



As 2014 comes to a close and 2015 peeks around the corner, the Combat Center prepares itself for a new year of hard work and dedication to the Corps. This past year has had its challenges and triumphs as Marines have gone through the training they need to stay prepared for the missions they will be tasked with. The ranges aboard the Combat Center are always ready to support the next task the Marine Corps has in store with the goal of maintaining a force of readiness. Although the Combat Center's mission is still the same, the installation's training command is always expanding its knowledge and ability. With 2014 slowly coming to its end, the Combat Center stands ready for all the challenges and opportunities the New Year has to offer.

A LOOK BACK AT 2014

CHANGES IN THE CORPS.....**A2**

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ON THE RANGES.....**A4**

FOREIGN FRIENDS.....**A5**

PART OF THE COMMUNITY..**A6**

FAMILY FUN.....**A7**

TOP SHOTS OF 2014.....**A8**

COMBAT CENTER SPORTS.....**B1**

2014 Medal of Honor recipient

On June 19, 2014, President Barack Obama presented Cpl. William Kyle Carpenter with the Medal of Honor for actions performed on Nov. 21, 2010 in Helmand province, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The Medal of Honor is the highest military honor presented to a service member for risk of life in combat beyond the call of duty. Carpenter became the eighth recipient and the third Marine alongside Cpl. Jason Dunham and Sgt. Dakota Meyer presented with the Medal for actions in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Citation

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as an Automatic Rifleman with Company F, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines, Regimental Combat Team 1, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom on 21 November 2010. Lance Corporal Carpenter was a member of a platoon-sized coalition force, comprised of two reinforced Marine rifle squads partnered with an Afghan National Army squad. The platoon had established Patrol Base Dakota two days earlier in a small village in the Marjah District in order to disrupt enemy activity and provide security for the local Afghan population. Lance Corporal Carpenter and a fellow Marine were manning a rooftop security position on the perimeter of Patrol Base



Dakota when the enemy initiated a daylight attack with hand grenades, one of which landed inside their sandbagged position. Without hesitation and with complete disregard for his own safety, Lance Corporal Carpenter moved toward the grenade in an attempt to shield his fellow Marine from the deadly blast. When the grenade detonated, his body absorbed

the brunt of the blast, severely wounding him, but saving the life of his fellow Marine. By his undaunted courage, bold fighting spirit, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of almost certain death, Lance Corporal Carpenter reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

—CHANGES in the CORPS—

Throughout the 239 years of its existence, the Marine Corps has gone through many evolutions to become the force of rediness it is and 2014 was no exception. The Corps saw many changes last year that included a change in leadership with the new Commandant taking charge. Marines also saw a change in their mission upon leaving combat roles in Helmand province, Afghanistan. The Corps’ saw various uniform changes for both male and female Marines. Units also changed with the deactivation of 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment among others. No matter the change, the Marine Corps’ mission to be America’s tip of the spear remains the same.

New Commandant:.....

Sun's out guns out:.....

Gen. James F. Amos the 35th Commandant of the Marine Corps passed command to Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr. on Oct.17, 2014. Upon taking command Dunford said his focus for the coming years was to make sure that the Marine Corps remains the expeditionary force in readiness that the nation has come to expect.

Marines depart Helmand province:...

After five years of combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan, U.S. Marines and British service members lowered the battle colors one last time aboard Camp Leatherneck on Oct. 26, 2014. Operational command of the base was handed off to the Afghan National Security Forces and all remaining elements of the Marine Expeditionary Brigade departed aboard C-17 fixed-wing aircraft on Oct. 27, 2014.

On March 9, 2014, Gen. James F. Amos announced the uniform change to have rolled sleeves with the desert utility uniform. Amos re-introduced the rolled sleeves to capture part of ‘the soul of the Corps’ that non-commissioned officers wanted back.

Deactivations:.....

1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, also known as ‘The Walking Dead’ due to their high casualty rates during the Vietnam War, rolled their battle colors up for the last time aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune Aug. 29, 2014. The year also saw the deactivation of Combat Center units to include ‘Dark Horse,’ 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, 7th Marine Regiment, May 30, 2014 and 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion, Aug. 5, 2014.

The Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force:.....

The GCEITF was created as part of the Marine Corps’ Force Integration Plan to conduct integrated, gender-neutral training in the execution of both individual and collective training tasks within designated ground combat arms occupational specialties. The GCEITF is led by Col. Matthew G. St. Clair and Sgt. Maj. Robin C. Fortner. Their training began October 2014 aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. Upon completion of an intensive 16-week training schedule aboard Camp Lejeune, the unit is scheduled to deploy for further training in 2015.



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CROSSWORD

Across

1 Shark movie
5 Busters' grp.
8 Hardly tepid
14 Orchestra wind
15 J.F.K. abbr.
16 Native of Muskogee
17 Alaska town
18 "Crystal Silence" jazzman
20 One of Sinatra's exes
21 Actress Lisa
22 Music symbol
23 Lineman?
27 Moves fast
28 Miniskirt style
29 Instruction to an equestrian
31 Hawkeye State native
34 Squawk, e.g.
37 Suitors pitch it
38 "All Summer Long" singer, 2008
40 Complexion
41 Remaining
42 Constrictor
43 "What do you ___?"
44 Won ___
45 Rorschach image
47 Pioneering multi-sport star
53 Witch's curse
54 Anticipate, as an arrival
55 Slightly twisted
56 Renowned chef
59 Perfume holder
60 Declare without proof
61 Progress too slowly
62 Herr Bismarck
63 Clam's cousin
64 Be positioned
65 "Stop pouring"

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Down

1 Bible book with a fish story
2 ___ suspicion
3 Femininity
4 Equal a bet
5 Sting elements
6 Start for -centric
7 Final word
8 Say "What?"
9 Legendary bird
10 Whatchamacallit
11 Energy giant that went bankrupt in 2001
12 Hair removal product
13 Refrain part
19 Egg box: Abbr.
21 First-round pass
24 Tiny parasite
25 Auto-financing co.
26 One in an order
29 Noah's number
30 Spared item
31 Wedding day phrase
32 IV sites
33 Job lot?
34 Exchanges words?
35 Pantyhose problem
36 As of now
38 Volume control
39 Skye of TV
43 Lo mein vessel
44 Prepares for takeoff
45 Four-hand amusement
46 Totally drunk
47 Chimes
48 "Camptown Races" syllable
49 Volunteer's cry
50 Part of a holy name
51 Give a grand speech
52 Snaggable fabric
53 Sitcom-streaming service
56 Flashy two-point basket
57 Get wrinkled?
58 Cartoon fan's keepsake
59 Oath

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Last editions answers

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- Main Street Motel, 3494 Main St.
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WHAT I'VE LEARNED

THE BEST OF

2014

CAPT. MARC SHELTON

.....

“I always ask Marines a question, ‘What is the opposite of success’. Usually Marines answer failure, and I respectfully tell them that is wrong. The opposite of success is quitting. Many people have tried and failed at many things, but they never quit. They never gave up. That is the mentality I try to instill into the Marines. Failure is a part of life, but quitting shouldn’t be.”



SGT. MAJ. ABEL LEAL

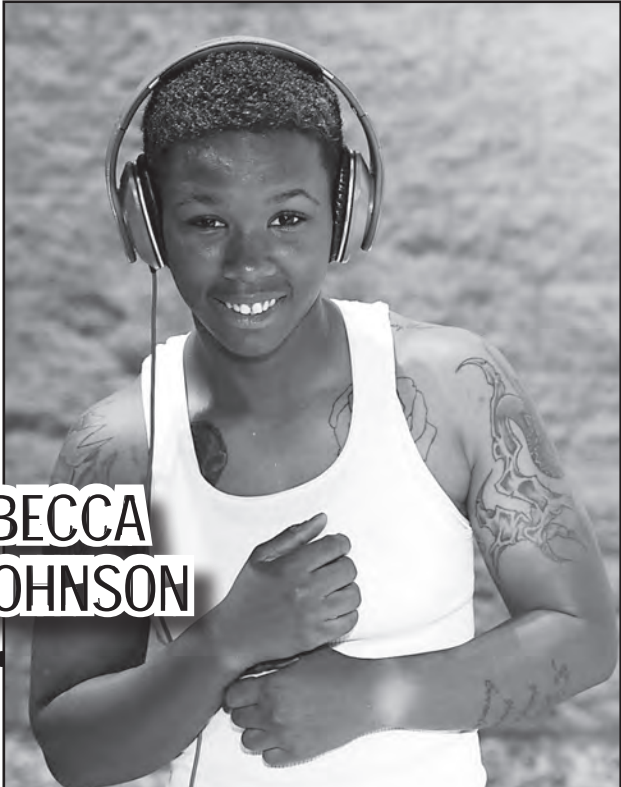
.....

“The things I learned growing up have helped me as a leader of Marines, in this position (as a battalion sergeant major) especially, because I understand that Marines are going to mess up. I’ve certainly messed up before. No one is perfect, but we deal with the issues and we help them by guiding them in the right direction. That’s what the Marine Corps did for me. It gave me direction.”

The What I’ve Learned section of the Observation Post provides a look into the unique characters who make up the Combat Center. It’s a place where friends, family and fellow Marines can gain insight into one another through their local newspaper. What I’ve Learned is a feature article compiled solely of quotes from the subject on how they live and see life. The subject relays their experiences and our writers simply transcribe it. The people displayed are faces of the community; they represent a part of us all.

RUTHEIA REBECCA
RASHAWN JOHNSON

.....



“In the Marine Corps, if you want something you have to work for it. Nothing is given, everything is earned. What the Marine Corps has taught me so far is if I want to pursue something, I have to go get it myself.”



CPL. RAMSEY CROW

.....

“The reason I volunteer is because I feel like I need to give back. Being a Marine is a huge honor but in a non-deployable status, why can’t we help out in the community and give back to them? If you’re not busy, why not donate your time to make a difference in someone else’s life?”

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ON THE RANGES

Marines have been fighting our nation’s wars for more than 200 years. A Marine’s fierce warfighting is rooted in the Corps’ ability to prepare unit’s for “any climb or place.” It takes places like the Combat Center to facilitate the training and keep Marines at their best at all times. The Installation does training year-round to ensure the readiness of Marines for any combat situation they may encounter. The environment here tests every Marine with its harsh conditions and mountainous terrain. Units come to keep themselves one step ahead of the rest and conduct pre-deployment training. Units partake in vigorous Integrated Training Exercises that test the knowledge and capabilities of every member of the team from the commanding officers to the fire team leaders. The Combat Center is the only base of its kind in the Marine Corps and it continues to train Marines for any mission.



A student with Infantry Officers Course 4-14, provides security for the extraction of American non-combatant role players after the long-range vertical insertion of a Company Landing Team during Exercise Talon Reach IV at Range 220, Sept. 19. The prospective infantry officers pointed a non-lethal laser at simulated protesters, which can cause nausea and disorientation.

PHOTO BY CPL. LAUREN A. KURKIMILIS



Lance Cpl. Joaquin Rodriguez, squad leader, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, and a native of Little Rock, Calif., delivers ammunition to a machine gun position during a live-fire exercise at Range 410A at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., Jan. 19. The battalion conducted platoon attacks at the range for the first event of their Integrated Training Exercise. ITX is a 30-day training evolution to prepare them for their upcoming combat deployment. The platoon attacks consisted of an assault on three entrenched positions with mortar and machine gun fire.

PHOTO BY CPL. JOSEPH SCANLAN



A Marine with Company I, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, fires the M136 AT4 rocket launcher during exercises conducted by the company at Range 104 April 11. The Marines were evaluated on their skills with the weapon system.

PHOTO BY CPL. LAUREN A. KURKIMILIS

Seaman Derek Jackson, Shock Trauma Platoon, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, is examined with an ultrasound to check for internal injuries while role-playing as an injured combatant during Final Exercise I of the Weapons and Tactics Instructors Course at Sandy Hills, Combat Center training area, Oct. 14. Each role-player had injuries ranging in severity, requiring different methods of treatment.

PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. THOMAS MUDD



Marines transport Capt. Anthony Bradbury, simulated downed pilot, Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 467, to a CH-53 Super Stallion for evacuation during a Tactical Recovery of Air crew and Personnel exercise, March 15. The aircraft was the primary means for insertion and extraction for the training exercise.

PHOTO BY CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIA



Lance Cpl. Bryan League, team leader, 2nd Battalion 4th Marines, 5th Marine Regiment, ascends a mountain side during a cliff assault at Sardine Rock Face, Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center, June 16.

PHOTO BY CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIA

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Foreign Friends

The Combat Center trains more than just Marines, every year foreign militaries come to train aboard the installation. The Combat Center’s environment helps prepare any force, U.S. or international, for a variety of situations that can be encountered in a combat zone. These training events have given the base a chance to show how it keeps Marines ready for any mission. Whether the Marines are demonstrating the techniques they have been taught or performing bilateral movements with U.S. allies, the Combat Center has been ready to take on the challenges of training them. Units also have the opportunity to teach each other the techniques and strategies they use during missions. The Combat Center continues to offer training to keep U.S. forces and its allies one step ahead of challenges yet to come.



The United Arab Emirates soldiers kneel ready to engage targets on Range 108, Combat Center, training area, Sept. 18. This training environment prepared the UAE soldiers to use techniques in similar scenarios. PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. THOMAS MUDD



Lance Cpl. Gary Goldman, exercise advisor, 3rd Light Armor Reconnaissance Battalion, instructs two United Arab Emirate soldiers during room clearing exercises at Range 111, Combat Center training area, Sept. 17. The UAE soldiers went through several runs entering the room to make sure they entered efficiently. PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. THOMAS MUDD



Cpl. Jesse Leight, exercise advisor, 3rd Light Armor Reconnaissance Battalion, helps a United Arab Emirate soldier place and set his weapon while on Range 108, Combat Center training area, Sept. 18. The UAE soldiers were on Range 108 to learn how to preform fire and maneuver tactics. PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. THOMAS MUDD

1st Lt. Ahmed Alremaithy, United Arab Emirates Military, travels to the tree line of the Mountain Warfare Training Center’s training area during an insertion, June 17. Echo Co. and attached elements coordinated together after insertion into the training area and proceeded to seize the objective that was being held by simulated enemy forces. PHOTO BY CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIA



Col. Jaroslaw Gromadzinski, Chief of Land Forces Use and Analysis Division, J3, General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces and Maj. Jerzy Kania, training staff, J-7 Training Directorate, General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces observe a fire support team with 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment performing firing missions during a mobile assault course in a corridor of the Combat Center’s training area, July 27. PHOTO BY CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIA



Capt. Jorge Colon, fire support coordinator, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, Capt. Joel Katz, forward air controller, 3rd LAR, and Sgt. Michael A. Kinne, fires faculty advisor, Marine Corps Tactics and Operations Group, conduct preparations before a fire support team exercise for Polish Army officers at the Supporting Arms Virtual Trainer, July 28. PHOTO BY CPL. CHARLES SANTAMARIA

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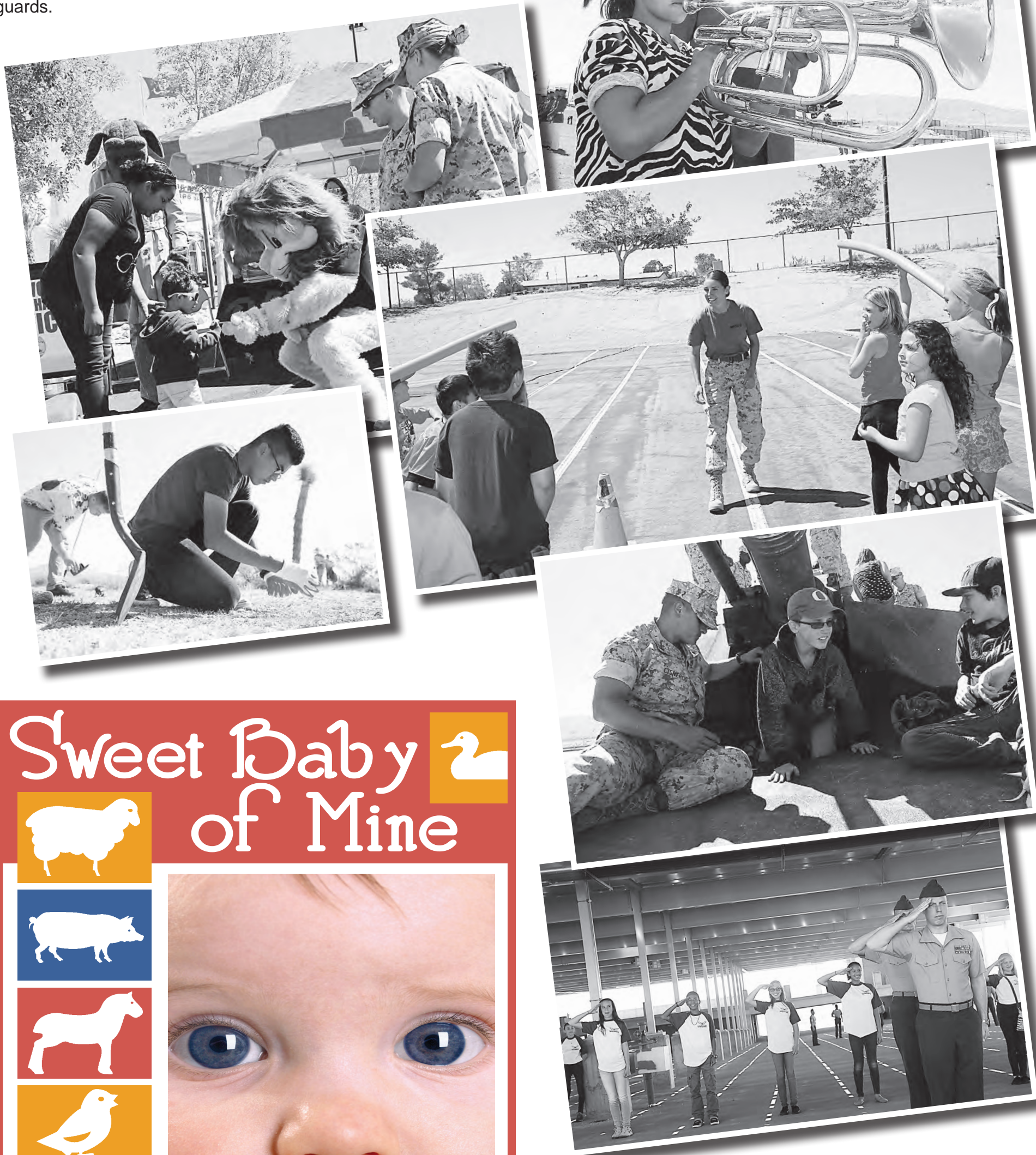
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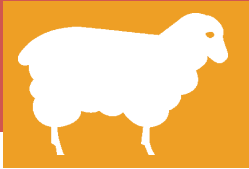
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part of the COMMUNITY

Throughout 2014, Combat Center Marines worked diligently to support local events and organizations around the Morongo Basin. The partnerships and relationships developed through these events provide the Combat Center with the ability to give back to the community, which supports the installation and the mission of its service members. Throughout the year, the Combat Center coordinated various visits and community relations events, on and off base, including Adopt-a-School, job shadowing, Gifted and Talented Education site visits, Red Ribbon Week, Read Across America Week, Earth Day clean-ups, community partnerships with the local chambers and school district, parades, static displays, guest speakers, K-9 demonstrations and color guards.



Sweet Baby of Mine



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A Hero's Welcome: Staff Sgt. Dodson returns to Combat Center



3rd CEB fathers, daughters share special night



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"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

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TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM by Lou Gerhardt



For the third time in several weeks I want to share with you a brief essay by a seminary professor of mine at pacific School of Religion, Berkley. Dr. Howard Thurman has given us post holiday thoughts that we should read again and again.

Work of Christmas
When the song of the angels is stilled.
When the star in the sky is gone.
When the kings and the princes are home.
When the shepherds are back with their flock.
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost.
To heal the broken.
To feed the hungry.
To release the prisoner.
To rebuild the nations.
To bring peace among brothers.
To make music in the heart.

I also want to share with you words from an unknown writer.

The New Leaf
He came to my desk with quivering lip—
The lesson was done.
"Dear Teacher, I want a new leaf," he said
"I have spoiled this one."
I took the old leaf, stained and blotted,
And gave him a new one, all unspotted,
And into his sad eyes smiled:
"Do better now, my child!"

I went to the Throne with a quivering soul—
The old year was done.
"Dear Father, hast Thou a new leaf for me?"
"I have spoiled this one."
He took the old leaf, stained and blotted,
And gave me a new one, all unspotted,
And into my sad heart smiled:
"Do better now, my child!"

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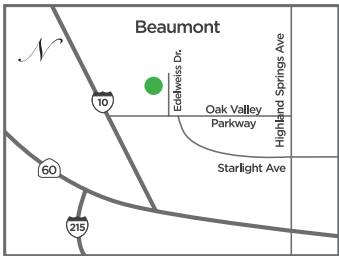
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**Year in
REVIEW
 Combat
 Center
 SPORTS**

2014



It is a Marine's job to maintain readiness; so it is only natural that physical activity would be a part of their day-to-day lives. This year in sports was rife with competition, losses, and wins. Marines from across the globe competed against one another during the Combat Center Warrior Games. They were also able to race each other in a run for the Marine Corps' 239th birthday and participated in several intramural sports such as basketball, football, soccer and golf. Whether it is personally or professionally, Marines are always looking for ways to better themselves and those around them. Marine Corps Community Services provided Marines aboard the Combat Center the opportunity to continue to get out, and pursue a variety of challenges.





Combat Center Events

The Combat Center Library is holding a Science night at Bldg. 1524, Jan. 22. The event is open to school-aged children and will have hands-on experiments and demonstrations. For more information call 760-830-6875.

The East gym is hosting the 2014 Winter Dodge ball League. The season will run from Jan. 26 through March 9. Teams are limited to six players per team. For more information call 760-830-4092.

The Winter Basket Ball League is slated to begin Jan. 12 at the East Gym. The league will run from Jan. 12 to April 23. For more information call 760-830-4092.

The MCCS Community Center is running the First Step & Youth Basketball league. The League is open to children ages 3-15. For more information call 760-830-8421.

The monthly Fun Family Friday is scheduled to be held at the Community Center. The family night provides events like free movies game night and other activities for families to do together. For more information call 760-830-3910

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Jan. 9
6 p.m. – The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 1, PG-13
8:30 p.m. – Birdman, R
11:30 p.m. – The Pyramid, R

Saturday, Jan. 10
10:30 a.m. – Chicken Run, G
12:30 p.m. – Penguins of Madahascar, PG
2:30 p.m. – Birdman, R
5:30 p.m. – Horrible Bosses 2, R
8 p.m. – Theory of Everything, PG-13
11 pm – Pyramid, R

Sunday, Jan. 11
12 p.m. – Annie, PG
7:30 p.m. – Top Five, R

Monday, Jan. 12
6 p.m. – The Theory of Everything, PG-13

Tuesday, Jan. 13
6 p.m. – Top Five, R

Wednesday, Jan. 14
5 p.m. – Penguins of Madagascar, PG
7 p.m. – The Pyramid, R

Thursday, Jan. 15
5 p.m. – The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 1
7:30 p.m. – Birdman, R

Friday, Jan. 16
4 p.m. – Lilo & Stich, PG
6 p.m. – Annie, PG
8:30 p.m. – Horrible Bosses 2, R
11 p.m. – Top Five, R



Disney version of fairy-tale mash-up musical hits all the right notes

NEIL POND

“Into the Woods”
Starring Meryl Streep, James Cordon & Emily Blunt
Directed by Rob Marshall
PG

Composer Stephen Sondheim’s award-winning 1987 Broadway play, a marvelously intertwined tapestry of several Grimm fairy tales laced with decidedly grown-up themes, debuts on the big screen with an all-star cast—and enough Disney tweaking to make it marketable to younger audiences.

Sondheim’s musical mash-up takes well-known characters from “Little Red Riding Hood,” “Jack in the Beanstalk,” “Rapunzel” and “Cinderella,” adds a few others, and puts them all on a woodland collision course of fate and fortune—and sometimes, alas, misfortune.

“Anything can happen in the woods,” goes a line in one of the songs.

And it certainly does, as a kindly baker (James Cordon) and his wife (Emily Blunt) embark on a journey to find the magical ingredients that will break a generational curse cast by a witch (Meryl Streep) that has prevented them from having a child.

Before they go, they send Little Red Riding Hood (Lilla Crawford) traipsing off with a basket of baked goods to see her granny. Soon enough, they come across Cinderella (Anna Kendrick) fleeing from an arduous prince (Chris Pine), and the young village peasant Jack (Daniel Huddleston), whose trade of a beloved milk cow for some magic beans will come to have calamitous effects for everyone.

As anyone familiar with the musical knows, Sondheim’s storyline and wonderfully clever, crafty songs work on multiple levels. They

traffic in some serious, decidedly heavy topics—parenting, choices, decisions, guilt, forgiveness, infidelity, murder and mortality. But they pack in some soft, tender moments, too, and some hilarious highlights, as well. Younger kids may think Johnny Depp’s two-scene cameo as The (big, bad) Wolf is just a howl-y hoot, but adults will easily catch the “sumptuous carnality” in the role’s campy pedophilic undertones. And you won’t come across many more amusing surprises than “Agony,” the preening, prancing “prince”-off duet between Chris Pine and Billy Magnussen, whose royal character yearns for the tower-trapped damsel with the golden hair, Rapunzel (Mackenzie Mauzy).

Other recognizable faces include Tracey Ullman as Jack’s Mother and Christine Baranski as Cinderella’s step-mother. Everyone sings, and does a terrific job. You might have known

Streep and Kendrick, from previous movies, had the pipes for their roles, but prepared to be blown away by everyone else, especially Blunt (who was—ironically—pregnant during much of the shoot) and Cordon, who you’ll be seeing even more of when he takes over The Late Late Show on CBS in March.

This fractured fairy tale might get a bit grim, especially for overly sensitive little ones; it was never intended as a sweet-dreams bedtime story. Disney has softened some of its coarser edges and made other modifications, but the “Be careful what you wish for” morality-tale message in the show’s not-always-so-happily-ever-after remains intact.

Yes, anything can happen in the woods. Who knows, you might find magic beans, witches, princes, big bad wolves, and much more—like the year’s best, most delightful, star-packed movie musical.

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Taken 3 (PG13)
12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30
Unbroken (PG13)
12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30
The Hobbit: The Battle of The Five Armies (PG13)
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