsbov.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PASSIONATE, PROGRESSIVE, CHRISTIANITY.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY - WEEKLY SERVICES AT 10:00 ON SUNDAY, BIBLE STUDY AND SOCIAL EVENTS WEEKLY. 30250 CANDLEWOOD DRIVE, CATHLAMET CITY, CA 92324</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MCCCV.NET 760 512 1700</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DESERT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday 10:00 A.M. - Worship Sunday School Child Care</p> <p style="text-align: center;">29 Palms • 5688 Sunrise Drive 760-361-0086 www.desertcongregationalchurch.org</p>
<p>To All Christians Concerned</p> <p>I know this is a tall order, but is anyone looking for casual fellowship over coffee who is a 5-point Calvinist? Amillennial? Doesn't believe in literal Sabbath-keeping, mandatory tithing, paedobaptism, or the health/wealth gospel? Believes Mat. 24 is fulfilled? Believes we are not the Romans 7 man or part old man and part new man? If so, call me at 760-365-6901.</p>	<p>Truth Tabernacle Apostolic Church 73493 29 Palms Hwy., Twentynine Palms</p> <p>Pastor Titus R. Burns Sunday Service 10:00 AM Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00 PM Call 760-367-4185 for more information</p> <p><small>"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38</small></p>	<p><i>"The will of God will never take you where the grace of God will not protect you."</i></p>	
<p>St. Martin-In-The-Fields EPISCOPAL CHURCH</p> <p>Sunday School & Eucharist 10:00 am Sunday Gospel Meditation 9:00 am Weds. Morning Prayer 7:30 am</p> <p>"Celebrating God's love for all God's Children" 72348 Larrea Road (2 blocks N. of KFC) www.stmartinchurch29.org (760) 367-7133</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"find hope in Jesus"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">firstsouthern Baptist Church of Yucca Valley</p> <p>Sun. 9:15 AM Life Groups Sun. 10:30 AM Worship Wed. 6:00 PM Bible Study</p> <p style="text-align: center;">56374 Onaga Trail in Yucca Valley (760) 365-5771 www.fsbov.org</p>	<p>Yucca Valley Center for Spiritual Living</p> <p>Healing Lives & Building Dreams Reverend Ron Scott Sunday Celebration 10 AM 7434 Bannock Trail, Yucca Valley 760-365-2205 yvcsl.org</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Desert Hills</i></p> <p>Presbyterian Church Sunday Service 10:00 a.m. Sunday School & Child Care 56750 Mountain View Trail Yucca Valley (760) 365-6331</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WORSHIP SERVICE 9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL/BIBLE CLASS 10:30 AM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Living Under the Son"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">59077 Yucca Trail, Yucca Valley CHURCH: 365-2548 Preschool & Daycare: 369-9590</p>	<p>First Assembly of God</p> <p>73331 Sullivan Rd • 29 Palms (760) 367-9973 Sunday 10:30am</p> <p>Child care for all services Super Kids Program www.29palmsag.org</p>	

TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM
by Lou Gerhardt



When I taught a positive living seminar at the federal prison in Atlanta, Georgia, I told the "lifers" and others that if they were ever released they were welcome to come to wherever I was and I would help them get jobs, etc. Three came to see me and I not only helped all three but one is a popular radio personality in the Detroit area today.

When I taught my seminar in the federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana, I told the prisoners the same thing and I was able to help several men who had served long prison sentences.

Warden Clinton Duffy of San Quentin fame was once asked by Joe Pyne, a West Coast radio personality, why he wasted his time with convicts. Pyne told Duffy that a "leopard never changes his spots." Duffy replied "I don't work with animals, I work with men. Men change every day."

When Warden Duffy died we had a memorial service at our church in Fresno to celebrate his good life. He was a tough minded optimist who never stopped believing in the potential of men and women regardless of how far they had fallen below the expectations of society.

Now it is election time in the Morongo Basin and it troubles me a great deal that some people find it necessary to bring up the past mistakes of candidates even when the candidates have paid in full for any crimes they committed.

And I don't care what kind of crime you are thinking about. There is no crime beyond forgiveness and the possibility of a fantastic and wonderful change in a person.

This column sponsored by:

George Lunczak
Joshua Tree

Mike Lipsitz
Landers

Dr. Lou can be reached at 760-367-4627
800-995-1620
es19m xc@verizon.net

WeekINPhotos

MCBH change of command

U.S. Marine Corps Col. Brian P. Annichiarico (right) passes the Marine Corps Base Hawaii unit colors to Col. Eric E. Schaefer (left) symbolizing the passing of command during the MCBH change of command ceremony at hangar 101 aboard MCAS Kaneohe Bay, Wednesday.

Photo by: Lance Cpl. Aaron S. Patterson



PALM SPRINGS AERIAL Tramway

DINING AT 8,500 ft. | HIKING | FAMILY FUN | pstramway.com | 760-325-1391

Cinema 6
 Showtimes Effective 8/15/14 - 8/21/14

Expendables 3 (PG13) 1:30 6:00 9:00
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (PG13) 2D 1:30 6:30 9:00 3D 4:00
Into The Storm (PG13) 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00
Guardians Of The Galaxy (PG13) 2D 1:30 6:00 3D 9:00

1 (760) 365-9633
www.cinema6theatre.com

VIP
 (Very Important Planet)
SMOG & ELECTRIC

7304 Pioneertown Rd.
 Yucca Valley, CA 92284 (760) 365-0933

Get Your Car Road Ready

Serving the Morongo Basin since 1985

**TIRES • WHEEL REPAIR
 COMPUTER BALANCING**

"We promise fast courteous service at the lowest cost possible"

760-228-2084
 1 (866) FRED'S TIRE

55666 Yucca Trail • YUCCA VALLEY
www.fredstireyv.com
 M-F 8am - 4pm • Sat 8am - 12pm

Your One Stop Shop For Complete Auto Repair

LIBERTY AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR
760-363-6900
 49813 29 Palms Hwy.
 Morongo Valley

The Only Car We Can't Diagnose Is The One They Haven't Built Yet!

Alternator - Starter & Battery Check with Printout *All For \$8.99*

ASE Certification • Propane Fill & Exchange
 Tires - New & Used

Open Tues - Sat 7am to 5:30pm
 Closed Sun & Mon

COMPLETE RV REPAIR

To advertise here, call your rep today!

The Desert Trail
 760-367-3577
www.deserttrail.com

Hi-Desert Star
 760-365-3315
www.hidesertstar.com

LEO'S AUTO REPAIR & SMOG
 Foreign and Domestic
760-363-6184
 49927-9 29 Palms Hwy, Morongo Valley 92256
 Hours: Mon-Fri. 8am-5:30pm • Sat. 8am-4pm

Tune-up • Oil Change • Brakes
 Transmission • Clutch • Tires

TIME TO GET YOUR CAR SUMMERIZED!! CALL TODAY!

SMOG SPECIAL Sm ogC check \$31.75 +Certificate • On Most Cars Must Present Coupon - Expires 9/10/14	BRAKE SPECIAL \$49.00 Most Cars +Parts Front or Rear Must Present Coupon - Expires 9/10/14
---	--

Blue Star
 YOUR LITTLE COUNTRY DEALERSHIP ON THE HILLS!

www.bluestarrvs.com

- Easy Financing available
- We Buy RV's
- Consignments wanted
- RV's, Motor Homes, Class C

2015 Pacific Coachworks RAGEN 19EX **\$18,271!**

55133 29 Palms Hwy.
 Yucca Valley, CA 92284

Hours
 Mon thru Sat 9 am-5 pm
 Sunday 12 pm-5
 Closed Tuesday

Office: 760-365-0777
 Cell: 909-709-8528



Sesame Street & USO

reach out to military children

Story & photos by Cpl. Lauren A. Kurkimilis



Combat Center children gather at the Sunset Cinema, Saturday, during the Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families. The tour visits Department of Defense installations worldwide in effort to reach out to military families.

As the red curtain at the Combat Center's Sunset Cinema was drawn, the spotlights illuminated iconic American celebrities, known worldwide for positively impacting the lives of children for more than 45 years. The theatre was filled with Marines, sailors, spouses and their children, who were there not just to enjoy an afternoon of entertainment, but to better understand the story of the military child through song, dance and Jim Henson's brightly colored Muppets. The Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families performed one of four shows for the Combat Center, Saturday.

"Today we had a free show for military families," said Nicole McClendon, Tour Manager, Sesame Street/USO Experience for

families in that they are always moving and it's the children (who) take the brunt of it sometimes," said Teresa Cherry, Center Manager, Bob Hope USO Palm Springs. "It can be very difficult because they are the new kid in school and it can be hard to make new friends. (The character) Katie helps the military child because they can relate to her."

Sesame Street and the USO have collaborated on projects like this for many years and progressively tailored their mission to meet the needs of their military fan base. They began with a project called, "Talk, Listen and Connect," a DVD series for military families, which originated from Sesame Street's Military Families Initiative. In 2008, they partnered with VEE Corp., responsible for arena tours like Sesame Street Live, and they creat-

"This show lets military children know that the USO and Sesame Street are here for them and we understand that they make great sacrifices."

-Nicole McClendon

Military Families. "This show lets military children know that the USO and Sesame Street are here for them and we understand that they make great sacrifices."

The plot of the show was brought to life in 2011 and was specifically designed for military children.

"This show centers around a very special Muppet named Katie, who happens to be a military child herself," McClendon said. "In the show, she's just found out that her family is about to move to another base, which is something that all military families go through. Katie is very nervous about this, but she talks to (the Sesame Street characters) and they teach her how to stay in touch with the friends she's already made and how to make new friends."

Two teams of volunteers from the Bob Hope USO Palm Springs came to assist the tour's visit to the Combat Center at all four showings, two on Aug. 8 and two on Saturday.

"This is beneficial to our military

ed the Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families.

"It's great because Sesame Street obviously understands kids and the USO understands military families," McClendon said.

This is the second version of this show. In 2008, Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families performed their first show ever at the Sunset Cinema and that version of the show focused on the effects a deployment has on military families and how children could cope with a parent being gone for a long time. In 2011, the show was changed to its current format in order to broaden the focus to a topic that all military families experience; a Permanent Change of Station.

"I think it's important to know that people like (those with) Sesame Street are behind the military," Cherry said. "They do understand that it's tough on the children and it's tough on the family."



[Top] Sesame Street characters, Elmo and Katie, take the stage at the Sunset Cinema, Saturday, during the Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families. The show is part of a year-long tour through 69 Department of Defense installations and focuses on the story of one character, Katie, a military child who has just discovered her family will be moving to a new duty station.

[Above] Sesame Street character, Cookie Monster, waves to Combat Center children at the Sunset Cinema, Saturday, during the Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families. The tour brought four performances to the installation, which were free to military families.

Liberty Call



Combat Center Events

Twentynine Palms Community Festival

The Twentynine Palms Community Festival will feature a kid's fun zone, craft area, prizes and food.

When: Sept. 5

Where: Del Valle Field

For more information, call 830-3110

CG's Car and Bike Show

An annual event held for Combat Center car and bike enthusiasts.

When: Oct. 4, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Where: MCX Parking Lot

For more information, call 830-5086

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Aug. 15

5:30 p.m. - Planes: Fire and Rescue 3-D, PG

8 p.m. - Transformers: Age of Extinction, PG-13

11:30 p.m. - The Purge: Anarchy, R

Saturday, Aug. 16

10 a.m. - Planes: (NDVD - Free Admission)

12:30 p.m. - Earth to Echo, PG

3 p.m. - Planes: Fire and Rescue 3-D, PG

5:30 p.m. - Transformers: Age of Extinction, PG-13

9 p.m. - Tammy, R

11:30 p.m. - Deliver us from Evil, R

Sunday, Aug. 17

12 p.m. - Planes: Fire and Rescue 3-D, PG

2:30 p.m. - Tammy, R

5 p.m. - The Fluffy Movie, PG-13

7:30 p.m. - Sex Tape, R

Monday, Aug. 18

6 p.m. - Transformers: Age of Extinction, PG-13

Tuesday, Aug. 19

5 p.m. - Planes: Fire and Rescue 3-D, PG

7 p.m. - The Fluffy Movie, PG-13

Wednesday, Aug. 20

5 p.m. - Earth to Echo, PG

7 p.m. - The Purge: Anarchy, R

Thursday, Aug. 21

5 p.m. - Tammy, R

7:30 p.m. - Deliver us from Evil, R



Stars flounder in sitcom-ism geriatric gloop

NEIL POND
"And So It Goes"

Starring Michael Douglas & Diane Keaton
 Directed by Rob Reiner
 PG-13

A paint-by-numbers romantic comedy for the AARP crowd, *And So It Goes* stars Michael Douglas as a cantankerous Connecticut real estate hotshot, Diane Keaton as New England's most unconvincing lounge singer, and young Sterlin Jerins (who fled zombies with Brad Pitt in *World War Z*) as the adorable moppet who brings them all together.

Director Rob Reiner has made some good movies, and even some great ones—*This Is Spinal Tap*, *Misery*, *The Princess Bride*, *When Harry Met Sally*, *Stand By Me*. Measured against cult masterpieces and all-time audience favorites like those, a lot of other movies would have a hard time measuring up. But this sitcom-like blob of sentimental geriatric gloop, alas, doesn't have a chance.

Douglas' character, Oren Little, is still bitter 10 years after losing his wife to cancer. Now he's a full-fledged grump and one-man insult factory, shooshing playful kids, muttering ethnic slurs to potential clients and pelting stray dogs with his paintball gun. "Do people really let you get away with being you?" asks his next-door neighbor Leah (Keaton), incredulously.

When Oren's long-estranged adult son shows up, he's packing a surprise: He's headed to prison. Can Oren keep his young daughter—the grandchild he never knew existed—until he gets out of the pokey?

If you've never seen any other movie or television

show, ever, you might wonder where this story is headed. Otherwise, you'll see every twist, turn, bump and bumble coming long before it gets there, as the new "unwanted" addition to Oren's life sets him on a fresh, friendlier course—and reignites his romantic spark.

Douglas and Keaton are old pros and they ride out the storm as best they can, but even these two solid Oscar winners can't put much of a shine on a script full of cheap jokes, lame gags and flat-out embarrassing lines of insultingly dumb dialog.

And they can't keep director Reiner's mind out of the gutter. We watch a pooch take a poop, see a little girl react to a dog humping a stuffed animal ("Look Mommy—it's just like you and Daddy dancing!"), and hear Oren make a crude crack about being confronted with ... ahem, genitals ... when a little boy changes out of his swimsuit. After a badly botched attempt at lovemaking, Leah rebukes Oren: "I had a dog once who wouldn't leave my crotch alone, and it was more romantic than this!"

For some people, the pile-on of feel-good mush at the end might divert them enough to think they've seen a decent, even uplifting movie. But most will be discerning enough to know they've just really just been run buried alive by a truckload of artificial sweetener.

In one scene, Oren and his little granddaughter discuss a sandwich made of two slices of baloney and one of cheese. That's actually a pretty good metaphor for this slapped-together attempt at making a quick, no-frills multiplex option for viewers old enough to get senior-citizen discounts.

It's just that I can't imagine this baloney, and this cheese, being what anyone wants for a movie meal—at any age.

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

MAKE YOUR FIRST MOVE WITH US!

We understand that buying a home is a big step. Let Navy Federal help you find your perfect home.

We offer great options for first-time homebuyers.

- > No money down options, including VA loans¹
- > No mortgage insurance
- > \$200 Visa® Prepaid Loyalty Card² after closing
- > Get up to \$1,500 towards your closing costs³



NAVY FEDERAL
 Credit Union

ARMY
 MARINE CORPS
 NAVY
 AIR FORCE
 COAST GUARD
 DoD

TAKE YOUR STEP TOWARDS HOMEOWNERSHIP.

navyfederal.org 1.888.842.6328

Federally insured by NCUA. ¹100% financing loans include an additional funding fee, which may be financed up to the maximum loan amount. ²Special offer available to first-time homebuyers only. Offer available for new applications on first mortgage purchase loans only. Certain product exclusions may apply. The Visa Prepaid Loyalty Card will be mailed to you within six weeks after your loan closes with Navy Federal. One offer per household. ³Special offer available for all first mortgage purchase loans except HomePath®. Member cannot receive cash back from this offer. Certain restrictions may apply. Ask your loan officer for details. © 2014 Navy Federal NFCU 13026 (7-14)



HI-GRADE MATERIALS CO. wants to be...

YOUR FIRST CHOICE
FOR:

READY MIX CONCRETE

concrete color selections - fibers for strength admixtures to enhance finishing.

- ▶ **WASHED LANDSCAPE ROCK**
- ▶ **PREMIX CONCRETE AGGREGATES**
- ▶ **LEACH LINE ROCK**
- ▶ **WASHED PLASTER SAND**
- ▶ **WASHED CONCRETE SAND**
- ▶ **FILL SAND**



Our WWII veteran owner wishes to thank the local community for your patronization over the past 30 years.

Locally owned and operated, **HI-GRADE MATERIALS** is a disposal site for broken concrete and asphalt. Asphalt is also available at the Twentynine Palms Quarry.

HI-GRADE MATERIALS CO. has been honored to support the Morongo Basin community since opening our first location in Joshua Tree in 1982.

We have donated over \$10,000 in material and financial aid to local agencies and neighborhood projects through the years.

HI-GRADE MATERIALS



(760) 366-3761

64722 TWO MILE ROAD, JOSHUA TREE

**7451 Mojave Road
TWENTYNINE PALMS**

AND

**55475 Yucca Trail
YUCCA VALLEY**

WE DELIVER or you can pick up rock and sand products at our Twentynine Palms Quarry at 7451 Mojave Road.