



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. BRANDI HANSEN

An F-35B Lightning II with Marine Operational Test & Evaluation Squadron 1 (VMX-1) on the flight line with an AIM-120 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile prepares for a round of Operational Test missile shots at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

VMX-1 tests F-35 combat capability

COURTESY STORY

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, FL. — Three F-35B aircraft and 75 U.S. Marines from Marine Operational Test & Evaluation Squadron 1 (VMX-1) F-35B Detachment at Edwards Air Force Base, CA, along with 21 test personnel from the JSF Operational Test Team at Edwards deployed to Eglin AFB, FL., from

August 9 to September 1, to complete Operational Test missile shots of the AIM-120 Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM).

These employment scenarios differed from those conducted in Developmental Test in that they were specifically designed around operational employment scenarios with the aim of further validating

See **F-35** pg. A6

Combat Center VLC provides counsel to Marines, sailors

STORY BY
CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO

United States Marines pride themselves on belonging to America's elite fighting force, but even the nation's most highly-trained men and women can become victims of serious crimes. The Victims' Legal Counsel provides assistance to Combat Center patrons when they need it the most.

"The Victims' Legal Counsel was established by the Secretary of Defense, pursuant to a presidential order, to represent the interests of victims in the criminal justice system," said Capt. John Stark, judge advocate, Victims' Legal Counsel Office-West.

Established in 2013, the VLC was stood up to assist in combating sexual

assault in the military. While they primarily represent victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, they are also available to represent victims of any kind.

"The organization really exists to make it more comfortable and more effective for victims to come forward and report a crime," Stark said. "Everything I talk about with potential clients is completely confidential and it is my job to ensure the victim is making informed decisions and understands all of their options throughout the process."

According to Stark, if one becomes a victim of a crime in the Marine Corps their first stop should be the VLC. While services such as the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

Program, the Victim Witness Assistant Program and the Family Advocacy Program provide valuable resources to victims of a crime, only Stark, who is currently the sole attorney for the Combat Center VLC, is authorized to provide a victim with legal advice.

"Often times, Marines hear rumors about the legal system and think they know how it works," Stark said. "But having someone who is well-versed in the legal system and represents your interests, and your interests alone, is incredibly beneficial."

If a Marine, sailor, family member, or Department of Defense employee thinks they have been the victim of a serious crime, they can go to the VLC office located in building 1551, room 87, or call 760-830-5162.

2016 Election Year: partisan political activities guidelines

STORY BY CPL. MEDINA AYALA-LO

As the 2016 presidential election draws near, it is important that Combat Center Marines, sailors and Department of Defense civilian employees exercise their rights and obligations of citizenship without violating statutes, regulations or policies regarding involvement in partisan political activities.

"In politics, a partisan candidate is a nominee of a political party," said Capt. Joe Teirab, the Deputy Staff Judge Advocate for the Combat Center. "You have the right to express your views, but it's limited because of our unique positions as active duty service members and government employees. Active duty service members are prohibited from participating or engaging in partisan political activities. What they can do is vote and encourage other service members to vote. They can donate money to campaigns and even attend a rally if not in uniform. But what they can't do is anything more active than that."



According to DoD Directive 1344.10, active duty service members are not permitted to:

- Appear or speak at partisan events
- Work on partisan campaigns
- Solicit funds for a candidate
- Solicit support of/encourage others to vote for a candidate
- Use their status as a member of the Armed Forces to encourage support of a candidate
- Share via social media material from a political candidates official campaign

While both active duty service members and civilian employees must adhere to the guidelines set forth, civilian employees are generally subjected to a less restrictive set of guidelines than their active duty counterparts.

"If you're not active duty, for example a reservist or retiree, you can participate in partisan activities but there can't be an appearance of DoD endorsement," Teirab said. "You can attend political campaigns in your own personal capacity. The guidelines for civilian employees are clearly outlined in the HATCH Act."

Specific guidance and answers to questions about what activities are authorized, can be found in DoD Directive 1344.10, MARADMIN 603/15, or www.dod.mil/dodgc/defense_ethics/resource_library/elections_guidance_2016.pdf.

"I think the rules are there for a good reason because we don't want to tarnish the role of our status as Marines and as service members," Teirab said. "While we have a status, mission and an identity as Marines, we also have first amendment rights and it's important to balance both."

Inside the Observation Post

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First ever LA Fleet Week

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 Gunnery Sgt. Robert Brown.



Cpls. Jakob Stark and Michael Sleeting ride in a UH-1Y Huey helicopter during COMPTUEX off the coast of Southern California.



Reprinted from the Observation Post
September 11, 1987

Third Tank Battalion celebrates 45th birthday

Third Tank Battalion will celebrate its 45th anniversary with a cake cutting ceremony at noon, Sept. 18 at the battalion's parking lot. Everyone is invited to attend. MGen. Gene A. Deegan, commanding general, will be the guest of honor.

The battalion was activated on Sept. 16, 1943 to Camp Pendleton. From there the battalion was deployed to Warkworth, New Zealand.

Joining the battle for the Pacific in World War II, the treads of Third Tank rolled through the smoke, sweat and blood of island battlefields, including the campaigns of Bougainville, Guam and Iwo Jima.

The unit received the Presidential Unit Citation with one bronze star for its contribution in the battle of Iwo Jima. The unit was also awarded the WWII Victory Streamer.

The battalion was deactivated Jan. 7, 1946, but was reactivated March 5, 1952. It was deployed to Japan in 1953 and served in various locations until it was assigned to the FMF during 1958, and reassigned to the 3rd MarDiv. in 1963.

The unit received its first Meritorious Unit Commendation (MUC) in Vietnam for "heroism, outstanding performance and meritorious achievement," Jan. 28 through May 31, 1968.

A detachment from the battalion received another MUC for action against the Norht Vietnamese Army on Aug. 15, 1968.

Also in Vietnam, 3rd Tank Bn. Earned a bronze star for its National Defense Service Streamer, the Vietnam Service Streamer with two Silver Stars and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm.

During April and May 1975, elements of the battalion participated in Operation Frequent Wind, providing security for evacuation Vietnamese refugees.

The battalion was deactivated June 16, 1976, only to be reactivated here July 1, 1976.

CROSSWORD

- Across**
- 1 Hits hard
 - 6 Edison's middle
 - 10 In a sec
 - 14 Words to live by
 - 15 PM Golda
 - 16 Hardly believable
 - 17 Nametag word
 - 18 Back to school supply #1
 - 20 Tax shelter
 - 22 Shoot the breeze
 - 23 Drunk
 - 24 ... #2
 - 30 Be a monarch
 - 31 Blotto
 - 32 Composer Satie
 - 36 Foreign dignitary
 - 37 Author Austen
 - 38 Tuscan city
 - 39 ... #3
 - 43 Nook book
 - 44 Liquefy
 - 45 Acting Gardner
 - 46 Chart fill
 - 47 Flambé
 - 49 Leave in
 - 50 ... #4
 - 53 Choose
 - 56 Bando of baseball
 - 57 Besides
 - 58 ... #5
 - 62 Dust Bowl-ers
 - 66 Justice's garb
 - 67 Gag reaction
 - 68 Bit of color
 - 69 Catchall abbr.
 - 70 Put down
 - 71 Bulrush, e.g.

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- Down**
- 1 Phooey!
 - 2 Dismiss
 - 3 Zippo
 - 4 Ape
 - 5 Campfire treat
 - 6 Rock blaster
 - 7 Author Harper
 - 8 Certain plastics
 - 9 Poet's land
 - 10 Everything
 - 11 Collars
 - 12 "Typee" sequel
 - 13 Counter call
 - 19 D.D.E.
 - 21 Fragrant oil
 - 24 Ran on

- 25 Should, informally
- 26 Bordeaux product
- 27 Done, in Dijon
- 28 Comedy club night
- 29 Bridle part
- 33 Time-stamp anew
- 34 "Well!"
- 35 Gold units
- 37 L-1011, e.g.
- 38 Meet
- 40 Quiz
- 41 Starting point
- 42 Goat's cry
- 47 Writer Christie
- 48 Of a son
- 49 Chicago suburb
- 51 Dolt

- 52 Genealogy
- 53 Grimm beast
- 54 Connive
- 55 Big brass
- 59 Moray, e.g.
- 60 Sorority letter
- 61 Actress Dennings
- 63 Hoosier st.
- 64 ___ roll
- 65 "I told you so!"

SUDOKU

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Last week's answers

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3	1	6	9	5	7	4	8	2
9	3	8	7	1	5	2	6	4
4	6	1	8	2	3	7	9	5
5	2	7	4	9	6	1	3	8

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

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 - Angelo's Kars, 226 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054
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 - Club San Diego, 3955 Fourth St.
 - Get It On Shoppe, 3219 Mission Blvd.
 - Main Street Motel, 3494 Main St.
 - Vulcan Baths, 805 W. Cedar St.
- In National City:**
- Dream Crystal, 15366 Highland Ave.
 - Sports Auto Sales, 1112 National City Blvd.

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 - STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Rd.
 - K Smoke Shop, 5865A Adobe Rd.
- In Yucca Valley:**
- Puffa's Tobacco Mart, 57602 29 Palms Hwy.
 - Puff's Tobacco Mart, 57063 29 Palms Hwy.
- In Palm Springs:**
- 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

Sheldon
BROWN

Plainfield, N.J. Lance corporal, administration clerk, Installation Personnel Administration Center, Headquarters Battalion

Lance Cpl. Sheldon Brown, administration clerk, Installation Personnel Administration Center, Headquarters Battalion, is the first member of his family to join the military. His family moved to the U.S. from Jamaica before he was born.

>My family is originally from Jamaica. They moved to the U.S. before I was born. We enjoy cooking on a grill and bringing the family together. Being together as a family is very important to us.

>I am very close with my brothers. I'm the youngest of five so I looked up to my older brothers. We used to do all sorts of things together like playing sports and video games. We loved to play "Sonic the Hedgehog."

>I actually didn't meet my oldest brother until just before I went to boot camp. He was born in Jamaica, unlike me. It was a good experience to be able to meet and get to know another sibling.

>I'm the first member of my family to join the military. I wanted to challenge myself and continue to improve myself for as long as I can. The Marine Corps gave me the challenge I was looking for.

>I enjoy being active and staying fit. Going to the gym to lift weights helps ease my mind and keeps me competitive in other aspects of life.

>Being fit is something that is completely determined by what I want. I choose how far I want to run, how much I'm going to lift and how high I want to jump. It takes determination to keep going with it but in the end it is completely worth it.

>I also go swimming whenever I have time. As much as it is a workout, it is also therapeutic for your joints. After swimming, I feel very relaxed and inspired to push myself harder to get better.

>When I'm not working out, I like to play basketball with Marines at the barracks. I have tried out many different sports but basketball is the most fun for me.



>It's great to challenge myself by putting my skills to the test. Basketball allows me to put everything I have out on the court and still work together as a team to accomplish a goal. It has been a sport I have enjoyed since childhood and I plan to continue playing for a long time.

>Learning is very important to me because it helps me grow as a person. People grow the most individually by learning and I want to continue growing for as long as I can.

>We learn every day and I want to make the most of it while I can so I can pass it to others and help them grow as well.

>To me, reading is like a workout for the brain. It does not matter what I read, I still enjoy it. Some of my favorite books I've read growing up have been "Holes" and the "Hunger Games" series.

>What gets me to like books so much is reading about the main characters' determination and drive to get through any challenges they face throughout the story.

>These types of characters show the determination that I want to have in my life. I want to say that no matter the situation I get myself in I will get out and keep moving through life.

>The Marine Corps has given me another family to be a part of. I enjoy the foundations it has given me. I want to make a career out of the Corps. I don't really know if I'll stay an admin clerk, but I know that I want to make the most of the time I have as a Marine.

INTERVIEWED AND PHOTOGRAPHED
BY CPL. THOMAS MUDD



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Combat Center families prepare with Prepare-A-Thon

STORY BY CPL. LEVI SCHULTZ

When unexpected threats arise, it is the Marine Corps that is best prepared to face them down, living up to its promise as the nation’s force in readiness. Likewise, natural disasters and manmade incidents may occur at any place or time, which presents the question, “will your family be prepared?”

The Combat Center is taking steps to educate residents with the knowledge needed to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergency situations as part of America’s Prepare-A-Thon 2016. Throughout the week of Sept. 4-10, the Prepare-A-Thon focuses on providing families and friends with the necessary tools and information to develop a family communications plan, which could be crucial to recovering from a disaster.

“When disasters occur, the possibilities of families being at the same location are very slim,” said Luis Aguirre, installation emergency management specialist, G-7 Mission Assurance. “By preparing a plan, a family will be able to know how to react if something occurs, where to meet up, as well as who to contact.”

According to Aguirre, the reality

of a disaster situation is that one will not likely have access to everyday conveniences, such as electricity or phone service. Not knowing where one’s child is during an emergency adds stress and confusion that is avoidable through advanced planning, he said.

“First and foremost, one of the main things a family should identify is how they are going to contact each other as well as where to meet up,” Aguirre said. “Being able to have all the steps rehearsed and planned allows each family member to know exactly what to do.”

For a template or more information on developing a family communications plan visit www.ready.gov. For additional information on the National Prepare-A-Thon, visit www.ready.marines.mil or contact G-7 Mission Assurance at 830-6074.

“First and foremost, one of the main things a family should identify is how they are going to contact each other as well as where to meet up. Being able to have all the steps rehearsed and planned allows each family member to know exactly what to do.”

-Luis Aguirre, Installation emergency management specialist, G-7 Mission Assurance

Developing an

Emergency Action Plan

1

Plan in advance how each family member will get to a safe place, get in contact with another, and how to get back together.

2

Consider a plan where each family member calls or emails the same friend or relative.

3

Be sure that each family member knows that phone number and has a means to call the emergency contact.

4

On the www.ready.gov website, you can download emergency contact cards for your children. These give children or their guardians quick access to important numbers during an emergency.

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NAVFAC conducts testing aboard Combat Center

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL. THOMAS MUDD

Naval Facilities Engineering and Expeditionary Warfare Center conducted testing for an energy efficient shelter project at Camp Wilson, Aug. 29 through Sept. 9.

NAVFAC held the test to determine which combination of products are the most effective and resource-efficient for use in the operating forces.

“We have been out here since last Monday conducting a series of tests to determine if there are new tent covers and liners that can produce longer lasting effects on the coolness of the tents,” said Robert Johnston, mechanical engineer, NAVFAC Engineering and Expeditionary Warfare Center. “Now, we are testing four different [environmental control units] in an attempt to determine if one is more effective than another

in a controlled environment. We are also testing the effectiveness of the new digital generators currently being used with the ECUs to determine how much fuel is required to run these units.”

The tests began with nine tents to determine which was the most effective with the current ECU used by the Navy and Marine Corps. During the first week, a new type of liner, insulated liners and the standard configuration were tested on three sets of three tents. Within each group, one tent was outfitted with camouflage netting, one with a new shade and one without either.

“These kinds of tests help produce a situation where we can increase the endurance of the Marines utilizing these tools,” said Earl Childs, program manager, Pacific Rim Defense. “By reducing the amount of fuel and resources used, we can cut down the amount of convoys sent out to



Naval Facilities Engineering and Expeditionary Warfare Center evaluates a variety of products during testing for more efficient tent and environmental control units at Camp Wilson, Wednesday.

restock them. By cutting down on those convoys, we help reduce the amount of people that could potentially be injured while riding in a convoy.”

The results of the tests will be

used by Marines while training as a method of testing the products in an operational environment to determine which combination is the most efficient for the Navy and Marine Corps as a whole.

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F-35 From pg. A1



PHOTO BY CPL. JONAH LOVY

An F-35B Lightning II prepares to take off from the flight line aboard Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort July 27.

and developing tactics, techniques, and procedures for all three variants of the F-35.

“Due to the commonality of the F-35 mission systems and weapons, everything we learned during this detachment directly translates to combat capabilities for the Marine Corps, our sister services, and partner countries,” Lt. Col. Richard Rusnok, VMX-1 F-35B Detachment Officer-in-Charge, said of the test missile shoot.

The detachment completed multiple engineering runs in preparation for the expenditure of five AIM-120 missiles and one Guided Bomb Unit-12 (GBU-12) LASER guided bomb. The operational test team developed complex air-to-air and air-to-ground scenarios and the F-35 weapons system performed as

expected to deliver weapons on target. On day one of live fire testing, the team was able to shoot two missiles on two separate test set-ups within 12 minutes – an exceptional level of efficiency in a test environment. Another test mission involved an F-35B dropping a GBU-12 and supporting it with LASER guidance while simultaneously engaging a QF-16 drone. Both weapons successfully guided to their targets.

“This was a phenomenally successful deployment that was made possible by the close coordination between the JSF Operational Test Team, U.S. Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and industry,” Rusnok said.

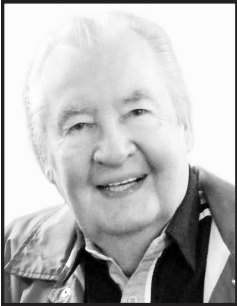
During the past year, VMX-1’s F-35B Detachment has been involved in multiple high profile events including:

- Block 2B, 3i, and 3F Developmental Test support
 - Block 2B Air-to-Surface Weapon Delivery Evaluation
 - Global Position System (GPS) testing
 - A deployment to the United Kingdom in support of the Royal International Air Tattoo and Farnborough International Airshow
- Upcoming events for VMX-1’s F-35B Detachment include:
- Naval Integrated Fire Control – Counter Air (NIFC-CA) testing
 - Developmental Test Period 3 aboard USS AMERICA
- “I want to congratulate the VMX-1 / JOTT team that did a magnificent job planning and executing this OT missile shoot,” Col. George Rowell,

VMX-1 commanding officer said. “ It is a huge achievement for the squadron and the F-35B program. We look forward to many more opportunities to provide positive impact.”

Marine Operational Test & Evaluation Squadron 1 is charged with testing the full range of Marine Aviation Combat Element (ACE) Operational Test and Evaluation including MV-22, CH-53E/K, F-35B, UH-1Y, AH-1W/Z, Command and Control Systems, and Unmanned Aerial Systems. VMX-1 is headquartered at MCAS Yuma, AZ, with detachments at Marine Corps Air Station New River, NC; West Palm Beach, FL; and Edwards AFB, CA VMX-1 was formerly called VMX-22. The squadron’s name changed on May 13, 2016.

TOUGH MINDED
OPTIMISM
by Lou Gerhardt



Herman Platzke’s selection by the Basin Wide Foundation as the entire Morongo Basin’s Volunteer of the Year was the correct choice. In the printed program celebrating the person they printed these good words about Herman:

“After serving 26 years in the Marine Corps with two tours in Vietnam and retiring as a Master Gunnery Sergeant, Herman’s family made Twentynine Palms home.

President Bush said you served your country, now serve your community and Herman took it to heart. A member of Kiwanis since 1994, he has served as president and lieutenant governor. Additionally, he has been the secretary and fundraising chair for a number of years, from selling See’s Candies over the holidays to serving pancakes. He’s done it all. He has also raised funds to support the Kiwanis/UNICEF worldwide service project, Eliminate, the elimination of Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus, saving more than 61 million mothers and their babies. Kiwanis works with MBCAL on the annual Spell-a-thon and Herman is instrumental in that event.

He serves as the Vice President of the Friends of the Library and a couple times a month you can find him at the Twentynine Palms Old Schoolhouse Museum as a docent and at Theatre 29 assisting as an usher for evening shows. He has been known to be on stage too! He takes Dr. Lou Gerhardt to his weekly Positive Living Seminars in Yucca Valley, assists the Joshua Tree National Park with the Christmas Bird Count, and is on an American Cancer Society Relay for Life team. Herman, with his bride of two years, Dina, truly enjoys giving back to the communities of the Morongo Basin.”

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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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PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. CAITLIN BEVEL

Marines with Task Force Los Angeles prepare to board the USS America (LHA 6) at Naval Base San Diego, Calif., Aug. 29, 2016. The ship will carry Marines, Sailors, and Coast Guardsmen to Los Angeles Fleet Week, Sept. 2 – Sept. 5. Fleet Weeks are annual patriotic events where active Navy and Coast Guard ships dock in major U.S. cities giving Marines, Sailors and Coast Guardsmen an opportunity to interact with locals. This is the first year LA has hosted an official Fleet Week event.



PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. CAITLIN BEVEL

Pfc. Luis Moreno, a combat engineer with 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force, requests permission to board the USS America (LHA 6) at Naval Base San Diego, Calif., Aug. 29.

The Marines have landed - First Ever Los Angeles Fleet Week

STORY BY SGT. RICARDO HURTADO

U.S. Marines with I Marine Expeditionary Force and Sailors assigned to U.S. Third Fleet aboard several San Diego-based U.S. Navy vessels will dock at the Port of Los Angeles from Aug. 30 to Sept. 6, to celebrate the first Los Angeles Fleet Week.

Fleet week is a celebration of the sea services, which Marines and Sailors from U.S. Navy ships make a major city a port of call. It is a Naval-American tradition that dates back to World War II.

For more than a decade, the Port of LA has been the venue for Navy Days. LA Navy Days is an event that, similar to fleet week, showcases Navy and Marine Corps capabilities, but at a smaller scale.

A collective effort between military and civilian agencies led to the request to amplify the festivities and change from Navy Days to Fleet Week.

Arley M. Baker, senior director, Port of LA Communications Group, said that the Port of LA has a strong history working with the Navy.

“There’s a tremendous amount of resources that the Navy-Marine Corps team, the Port of LA, the city and a variety of public agencies put into these types of visits,” Baker said. “By super-sizing Navy Days, we strongly felt that we could maximize on the core goal of facilitating meaningful interactions between the Sea Services and citizenry. This led us to approach (U.S. Third) Fleet last year about bringing a Fleet Week to LA”

U.S. Third Fleet will bring their Sailors and naval assets to this year’s LAFW, as they usually do for Fleet Weeks along the west coast, while I MEF will showcase its Marine Corps war fighting, humanitarian

assistance and disaster relief capabilities on ship and ashore to highlight the abilities of the Navy-Marine Corps team.

Over 170 Marines based at Camp Pendleton and Marine Corps Air Station Miramar make up Marine Task Force Los Angeles this year. The Marine LA Fleet Week Task Force command element is made up of Marines from Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369 (HMLA-369), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing and is led by Lt. Col. Nathan S. Marvel, HMLA-369’s commanding officer.

Marvel said LA Fleet Week is a good opportunity for the Marines to interact with the LA community and show them what the Navy-Marine Corps team is capable of in defense of the nation.

“All three major elements of the (Marine Air-Ground Task Force), also known as a MAGTF, will be on display during Fleet Week,” Marvel said. “Visitors will be able to interact with our Ground Combat, Logistics Combat and Aviation Combat Elements of the MAGTF. There will be vehicles, ground support equipment and aircraft on display. Additionally the Marines of Task Force Los Angeles will be out participating in a multitude of activities to include community relations activities, social events and sports competitions.”

Marvel added that the task force is composed of Marine units that have a long-standing history in the region.

“Southern California is our home,” Marvel said. The units that make up this MAGTF are stationed across Southern California. This is a great opportunity for our neighbors and fellow citizens to get to know the Marines and for the Marines to thank the community for their

support.”

The ships will parade into the Port of LA on Aug. 30, which will officially kick off LAFW. Baker said the port is ready to host the ships and the service members on board, and encourages them and the community to explore the area and enjoy the festivities.

“LA Fleet Week will be an outstanding opportunity for the men and women of the Marines, Navy and Coast Guard to visit and interact with the greater Southern California community in a number of meaningful ways,” Baker said.

Baker went on to add that both, service members and community will have the opportunity to participate in various events throughout the week.

“Our hope is that the Marines and Sailors will explore the local downtown and waterfront areas, so they get a flavor of the LA Waterfront,” Baker said. “This is one of the oldest and proudest communities in LA, and they are very excited to welcome the Marines and Sailors.”

Some of the events scheduled for LA Fleet Week include aircraft flyovers, military and first-responder displays, a science, technology, engineering and mathematics exposition, food, entertainment and a variety of other fun activities, as well as a Labor Day morning “Conquer the Bridge” race.

If you want to see more of the Navy-Marine Corps team, see them at San Diego Fleet Week. Sept. 10-15 where Marines and Sailors will kick off the event with the Sea and Air Parade beginning the five days of ship tours, static displays, military band performances and more. Or, check out the Marine Corps’ largest airshow in the country, the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Airshow from Sept. 23-25 in San Diego.

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**As reported by Military Times, July/August 2015*

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PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. TIMOTHY SMITHERS

Marines salute during morning colors at the court of flags at Nashville Tenn., Wednesday, as part of Marine Week. Marine Week Nashville celebrates the contributions of local Marines whose service to our nation has protected and preserved our way of life for hundreds of years.



PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. JERED STONE

An MV-22B Osprey assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 261, flies above Riverfront Park at Nashville, Tenn., as part of Marine Week Nashville, Tuesday. Marine Week Nashville is an opportunity to showcase the Marines and help people understand the capabilities of the Marine Corps.



PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. JACK RIGSBY

U.S. Marines with 2nd Amphibious Assault Battalion drive AAV7 Amphibious Assault Vehicles down Cumberland River during Marine Week Nashville, Tenn., Tuesday. Marine Week Nashville is an opportunity to showcase the Marines and help people understand the capabilities of the Marine Corps.



PHOTO BY CPL. JOHN HAMILTON

A U.S. Navy Sailor directs a landing craft, air cushion (LCAC) in the well deck of the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD-1) on Monday. The 22nd MEU, deployed with the Wasp Amphibious Ready Group, is conducting naval operations in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe and Africa.

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1/7 PUSHES THROUGH COLOR RUN



A Marine with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, throws colored cornstarch on runners during the battalion-wide 5k color run aboard the Combat Center, Sept. 2.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL. LEVI SCHULTZ

Donning pristine white T-shirts, Marines and sailors of 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, added some color to their morning physical fitness routine with a battalion-wide 5k color run aboard the Combat Center, Sept. 2.

“I think it’s a great event for everyone to come out and volunteer for. I believe it’s important to volunteer for battalion events to let the Marines know we support them.”

Whitney Wetherill, 1/7 spouse

The battalion organized the run to promote camaraderie and brotherhood amongst a unit that is essential in winning battles while simultaneously involving family members who participated by throwing bio-degradable colored cornstarch at the service members as they ran. The course took more than 200 runners along Gillespie Road where they ran in a formation and took turns singing cadence.

“We held the color run to spice up the battalion PT right before a [holiday liberty period],” said Mary Freese, family readiness officer, 1/7. “It is something families can get involved in to show how much they support the Marines.”

According to Freese, providing the Marines and families with new and fun activities is essential to improving morale within the battalion.

“I think it’s a great event for everyone to come out and volunteer for,” said Whitney Wetherill, 1/7 spouse. “I believe it’s important to volunteer for battalion events to let the Marines know we support them.”



A spouse of a Marine with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, throws colored cornstarch on runners during a battalion-wide 5k color run aboard the Combat Center, Sept. 2.



A spouse of a Marine with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, throws colored cornstarch on runners during a battalion-wide 5k color run aboard the Combat Center, Sept. 2.



Marines and sailors with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, participate in a battalion-wide 5k Color Run aboard the Combat Center, Sept. 2.



Combat Center Events

Sandy Hill Lanes is scheduled to host a Fall and Winter Bowling League. Registration is open now and ends Sept. 13. There will be opportunities to practice and receive coaching. Come with teams of four to participate in this 24 week tournament. For more information call 760-830-6422.

Come down to Felix Field Sept. 23 for Picnic in the Park. The event is from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Bring your children and a picnic lunch for an opportunity to meet new families while your children explore and play. For more information call 760-830-3380.

Hashmarks Staff Noncommissioned Officer Club hosts Steak Night every Monday and Friday from 4:30 to 8 p.m. The event is open to all hands Monday and SNCOs on Fridays. For more information, contact 760-830-5035.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Sept. 09
4:00 p.m. – Ice Age: Collision Course (3-D), PG
6:20 p.m. – Nerve, PG-13
8:30 p.m. – Jason Bourne, PG-13
11:30 p.m. – Suicide Squad, PG-13

Saturday, Sept. 10
11:30 a.m. – Ice Age: Collision Course, PG
2:00 p.m. – Suicide Squad (3-D)
5:00 p.m. – Star Trek, PG-13
7:30 p.m. – Bad Moms, R
9:40 p.m. – Lights Out, PG-13
11:50 p.m. – Anthropoid, R

Sunday, Sept. 11
12:00 p.m. – Sausage Party, R
3:00 p.m. – Storks (3-D), PG
6:30 p.m. – Suicide Squad, PG-13

Monday, Sept. 12
5:00 p.m. – Nerve, PG-13
7:2 p.m. – Bad Moms, R

Tuesday, Sept. 13
5:00 p.m. – Pete’s Dragon (3-D), PG
7:20 p.m. – Bad Moms, R

Wednesday, Sept. 14
5:00 p.m. – Lights Out, PG-13
6:50 p.m. – Suicide Squad, PG-13

Thursday, Sept. 15
5:00 p.m. – Ice Age: Collision Course, PG
7:10 p.m. – Star Trek Beyond, PG-13

Friday, Sept. 16
5:00 p.m. – Pete’s Dragon (3-D), PG
7:20 p.m. – Jason Bourne PG-13
9:50 p.m. – Sausage Party, R
11:50 p.m. – Suicide Squad, PG-13



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Odd Squad

DC Comics’ ‘Suicide Squad’ is a crazy, colorful, over-stuffed mess

NEIL POND

*‘Suicide Squad’
Starring Will Smith,
Margot Robbie, Viola
Davis & Jared Leto
Directed by David Ayer
Rated PG-13*

The superhero summer gets a jolt of anarchy as a group of “metahuman” oddballs and outlaws commandeer the screen. Based on obscure characters created by DC Comics, the Suicide Squad is a motley crew of death-row supervillains corralled by the govern-

ment to combat threats too dangerous or deadly for ordinary defenses—like the “next” Superman, who might not be so people-friendly, or the slinky sorceress (Cara Delevingne) now building a doomsday machine to annihilate humanity—in exchange for lightened sentences. Think The Dirty Dozen meets Guardians of the Galaxy, with a twist of Ghostbusters. Will Smith is Deadshot, the world’s most lethal assassin. Margot Robbie is Harley Quinn, a psychiatrist turned psycho by her bonkers boyfriend, the Joker (Jared Leto). There’s also Aussie kleptomaniac Captain Boomerang (Jai Courtney), hulking human reptile Killer Croc (Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje, buried beneath a ton of rubbery prosthetics) and pyrotechnic homeboy El Diablo (a heavily tattooed Jay Hernandez). Viola Davis is the iron-fisted black-ops recruiter in charge of the squad. Karen Fukuhara plays Katana, a samurai whose sword contains the souls of everyone its ever slain. Joel Kinnaman is elite soldier Col. Rick Flag, who has a special—

though convoluted—tie to the Enchantress, the ancient, newly resurrected witch trying to destroy the world. Even Batman (Ben Affleck) and the Flash (Ezra Miller) drop in for cameos, as if they’ve casually wandered over from another movie. Everyone has a back-story and a rockin’ theme song. Harley gets a reworked version of the old Leslie Gore hit “You Don’t Own Me,” Creedence Clearwater Revival’s swampy “Fortunate Son” plays for Killer Croc, and as Diablo’s flames flicker in the night sky, we hear War’s “Slippin’ Into Darkness.” Writer-director David Ayer—who also directed the Brad Pitt WWII tank flick Fury and wrote Training Day, for which Denzel Washington won an Oscar—has a lot on his plate. Ultimately, the huge cast, unwieldy story and muddled, sometimes downright cheesy special effects become just too much—for him, and us—and everything crashes, smashes, mashes and finally collapses into a big, boom-y blob. There are some things, however, to like about Suicide Squad. Leto’s

cackling Joker is an unhinged kick; you never know what he’s going to do, how far he’ll go or where. It’s good to see Smith in a semi-supporting role where he can lay back in an ensemble but still unload some great quips. Davis is deliciously ambiguous as a high-ranking agent who’ll do whatever it takes to do a dirty job. Robbie seems to be having fun as the wacko Harley, but her hyper-sexy shorty shorts, fishnet stockings, stiletto boots and smeared babydoll makeup look like they came from a stripper’s closet—or a fanboy’s heated ComicCon dream—instead of a wacko supervillain’s lair. In the end, the movie is a hot mess—but a loud, star-packed, proudly trashy one. At one point, Harley and the Joker jump into an industrial vat of paint, then make out, rolling around and laughing like the nut jobs they are in the swirls of blue, red, yellow and green. That’s pretty good snapshot of Suicide Squad as a whole: Stuffed full of everything, including itself, it’s mad, mucky and yucky and doesn’t make a lot of sense—but hey, look at all those crazy colors!

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WeekINPhotos

SPMAGTF Marines conduct OC Qualification



Sgt. Kelvin Centeno, supply administration specialist, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force - Crisis Response - Central Command 16.2, performs kicks during an Oleoresin Capsicum qualification course at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, Aug. 27. SPMAGTF-CR-CC is a self-sustaining expeditionary unit, designed to provide a broad range of crisis response capabilities.



Sgt. Dylan Zuccherino, forward observer, Detachment N, 3rd Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force - Crisis Response - Central Command 16.2, gives commands to Cpl. Brandon Ashker, a military policeman with Law Enforcement Detachment, SPMAGTF-CR-CC 16.2, during an Oleoresin Capsicum qualification course at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, Aug. 27. SPMAGTF-CR-CC is a self-sustaining expeditionary unit, designed to provide a broad range of crisis response capabilities.



Lance Cpl. Albert Huerta, radio operator, Detachment N, 3rd Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force - Crisis Response - Central Command 16.2, is contaminated with Oleoresin Capsicum spray during an OC qualification course at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, Aug. 27. SPMAGTF-CR-CC is a self-sustaining expeditionary unit, designed to provide a broad range of crisis response capabilities.



Cpl. Darin Keesler, military policeman, Law Enforcement Detachment, Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force - Crisis Response - Central Command 16.2, supervises Marines through an Oleoresin Capsicum qualification course at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, Aug. 27. SPMAGTF-CR-CC is a self-sustaining expeditionary unit, designed to provide a broad range of crisis response capabilities.

Photos by Sgt. Donald Holbert

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