

MCAGCC hosts Combat Religious Ministry Team training



RP2 Anderson Miller, native of Detroit, Mich., and Navy Lt. Kamille Williams, native of Atlanta, Ga., take cover during the Combat Center's Chaplain and Religious Program Specialist Expeditionary Training, Jan. 20. This training evolution provided a way to train the chaplain to learn how to respond to security commands provided by the RP.

STORY AND PHOTO BY
LANCE CPL. MEDINA
AYALA-LO

A squad patrols through the desert, but this squad is unlike any other. As they patrol, everything is calm, until gun shots ring out. Members of the squad return suppressive fire and a religious program specialist quickly gets his chaplain to safety.

The Combat Center hosted Combat Religious Ministry Team Training, Jan. 20. The exercise was held to condition Religious Ministry Teams for combat situations and is the first of its kind.

"When the units go through training in ITX, they don't really provide individual training for the chaplains and RPs," said Navy Capt. Steven Moses, Combat Center Chaplain, native of Louisiana. "So we're putting them in a situation where they understand how to be on a patrol and how to respond to emergencies as a team."

RMTs are composed
See **Ministry page A6**



RP2 Anderson Miller, native of Detroit, Mich., and Lt. Kamille Williams, native of Atlanta, Ga., take cover during the Combat Center's Chaplain and Religious Program Specialist Expeditionary Training on range 215, Jan. 20. The religious ministry teams were conditioned on what to do in the event of being in a combat zone, and how to provide field worship services.

New Tax Center helps Marines with 2014 filing

BY LANCE CPL. JULIO
MCGRAW

Tax season is here again and the Combat Center Tax Center opened its doors, Wednesday, to assist base patrons with this year's taxes.

The Tax Center has a new location this year at Bldg. 1110-R1 on Brown Rd. between Adobe Rd. and 1st St. and provides service members, dependents and retirees the help they need to prepare their 2014 taxes.

"Our goal for whoever walks into our office

is to have them leave knowing they got the best possible service and the largest tax return possible," said Gunnery Sgt. Ian Moore, staff non-commissioned officer in charge, Tax Center.

According to Moore the only charge for the tax service is, the time it takes to go in and prepare the taxes. The Tax Center employs 14 Marines, who have trained with the Internal Revenue Service and the California State Franchise Tax Board to

help Service Members with tax situations unique to the military.

"We are good at what we do," said Cpl. Randy Johnson, tax preparer, Tax Center. "We understand special situations in the military and we can relate to the [service members] to better help them more than a tax center out in town."

The Tax Center is open Monday through Thursday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. The services are done free of charge and taken on a walk-in basis or by appointment.

The documents needed are W-2 tax forms and any other documents that provide proof of income. Other documents for claims would include receipts from business expenses, loans or proof of mortgage are examples.

Although tax extensions are available, the tax deadline is Apr. 16 and the Tax Center staff recommends that taxes be filed sooner rather than later to avoid any delays on tax returns. For more information contact the Tax Center at 760-830-4829.

First Sergeant leads from front



1st Sgt. Frank Robinson, Company A First Sergeant, Headquarters Battalion, shakes the hand of Lt. Col. Dennis Sanchez, HQBN Commanding Officer, aboard the Combat Center, after being pinned with a Purple Heart and a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Jan. 22. Marines from HQBN congratulated Robinson after the citation and awards were given.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
LANCE CPL. THOMAS MUDD

TWENTYNINE PALMS, Calif. - Frank O. Robinson, Company A First Sergeant, headquarters battalion, native of Baltimore, Md., received a Purple Heart and a Navy Commendation Medal with valor aboard the Combat Center, Jan. 22.

Robinson received a Purple Heart Medal for wounds sustained in Afghanistan on Aug. 10, 2014 and received the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for his actions while serving as Weapons Company first sergeant for 1st battalion, 7th Marine regiment, Marine Expeditionary Brigade Afghanistan, from March 2014 to Sept. 2014.

"I am truly humbled to be able to award the Purple Heart and a navy commendation with a combat distinguishing device for valor to an outstanding Marine," said Lt. Col. Dennis Sanchez, commanding officer, HQBN. "Moments like this brings to mind the statistic that only one percent of Americans join the armed forces."

Robinson was engaged by small arms fire and rocket propelled grenades that sent rounds and shrapnel into the side of his vehicle. After repositioning his vehicle to gain positive identification of

See **Award page A6**

Measles outbreak taking toll on unvaccinated

BY NAVY LT. DANIEL
CROUCH

California State health officials have announced a measles outbreak that originated in southern California. As of January 21, a total of 59 cases have been confirmed. San Bernardino County currently has two confirmed measles cases.

Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms Public Health department is working with the county and base medical facilities to increase awareness of measles.

Symptoms of measles include high fever, cough, and a red skin rash. Measles is highly contagious and can travel to others through coughing and sneezing. It is so contagious that if one person has it, 90% of the people close to that person, who are not immune, will also become infected. Infected people can spread measles to others from four days before to four days after the rash appears.

The best way to prevent measles is vaccination with the Measles, Mumps, and Rubella vaccine. Since children under 5 years old are at greatest risk for infection and complications, vaccination among children is critical. Ask

your provider if your child is up to date with an MMR vaccine.

NHTP invites beneficiaries over one year of age to come and get an MMR vaccine if they have not previously been vaccinated. To learn more about measles, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/vaccination.html>.

Treatment for measles consists of reducing patient symptoms and an MMR vaccine if indicated by a provider. Patients should contact their primary care team if they or their children develop rash and fever.

Twenty-four-hour nurse advice is available via the Tricare Nurse Advice Line at 1-800-Tricare (874-2273). If a patient needs to speak to their provider, call the NHTP appointment line at 760-830-2752. They can also email their provider at www.relayhealth.com for specific questions about measles.

If patients suspect that they or their child has measles while visiting NHTP for a medical appointment, they should remain outside the clinic doors and a clinician will assist them. This way NHTP can provide you the treatment needed without infecting others in the clinic.



Reprinted from the Observation Post
January 30, 2008

Mad Ghost bring Mayhem from the Heartland to Iraq

BY LANCE CPL. NICHOLAS DUNN

The Marines and sailors of 2nd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, also known as the “Mad Ghosts,” joined the ranks of activated reserve units when they deployed to Iraq from the Combat Center Jan. 21 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The battalion first came to the Combat Center in September 2007 to participate in the 30-day pre-deployment training package, dubbed Mojave Viper. After building basic infantry skills on the Combat Center ranges, they began Mojave Viper in late November of that year.

Upon completion of Mojave Viper Dec. 21, 2007, 2/24 took a well-deserved period of block leave to see their families one last time before their deployment. When the battalion returned in early January of this year, they sent their advanced party to Iraq to prepare for their deployment.

Now, the entire battalion has deployed to Iraq. The majority of the Marines and sailors departed the Combat Center Jan 21. The rest of the battalion left later that week. This is their second deployment to Iraq since their mobilization in June 2004.

“I volunteered to come out of IRR [Individual Ready Reserve] status to deploy with 2/24, so I’m really excited to go,” said Lance Cpl. Dan Schramm, squad automatic weapon gunner, Fox Company, 2/24. “I’m a patriot and I came back because I feel I have a moral obligation to serve my nation.”

Schramm added that Iraq is in a crucial period of their history, and he feels the American military presence there providing security is a necessity for Iraqi leaders to be able to make appropriate decisions for their country to stand up on its own.

During their first deployment to Iraq, the battalion operated North Babil Province of Iraq and was successful in capturing more than 1,000 insurgents during the first democratic elections in Iraq, keeping true to their motto “Mayhem from the Heartland.” They were distinguished as the first Marine Forces Reserve battalion to operate independently in Iraq. Their commanders feel they will have similar success on this deployment.

“I think reserve units bring unique capabilities to the fight were in,” said Maj. Guillermo Rosales, Fox Company commander, 2/24. “Our Marines are professionals in the outside world-everything from police officers to carpenters. They’re all in the right mindset, but also have additional skills they can bring to the deployment and help us to be successful.”

Rosales also feels Mojave Viper effectively trained his Marines for their deployment and the training will add the battalion’s success.

“Mojave Viper is a great training program,” he said. “It exercises every individual rifleman, small-unit leader and commander. The Marine Corps has done it right to prepare us for the rigors of deployment.”

Overall, the battalion seemed excited as they prepared for their deployment to Iraq, despite the dangers of a hostile environment.

“I’m eager to return to Iraq to see the positive changes that have occurred since our last deployment,” said Schramm.

The Marines and sailors of 2/24 departed for the seven-month deployment to Iraq and will serve the Marine Corps supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. The battalion is expected to return in August 2008.

CROSSWORD

Across

1 Swedish auto

5 Tijuana beach

10 Actor Sharif

14 Florence's river

15 Competitive boater

16 Prefix meaning "trillionth"

17 Comic actress who wrote the memoir "Not That Kind of Girl"

19 Taverns

20 Head start

21 Ranch visitors

22 Lassies' friends

26 Opposition

28 Numbskulls

29 Wind instrument

30 Home folks

33 Turkey topper

34 Concisely, briefly

35 To some extent

36 Oilstone

37 Make like a peacock

38 Airline to Israel

39 Exec's accessory

40 Attach, as a badge

41 ____-Lay (food brand)

42 OTC offering

43 F ____ "Frank"

44 Check

45 Parolee, perhaps

47 Bridge misplays

48 Kindle

50 Pear choice

51 Tiny amount

52 Comic actress who wrote the memoir "Yes, Please"

58 Cunning tactic

59 Critic, at times

60 Like garage floors

61 Certain offspring

62 i.e., for long

63 Actress McClurg

Down

1 Mule of song

2 "Where ____ we?"

3 Beach Boys hit "Barbara ____"

4 It can put the squeeze on you

5 They're no fun

6 Director Fritz and singer k.d.

7 Gut feeling

8 Thumbs up vote

9 Supply with heat

10 Smuggled stuff

11 Comic actress who wrote the memoir "Is Everyone Hanging Out Without Me? (And Other Concerns)"

12 Teen's torment

13 Famous flagmaker

18 Pan, e.g.

21 Believe

22 Illuminates

23 Quick-witted

24 Comic actress who wrote the memoir "Then Again"

25 Ivory alternative

26 TV Buddy

27 This may be proper

29 Tie ____

31 Requiring overtime

32 Hosiery

34 Pro golfer Hale

37 Cuernavaca coin

38 Iroquoian people

40 Drop the quarterback

41 Field enclosure

44 Spa spot

46 Fracture finders

47 Lassoes

48 Drinks politely

49 Horseback game

50 High-tech unit

52 Yellowfin tuna, on some menus

53 Like some scientists

54 Long-handled tool

55 Pupil's cover

56 Yale alum

57 Kind of whiskey

SUDOKU

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Last week's answers

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- Club San Diego, 3955 Fourth St.

- Get It On Shoppe, 3219 Mission Blvd.

- Main Street Motel, 3494 Main St.

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

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- 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

Frank

Baltimore, Md. 1st Sgt., company A, headquarters battalion, 38

ROBINSON

> I was next to the youngest. There's a 17 year gap between my oldest brother and me. By the time I got old enough to realize, 'these are my brothers and sisters' it was really just me, my younger brother and my sister. So we were the only three left in the house at that point.

> There are seven of us total in my family, four boys, three girls. I have three boys and two girls.

> One thing I can say is my brothers, and my dad more than anybody, had a huge influence on me and my development from being a boy to a man. I could say that it was a great childhood. I grew up in a disciplined household. Discipline was the focal point and my dad made sure of that.

> It wasn't a shock factor for me, coming into the Marine Corps. One huge thing that I learned growing up was to be held accountable for your actions and to make sure you think through situations before you make decisions. I think it definitely helped me throughout my career.

> In my household, my dad gave us two options, 'college or the military.' It wasn't going to be, 'you work and then stay at the house,' it was one or the other. I knew I wasn't ready for college at 18 years old, so I decided just to look at all the branches of the military. The Marine Corps was the first stop I made. I was so thoroughly impressed with the mindset of Marines that I didn't have to go any further.

> I joined the Marine Corps in 1995. My first four years, I couldn't wait to get out, and four years went by really quick, and I realized that one, I didn't have a degree and two, I didn't have any money saved up, so I re-enlisted. After I went to the drill field and became a drill instructor, I knew I was staying for the long haul.

> Being on the drill field takes you all the way back to what it means to be a Marine, and what it takes to make a Marine. When you're going through boot camp as a recruit you don't get to see that but when you're a drill instructor you get to see the transformation first-hand. It completely changed the way I look at the Marine Corps as a whole.

> I love going to the gym, and spending time

with my family, no matter what it is. It could just be watching movies or out in the yard playing.

> I love studying and watching military tactics. I love the military channel and I will stay up until two o'clock in the morning, watching something and trying to understand military tactics.

> Being a Marine means the world to me. It means the same thing to me as the [air] in my lungs. I love the camaraderie, the brotherhood and the long, rich, illustrious history that surrounds the Corps. I couldn't picture or see myself doing anything else.

> I've been to a lot of units. I've been with base, I've been with the air wing, I've been with infantry and I've been in [the Marine Logistics Group]. I've seen a lot, so I think that bringing experience from all over the MAGTF will definitely assist with the mission here at Headquarters Battalion.

> One thing I would want my Marines to know about me is that I care for each and every last one of them. I want to see them successful at all costs. I don't want to see any of them fail and even if I'm disciplining them, I still want them to know that I care about them.

> I think one of the things that had the biggest impact on me was graduating my first platoon as a drill instructor and the sense of accomplishment I had behind that. That was probably one of the proudest days; it's almost like a dad watching one of his kids graduate high school or something of that nature.

> The second one was my time with [1st battalion, 7th Marine Regiment], Weapons Company. To go into Afghanistan with all of the uncertainty, against a determined enemy and be able to bring all 119 Marines back. That was huge for me because when you go into combat situations you don't know how it's going to turn out.

> One thing I can say about my wife is she is the most honest person to me when it comes to being a Marine. She doesn't hold anything back and she definitely keeps me grounded and on my toes. I go to her for advice in general and I think we have a great relationship in the aspect of communication.

> I try to make sure that the Marine Corps



and my family life are completely separate because it already affects them: the deployments, the long hours, things like that. My seven-year-old talks about it all the time, she actually says she wants to be a Marine.

> I really got into physical fitness, five or six years ago. It extends far beyond being a Marine to me because one day you have to hang this uniform up and I still want to be healthy.

> As a young Marine, I wanted to be a drill instructor, but I was kind of on the fence about staying in. I knew if I did, I wanted to be a drill instructor. My drill instructors inspired me as a recruit and you never forget those individuals who were a vital part in that transformation.

> I want to be able to assist, mold, mentor, and teach, Marines. It does nothing for me to have 20 years in the Marine Corps and keep all of that information and knowledge with me when I leave. So I think the biggest piece is to help others reach their goals and try to be an inspiration to all Marines.

INTERVIEWED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY LANCE CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO



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7th Marine Regiment main

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY LANCE CPL. JULIO
MCGRAW

Smoke rises from the ground and tear gas billows out of canisters, engulfing the Marines of 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment. Riflemen settle into fighting holes, amidst cold winds and harsh desert conditions, while quickly equipping their gas masks.

Marines with 7th Marine Regiment participated in the Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation Exercise aboard the Combat Center, Jan. 12-21. MCREE allowed Marines from 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment to peer-review their counterparts in 3/7 in order to better prepare them for their upcoming deployment. 3/7 is currently slated to deploy as part of Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force - Crisis Response - Central Command 15-2 in support of operations in the region.

“MCREE is a series of live-fire and dry-fire field exercises that a unit gets evaluated on [while] receiving feedback from another battalion in the regiment,” said Capt. Kevin Fallon, Company Commander, Company I, 3/7. ” In our case, [1st Battalion 7th Marines] evaluated us.”

Throughout the exercise Marines from 1/7 evaluated their counterparts in 3/7 by giving them constructive feedback on their performance.

“This training is a pre-requisite for deployment and the Integrated Training Exercise held here at the [Combat Center],” Fallon said. “The only difference is that in this exercise we are evaluated at a more internal level by the regiment.”

The 10-day field exercise consisted of different missions spanning over several ranges aboard the Combat Center. The missions were

similar to what a Marine Air-Ground Task Force could encounter while deployed.

“It was a good way to flex our muscles on certain things that we usually do, but this time we could execute it with all of the moving parts on a battalion level,” Fallon said.

3/7 Headquarters and Service Company set up a forward operating base and supported Companies I, K, and L through their runs of the ranges.

The three companies of 3/7 conducted exercises that included a 20-kilometer movement-to-contact and dug-in a defensive posture with fighting holes. While there, the Marines were tested on their ability to set-up and react to both physical and chemical attacks.

A company-level helicopter assault on a Military Operation on Urbanized Terrain town was also conducted with the use of MV-22B ‘Osprey’ tilt-rotor aircraft.

In the following days, the unit also conducted a dry-fire rehearsal and live-fire offensive operation at the Morgan’s Well training area and the MOUT Town on Range 210.

At Range 210, Amphibious Assault Vehicles from Company D, 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion and M1A1 Abrams Tanks from 1st Tank Battalion, Company B, supported each of the companies as they cleared objectives.

According to Fallon, with the feedback given by 1/7 during MCREE, Marines of 3/7 plan on improving their operational skills and maintain readiness for any type of task given to them.

“The feedback 1/7 gave us is definitely of great value and will be implemented to make our Company and our Battalion be better prepared for what lies ahead,” Fallon said.



Cpl. Paul Regotti, squad leader, Company I , 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, provides security for Marines exiting a MV-22B ‘Osprey’ tilt-rotor aircraft during an air assault on a Military Operation on Urbanized Terrain town during the Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation Exercise, Jan. 16.



Lance Cpl. Tyler McCabe, rifleman, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, a native of Flowery Branch, Ga., sets up his infrared sight attached to his M27 Infantry Automatic Rifle during a night live-fire exercise at the Morgan’s Well Training area during the Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation Exercise, Jan. 18. The 10-day exercise tested 3/7’s abilities in defensive positions and offensive objectives.

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An M1A1 Abrams Tank from 1st Tank Battalion, Company B, fires its 120 mm main gun toward a target 1200 meters away during an assault on a Military Operation in Urban Terrain town on Range 210 during the Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation Exercise, Jan. 20. '1st Tanks' and 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion supported 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment during their assault of the MOUT.



Lance Cpl. Michael Caliendo, rifleman, Company I, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, a native of Neptune City, N.J., fires blank rounds from an M249 Squad Automatic Weapon during an air-assault on a Military Operation on Urbanized Terrain town during a Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation Exercise aboard the Combat Center, Jan. 16.



1st Lt. Joseph Carroll, Company I Executive Officer, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, a native of Norwood, Mass. looks on as an MV-22B 'Osprey' takes off during an air assault on a Military Operation on Urbanized Terrain town during the Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation Exercise, Jan.16. The exercise tested each company of 3/7 on their ability to perform offensive operations.



Pfc. Vincent Adames, native of San Antonio, and Pfc. William Estrada, native of Fontana, Calif., riflemen, Company I, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, watch their sectors of fire during an attack with 2-Chlorobenzalmalononitrile, also known as CS Gas, during the Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation Exercise, Jan.15. The exercise tested the defensive response of 3/7 while tear gas engulfed the area.



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Ministry from page A1

of a chaplain and an RP. They are a unique commodity in the Marine Corps because while the RP is a trained combatant, the chaplain isn't. The RP's sole responsibility is to provide security for the chaplain.

"We're not combatants as chaplains, but that doesn't mean we can't help," said Lt. Cmdr. Arthur Wiggins, Jr., 4th Marine Regiment Chaplain, native of Durham, N.C. "Our RP is our body guard, they're going to try to protect us, so the sooner we find cover and help them do their job, then we're also helping the situation."

The training event was held on Range 215 and went through a variety of scenarios. The RMT's were familiarized with how to respond to different situations. They reviewed what to do when they go out with the operating forces, such as how to conduct field worship services and perform first aid. For this exercise there were eight RMT's, 30 Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School students, and 35 Tactical Training Exercise Control Group role players.

"I believe the Marines who are taking them out on patrols are learning a lot about what it means to be a chaplain, because it's kind of a unique thing," Moses said. "When everyone thinks of the chaplain, I think they think that the chaplain comes and provides services, but the chaplain also has to be out there with Marines."

The hope is to conduct this training at least five times a year, during every ITX, and have a different set of RMT's cycle through each time.

"This is training that every chaplain needs," Wiggins said. "This is the training that's going to be helpful, not only for the chaplain and RP but also for the Marines, to help keep them spiritually fit and keep them alive."



Navy Lt. Michael T. Slaughter, chaplain, Combat Logistics Battalion 7, native of Ocala, Fla., calls in after hearing shots fired during the Combat Center's Chaplain and Religious Program Specialist Expeditionary Training on range 215, Jan. 20. For this exercise there were eight RMTs, 30 Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School students, and 35 Tactical Training Exercise Control Group role players.



An improvised explosive device stops a convoy during the Combat Center's Chaplain and Religious Program Specialist Expeditionary Training on range 215, Jan. 20. This training evolution tested a Religious Ministry Teams response in the event of being in a combat zone.

Award from page A1



1st Sgt. Frank Robinson, Company A first sergeant, Headquarters Battalion, stands at attention after receiving a Purple Heart and a Navy Marine Corps Commendation Medal aboard the Combat Center, Jan. 22.

the targets, he engaged the enemy with his vehicle and the vehicle next to him. His actions lead to a successful engagement of the enemy while in Afghanistan.

"I have no doubt in my mind that America woke up today and forgot that we are still fighting a war," Sanchez said. "What is intangible and not mentioned in the [citation] is that his leadership and guidance in combat probably saved the lives of his fellow Marines on a daily basis."

Robinson served his Marines with dedication and led them to complete objectives while in Afghanistan. He plans on using the same drive to serve in HQBN.

"I could not have done this without the Marines I served for," Robinson said. "I say 'served for' because as a first sergeant I don't serve with you, you don't serve me, I serve you. Colin Powel once said, 'There are no secrets to success. So don't go looking for it. Success is a direct result of hard work and learning from failure.' That is what those Marines did."



1st Sgt. Frank Robinson, Company A first sergeant, Headquarters Battalion, speaks to Marines of HQBN after receiving a Purple Heart and Navy Marine Corps Commendation Medal aboard the Combat Center, Jan. 22. Robinson's leadership helped his Marines complete their objectives while in combat situations.

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Camp Wilson holds pre ITX 2-15 movie premier



Marines and sailors enjoy a free showing of “American Sniper” at Camp Wilson, Jan. 21. The Camp Wilson officer in charge wanted to provide the service members a chance to relax before the 30-day Integrated Training Exercise 2-15 began, Jan. 22.



Lance Cpl. Cornelius Thompson, supply administrative specialist, Combat Logistics Battalion 1, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., scoops popcorn to serve Marines and sailors during a free screening of “American Sniper” at Camp Wilson, Jan. 21. The United Service Organizaton, Camp Wilson personnel, Single Marine Program and Marine Corps Community Services worked together to present the movie to approximately 2,000 Marines and sailors before the beginning of Integrated Training Exercise 2-15.



Lance Cpl. Bradley Wilson, rifleman, 4th Marine Division, waits patiently for the movie to begin during a free screening of “American Sniper” at Camp Wilson, Jan. 21.



Marines patiently wait and converse among themselves prior to a free showing of “American Sniper” at Camp Wilson, Jan. 21. At the event, the Marines and sailors were offered free snacks and beverages to enjoy during the movie.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. OLIVIA DAY

Marines walk into Bldg. 5407 at Camp Wilson, tired and hungry, and are greeted by a United Service Organization volunteer. They are offered a smorgasbord of food, including chips, hotdogs, popcorn and an assortment of drinks. They then take their seats and prepare to watch a free screening of “American Sniper.”

Marines and sailors attend a movie night hosted by the Palm Springs United Services Organizations, Single Marine Program, Marine Corps Community Service and Camp Wilson personnel at Camp Wilson to help boost morale and motivate them for the upcoming Integrated Training Exercise 2-15, Jan. 21.

The director of the Palm Springs USO, Thersa Cherry, contacted Maj. Yanni Athanasiadis, officer in charge, Exercise Logistics Center.

“Right before they start training, there’s not much going on and everyone is here, that’s why we chose this week.” Athanasiadis, who is also known as the ‘Mayor of Camp Wilson’ said. “The Marines seem to be in good spirits and anytime the USO is able to get involved with the service members, it’s a good thing.”

The number of Marines and sailors who attended the event rose so high, that a second showing of the movie was offered. Approximately 400 Marines and sailors attended the free screening. This is the first time

a movie screening as large as this one has been offered to the Marines and sailors during an ITX, Athanasiadis said.

“The USO is with the service members all the way and when the Marines come out here for exercises they don’t really have anything to keep them busy [during] the couple of nights before they go to the field,” Cherry said. “So we thought that bringing the movies to them would be a good idea. We chose the movie ‘American Sniper’ because we knew there would be a big turn out and it would motivate the Marines and sailors.”

One of the Marines who attended the event was Lance Cpl. Bradley Walsh, rifleman, 4th Marine Division, who is stationed at Marine Base Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan.


“When we found out the USO was putting on ‘American Sniper’ for us, we were all pretty pumped because we thought we were going to be missing the release of it due to being in the field.” Walsh said. “It’s really motivating to know he’s fought with Marines in the past and it’s a story that should be [shared].”

“Just seeing the participation already, I can say confidently that the USO is interested in coming back for additional events like this,” Athanasiadis said.

The Palm Springs USO and Maj. Athanasiadis had such a good turnout, that they agreed to keep doing events like this during ITX on the first or second day of training.

TOUGH MINDED OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt



We are fortunate that internationally known guitar player Derwood Andrews and his wife Stephanie live among us. Derwood will be making a rare public performance 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM this Friday, January 30 at the Twentynine Palms Inn.

The following essay was written by Derwood at my request.

“From a very young age I begged my parents for a dog. I had to wait until I was 42 before my wish was realized. My parents, my country of England and my touring days in a band were long gone. I had married and ‘settled down’ in the Hi-Desert when we got Ted; a Boston Terrier of six weeks old. I remember fondly our car’s engine blowing up at the top of the Grapevine on the way back from the Sacramento breeders. I could care less about anything but little Teddy Boy, and a year later, little deaf Mabel, another Boston.

Boy they were great dogs. We got to share their lives for nearly 14 years with friends and family; road trips, agility lessons, camping, parties and our wonderful 5 acre home in the desert. Within a year of each other they recently both died and left a hole the size of a mountain in our hearts. Thankfully we have great memories, photographs and videos of our time together, which does help. I hope and trust that the family, friends and animals we loved will all share notes of joy in some misty future. Rest in peace, loves...”

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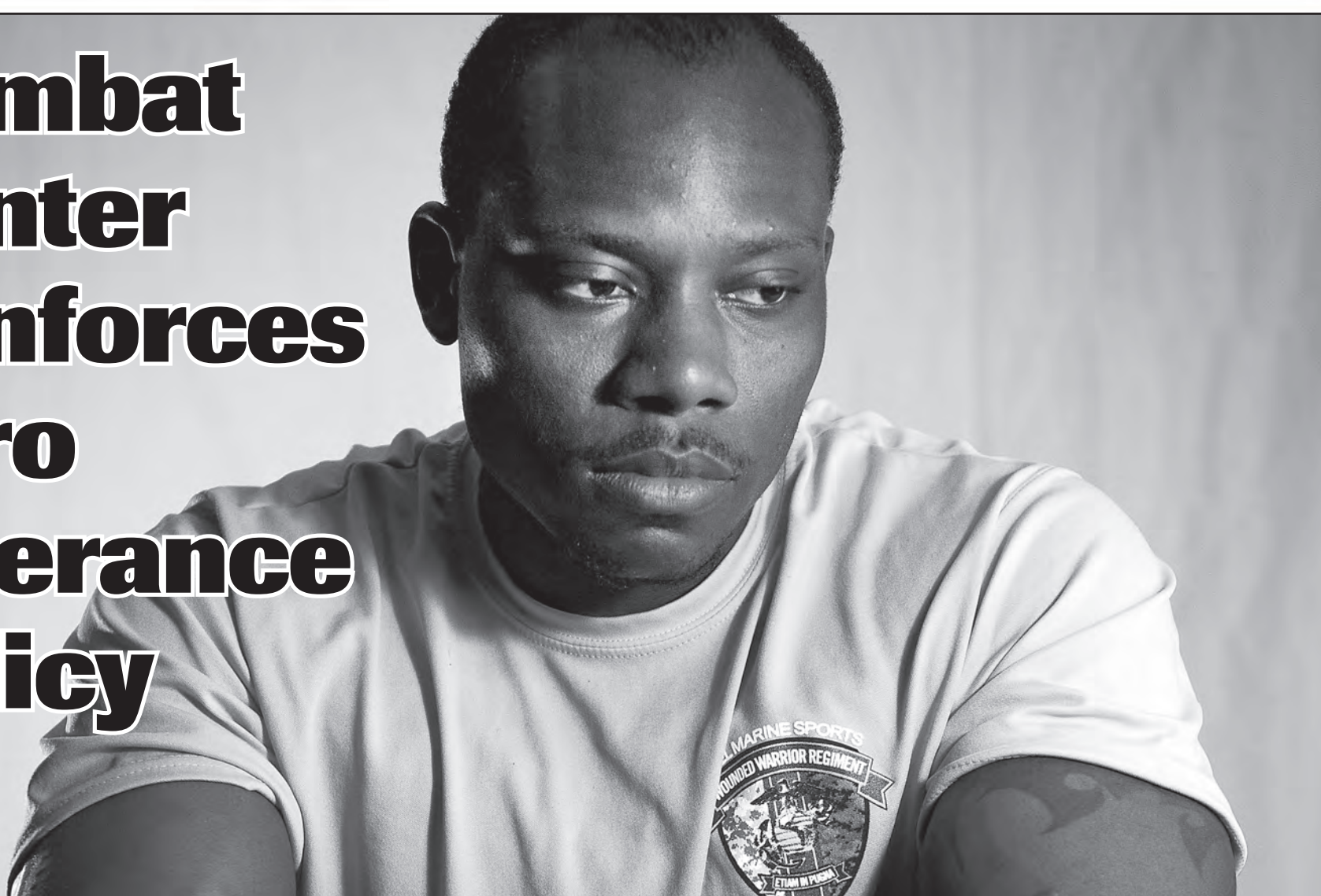
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Combat Center reinforces Zero Tolerance Policy



BY LANCE CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO

TWENTYNINE PALMS, Calif. - From the time of the Marine Corps' inception it has upheld the core values of honor, courage and commitment. Those are the traits for which Marines are known, and by which they are expected to live, no matter the circumstance. Over time, the Marine Corps has built a strong reputation as America's force in readiness. In order to honor that reputation, Marines must remember to uphold every standard set forth by the Corps while in or out of uniform.

Many employers have policies against substance abuse. The Marine Corps enforces a zero tolerance drug policy, which states:

They have online classes on Marinenet and [Marine Online] for substance abuse," said Sgt. Marya Canizales, assistant Substance Abuse Control Officer, Headquarters Battalion, native of Pasadena, Calif. "The classes provide common knowledge on the usage of different types of [drugs] and lets Marines know the affect it has based off of things like their physical activity, body weight and gender."

Not only is there a zero tolerance policy on substance abuse in the military, there are also federal laws prohibiting it. There are exceptions in some states where the use of certain drugs is permitted. For instance in the state of

M. Olivares-Mendoza, SACO, Headquarters Battalion, native of Guadalajara, Mexico. "From seeing either family members or friends use drugs and what it leads to, I would tell them keep away from drugs. They affect not only your career, but it also affects your life, your family and your friends. It can destroy you."

For Marines struggling with substance abuse, there is always help. Something to keep in mind is that the substance abuse program is put in place to assist those in need. The interactions in the program are from person-to-person, regardless of rank or what

“The illegal distribution, possession or use of drugs is not tolerated in the United States Marine Corps. Furthermore, each instance of illegal drug use by a Marine makes that Marine unfit for duty and a risk to the safety of fellow Marines. It is your responsibility to use all your influence over fellow marines to help avoid involvement with illegal drugs. As a Marine, you are expected to be dedicated to the highest standards of personal conduct and honor.”

Marines are made aware of this policy from the day their recruiter. Alcohol abuse, gambling and substance abuse are all considered forms of addiction and may be brought on by various circumstances in someone's life, according to the Substance Abuse Control Office. Although is expected of them, there are still programs in place for Marines who stray from policy.

“The programs that are offered to Marines are Prime for Life which is a two-day class.

California, the use of medicinal marijuana is allowed if it is proven that the patient suffers from certain ailments and that using medicinal marijuana would help alleviate them, according to the Medicinal Marijuana section of the California Department of Public Health website, www.cdph.ca.gov. Despite that fact, the zero tolerance policy on drug use is still in full effect for a member of the armed forces.

“I would talk to [my Marines] and give them my experiences,” said Gunnery Sgt. Victor

someone is struggling with, the participants of the program will always be treated with dignity and as a person who needs help, according to Canizales.

“[If you need help] you can visit either the base SACOs or you can go to the individual battalion representative,” Canizales said. “We have information when it comes to receiving assistance for self-help classes, [alcohol assistance] classes and different types of treatments.”



Combat Center Events

The Career Resource Office will be hosting the Spouse Transition & Readiness Seminar January 29, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Village Center, Bldg. 1551. The purpose of the workshop is “To empower military spouses and to alleviate stress such as employment, finance, transition, and education associated with the military culture.” To register for the seminar call 760-830-7225 or go to the Career Resource Office located in Bldg. 1427.

Sandy Hill Lanes will be hosting its 35th Anniversary Celebration Grand Opening, January 30 from 11 a.m. to midnight; the ribbon cutting ceremony will begin at 11 a.m. At the event there will be a ‘Marine vs Pizza’ Eating Contest at 6 p.m., there will be giveaways to the first 250 visitors and a lunch combo available for free from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

On February 1, visit a local MCCS Club to enjoy Super Bowl XLIX. The doors will open at 2 p.m. and kick-off is at 3:20 p.m. There will be prizes and giveaways at all locations with food and drink specials available. For more information contact MCCS at 760-830-8429.

L.I.N.K.s., the Officers Spouses Club and the Heart Truth will be hosting The Heart Truth Red Dress Gala and Fashion Show. The event will be taking place on February 5th at the Officers Club from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. The recommended dress code for the event is a red dress but any red attire is welcome as long as it's within base dress code guidelines. Child care will also be provided at the event. The gala is to raise awareness about heart disease. To register online, go to <http://tinyurl.com/DressGala>

The Base Library will be hosting ‘Love is in the Air’ on February 12, from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. At the event, there will be festive stories, games and arts and crafts to create something for that special someone. All ages are welcome and for more information call 760-830-6875.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Jan. 30
5 p.m. – Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb, PG
7:30 p.m. – Exodus: Gods and Kings, PG-13
11 p.m. – Unbroken, PG-13

Saturday, Jan. 31
10 a.m. – A Bugs Life, G
12:30 p.m. – Into the Woods, PG
3 p.m. – Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb, PG
5:30 p.m. – The Hobbit: Battle of Five Armies, PG-13
8:30 p.m. – Unbroken, PG-13

Sunday, Feb. 1
12:30 p.m. – Into the Woods, PG
3 p.m. – Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb, PG
5:30 p.m. – Women in Black 2 Angel of Death, PG-13
8 p.m. – The Gambler, R

Monday, Feb. 2
6 p.m. – The Gambler, R

Tuesday, Feb. 3
6 p.m. – Exodus: Gods and Kings, PG-13

Wednesday, Feb. 4
5 p.m. – Woman in Black 2 Angel of Death
7:30 p.m. – Wild, R

Thursday, Feb. 5
5 p.m. – Annie, PG
7:30 p.m. – Top Five, R

Friday, Feb. 6
6 p.m. – Exodus: Gods and Kings, PG-13
9 p.m. – The Gambler, R
11:30 p.m. – Woman in Black 2 Angel of Death, R



Bull’s-eye

‘American Sniper’ aims for entertainment & something deeper

“American Sniper”
Starring Bradley Cooper & Sienna Miller
Directed by Clint Eastwood
Rated R

If you were one of the millions of people who read Chris Kyle 2012 bestseller *American Sniper: The Autobiography of the Most Lethal Sniper in U.S. Military History*, you might have thought, “That’d make a great movie!”

Steven Spielberg, thought so, too, and wanted to direct it. Bradley Cooper, who’d already ventured into executive roles with his *Silver Linings Playbook* and *American Hustle*, agreed, and wanted to produce it—and wanted Chris (Guardians of the Galaxy) Pratt to star in it.

But in Hollywood, things don’t always end up the way they start out. Spielberg decided to take a pass, and Clint Eastwood stepped in. And Cooper decided not only to produce, but also to play the leading role of the highly decorated U.S. Navy SEAL, who killed more than

160 “hostiles” during four tours of duty in the Iraq War—before his life took its own ironically tragic turn.

It would have no doubt been different, with a different director and a different leading man, but it’s hard to imagine it being much more successful, dramatically stronger or more emotionally visceral. Eastwood and Cooper both bring their A games for this taut, tense, terse drama that depicts Kyle’s trajectory from Texas good ol’ boy to one of the military’s most effective killing machines, as it also bites down hard on the psychological effects of war, violence and combat that linger long after the fighting is over.

Cooper is an undeniably versatile actor; he’s done serious drama as well broad comedy. But this role is unlike anything he’s ever undertaken, requiring him to bulk up with 30 pounds of muscle and take on a vowel-stretching Lone Star drawl to play Kyle, who knocked around as a rodeo cowboy before enlisting in the SEALs after watching TV coverage of the 9/11 ter-

rorist attacks.

Sienna Miller plays his frustrated wife, Taya, who watches helplessly as her husband wrestles with emotional demons she can’t fathom each time he returns home from a tour.

Eastwood, 84, is a Hollywood icon best known as for his portrayal of a “hall of fame” of iconic cowboys, cops and other classic characters—but he’s also directed more than 30 movies, beginning back in the early 1970s, for which he’s won two Oscars.

Working with his longtime cinematographer Tom Stern, he sets up every shot with solid, no-nonsense precision. Every detail feels right: the paint on the scope of Kyle’s rifle, worn away by thousands of minute focusing adjustments; the makeshift U.S. outposts on the outskirts of Fallujah or Sadr City, where the plywood on the barracks for the troops looks so fresh you can almost smell it; the quick red splatters of blood, which splash across the bleached-out, blanched background tones like crimson punctuation marks, whenever Kyle’s aim is true.

Kyle’s reputation as a deadly marksman makes him feared among the Iraqi opposition—and highly val-

ued as a trophy. Other snipers, including one known as Mustafa, have their sights trained on him. And then there’s a shadowy terrorist henchman, the Butcher, whose torture instrument of choice is a power drill. Be warned: There’s one particularly harrowing scene, involving an hysterical Iraqi family, whizzing bullets, dueling snipers, Kyle’s wife on a cell phone, a growling dog, and the Butcher and his drill. Eastwood doesn’t rub your nose in it for any longer than necessary, but it’s a terrifying reminder of atrocities of war.

“It’s a heck of a thing to stop a beating heart,” Kyle tells his young son, taking him on his first hunting trip, making him understand that killing anything is not to be taken lightly. Is *American Sniper* pro-war or antiwar? Is a sniper a hero, or just a soldier doing his lethal job? Where’s the line between civilization and savagery during wartime, and what’s the price of walking it? Can there ever be enough good to overcome evil? Eastwood wants viewers to watch, think and decide. *American Sniper* aims for entertainment as well as something even deeper, and hits its mark.

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American Sniper (R) 1:30 6:00 9:00
Birdman (R) 1:30 6:30
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