

## First communications officers graduate under CTB



2nd Lt. Jessica Munter, student, Basic Communications Officer Course, Class 1-15 accepts recognition for being on the Commanding General's Honor Roll during the class' graduation ceremony at the Combat Center Auditorium, April 7.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
 LANCE CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO

The Communication Training Battalion graduated its first Basic Communications Officer Course at the Combat Center Auditorium, April 7, 2015.

While BCOC 1-15 is not the first to produce communications officers, it was the first to graduate communications officers under the command of CTB.

For nearly 60 years, the training of commissioned and enlisted communications Marines was conducted in separate locations. Officers were trained at the Communications School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., and enlisted Marines were trained at the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School here, aboard the Combat Center.

"In order to be proficient communications officers, you need to understand the mission of the unit that you're in so that you can better support their communications needs," said Col. Michael D. Robinson, director, Tactical Training Exercise Control Group. "[These officers] will be the driving force between communications training and their unit."

See **CTB** pg. A6



Col. Michael D. Robinson, director, Tactical Training Exercise Control Group, addresses Basic Communications Officer Course 1-15 students during the class' graduation ceremony at the Combat Center Auditorium, April 7.



The co-generation plants recycle waste-heat created while producing energy to use as heating and air conditioning aboard the Combat Center.

## Combat Center PWD works toward water, energy conservation

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
 LANCE CPL. THOMAS MUDD

Co-generation plants are one of the ways the Public Works Department provides power to the Combat Center community. The plants utilize large engines to generate electricity and repurpose the waste-heat created by them to help power buildings on the installation.

The waste-heat is utilized in different ways, making the co-generation plants a useful resource.

"The co-generation plants produce approximately 80 percent of the energy we use on the base," said Gary Morrissett, utilities and energy management supervisor, PWD. "Together with the solar panels, we are able to generate 90 percent of the base's power."

There are two jet-driven co-generation plants located aboard the Combat Center. These facilities use propane and natural gas to run turbines, which power the Combat Center's electric needs.

"There are two types of co-generation plants; engine driven and jet-engine driven," Morrissett said. "The co-generation plants we use actually have the capability to keep the base operational without being con-

nected to the Southern California Edison power grid. We have powered all the buildings of the Combat Center for 48 hours at one time."

Compared to other co-generation plants, the Combat Center's co-generation plants create fewer emissions. The plants use propane and natural gas to limit the amount of harmful emissions released, which are measured in parts-per million.

"The co-generation plants we use are the least emitting that you can have," Morrissett said. "They generate about 10 parts-per million in emissions. Other facilities of the same kind, especially older ones, produce approximately 70 parts-per million."

Parts-per million is the common measurement used for the amount of emissions released in air or water. On top of the Combat Center's co-generation plants being cleaner than most others, the base's co-generation plants have also played a part in the quality of life aboard the Combat Center.

"The co-generation plants utilize the waste-heat generated from the plant to be used in place of boilers to heat the buildings and water on base," Morrissett said.

See **Water** pg. A6

## Marine Corps Leave Chopped Back To 60-Day Maximum



PHOTO BY CPL. DYLAN BOWER

Marine Administrative Messages 151/15 was signed March 24, which outlines current and revised maximum leave accrual for fiscal year 2013. For further guidance to see if you qualify for special leave accrual reference Marine Corps Order 1050.3j and the MARADMIN 151/15

STORY BY  
 CPL. JOSE LUJANO

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. —Marine Administrative Messages 151/15 was signed March 24, which outlines current and revised maximum leave accrual for fiscal year 2013.

Marines were authorized to accumulate a maximum of 75 days of annual leave at the end of

each fiscal year without qualifying for special leave accrual during the temporary extension approved by the 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, which expires on Sept. 30, 2015.

However, Marines who have accumulated more than 60 days of leave have until Oct. 1, 2015, to either take it as vacation or cash out before they lose those days.

## Marine Corps' Top Shot

Every week, thousands of fans cast their votes for the best photograph posted on the Corps' Facebook page. This week's top shot comes from Lance Cpl. Jodson B. Graves.



U.S. Marines attending the infantry officer course prepare to conduct a fast rope exercise during Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course on Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., March 27.



Reprinted from the Observation Post

April 15, 1977

Story by Cpl. Craig Carl Bek

# Save Water Program Starts Aboard Base

The base has imposed a 25 percent water consumption reduction goal upon itself.

This policy is the result of state agencies requesting 'across the board' reduction of between 10 and 25 percent in water consumption for Southern Californians.

California is experiencing its worst drought in recorded history. Drastic water conservation methods are presently being employed with 60 percent enforced reductions in certain portions of the state. The effects of this drought are predicted to be far reaching and last for at least the next few years.

Although the present water crisis has had no direct effect here yet, it will. Our water usage and conservation practices will come under close scrutiny because the water resources of the base are part of the state's

total resources. Also, since much of the electricity available in California is produced by hydroelectric generating systems, the water shortage will also affect the amount of electricity available to the base.

Water is a scarce and valuable commodity in the Mojave Desert. Contrary to current belief, some water tables aboard base have been significantly depleted in recent years. According to a U.S Geological Survey, without additional well, the base will run out of water by 1980.

While the water resources have been constantly depleted in some mining areas aboard base, water consumption has been rising since 1973. The prime contributors to excessive water depletion are 'hous-

ing' lawn watering and expanding base population.

The base did take a giant step toward curbing water wasting by implementing the usage of 'grey water' from 'Lake Bandini' to water common areas such as the golf course, parade field and Victory Field. This partially purified water has many uses which will preserve potable water. It is hard to believe that water is a receding resource since our number one thirst quencher covers 75 percent of the earth, but the majority of this water is seawater not readily accessible to inland California.

The Central California Valley hasn't had enough water for 10 years. Marin County has been in a state of national emergency because of drought conditions over the past year. Eight central California

counties have declared emergency consumption reductions in recent months of 25-30 percent.

There are some frequently abused water conservation methods suggested in the Base Water Conservation Order: Don't water concrete and asphalt. Don't leave the sprinkler in one place long enough to cause run-off (no longer than 15 minutes for most sprinklers.) When water runs out of your yard into the street, stop watering. Conserve water every chance you get. Stopper wash basins or close the water tap when it's not in use. Shut off leaky fixtures, if possible, when they are in need of repairs. Take shorter showers. A normal shower shouldn't use in excess of 25 gallons of water, whereas a bath uses 36. Additional water may be saved by shut-

ting the shower off while lathering.

Two rather blatant water conservation abusers were observed at MCB Twentynine Palms. One Marine went into the head in his BEQ room and turned on the shower so it would warm up. He then proceeded to watch two complete programs before taking his shower. The other individual was noted washing down the concrete walls of a building on base. The walls could have just as easily been swept down. It must be noted here that these thoughtless and wasteful acts are few...but it is expected that all personnel here will enter a new phase of water conservation. It is hoped that this program will be initiated by all of us with the 'can do' spirit always exhibited by base personnel in the past.

## CROSSWORD

- Across**
- 1 Botch (up)
  - 5 Toot your own horn
  - 10 Essential fluids
  - 14 Field of study
  - 15 Tuba output: Var.
  - 16 Bring on, as a new coach
  - 17 Fake embroidery?
  - 19 Exam format
  - 20 Man in a box
  - 21 Conductor Antal
  - 23 Made engravings
  - 26 Scout's spike
  - 27 Rang, as a bell
  - 28 Nickname of baseball's Leo Durocher
  - 29 "I \_\_\_ return!"
  - 30 Like the ten o'clock scholar
  - 31 Set the price
  - 34 Tends to the lawn
  - 35 Romanian river
  - 36 He or she: Abbr.
  - 37 Bleating female
  - 38 Yet
  - 39 Baseball Hall-of-Famer Tim
  - 40 Insecticide made from the powdered roots
  - 42 The Pooh
  - 43 Tops
  - 45 Minerals used in paints
  - 46 Entertainer Goldberg
  - 47 Designate
  - 48 Mom's sister
  - 49 Haircuts?
  - 54 Timber-to-be
  - 55 Piscivorous fliers
  - 56 Snug corner
  - 57 Checked items
  - 58 \_\_\_-thon (literary event)

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- Down**
- 1 It has an Apple menu
  - 2 Blow one's lines, e.g.
  - 3 Refuse to fold
  - 4 bird with a serrate beak
  - 5 Flew suddenly
  - 6 Sounded amazed
  - 7 Eros, in Rome
  - 8 Rest area?
  - 9 Certificates issued to property purchasers
  - 10 Igloo feature?
  - 11 Smog?
  - 12 Jabber
  - 13 Baseball boss Bud
  - 18 Picasso's prop
  - 22 Lacking siblings
  - 23 Knocker's reply
  - 24 "Keep dreaming"
  - 25 Vandalized art work?
  - 26 Heaved, as a football
  - 28 Polynesian starch staples
  - 30 City near old Carthage
  - 32 Mezzo-soprano Anne \_\_\_ von Otter
  - 33 Genuflection points
  - 35 One of Bergen's dummies
  - 36 Prodigal son, e.g.
  - 38 Fool, with "up"
  - 39 Big name in Russian ballet
  - 41 Overdoes it
  - 42 Polish Peace Nobelist
  - 43 Mown tract
  - 44 Officer under Kirk
  - 45 Impoverish
  - 47 Author Quindlen
  - 50 Square decimeter
  - 51 NATO nat.
  - 52 As well as
  - 53 Heavens

## SUDOKU

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Last week's answers

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 - STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Rd.  
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 - 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

# Nora Cheyenne, Wyo. Biological science technician, Natural Resource and Environmental Affairs Division

## HOTCH

Hotch moved to several areas as a child due to her father being active duty in the Air Force. She lived in locations such as: Cheyenne, Wyo.; Kaiserslautern, Germany; Spokane, Wash.; Boulder, Colo.; and Temecula, Calif. This allowed her to experience different cultures and meet new people.

> **Since my father was in the Air Force**, we moved around about every two or three years. I loved going to different places and meeting new people.

> **For a long time I continued** to move to new places every few years, like my family did while I was growing up.

> **I came to the desert first** because I had a sister who lived here and I had never experienced the environment. At the time, I had just received my bachelors [degree] in Environmental Population and Organismic Biology from the University of Colorado, and wanted to close to my sister.

> **I love the desert.** Most people don't realize how much is really here. It's not flashy and it doesn't have large wildlife but if you stop and look around you would see some fascinating things and appreciate them for what they are.

> **After being out in the desert** for a little while, I moved toward the coast and hopped around that area for a few years before I had a calling to come back to the desert.

> **I enjoyed the desert** the first [time I lived here] and after working in San Diego County with [United States Geological Survey] in post-fire plant surveying, I applied for this job.

> **I thought** that no one liked the desert as much as I do, and that I had a better chance getting this job.

> **One of the greatest things** about working on a military base is



that I get to meet a diverse group of people. The community is also very respectful and helpful.

> **Growing up, I wanted** to be in a career where two days were never the same. I thought about going into the medical field, but I took some other biology classes and found that I enjoyed working with plants and animals more.

> **I love going into the field** and working hands-on with the different plants and animals. Part of my job is to move the wildlife that makes its way onto base. For example, when a tortoise is found we come out and relocate it or if an injured animal is reported we go and retrieve it so we can [treat] it.

> **I feel like the job we do** here is very important. The NREA works to keep the base within the law, by teaching people how to preserve the plants and animals habitats, while allowing the base to continue its mission.

> **I do what I love every day** and I believe that if you do what you love, you never work a day in your life.

INTERVIEWED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY LANCE CPL. THOMAS MUDD

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# 'War Dogs' return fr



Friends and family members await the arrival of their loved ones during 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment's homecoming at Del Valle Field, Saturday.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
LANCE CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO

Proud parents, anxious wives and eager children welcomed home Marines and sailors of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment at Del Valle Field, April 6, 2015.

"I think that being here to welcome them home makes the [Marines and sailors] feel like there wasn't a day that went by when we weren't thinking about them," said Sarah Solop, wife of 1st Lt. Christopher Solop, platoon commander, 2/7. "It's important that they feel supported, especially when they're coming home from a deployment. I feel like this is a reward for [everyone]."

"War Dog" Marines and sailors served as part of Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis Response-Central Command 15.1.

"Having my husband back and seeing him meet our son for the first time was amazing," said Loyrn Merager, wife of Lance Cpl. John Merager, rifleman, 2/7. "He was able to see him on a computer, but there is no feeling in the world that compares to actually having him home."

"War Dogs" involvement with SPMAGTF-CR-CC 15.1 played a part in solidifying the Marine Corps' role as the nation's force in readiness, able to respond to an ever-changing global environment.

"I think it went very well, and I'm very proud of my guys," 1st Lt. Solop said. "We went in there not completely sure what to expect, but I think the Marines adapted to every situation that came our way and succeeded in every aspect."



Cpl. Brandon Bernard, mortar-man, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, embraces his wife Kessa Bernard and their 8-month-old daughter, Brynlee, during the battalion's homecoming at Del Valle Field, Saturday, 2015



Friends and family await the arrival of their loved ones during 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment's homecoming at Del Valle Field, April 6.

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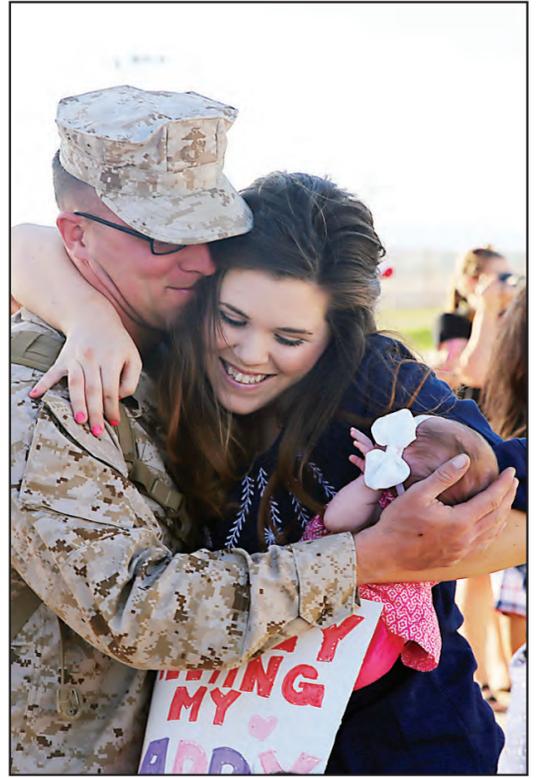
All square footage is approximate; pricing subject to change. Models do not reflect racial preference. Information is accurate as of the date of the publication. Not all features are available in all homes. Map not to scale. CA Contractor's License #251810.



# om special purpose



1st Lt. Christopher Solop, platoon commander, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, meets his 6-month-old daughter, Ava, for the first time during the battalion's homecoming at Del Valle Field, April 6.



Sgt. Brandon Bishop, section leader, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, embraces his wife Jana Bishop, and daughter Hadley Bishop during the battalion's homecoming at Del Valle Field, March 30.



Friends and family wave homemade signs as they await the arrival of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment's Marines and sailors from their deployment at Del Valle Field, March 30.

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# 'Magnificent 7th' welcomes veterans to Combat Center



Lance Cpl. Mason Morris, machine gunner, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, native of Orange, Va., exchanges stories at the Exercise Support Division with Susan Marie Weber, mayor, Palm Desert, and a member of the 1st Marine Division Association, Desert Cities Mitchell Paige Medal of Honor Chapter during a tour of the Combat Center, April 8.



Cpl. Anthony Pen, training cadre, 7th Marine Regiment, native of Springfield, Mass., talks to a member of the 1st Marine Division Association, Desert Cities Mitchell Paige Medal of Honor Chapter, about the functionalities of different types of weapons Marines currently use during a tour aboard the Combat Center, April 8.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO

Marines, old and young, exchanged stories of their shared legacy during a tour of the Combat Center, April 8, 2015, administered by 7th Marine Regiment and given to members of 1st Marine Division Association, Desert Cities Mitchell Paige Medal of Honor Chapter.

The 1st Marine Division Association is comprised of Marine Corps veterans. They have developed a strong relationship with 7th Marine Regiment through their coordination of support for Marines, sailors and their families when service members are deployed, during the holiday season, and during other events throughout the year.

"The tour today was a way for us to show our appreciation to the association, specifically the desert cities chapter," said Lt. Col. Jared Spurlock, executive officer, 7th Marine Regiment. "They have been big supporters of the regiment and today was about giving them a chance to see what we are all about."

The tour began at the rifle range with a demonstration of the M40-A5 sniper rifle and a presentation of 14 different weapons systems' functions and uses. Afterward, they were taken to Range 800 where cadre from the Marine Corps Engineer School and Marines from 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment provided insight on how Marines and

Sailors train to operate in an improvised explosive device environment.

"The visit up here is always very uplifting for our veteran Marines because we've all served at one time," said James E. Sullivan, 1st Marine Division Association, Desert Cities Mitchell Paige MOH Chapter. "We come back and we all feel better when we leave, being able to see the Marine Corps in such good hands."

Members of the 1st Marine Division Association include veterans who have served in World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the post-Vietnam eras. The tour concluded with a luncheon in the 7th Marine Regiment's Command Post where the veterans interacted with Marines and Sailors allowing all parties to express their mutual appreciation for each other.

According to Spurlock, a big part of the relationship 7th Marine Regiment has developed with the city of Palm Desert is largely due to the background work that the 1st Marine Division Association has done, such as organizing events for Marines and Sailors, and organizing dinner drives for service members and their families.

"These veterans are instrumental in keeping the esprit de corps alive," Spurlock said. "Events like this give them a chance to interact with a new generation of Marines and get a feel for how the regiment is doing."

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Communications officers from the Basic Communications Officer Course 1-15 listen to the guest speaker, Col. Michael D. Robinson, director, Tactical Training Exercise Control Group, during their graduation ceremony at the Combat Center Auditorium, April 7. The intent of the course was to graduate officers who are proficient in the employment of tactical preparations systems and prepared to fulfill responsibilities in entry-level communications billets.

### CTB from pg. A1

The Communications School, formerly located in Edson Hall aboard MCB Quantico, Va., was deactivated June 19, 2014, and CTB was activated aboard the Combat Center March 12, combining the training mission of commissioned and enlisted Marines.

BCOC 1-15 was comprised of 77 officers, including four international officers. During the ceremony the guest speaker, Robinson, congratulated the students, gave them advice for the future, recognized the honor graduates, and presented diplomas and awards.

"I talked to the lieutenants when they got here about how important endurance would be during a 21-week

course," said Lt. Col. Speros C. Koumparakis, commanding officer, CTB. "They have proven their endurance and that they are ready for the marathon of heading out to the Fleet Marine Force."

The intent of the course was to graduate officers who are proficient in the employment of tactical communications systems and prepared to fulfill responsibilities of entry-level communications billets.

"I wish them good luck," Robinson said. "There is a lot of adventure that awaits these communications officers and I'm sure they will be successful no matter where they go."

 Visit the official MCAGCC facebook page at <a href="http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter">http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter</a>	 The Combat Center has its own YouTube channel. Find it at <a href="http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO">http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO</a>	 The Combat Center has its own Flickr photo and video streams. Find them at <a href="http://www.flickr.com/thecombatcenter">http://www.flickr.com/thecombatcenter</a>
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### Water from pg. A1

The waste-heat is utilized as the primary way of heating and air-conditioning aboard the Combat Center.

"The heat also goes into the air conditioning units we have put on most of the buildings," Morrissett said. "These units boil Lithium Bromide. When it condensates, it actually cools the air, which is then used to cool the building."

With all of the types of energy the plants

create, the Combat Center is able to create and provide a better source of energy, heat, and air-conditioning to the facilities service members utilize aboard the installation.

According to Morrissett, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., and Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., are the only other bases in the Marine Corps with Co-generation plants.

### Leave from pg. A1

For the past decade, while the national defense strategy was focused in the Middle East fighting the war on terror, the high operational deployment tempo of work required from the military allotted service members an extra 15 days of leave per year.

Since the operational commitment is decreasing, the maximum amount of leave will return to 60 days.

The only way Marines will not lose those excess days is if they are subject to special leave accrual.

If a Marine is authorized for special leave for fiscal year 2015, they may be allowed to have a maximum accrual of up to 120 days, even after Oct. 1, 2015.

Those who serve in dangerous areas may qualify for an exception that will still permit them to carry over leave in excess of 60 days. The full rules can be found in Military Personnel Manual Article 1050-070, located on the Navy Personnel Command website, but the exception is intended for those who work in a hazardous or combative environment.

Special leave accrual

is permitted for Marines who have served in an area where they received imminent danger, hostile fire pay or were stationed on a deployable ship or mobile unit operating away from its homeport for at least 120 days.

For Marines granted special leave accrual, they must use that leave by Sept. 30, 2019.

For Marines qualified for special leave accrual through "other duty" than that already stated, their leave must be used by Sept. 30, 2017.

For further guidance to see if you qualify for special leave accrual reference MarineCorps Order 1050.3j and the MARADMIN 151/15 found on <http://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/MessagesDisplay/tabid/13286/Article/173429/maximum-leave-accrual-guidance-for-fiscal-year-2015-fy15.aspx>.

For those Marines unsure about their leave balance, Marines can log on to their MyPay account and check their leave and earning statement. The leave balance is in box 23.

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# Earth Day 2015 Events



**SATURDAY APRIL 18**  
**Yucca Valley Earth Day**  
 Time: 9 a.m.

Hi-Desert Nature Museum  
 The Combat Center will participate to spread information about the installations energy initiative and Natural Resource Conservation efforts  
 For More information call Keith Mohn at 760-830-6603

**MONDAY APRIL 20**  
**"A Day in the Life of a Hero"**

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 Or Contact  
 760-830-1696  
 760-368-4021  
 Or email [moatuatasi@lpsi.com](mailto:moatuatasi@lpsi.com)

**TUESDAY APRIL 21**  
**Electronic Waste Recycling**  
 For more information call  
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**WEDNESDAY APRIL 22**  
**Earth Day Mountain Bike Ride**  
 8 a.m. Fourth Street near Bldg. 1480  
 For more information visit [www.green29.org](http://www.green29.org)

**WEDNESDAY APRIL 22**  
**Lincoln Military Housing Kids Color Run**  
 8am  
 Lincoln Military Housing Athletic Field  
 For more information call 760-368-4021  
 or email [moatuatasi@lpsi.com](mailto:moatuatasi@lpsi.com)

**THURSDAY APRIL 23**  
**Earth Day Road Bike Criterium**  
 8 a.m.  
 Intersection of Fifteenth Street and Dunham Street  
 For more information  
 or visit [www.green29.org](http://www.green29.org)

**FRIDAY APRIL 24**  
**Earth Day Fun Run**  
 6:30 a.m.  
 Desert Winds Golf Course  
 5k Fun Run with an admission fee of a Recyclable plastic bottle or aluminum can  
 For more information Call Keith Mohn at 760-830-6603  
 or visit [www.green29.org](http://www.green29.org)

**FRIDAY APRIL 24**  
**Earth Day Extravaganza!**  
 Start Time: 4:30 p.m.  
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# Strengthening Our Families through the lives of Our Children



**STORY BY: MCAGCC FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAM**

As we continue to recognize April as Child Abuse Prevention Month, the Family Advocacy Program wants to continue to provide you with resources to be the Best Parent or Caregiver you can be! Here are a few notes from 'Love Our Children USA'.

We must nurture our children [...] it is one of the important things we can do. A parent's love and caring determines how a child grows up and how a child will eventually parent.

Adults can nurture children's positive self-esteem by helping them discover what they are good at doing. Part of a child's self-esteem comes from feeling competent and skilled at something they enjoy. By creating opportunities for children to explore different objects, activities, and people ... and nurturing those interests, you can play a big role in helping children to be successful and feel good about themselves.

The early years are when children show personality traits and preferences for what they like and dislike. By planning opportunities with children's unique personality styles in mind, you nurture their positive feelings about themselves.

Nurturing children and building a loving and caring relationship is not always easy. With patience and love, you can do it. Treat each child according to their needs. Every child needs parents who can notice and appreciate their special qualities. When siblings are involved, trying to treat each equally usually backfires and undermines children's individuality. Focus attention whenever possible,

avoiding distractions.

If children want to interact at a time when you cannot be fully attentive, let them know and schedule a time for conversation and/or play when you can focus entirely on them. Children usually know when adults are only half-listening and can feel frustrated, unheard, and at times even unloved when this happens.



Listening to children with your full attention helps strengthen their sense of importance and gives the message that you really want to hear what they are thinking and feeling. Listen sensitively, avoid too much questioning, and describe the situation. Children will usually shut down emotionally when parents bombard them with questions. They feel on the spot and pressured when adults probe and inquire too much about their day.

Describing the situation is a neutral and

non-intrusive approach that leaves room for children to respond in their own way. Use "I" messages and try to avoid blaming and accusations. This will allow you to express your feelings about a particular behavior without attacking your child's character or self-esteem. Set limits that are appropriate to children's age, temperament and stage of development.

They don't have to be elaborate in order to be fun or memorable. The most important thing you can do to start a new tradition (or continue an old one) is whatever feels comfortable and enjoyable for both the parents and children. Traditions are also important for teaching children about--and centering them in their cultures.

Take care of yourself so that you have energy and enthusiasm available for your children. It can be hard to find a balance between meeting your children's needs and making time for yourselves. It is important for you to find appropriate outlets for your feelings of stress, responsibilities, etc., and you need some 'down' time to pursue your own interests or just to unwind. Most parents find that even a short break from children can make a positive difference in the way they feel.

Parents need to fulfill themselves as parents, in their parenting roles, and also as individuals with interests outside the family. They need to go places on their own, and to do some things just for themselves. Then parents return to their children refreshed.

When you're stressed, try to resolve situations before they escalate. Take time out and call someone to express how you're feeling, ask them to come over and stay with the kids for a while.

Count to 10 and think, "What do I really want to accomplish here?" Play music and remember how much you love your child and think about the best way to show that to your child.

If you need additional resources or information, please do not hesitate to contact the Prevention and Education Program at 830-6345.



## Liberty Call



### Combat Center Events

The Combat Center will participate in the Yucca Valley Earth Day celebration tomorrow to spread information about the installation's energy initiative and natural resource conservation efforts. Come out to celebrate earth day! For more information, contact Keith Mohn at 830-6603.

The Single Marine Program will host a free UFC clinic and fight night viewing tomorrow at the West Gym. The event will start with an afternoon of demonstrations and end with a viewing party of the UFC fight at the Sunset Cinema. Space is limited and the event is open to active duty service members only. For more information, contact SMP at 830-4767.

Head to building 1433 for a caregiver peer-to-peer support forum, April 21 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The forum is open to anyone who provides support and care to wounded, ill or injured service members. It will give caretakers the opportunity to meet new people and broaden their support network. Meetings will be held on the third Tuesday of every month. For more information, contact Teri Templeton at 909-963-8776.

Register for a chance to win a spot in the Choose-a-Ride Sweepstakes. Participants will have a one in eleven chance of winning a brand new car. This event is open to active duty military and their spouses only. Visit the MCCS Facebook page for more information. The page can be found at facebook.com/MCCS29 palms.

Come visit Sandy Hill Lanes Bowling Center. With well-maintained lanes, large screen televisions, and a digital jukebox, it's a great facility for indoor recreational fun and relaxation. Tournaments are offered regularly and cosmic bowling runs every Friday and Saturday evening. For more information, contact 760-830-422.

### Sunset Cinema

Friday, April 17

8:00 p.m.- Kingsman: The Secret Service, R  
11:00 p.m.- Chappie, R

Saturday, April 18

10:00 a.m.- Mirror Mirror (free admission), PG  
12:30 p.m.- Cinderella, PG  
5:00 p.m.- SMP event- UFC Viewing  
11:30 p.m.- Run All Night, R

Sunday, April 19

12:30 p.m.- The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, PG  
3:00 p.m.- Little Boy (sneak preview), PG-13  
5:30 p.m.- The Divergent Series: Insurgent (3-D), PG-13  
8:00 p.m.- Get Hard, R

Monday, April 20

4:30 p.m.- Despicable Me 2 (free admission), PG  
7:00 p.m.- Run All Night, R

Tuesday, April 21

5:00 p.m.- Ice Age (free admission), PG  
7:00 p.m.- The Divergent Series: Insurgent (3-D), PG-13

Wednesday, April 22

5:00 p.m.- Brave (free admission), PG  
7:00 p.m.- Kingsman: The Secret Service, R

Thursday, April 23

4:30 p.m.- Penguins of Madagascar (free admission), PG  
6:30 p.m.- The Lazarus Effect, PG-13  
8:30 p.m.- Get Hard, R

Friday, April 24

4:00 p.m.- Transformers: Age of Extinction (free admission), PG-13  
7:00 p.m.- Unfinished Business, R  
9:00 p.m.- The Divergent Series: Insurgent, PG-13  
11:30 p.m.- Get Hard, R



# Hardly hilarious

Putting two funny guys together doesn't always make a doubly funny movie

NEIL POND

*"Get Hard"*  
Starring Will Farrell  
and Kevin Hart  
Directed by Etan Cohen  
Rated R

The first thing you see is a close-up of Will Farrell, sobbing uncontrollably. The camera holds the shot. This is a comedy, so a well-known comedic actor boo-hooing must be funny...right?

Audiences will likely ask themselves that question, and more than once, as Farrell and his costar, Kevin Hart, riff through a raunchy gauntlet of jokes built around a premise that certainly, on the surface, isn't humorous at all: When an investment firm fat cat is sentenced to 10 years of hard time, he fears he'll never endure the brutalities of prison life.

It helps in the humor department, of course, that Farrell is a very funny guy. And Hart, who's parlayed standup and TV success into a budding movie career (Ride Along, The Wedding Ringer) can be a manic ball of comedic energy. But two fun-

nymen together doesn't always add up to a doubly funny movie. For that, the finger of blame points to Etan Cohen, a screenwriter (Men in Black 3, Tropic Thunder) making his theatrical directing debut, and definitely not to be confused with Ethan Cohen of the Cohen Brothers, the Oscar-winning sibling duo who made No Country For Old Men, True Grit and Fargo.

Farrell plays the investor dimwit, James King, as an offshoot of the family tree of clueless man-children sprung from Anchorman, Step Brothers, Elf, The Other Guys and other doofuses from his comedy hall of fame. James racks up \$28 million with a single phone call; he's engaged to the daughter (Alison Brie, from TV's Community) of his firm's owner (Craig T. Nelson); he sings along to Icona Pop's I Love It as he drives his car with its vanity plate that reads IMA GAWD.

So it rocks his world when he's arrested for an investment scandal, and the judge throws the book at him, making him an example of white-collar, one-percent-er crime. James, proclaiming his innocence, refuses to

accept a plea deal and is given 30 days to set his affairs in order. In a panic, he turns to the only black person he knows, Darrell (Hart), the owner of the car wash that tends his vehicle every day. Wrongly assuming Darrell has served hard time, James begs him to impart his prison survival skills.

Although Darrell's criminal record is, in fact, nonexistent, he needs \$30,000 to move his family into a better home and get his young daughter into a safer school. So he names his price, pretends to be an ex-con, and agrees to school James in how to "get hard."

This is—or could have been—some pretty edgy stuff, dancing around race and racism, class and social mobility, wealth and income distribution, and very real fears that most normal people would have about suddenly finding out they're going to spend a decade behind bars. But director Cohen turns Get Hard into one long, smutty joke that keeps returning to one central topic, prison rape, as a punch line. There's a particularly unfunny scene that stretches on long after its questionable humor has played out, in

which Darrell and James go to a gay brunch spot so James can, shall we say, sharpen a certain skill set in which he's lacking.

Some genuinely funny bits sneak through. A dinner-table scene, in which Darrell uses the movie storyline from Boyz n the Hood in place of his own, is a hoot. And the "training" scenes, especially when Hart impersonates a whole prison yard full of inmates, or faux-fights with James, feel like jolts of improv hilarity that show the two stars straining make humor however,

wherever, whenever they can in a movie that frequently leaves them stranded.

But too often, and far too much, Get Hard settles for clichés, crudeness and stereotypes instead of anything original, clever or as scathingly funny as it might have been. Farrell and Hart work tirelessly to stay on their feet as the comedic ground crumbles underneath them and their talent. They do seem to enjoy each other's company, and they have a crisp, odd-couple chemistry that clicks and crackles, even as the movie clanks and crashes. Hopefully, this won't be the last we'll see of them together.



Saturday, April 18th

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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# Combat Center Marines receive taste of mobile exchange



Sgt. Tyler Sylvester, troop morale specialist, Headquarters Battalion, rings up customers in front of the Mobile Tactical Field Exchange aboard Camp Wilson, April 13, 2015. MTFX is currently providing support to the Marines and sailors of Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force and those participating in Desert Scimitar.



Lance Cpl. Michael Seabolt, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist, 1st Transportation Support Battalion, and Cpl. Anthony Bukowski, logistics/embarkation specialist, 1st TSB, shop for snacks inside of the Mobile Tactical Field Exchange aboard Camp Wilson, April 13.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
LANCE CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO

As Marines and sailors trudge back to Camp Wilson from a long day of combat conditioning, they spot what appears to be a desert mirage; a shipping container, displaying the Marine Corps Exchange logo. For the first time, the Mobile Tactical Field Exchange provided relief to Marines and sailors training aboard the Combat Center, April 13, 2015.

Marine Corps Community Services oversees MTFX's operations. MTFX has provided support to units that are in deployed environments since 2012. They provide items for purchase such as hygiene essentials, snacks and cold drinks. Forward deployed units, and now those that are training aboard the Combat Center, can receive support from the MTFX when requested.

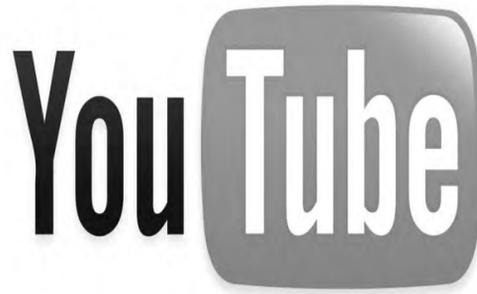
"The first thing we'll provide are [products] essential to completing the mission," said Gunnery Sgt. Jerry Self Jr., Camp Wilson area operations manager, Headquarters Battalion. "Then we provide things that are nice to have. You'd be surprised to see how much of an impact it makes for a Marine to have access to something as simple as a cold drink."

The MTFX is currently a cash-only establishment but the prices are the same as those at the Marine Corps Exchange on main side. Currently, there is only one MTFX available to the Combat Center, but they plan on supporting future training exercises as they are requested.

"We operate based off of the commander's guidance," Self said. "The mobile exchange is important because it boosts the morale of the Marines. The higher the morale, the harder they train and the better warfighters they become."

MTFX is currently providing support to the Marines and sailors of Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force and those participating in Desert Scimitar.

"When you go around doing this, the unit commanders see a noticeable difference in their Marines," said Sgt. Tyler Sylvester, troop morale specialist, Headquarters Battalion. "It's great to see [the Marines'] spirits lifted when they know it's the week the [MTFX] is supposed to be coming."



The Combat Center has its own YouTube channel

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<http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO>.

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### TOUGH MINDED

### OPTIMISM

by Lou Gerhardt



Every once in a while someone wants to know why I don't put more humor into my weekly column. So here is a contribution from my dear friend the late Sam Sloneker. Read and enjoy.

And Adam said, "Lord, I have already named all the animals in the Kingdom and I cannot think of a name for this new animal."

And God said "I have created this new animal to be a reflection of my love for you, his name will be a reflection of my own name, and you will call him DOG."

And Dog lived with Adam and Eve and was a companion to them and loved them. And they were comforted. And God was pleased. And Dog was content and wagged his tail.

After a while, it came to pass that an angel came to the Lord and said, "Lord, Adam and Eve have become filled with pride. They strut and preen like peacocks and they believe they are worthy of adoration. Dog has indeed taught them that they are loved, but perhaps too well."

And God said, I will create for them a companion who will be with them and who will see them as they are. The companion will remind them of their limitations, so they will know that they are not always worthy of adoration."

And God created CAT to be a companion to Adam and Eve. And Cat would not obey them. And when Adam and Eve gazed into Cat's eyes, they were reminded that they were not the supreme beings.

And Adam and Eve learned humility. And they were greatly improved. And God was pleased. And Dog was happy.

And Cat didn't give a damn one way or the other.

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Yucca Valley - (760)-369-7164

Las Palmas Mexican Cuisine  
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Dr. Lou can be reached at 760-367-4627  
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### Truth Tabernacle Apostolic Church

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Pastor Titus R. Burns  
Sunday Service 10:00 AM  
Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00 PM  
Call 760-367-4185 for more information

"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

### The United Methodist Church

Yucca Valley, CA

57273 Onaga Trail  
(corner of Joshua Lane & Onaga Trail)  
Sunday Worship: 10:30 AM  
Children's Sunday School: 9:30 AM  
Thursday Bible Study 10:00 AM  
Pastor John Runckel  
Office: 760-365-3671

### St. Martin-in-The-Fields EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Sunday School & Eucharist 10:00 am  
Sunday Gospel Meditation 9:00 am  
Weds. Morning Prayer 7:30 am

Vicar, Peggy Ventris  
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www.stmartinchurch29.org (760) 367-7133

### firstsouthern

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Sun. 10:30 AM Worship  
Wed. 6:00 PM Bible Study

56374 Onaga Trail in Yucca Valley  
(760) 365-5771 www.fsbcyv.org

### Yucca Valley Center for Spiritual Living

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