

The boys are back



CPL. KATE SEILER

First Sgt. Frank Robinson, first sergeant, Weapons Company calls cadence as the Marines from 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment march towards their families at Del Valle Field, Sept. 11. Marines from Headquarters and Support Company were also returning from Afghanistan on Sept. 11.

Marines, sailors reunite with loved ones

BY CPL. KATE SEILER

Elements of 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment returned to a crowd of anxious family members of the Marines and sailors with Headquarters and Support and Weapons Companies on Sept. 11. More than 200 Marines and sailors marched towards their loved ones with immense intensity to finally see their families again.

Lee Hollingsworth, father of 1st Lt. John Hollingsworth, 2nd Platoon, Weapons Company was among the family

See **Boys** A6



CPL. KATE SEILER

Combat Center families await the arrival of their Marines with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment at Del Valle Field, Sept. 11. The Marines and sailors of Headquarters and Support and Weapons Companies, were redeployed after six months in Afghanistan.



CPL. KATE SEILER

Combat Center families cheer as Marines and sailors with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment march towards them at Del Valle Field, Sept. 11. More than 200 Marines and sailors were reunited after six months in Afghanistan. They were from Headquarters and Support and Weapons Companies.

Marine Corps' Top Shot

Every week, thousands of fans vote for the week on the best photograph, posted on the Corps' Facebook page. This week's top shot comes from Cpl. Todd Michalek.



CPL. KATE SEILER

Force Reconnaissance Marines with the Maritime Raid Force, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit perform a diving exit while conducting an initial High Altitude Low Opening jump out of an MV-22B Osprey at Marine Corps Auxiliary Landing Field Bogue Field, N.C., Aug. 11. Air support for the training was provided by the MEU's Aviation Combat Element, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 365 (Reinforced). The training took place as part of pre-deployment training in preparation for the 24th MEU's deployment at the end of the year.

New ribbon will honor combat instructors

BY HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS

WASHINGTON — The Secretary of the Navy has established the Marine Corps Combat Instructor Ribbon which will be formally announced in a pending MARADMIN.

As requested by the Marine Corps' Schools of Infantry, this special duty assignment ribbon takes its place alongside ribbons recognizing the service of drill instructors, recruiters, and Marine Security Guards. This visible form of recognition completes the growth of the Combat Instructor military occupational specialty into a fully formed SDA as first outlined in ALMAR 056/02 and expanded in MARADMIN 295/03.

The combat instructor MOS was first introduced to build upon the foundations

established in Marine Corps Recruit Training where drill instructors make Marines. The combat instructors at the Schools of Infantry teach all Marines the basic combat skills which make every Marine a rifleman. It is these skills which enable Marines of all military occupational specialties to be so successful in combat engagements with the enemy.

To be eligible for the ribbon, Marines serving in an MOS 0913 billet must remain qualified as a combat instructor and successfully complete a tour of duty. Additionally, School of Infantry billets containing the word "instructor" are eligible if they possess and maintain the 0913 MOS for the duration of their tour. Other specifically listed billets in the Advanced Infan-

See **Honor** A6

'Cutting Edge' walks down memory lane

LANCE CPL. OLIVIA DAY

The sun shines bright on the Marines of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment as they stand in formation. In the distance an old white bus approaches leaving a cloud of dust in its wake. As the sand settles, Sgt. Maj. Alfredo Franco, the battalion's sergeant major, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, stands ready to greet the former Marines of K Co., 3/7. 'Cutting Edge' Marines, old and new, stood face-to-face at Del Valle Field, Sept. 11, to strengthen the timeless bond shared between those who served in the same company, even if generations apart.

Vietnam-era 3/7 Marines exited the bus and greeted Franco. When the former Marines met the present-day Marines, it was

two generations looking at each other. For one generation, time of service had ended decades ago while the other's continues on. During the visit, Marines and veterans shared stories, showcased weapon systems and ate chow with their comrades.

The event was coordinated by a former Navy corpsman with the battalion. The veterans have met annually for the past 15 years at various locations all over the United States, ranging from Jacksonville, Fla. to Portland, Ore. This year, they decided to meet in Twentynine Palms, Calif., and visit the current Marines of 3/7. One of the Vietnam-era Marines who attended the event was retired 1st Sgt. Carlos Alvarez, who was awarded three Purple Heart medals

See **Edge** A6



CPL. KATE SEILER

Sgt. Maj. Alfredo Franco, battalion sergeant major, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, greets retired Vietnam veterans as they exit a bus at Del Valle Field, Thursday, Sept. 11. During the event, Marines and veterans would share stories, showcase weapon systems and eat chow with their comrades.

EDGE, from A1

and a Bronze Star medal. "I can't find words to say how much I enjoyed it," Alvarez said. "I think every unit in the Corps should pass the word down from the old to the new."

Marines of all ranks and ages couldn't have agreed more. Lt. Col. Ross Parrish, commanding officer, 3/7, was one of those Marines.

"For us to be able to learn lessons that they learned almost 50 years ago is tremendous," Parrish said.

"The fact that Co. K, 3/7 and their time in the Marine Corps means so much to them is of extreme value to our Marines to understand what it means to be a Marine in service and out of service. It is a tremendous opportunity to thank these gentlemen for their service, the example they set, and what they're continuing to do as civilian Marines."

During the event, there were tables set up to show the veterans weapons now used by the battalion such

as the M240B machine gun, M2 Browning .50 caliber machine gun, and the 60mm and 81mm mortar systems. The Marines also showed the veterans modern flak jackets and attachments such as ammunition pouches, water pouches and grenades.

The battalion provided food and beverages for the veterans while the Marines exchanged stories with one another.

"The stories were motivating," said Lance Cpl. Ryan Carmona, assistant patrol leader, K Co., 3/7.

Carmona also mentioned that he had a great time listening to all the different stories the veterans shared with them.

At the end of the event, the Marines of K Co. fell into formation alongside the 3/7 veterans, standing tall and full of pride. Smiling faces were everywhere as the Marines said their goodbyes, thanking those who came before for their service and everything they have done for this country.



Lance Cpl. Jose Garay, rifleman, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, listens to Vietnam veteran Julio Lopez share his experiences during the Vietnam War at Del Valle Field, Sept. 11.

CPL. KATE SEILER



The Vietnam-era Marines of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, visit the current Marines of K Co. to share stories from the Vietnam War and offer advice on how to be a Marine in service and out of service at Del Valle Field, Sept. 11.

CPL. KATE SEILER



Marines with 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, listen to retired 1st Sgt. Carlos Alvarez share his experiences of the Vietnam War at Del Valle Field, Sept. 11.

CPL. KATE SEILER

BOYS, from A1

members waiting for the return of their son.

"We are so proud of our son and are so grateful for all the Marines do for us," said Hollingsworth.

While deployed to Afghanistan, the Marines

and sailors conducted multiple missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The rest of 1st Battalion, 7th Marines are scheduled to redeploy throughout the month of October.

HONOR, from A1

try Training Battalions, and specific leadership billets in SOI East or West, including subordinate battalions, are also eligible.

The appropriate SOI will document entitlement to the award for current instructors when they depart the command.

The SOIs will also adjudicate retroactive awards for any Marine currently assigned to the school for a subsequent tour.

Per the upcoming MARADMIN, the ribbon may be awarded retroac-

tively to all Marines with qualifying service beginning on or after Oct. 9, 2002.

Marines who have moved on to the Fleet Marine Force must take substantiating documentation to their Personnel Administration Center for evaluation.

The Military Awards Branch will evaluate awards referred by Personnel Administration Centers, as well as requests from Marines no longer serving.

In order of precedence, the new

ribbon will be placed after the Marine Security Guard Ribbon and before the Armed Forces Reserve Medal.

An initial quantity of the ribbon will be produced to meet the short-term requirement of the Schools of Infantry and the Military Awards Branch.

The ribbons will begin appearing commercially approximately 30 days after the release of the MARADMIN.

Detailed information will be made available in the pending MARADMIN.

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Reprinted from the Observation Post
September 12, 1975

College tackles combat center

BY CPL. R. L. CUTTS

It's obvious they're not Marines, although half of them are built like they've spent years at Parris Island or in San Diego. The dead giveaways are the length of their hair and the beards and mustaches of a few. They live in the barracks and eat in the mess hall. They're the College of the Desert's football team, the Roadrunners.

Annually, the Roadrunners spend about five days here eating, living and training together. They practice on Victory Field three times daily doing calisthenics, running patterns and generally getting in shape for the season ahead which begins September 20.

According to head coach Bill Reeske "Coming out here gets the team away from mom, dad, their girls, and other distractions. Here they live, eat, and sleep football. We deliberately strive to break up cliques and integrate all the players. They're even assigned bunks to keep friends apart. The object is to unify the team. They have to be willing to put out for one another."

Reeske expects this year's team to surpass last year's and feels they're better than average. This is their seventh year here and he thinks this team has the best overall attitude so far. The only problem he foresees right now is the lack of depth in the defensive and offensive line.

The nine man staff, consisting of five coaches, two managers, and two trainers would like to see some Marines on the team. Unknown to many, members of the Marine Corps enrolled full time in College of the Desert can play football with the Roadrunners.

"There is a great correlation between football and the military, especially in tactics, unison and spirit," says Reeske.

Reeske foresees a great year for four of his players in particular: quarterback Robert Botley, tailback Kenny Dobbins, running back Roger Kibbee, and tackle Gabe Garza. These four players have been looking especially well during pre-season practices.

Feelings toward the base ran pro and con, but most players were impressed and happy with the opportunity to train here. Coach Jim Glazner who is here for the fourth year feels that the Marine Corps treats C.O.D. really well. Says Glazner, "The food's good, the barracks are fine. Everything is suitable for what we're doing."

Tackle Myke Nelson seemed to be impressed with the base athletic facilities, finding the gym weight room "great" "On a scale of one to ten," Nelson said, "I would have to give this place an eight. It's not bad at all. I sure can't complain."

Some of the praisers were moderately low key,

but they did lean toward favorable. Tightend Ronald Roy decided that "the food is better than nothing."

Cornerback Wallace Miles found the food "ok" but felt that cooking for so many people tends to stagnate the taste of the food.

Some members of the team seemed quite at home in the barracks and around the base. Linebacker Roger Kibbee whose father was a Marine for 22 years was brought up on Marine Bases. Being able to compare bases, Kibbee felt, "What they have to work with in the way of food and board, they do pretty well."

Safety Billy Dobbins was with the Army 82nd Airborne, and is more than used to eating mess hall chow, and easing in the lap of luxury of our barracks.

"The food seems all the same between the Marine Corps and the Army. What I like here is that you get to eat all you want."

For the most part, both the staff and the players seemed more than happy with the opportunity to come out and train a few days here. Hopefully, training and living together tightens the inner as well as outer strength of the team. Next year when they return for their eighth year, possibly they will benefit even more from their time here.

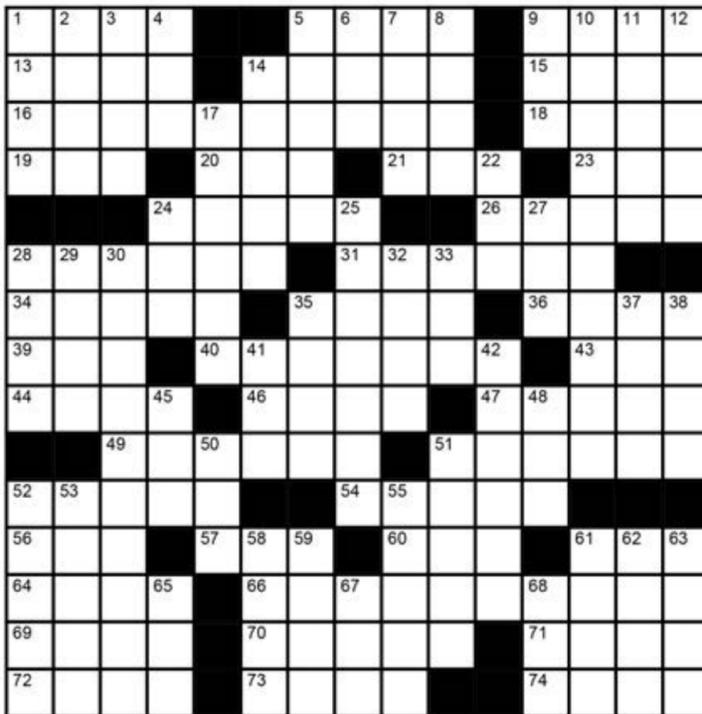
CROSSWORD

See answers in next week's edition

"To Each His Own"

Across

- 1 Pillow cover
- 5 What a dog wags
- 9 Health resorts
- 13 "The Wizard of Oz" barker
- 14 African nation whose capital is Accra
- 15 Shelter for a boy scout
- 16 Impossible to get
- 18 All there
- 19 Ask nosy questions
- 20 Cracklin' ___ Bran (cereal brand)
- 21 Hand holder?
- 23 FBI's sister organization
- 24 Poison ___
- 26 Merman or Mertz
- 28 Places to stay for the night
- 31 Section of Manhattan
- 34 Actress Dunne or Cara
- 35 Second Greek letter
- 36 Hawk's home
- 39 Teachers' org.
- 40 Tough choice
- 43 Astrological sign
- 44 Physicians, for short
- 46 Army beds
- 47 Touch lightly with a tissue
- 49 "I ___ do this..."
- 51 Take to the skies
- 52 Pace
- 54 Underground tunnel
- 56 "___ you kidding?"
- 57 Irrate
- 60 Ruin
- 61 ___-Man (video game)
- 64 Salmon variety
- 66 Florida city
- 69 Stench
- 70 Finish by
- 71 Italy's old currency



- 72 Uses a needle
- 73 Indicates agreement
- 74 One of Scooby-Doo's pals

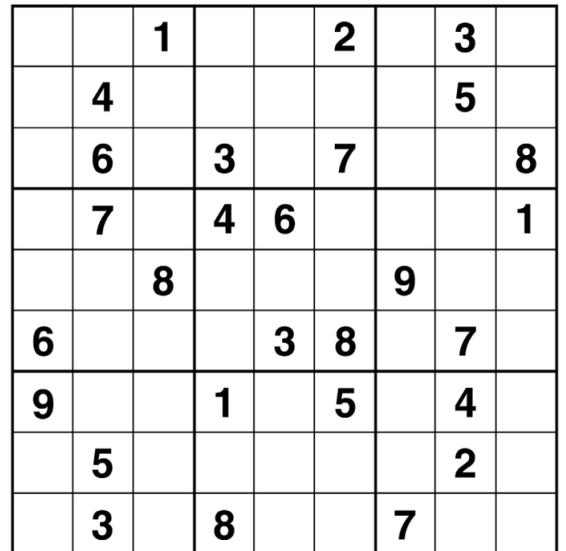
Down

- 1 "Cut it out!"
- 2 60 minutes
- 3 Lawyer: abbr.
- 4 Cow's sound
- 5 Letter before iota
- 6 Small battery
- 7 ___ Empire
- 8 Bert who played the Cowardly Lion
- 9 Paul and John: abbr.
- 10 Fruity dessert
- 11 Musical about an orphan

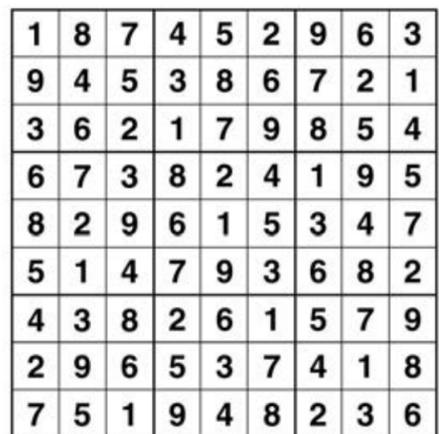
- 12 Take what's not yours
- 14 Small weights
- 17 Committed a basketball infraction against
- 22 Director Gibson
- 24 One of 100 in D.C.
- 25 Orange snack food
- 27 Perfect score, maybe
- 28 "Do you ___?"
- 29 Two-color cookie
- 30 Student's request
- 32 Bank conveniences
- 33 Aries animal
- 35 Ink stain
- 37 Chair
- 38 Carry
- 41 Cold cubes
- 42 Word like "happily"

- 45 Tree stuff
- 48 Put on TV
- 50 Male cat
- 51 Expect
- 52 Mexican snacks
- 53 Eat away
- 55 Samms and Watson
- 58 "I agree!"
- 59 The Flintstones' pet
- 61 Poker duo
- 62 Land measurement
- 63 African nation that's also a man's name
- 65 Hospital places: abbr.
- 67 Do some math
- 68 One of Santa's little helpers

SUDOKU



Last week's solutions



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

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- Angelo's Kars, 222 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054
- Angelo's Kars, 226 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054

In San Diego:
- Club Mustang, 2200 University Ave.
- Club San Diego, 3955 Fourth St.
- Get It On Shoppe, 3219 Mission Blvd.
- Main Street Motel, 3494 Main St.
- Vulcan Baths, 805 W. Cedar St.

In National City:
- Dream Crystal, 15366 Highland Ave.
- Sports Auto Sales, 1112 National City Blvd.

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

In Twentynine Palms:

- Adobe Smoke Shop, 6441 Adobe Rd.
- STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Rd.
- K Smoke Shop, 5865A Adobe Rd.

In Yucca Valley:

- Yucca Tobacco Mart, 57602 29 Palms Hwy.
- Puff's Tobacco Mart, 57063 29 Palms Hwy.

In Palm Springs:

- Village Pub, 266 S. Palm Canyon Dr.
- Whispering Palms Apts., 449 E. Arenas Road
- NYPD Pizza, 260-262 N. Palm Canyon Drive

For the complete orders, but not off-limits, check out the Combat Center's official-website at <http://www.29palms.marines.mil>

WHAT I'VE LEARNED

Brandon VALENTINE

Columbus, GA Radio Chief, Staff Sgt., Age 29

VALENTINE IS A SINGER AND GUITARIST. LAST YEAR, HE PERFORMED WITH RASCAL FLATTS AT THE ALL-STAR SALUTE TO THE TROOPS, PRESENTED BY THE ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC.

> **I like to play the guitar,** watch college football and spend time with my wife and my little girl. Most of my time goes to my little girl, she is pretty much my life now.

> **My daughter is almost 20 months old.** We had her and then about seven months later, I deployed. When I came back she was a totally different person.

> **I basically missed the 'first everything.'** First words, birthday, steps, Christmas and Thanksgiving, I missed all of those things. When I left, she was crawling and when I got back, she was running.

> **When I was deployed,** we got the chance to skype a lot. It was funny because when I got back and got off the bus, she looked at me and said, "Daddy." Developing our relationship even when I was deployed went pretty smoothly.

> **I am a pretty goofy guy** with my daughter. We have a good time and a strong relationship. I think she is more of a daddy's girl now.

> **She is wild.** She is constantly bouncing off the walls and she is nonstop. At 20 months, she can jump into the pool and swim, which is pretty scary. My wife has to bring her to the pool at least three times a week now.

> **I'd have to say** she's a well-balanced mix of my wife and me. I think she gets her brains from her mom and her wildness from me.

> **When it comes to college football,** I'm a University of Georgia fan. I have a Georgia 'G' tattooed on my foot.

> **My favorite player** on Georgia this year is Todd Gurley, He is a beast. He broke a lot of Georgia's records in the first week of this season.

> **I grew up as a Georgia fan.** I lived three hours from the school, where I use to live, it's right on the Alabama, Georgia line so you're either a Georgia fan, or an Alabama fan.

> **My wife and I** are from the same town. We have been married almost nine years but when we first met, she didn't really watch too much college football. She always said she was an Auburn fan but I fixed all of that.

> **She's a pretty hardcore** Georgia fan now. She knows more about football than half of the guys who come over to watch. My daughter is also a Bulldogs fan, I have a video of her saying, "Go Dogs."

> **I have been playing** guitar for about five or six years, I taught myself in Iraq. I bought a guitar off of a guy for 30 bucks. I taught myself about four chords and then went from there. If you know a couple of chords, you basically know thousands of songs.

> **I have always been into music;** I played piano for a little bit in high school. I also grew up playing the drums. My dad bought me a drum set when I was five.

> **I was actually supposed** to join the Marine Corps to play in the band. My dad was in the Army and when I told him, he was like, "Are you really going to join the Marine Corps to play in the band?"

> **I made it through auditions** and everything to join the band as percussion but I changed my mind last minute.

> **Drums are actually my primary** instrument but guitar is definitely my favorite. I never sang out in front of people or anything like that until I grabbed a guitar.

> **I started out just banging on a drum set,** not knowing what I was doing. As I got older, I got better. The more you do something, the better you'll get. If you have an interest in something, you always try to do it better than the last time.

> **I didn't get bored with** it or anything, it was just hard being in the Marine Corps and having a drum set in the barracks. All my friends would play guitar and it was something I was interested in learning.

> **When I was in the barracks,** my buddies would grab their guitars and I'd grab a bucket and some sticks and we'd play.

> **I went on deployment** and that's when I finally decided to give the guitar a shot.

> **I am left handed** for everything but when I started to play guitar, I learned to play right handed.

> **While I was in Afghanistan,** I submitted a package for the first annual 'Salute to the Troops' in Las Vegas. At the time, I didn't think I would ever get picked, I can't even win scratch off tickets but I submitted any way.

> **They flew my wife from Georgia** and gave us a full weekend of concerts. I also got to attend the Academy of Country Music Awards. Our seats were on the floor and eight rows back. After that, I got to perform with Rascal Flatts in front of about 19,000 people.

> **It was crazy** because about three seats over was Tim McGraw and Miranda Lambert but it was all free for us. Anyone you could think of, when it comes to country music was there. It was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

> **After that,** I went to career course but while I was there I got an offer to perform in Daytona, Fla. and open up for Easton Corbin on my own.

> **I'm getting out next year** and I definitely want to get a band together. I just want to get a group of guys that like to play music and kill some time together.



Interviewed by Lance Cpl. Olivia Day

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Pool tournament promotes healthy competition

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PFC. JULIO A. MCGRAW

Combat Center Marines and sailors came together for an evening of friendly competition at the Single Marine Program's weekly pool tournament held at The 5th Street Zone, Tuesday.

The billiard tournament is sponsored by the SMP and provides service members a chance to get out of the barracks and enjoy a recreational activity during off-duty hours.

"A lot of the time, it's students [who participate] because they don't have many privileges yet or can't go off base," said Anthony Baca, facility manager, The 5th Street Zone. "There are some higher ranks that come here and participate with them which is really cool."

The tournament is held with individual standings, which offer prizes at the end of each month for the number one player.

Each player at the tournament is there for different reasons; some do it to relieve stress, while others participate because it's fun.

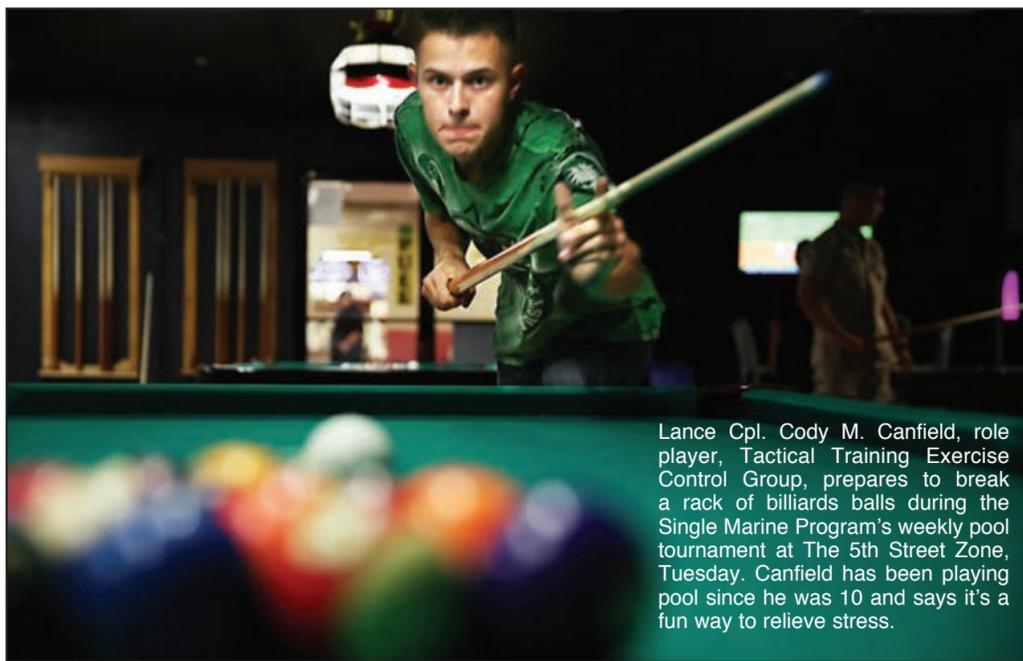
"It's one of my hobbies," said Lance Cpl. Alexander Klippert, student, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School. "It's something I enjoy and being in the competition is always fun."

Although the event was a tournament, the Marines stood around and playfully taunted each other in a relaxed environment and conducted themselves with sportsmanship.

"The tournament and facility are open to anyone who is active duty," said Baca.

Pool is not the only service offered at The Zone. Ping-Pong, video game tournaments and monthly poker tournaments are also hosted in the facility.

Pool is just a game, but at The Zone, it is a way Marines of any rank can get together and engage in some healthy competition.



Lance Cpl. Cody M. Canfield, role player, Tactical Training Exercise Control Group, prepares to break a rack of billiards balls during the Single Marine Program's weekly pool tournament at The 5th Street Zone, Tuesday. Canfield has been playing pool since he was 10 and says it's a fun way to relieve stress.



Pfc. Glen Hicks, student, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, takes his shot during the Single Marine Program's weekly pool tournament at The 5th Street Zone, Tuesday. The tournament is held every Tuesday and although it gets competitive, the patrons still participate every week.



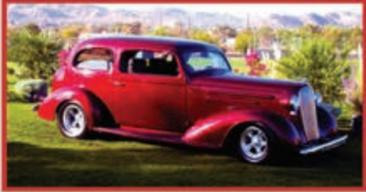
Pfc. Glen Hicks, student, Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School, racks the balls at the Single Marine Program's weekly pool tournament at The 5th Street Zone, Tuesday.

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Flu shot: What you need to know

NAVY LT. DANIEL CROUCH

Why get vaccinated?

Every flu season is different, and this illness can affect people differently. Even healthy people can get very sick from the flu and spread it to others. Influenza is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and, in serious cases, death.

Flu season typically occurs between January and March in Twentynine Palms, Calif. Receiving a flu vaccine is the best way to reduce the likelihood of catching the virus and spread it to others.

How do flu vaccines work?

The flu shot contains damaged or dead viruses. Your body memorizes these viruses so when you get exposed to the flu, your body reacts quickly. The defense your body generates typically lasts about 6 months, so annual vaccination is important.

Some people feel sick for a few days after receiving a flu vaccine as the body develops its flu defense. This is normal. You cannot receive the flu from the vaccine since the vaccine viruses are damaged or dead.

Who should not get vaccinated?

Children younger than six months of age cannot receive the influenza vaccine. People who have had a severe allergic reaction to an influenza vaccine should contact a health care provider. If you have concerns about getting the flu vaccine or would like to discuss the risks, contact your health care provider.

When can we get vaccinated?

The Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital offers free flu vaccines to all active-duty service members, civilian workers, beneficiaries, and retired personnel aboard the Combat Center. Active duty: flu vaccines will be provided at each unit and command.

Civilians, beneficiaries, and retirees can receive the vaccine at the Child Development Center, Main Exchange and Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital. For specific times please call the hospital at (760) 830-2190.

Who should get vaccinated?

Everyone 6 months or older should get a flu vaccine annually. It is especially important for those at high risk for serious complications. These people include: pregnant women,



COURTESY PHOTO

health care personnel, people under the age of 5 or older than 65, household contacts and caregivers of

months old, people who have certain medical conditions including asthma, diabetes, and chronic lung disease and household

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Cruisers Vs. Sportsters: The Switch



COURTESY PHOTO

STORY BY BOB PIIRAINEN, SAFETY DIVISION

Having ridden motorcycles for the better part of 35 years, you would think that I should be able to hop on one bike or another and ride it with the same level of expertise, regardless of the make and model. While my experience does help in making that transition, it doesn't guarantee a perfect one. The reason I bring this up is because there are those out there that are either thinking about, or have made the switch from one style of motorcycle to another. Should you come back and take another course, even if you are current in your training? I would say yes, and here's why.

Let's say you are going from a sport bike to a cruiser. The first obvious difference is the bike's weight. You are going from a bike weighing 400 lbs. or less, to one that easily weighs more than 700 lbs. That is the one considerable difference in the two. Secondly, the riding position is much different. With a cruiser, you are sitting more "in" the bike rather than on top of it. Also, the handling is completely different. You don't have the ground clearance you once had with the sport bike, so you will need to adjust your speed and braking accordingly, especially in the mountains. I'm not saying cruisers don't handle well, they just handle differently. Lastly, you will notice a huge difference in the bike's performance. Not

that the cruisers are slow, but they don't have the flat-out acceleration of a sport bike. A 600cc sport bike will chew up and spit out even the largest of the cruisers in a straight line race. The brakes on most of the sport bikes and cruisers are wonderful. The Harley Baggers have been manufactured with "Brembo" brakes for the past four years or so. They don't get much better than that, and as a result, you can haul that 900 lb. beast down pretty quick.

Now, let's go from a cruiser to a sport bike and see what we come up with. The first thing we notice is that this thing will fly if we aren't careful. A quick handful of throttle will get us into triple-digit speeds in a matter of moments. Much different than our cruisers. Also, the bike feels totally different. We are now riding on top of this thing. Everything happens in a hurry: acceleration, handling, the brakes, everything. The bike feels ... twitchy! And it is. It is designed to go around corners very fast, not take 500-mile rides, although you certainly can.

Either way, if you switch, do yourself a favor and come sign up for the next available Advanced Rider Course. It will give you a chance to become more familiar with your new bike in a controlled environment. One without cars, trucks, potholes, sand or other distractions.

See you soon.

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To All Christians Concerned

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.

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TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt



I am a sanguine and debonair pilgrim on a spiritual journey through a fascinating and ever expanding universe. I have come from the heart of God and I will return to God's heart when my travelling days are done.

In this absolutely fascinating and ever developing cosmos I might be called a stoic. I mean that I trust without reservation that my life is continuing to unfold as it should and that all things work together to serve the ultimate purpose of the Creator. In addition, in a pragmatic way I am a devoted follower of the life and teachings of Jesus, a master teacher, who taught us to feed the hungry, cloth the naked, visit the sick and go to the jail.

Intellectually, I'm a heretic. I cannot accept or subscribe to anything that conflicts with my own concept of truth. This means that my theological position has changed through the years and will very likely change again and yet again as I continue to study, think, experience and learn.

My attitude on social and political matters is best described as that of an "activist." It is my belief that the ultimate solution to all social and political problems is an informed, honest, concerned, involved, compassionate and responsible citizenry working within the framework of a free society. Therefore, I believe it to be the primary task of educational and religious institutions to encourage the development of wholly integrated men and women who have a high opinion of themselves, who genuinely respect others and who trust God's creative process.

This column sponsored by:

Patricia Aitken
Yucca Valley

George Lunczak
Joshua Tree

Dr. Lou can be reached at 760-367-4627
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WeekINPhotos

Marines, British share lifesaving techniques at Phoenix Odyssey

Photos by: Sgt. Paul Robbins



Petty Officer 2nd Class Derrick A. Adkins (back), battalion corpsman for 2nd Intelligence Battalion, II Marine Expeditionary Force, and a native of Chattanooga, Tenn., applies a simulated trauma to the arm of Sgt. Erick J. Velazquez, a geospatial intelligence analyst for 2nd Intel Bn, II MEF, and a native of Coral Springs, Fla., as part of a casualty assessment and treatment scenario for British soldiers of the 5, 6, and 7 Military Intelligence Battalions, 1 Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition Brigade, during Exercise Phoenix Odyssey on Tuesday. The day's training focused on common battlefield injuries, casualty care in the field, and lifesaving procedures in combat. The two forces have been training in a Military Operations in Urban Terrain facility on Camp Lejeune as part of a week long, scenario driven, bilateral exercise.

British soldiers with 5, 6, and 7 Military Intelligence Battalion, 1 Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition Brigade, work alongside Marines of 2nd Intelligence Battalion, II Marine Expeditionary Force, to evacuate a simulated casualty as part of a casualty assessment and treatment scenario during Exercise Phoenix Odyssey on Tuesday. The day's training focused on common battlefield injuries, casualty care in the field, and lifesaving procedures in combat. The two forces have been training in a Military Operations in Urban Terrain facility on Camp Lejeune as part of a week long, scenario driven, bilateral exercise.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Derrick A. Adkins (back), battalion corpsman for 2nd Intelligence Battalion, II Marine Expeditionary Force, and a native of Chattanooga, Tenn., and Petty Officer 2nd Class Douglas M. Watkins, the lead Combat Lifesaver instructor for Marine Headquarters Group, II MEF, and a native of Delta, Pa., demonstrate the use of pressure bandages to British soldiers of the 5, 6, and 7 Military Intelligence Battalions, 1 Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition Brigade, during Exercise Phoenix Odyssey on Tuesday. The day's training focused on common battlefield injuries, casualty care in the field, and lifesaving procedures in combat.



British Sgt. George P.H. Colquhoun, a military intelligence operator and team medic for 7 Military Intelligence Battalion, 1 Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition Brigade, and native of Wallsend, England, hollers for a tourniquet while caring for Sgt. Erick J. Velazquez (center), a geospatial intelligence analyst for 2nd Intelligence Battalion, II Marine Expeditionary Force, and a native of Coral Springs, Fla., as part of a casualty assessment and treatment scenario during Exercise Phoenix Odyssey on Tuesday. The day's training focused on common battlefield injuries, casualty care in the field, and lifesaving procedures in combat.



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Combat Center Marines aid Desert Arc at Camp Ronald McDonald



Lance Cpl. Carlos Morris, admin specialist, Headquarters Battalion, helps camper Chase Neiberger learn how to shoot an archery bow at Camp Ronald McDonald in Mountain Center, Calif., Saturday

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. OLIVIA DAY

MARNE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER TWENTYNINE PALMS, Calif.—Laughter filled the air as Combat Center Marines volunteered with Desert Arc at Camp Ronald McDonald in Mountain Center, Calif., Saturday. The event was coordinated through Navy Lt. Donald Baker, Chaplain, Headquarters Battalion, to help build a stronger relationship with the base’s surrounding community.

Desert Arc has provided disabled adults with care and life skills for approximately 55 years. The organization has various locations that range from Coachella Valley, Calif., to Blythe, Calif. Desert Arc has more than 600 clients. At the Palm Desert location, they provide their participants with vocational training and on-site employment opportunities.

The special needs campers started their day with

breakfast at the dining hall and began activities at 9 a.m. The activities included archery, arts and crafts, fishing, swimming, softball, basketball, canoeing and a Hawaiian-themed dance in the evening. Aly Leavitt, lifeguard, Camp Ronald McDonald, has worked for the camp for six years and has volunteered for two years.

“I definitely enjoy doing it,” Leavitt said. “I love being on the mountain and interacting with everyone.”

Emily Montoya, volunteer, also served as a lifeguard along Leavitt during this event.

“We heard about this opportunity to volunteer through our church and we were both excited to help serve a good cause,” Montoya said.

During arts and crafts, the campers got the chance to make pinch-pot bowls and paint pre-made figurines provided by Old Town Artisan Studio in La Quinta, Calif. The art studio also provided the camp with two volun-

teers, Stefania Ford, who helped with the painting, and Colby Cramer, who helped with the pottery.

“I’m having a lot of fun and I’m looking forward to the dance tonight,” Clark said.

At the archery range, Headquarters Battalion Marines helped the participants learn how to use bows and arrows. Some of the campers have the opportunity to work for the Desert Arc at any of their many locations across California. One of those campers was Barbara Ballie, who has been with the camp for almost 12 years. They provided her with a job opportunity as a cook at Camp Ronald McDonald.

There are many volunteer opportunities available through Desert Arc and Camp Ronald McDonald. For more information on how to get involved call (760) 346-1611 for Desert Arc or (310) 268-8488 for Camp Ronald McDonald.



Clockwise from left: Emily Montoya, spouse, keeps watch as a volunteer lifeguard at Camp Ronald McDonald, Saturday. Besides swimming, campers could also take part in archery, canoeing, fishing, softball, basketball, and arts and crafts for the campers.

Martha Gonzalez, volunteer, shows campers how to bait a hook at Camp Ronald McDonald, Saturday. She is also the disk jockey for Desert Arc and she performed at the dance later on in the evening.

Denise Clark, who is painting a bowl provided by Old Town Artisan Studio, was one of the campers who participated in arts and crafts at Camp Ronald McDonald, Mountain Center, Calif., Saturday. This was her first year coming to the camp and looks forward to coming back.



Liberty Call



Combat Center Events

THE OFFICER SPOUSES CLUB is scheduled to host a bunco night. Hometown or College jerseys are encouraged. The event will be held Sept. 26 at 8:30 p.m.

THE DESERT WINDS GOLF COURSE is scheduled to host a 5 Kilometer Fun Run to observe Red Ribbon Week and raise drug awareness. The run is scheduled for Oct. 23 at 8 a.m.

THE DESERT WINDS GOLF COURSE is scheduled to host a recreational 6-mile run. Registrations can be turned into building 1341. The run is scheduled to begin Sept. 23 at 8 a.m.

THE COMMUNITY CENTER is scheduled to host a craft fair and bake sale. Registrations are scheduled to conclude October 24. The Fair is scheduled to begin Oct. 25 at 9 a.m.

THE OFFICER'S CLUB is scheduled to host the Belle of the Ball Dance lessons. There is also a ball gown giveaway scheduled. The lessons will be held Oct. 4 at 9 a.m.

THE EAST GYM is scheduled to host an endurance and relay run. The run is open to any active duty service members, retirees, DoD and Dependents. The run is scheduled for Oct. 3 at 5 p.m.

THE MARINE CORPS EXCHANGE will hold the Commanding General's Car and Bike show in its parking lot. The cars and bikes will be split up into different categories. The Car show is scheduled for Oct. 4 at 10 a.m.

THE MARINE CORPS Family Team Building Workshop is scheduled to hold programs that promote healthy lifestyles, improve morale, unit and personal readiness, and retention.

A WORKSHOP is being held in classroom 303 of building 1530, Tuesdays from 2 to 3:30 p.m. and Thursdays from 9 to 10:30 a.m. This workshop will cover a wide range of active coping skills, ways to make better use of social networks, and specific stress management approaches.

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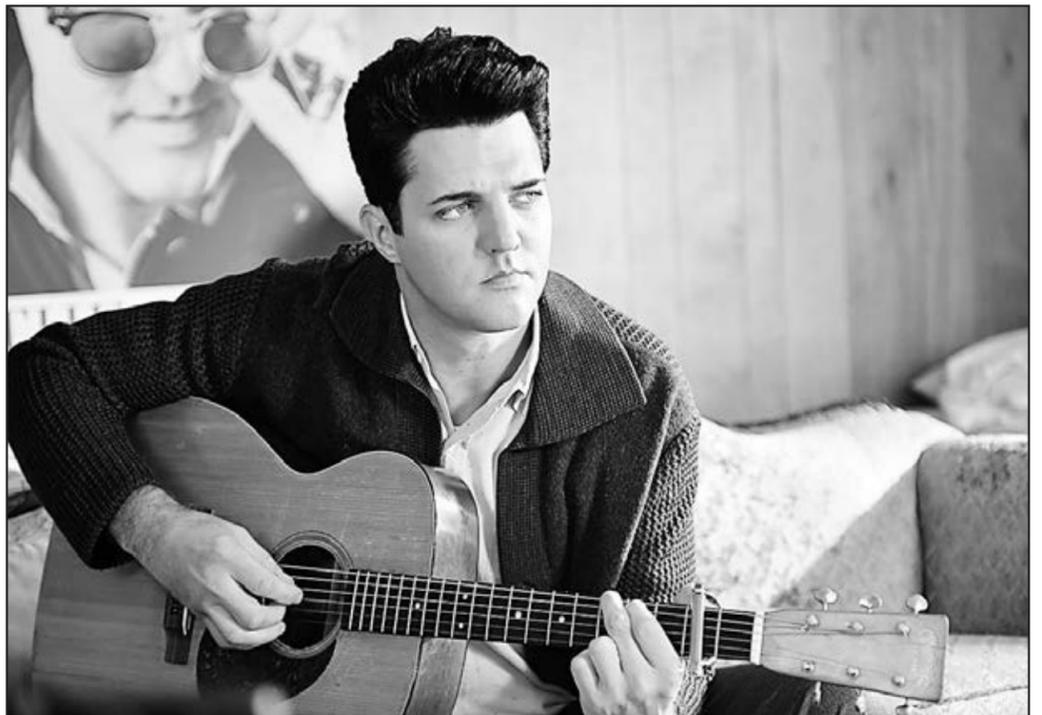
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Elvis-tinged parable of twins is bland exercise in make-believe

NEIL POND

"The Identical"

Starring Blake Rayne, Ray Liotta & Ashley Judd
Directed by Dustin Marcellino
Rated PG

The movie or its marketing materials don't say it, so I will: *The Identical* is the strangest Elvis movie not about Elvis you'll likely ever see.

It's about a young man who grows up in the South, unaware that he has a twin brother who'll grow up to become a hip-shakin' singing sensation—just like Elvis. The young man shares his twin's musical talent, his Elvis-y stage moves, his Elvis-y looks, and he even gets hired as an impersonator, becoming famous as the best Elvis-y copycat in the business.

But *The Identical* only makes one fleeting reference to Elvis. Instead, it pretends its characters exist independently, in a bubble, but parallel to real events and real people, including Elvis. It all makes for a curious, weirdly weightless little exercise in make-believe—especially since the movie make-believes it's not about Elvis. (The movie doesn't have any rights to actual Elvis music, or anything else "Elvis"—because those things cost a lot of money.)

Elvis actually had a twin brother who did not survive childbirth. What might have happened, though, had Presley's twin lived? Perhaps something like this, *The Identical* suggests.

A poor couple in Depression-racked Alabama gives birth to twin boys, but can't afford to raise them both. So they give away one to a traveling evangelist (Ray Liotta) and his wife (Ashley Judd), swearing them to lifelong secrecy. Then they stage a mock funeral, burying an empty shoebox behind their ramshackle house, so the neighbors won't question why the infant

is no longer around.

The years pass. Newcomer Blake Rayne (a former Elvis impersonator—for real!), making his acting debut, plays both the preacher's kid, Ryan Wade, as well as the pop-rock sensation Drexel Hemsley, although Drexel has only a couple of scenes and one mumbled line of dialog. This is the story of the "other" brother, who's tugged between the rock 'n' roll DNA somehow in his genes and the wishes of his father to pursue a more righteous path.

The Identical is a modest little movie, made on a shoestring, no-frills budget of \$3 million. Sometimes it feels just one rib poke away from a Saturday Night Live skit, or the kind of outright parody John C. Reilly did with *Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story*, his faux-Johnny Cash send-up. But it plays it straight—and narrow, constantly hammering its faith-and-values themes of reconciliation, forgiveness and discovering "who [God] made us to be," and over-amping every emotional tone to eleven.

Seth Green and Joe Pantoliano provide hijinks that feel lifted from old *Happy Days* reruns. Judd spouts homilies like "Slap the dog and spit on the fire." And Liotta (also one of the executive producers), best known for playing a mobster in *Goodfellas*, digs in to his role as a man of the cloth like it was made out of ham and cheese.

Despite some scenes with howlingly high levels of hoke, some viewers will nonetheless likely find something to love about this bland, edge-less, Elvis-tinged parable, which has nothing to offend, shock or rub even the most sensitive of sensibilities the wrong way—like a lot of Elvis' music, or his own movies. Come to think of it, Presley may have "left the building" long ago, but his spirit is still around, even in a strange little movie that pretends it's not.

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