



OBSERVATION POST

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May 3, 2013

Vol. 57 Issue 17

Hiring Our Heroes helps spouses

Lance Cpl. Lauren A. Kurkmillis
Combat Correspondent

Spouses of service members are often faced with unique challenges like raising children while their partner is deployed and frequent relocation each time the next permanent change of station come around. Focus is placed on the service member's career, leaving the spouse's employment aspirations to be placed on the back burner. Programs like Hiring Our Heroes not only work toward finding meaningful employment for veterans, but for spouses as well.

The Hiring Our Heroes Military Spouse Employment Program aims to help military spouses overcome unemployment and underemployment. The Hiring Our Heroes Spouses job fair is visiting the Combat Center May 9 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event will take place at the Combat Center's

"The Commandant of the Marine Corps and Mrs. Amos are actively involved with the Hiring our Heroes efforts."

— Jessica Arthur

Officer's Club and is open exclusively to military spouses.

"The Commandant of the Marine Corps and Mrs. Amos are actively involved with the Hiring our Heroes efforts, supported by the National Chamber of Commerce, receiving full backing from the White House and Mrs. Obama's Joining Forces initiative," said Jessica Arthur, Marine Air Ground Task Force family readiness officer.

The program assists spouses in becoming more competitive in the workplace through networking events, online and in-person mentoring, and hiring fairs that are exclusively designed for military spouses.

The program promotes the following six core areas of support for military spouses:

Nationwide Network - building a national network of spouse-friendly employers, public partners, and service organizations that will enhance the job prospects of all military spouses.

Resume Refining - giving spouses the tools and training they need for a successful job search including how to best highlight their unique strengths on their resumes.

Certification & Licensing - connecting spouses to the resources they need to obtain and maintain the proper certifications and licenses for their careers, regardless of where their spouses serve.

See **SPOUSES** page A5

HEAVY ARTILLERY



CPL. ALI AZIMI

Marines with Battery N, 5th Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, fire an M777 A2 howitzer during a series of integrated firing exercises at the Combat Center's Quakenbush Training Area April 26.

Reserve unit teams up with active counterparts

Cpl. Ali Azimi
Combat Correspondent

Marines with Batteries O and N, 5th Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, conducted a series of integrated firing exercises in conjunction with 11th Marine Regiment at the Combat Center's Quakenbush Training Area, April 26.

terparts and get some good training," said Maj. Kevin Jackson, operations officer, Headquarters Battery, 5/14.

The batteries executed continuous fire missions throughout the day leading into the night portion.

The light from the howitzers' fire briefly lit up

changed positions. They transported the 7,500-pound howitzer as they drove across nearly 10 miles of rough desert terrain, using their night-vision goggles to see through the darkness.

All these exercises are meant to increase the proficiency of these Marines, said Sgt. Travis Hill, section



CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON

Fifth battalion is a reserve artillery unit from Seal Beach, Calif., and arrived at the Combat Center the day prior as part of their routine drill.

"It's a pretty outstanding opportunity for the reserves to get to integrate with their active duty coun-

terparts and get some good training," said Maj. Kevin Jackson, operations officer, Headquarters Battery, 5/14.

terparts and get some good training," said Maj. Kevin Jackson, operations officer, Headquarters Battery, 5/14.

Where active-duty Marines have training day-in and day out, the reserve battalion only has a few days of drill to execute all their training.

"We're out here training the Marines, making sure

See **ARTILLERY** page A5

'Watchdogs' deploy

Lance Cpl. Alejandro Bedoya
Combat Correspondent

Marines and sailors with Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron-1 said goodbye while loading bags and waiting for the busses with their loved ones, April 27.

The unit deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and will be replacing Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron-3. The primary mission of the unit will be providing support for ground troops during their seven-month deployment.

They will also be using unmanned aerial vehicles to conduct surveillance missions and gather intelligence.

"It is good to see everyone saying goodbye," said Sgt. Maj. Jason Perry,



LANCE CPL. LAUREN A. KURKMILLIS

Mackenzie Gilbert, 6, daughter of Sgt. Joshua Gilbert, imagery analyst, Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron-1, holds her father's hand before he departs for Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, April 27.

squadron sergeant major. "It makes the troops feel good to see everyone out here even though it is a Saturday."

Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron-1 has been involved in multiple engagements in the past, some of which are Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Desert Storm.

According to Lisa Gilbert, wife of Sgt. Joshua Gilbert, imagery analyst, deployments can be challenging.

While he is gone, she alone must take care of their three children, Jayden, 8, Makayda, 7, and Mackenzie, 6.

"I support him in anything he does, even if it means he is going to be away from us for a long time," Gilbert said. "I'm so proud of him but we are going to miss him very much."

Although the families of VMU-1 will miss them, the Marines and

See **VMU-1** page A5

COMBINED ARMS EXERCISE



For more photos, see page A6

CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON

Jayson Mike, 6, son of Sgt. Justin Mike, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3, waits to see a static display of an M1A1 Abrams main battle tank during the L.I.N.K.S CAX for Kids program April 25.

LINKS throws fun-day for base children

'First Tanks' holds formation training

Lance Cpl. Alejandro Bedoya
Combat Correspondent

Company B, 1st Tank Battalion took their M1A1 Abrams tanks out on the road to participate in formation training aboard the Combat Center, April 28.

The training was conducted at Lead Mountain to improve driving and reaction to a variety of different environmental scenarios. The tank crews were forced to drive during the day and night. For some drivers, this was particularly difficult due to their lack of field experience.

"I had to drive at my (Military Occupational Specialty) school but this is the first time I have ever been out with my company," said Pfc. Juan Isaiz, driver, Co. B. "I hear the more experienced tankers talk about the training they have done and it gets me excited for what is to come. Driving here yesterday, I was very excited."

The tankers set a perimeter around the main camp, before they performed

maintenance on the tanks in preparation for the day-formation exercises.

"I am responsible for making sure the tank is fueled up and ready to go," Isaiz said. "Everyone has their own thing to do but the newest tanker has to make sure the tank is ready to go when it is time to move out."

The tankers returned from their day formation exercises to refuel and prepare their tanks for night formation exercises.

Company B also conducted exercises to improve their response time to taking contact and taking action. Taking contact and taking action are two different commands for tankers.

Taking action is a command that instructs driver to turn the whole tank and drive in the direction of the action to engage a target, pursue the enemy or aid troops.

When a tank takes contact, the command tells the crew to simply rotate the

See **TANKS** page A5

"I hear the more experienced tankers talk about the training they have done and it gets me excited for what is to come."

— Pfc. Juan Isaiz

THINGS TO KNOW

Motorcycle SAFETY

Tips to prepare bikers for riding in heat

Brent Athy
Safety Division

To most riders, a commute or long-distance ride rarely seems more appealing in a car than on a motorcycle. But when the temperature climbs up and over 100 degrees, even some of the most enthusiastic riders begin to reminisce about the amenities of the car air conditioning and cup holders filled with ice-cold beverages, etc.

One of the best ways to deal with adverse temperatures is to simply plan ahead. Mid-day rides are fine in that they allow you to hit the snooze button a few times, but they also put you out on the road in the hottest part of the day. Early morning start times are more the ticket during the summer months. Temperatures are lower in the morning as well as humidity levels that are more likely to help keep you cool while rolling down the road. Also, early rides can get you on the roads prior to most of the traffic making for a smoother ride. Late afternoon rides should not be counted out as they put you on the roads as the temperature is dropping rather than rising, plus the sun is up much later this time of year so if your ride gets extended you won't be left in the dark.

Nevertheless, both are a good opportunity to beat the heat and some traffic.

Should you be unable to avoid riding in the mid day heat, make sure you have the proper gear for the climate like a perforated jacket with closing panels and pants with vents. Remember, not too much ventilation or you may dehydrate. A well ventilated helmet and gloves are a nice plus along with some vented riding boots. You may also want to consider some sort of moisture-wicking undergarment to help with moisture retention.

Once you've decided when you want to ride and what sweat-saving gear you will ride in, you need to

take a look over your bike and decide whether the fluids are up to the heat as well. Higher-viscosity oil may be a better alternative to the 10w-30 or so that is designed for use in the cooler months as they will have a tendency to thin rapidly in the heat. Aside from

changing oil, it is also a good time to change out the coolant as this should be done twice a year anyway.

Water — for you not just the bike, make sure you have plenty of water with you to stay hydrated. This is more a necessity than a recommendation. Increased perspiration rates are your enemy but can be combated with a camelback or some other similar system. Have fun out there and stay cool.

“One of the best ways to deal with adverse temperatures is to simply plan ahead.”

— Brent Athy

Hospital installs new CT scanners

Dan Barber
Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms
Public Affairs Officer

April 15, a new Computed Tomography Scanner was installed in the Radiology Department. The installation process at the Naval Hospital will continue until late May. During this time period a temporary mobile CT Scanner will be provided in a trailer outside the Emergency Medicine Department entrance. This will require blocking six parking spaces in the old ambulance parking area; we apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

The Radiology Department is acquiring this updated GE Healthcare (Optima CT660) 64 slice CT scanner, replacing the current 16 slice CT scanner, to help provide better radiology service to beneficiaries.

“Our goal is to provide the best medical care to our patients. With the new Optima CT660, the scanning time will be reduced while maintaining superior resolution quality.”

— Dan Barber

CT scans otherwise known as CAT Scans have been performed successfully over the last 30 years. They allow radiologists to look inside the body without an invasive procedure or surgery.

Typical reasons for acquiring a CT scan include illness of unknown origin, trauma, malignancy or other instances in which a medical problem is suspected that cannot be easily detected with a physical exam. A CT scan obtains multiple 2-D images of the body area of concern. The images are then evaluated in multiple planes; front to back, side to side, top to bottom and sometimes in 3-D, to rule out or diagnose a medical issue.

Our goal is to provide the best medical care to our patients. With the new Optima CT660, the scanning time will be reduced while maintaining superior resolution quality. In short, faster scan times, lower radiation dose and improved picture quality. We are excited to bring this upgraded imaging to our patients and providers here at Naval Hospital Twentynine Palms.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

DUSTIN CHARLES BROWN
Born on April 14, 2013
Born to Daniel and Stevie Brown

KENLEY RUTH BALDWIN
Born on April 18, 2013
Born to Jacob and Alissa Baldwin

CAYDEN ALEXANDER KILSON
Born on April 19, 2013
Born to Cherish Kilson

VINCENT BERNARD ARRIOLA JR.
Born on April 19, 2013
Born to Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Arriola

JAIDEN JOSIAH NAVTA
Born on April 19, 2013
Born to Robby and Michelle Navta

AURELIA ELENA FERRIZ
Born on April 20, 2013
Born to Andres and Kira Ferriz

LEILA JADE SMELTZER
Born on April 22, 2013
Born to Cristopher and Brittani Smeltzer

ADDISON LEEANN COKE
Born on April 23, 2013
Born to Christopher and Karleen Coke

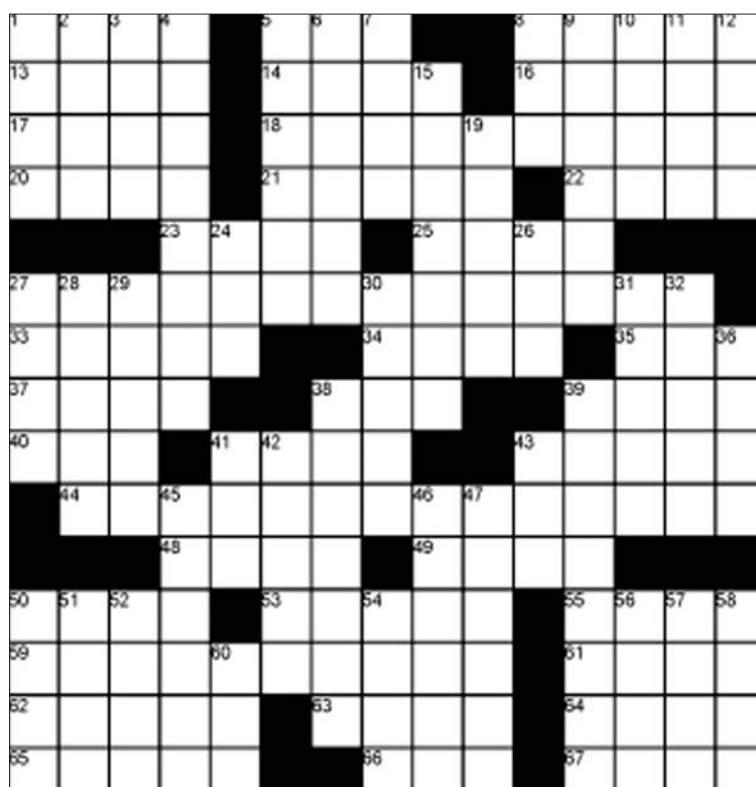
DYLAN MASEO FLORES
Born on April 23, 2013
Born to Maseo and Amber Flores

CALVIN JAMES SHERBUNE
Born on April 24, 2013
Born to Christopher and Kristina Sherbune

ALEXANDER RAPHAEL RIOS-AGUILAR
Born on April 27, 2013
Born to Alfonso and Claudia Rios

BELLS

- ACROSS**
- “That’s a laugh!”
 - Former press secretary Fleischer
 - Invited
 - Oxeye window shape
 - Emit coherent light
 - Drummer who replaced Best
 - One, for one
 - Sweet fruit of Washington and Oregon
 - Bloodhound’s clue
 - Retort to 7-Down
 - Diana or Betsy
 - Sidi __, Morocco
 - PC pic
 - Miss Frances’s kiddie show
 - Cornhusker State city
 - Elevator name
 - Apollo vehicle
 - Attempted to score
 - Wall and 42nd: Abbr.
 - Stat for a goalie
 - Tool man Allen
 - Italian bubbly
 - More rational
 - Indoor racket
 - Looking down on
 - Road reversals, slangily
 - Be a blowhard
 - Moves like sludge
 - Run __ (go crazy)
 - 1963 Johnny Cash hit
 - Mindy of “The Facts of Life”
 - Create cuffs on, perhaps
 - Snow construction
 - Role for Welles
 - Trombone feature
 - Teachers’ org.
 - Tuck away
 - Nonpaying train rider
 - Driven by greed
 - Christmas pageant prop
 - “I’m game”
 - Lacking melanin
 - Cookie or bread morsel
 - “That’s not true!”
 - Cigarette tip
 - Buffet table heater
 - Corn syrup brand
 - Boots the ball
 - Prohibition backers
 - “Me” types
 - Strep throat bacteria
 - Pharmaceutical-approving org.
 - Destroyed cries
 - Verb with “thou”
 - “Got it, dude!”
 - Judd or Watts
 - Gained access
 - Chan portrayer Warner __
 - Destroy completely
 - A __ child
 - Pay a brief visit
 - Pathetic sorts
 - Actor’s rep: Abbr.
 - Mad Magazine specialty
 - “You don’t __!”
 - Acted shrewish
 - Nom de __
 - Coin of Toledo, once
 - Victoria’s Secret buys
 - Small brook
 - Prefix with knock or lock
 - Utah national park
 - Castle s trench
 - “That’s not good!”
 - Was familiar with
 - It needs refining



See answers on page A5

SUDOKU 2892-D

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



Whatever you’re looking for, you can find it in the **Observation Post Classified section**

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OFF-LIMITS ESTABLISHMENTS

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

In Oceanside:
- Angelo’s Kars, 222 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054
- Angelo’s Kars, 226 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054

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

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

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

In Twentynine Palms:
- Adobe Smoke Shop, 6441 Adobe Rd.
- STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Rd.
- K Smoke Shop, 5865A Adobe Rd.

In Yucca Valley:
- Yucca Tobacco Mart, 57602 29 Palms Hwy.
- Puff’s Tobacco Mart, 57063 29 Palms Hwy.

In Palm Springs:
- Village Pub, 266 S. Palm Canyon Dr.

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



Matthew

Lake Forest, Calif., Combat Center firefighter, 33

MATHER

> **We have a brotherhood.** We are all very close. You work so much with these guys that you become a family. You have to trust each other and watch each other's backs, kind of like Marines. I trust these guys with my life.

> **My first fire gig** was with Department of Defense Fire out in Virginia Beach and then I got transferred out here.

> **I was a tow truck driver** and I saw a bad car accident happen right in front of me. The car was in flames and there was a man trapped inside and no one was on the scene. I tried to put out the fire with a fire extinguisher. I ended up cutting the seatbelt and pulling the man out. The (firefighters) who showed up on scene said I saved his life. I went home that night and couldn't stop thinking about how awesome it would be to be able to do that every day.

> **I was out at lunch** the next day and saw the same firefighters from the accident. They offered to buy me lunch so I sat with them and was asking how to become a fireman and it all started from there.

> **I worked as a reservist**, which is kind of like a volunteer, for about a year.

> **After I became** a reservist, the fire department sent me to school to become a certified emergency medical technician.

> **I quit my tow truck job** and became a full time EMT on a private ambulance for about seven years before actually becoming a firefighter.

> **I fell in love with this** job and the fact that I am helping people. I knew I was going to be doing this for the rest of my life as soon as I became a reservist. I'm not really the type of guy who likes working behind a desk.

> **This job is exciting and** lets me get out there and get my hands dirty. On top of that, it is rewarding.

> **I worked with F-18's** when I was in Virginia. We did crash rescue, structural and emergency medical services over there.

MATHER COMES FROM A MUSICAL FAMILY AND GREW UP PLAYING GUITAR, BASS, PIANO AND DRUMS. IN HIS SPARE TIME, HE WRITES MUSIC.

> **One day, an F-18 took off** and something happened to the engine that caused both pilots to eject. The plane ended up bouncing in the parking lot and hitting an apartment complex. The plane went completely through the complex. The whole place went up in flames. There was fire everywhere and every single apartment was lit up. We were there for a week but there were no casualties. It was Good Friday so everybody was out.

> **The gear is pretty heavy** but you get used to the 60 or 70 extra pounds. I remember putting it on for the first time and I couldn't believe I was going to have to wear that stuff every day.

> **The scariest call I have been to** was when a big shopping center went up in flames. I was assigned to a ladder company and we had to go on to the second floor to look for any spread of the main fire. Once we climbed up into the attic, the smoke was so thick, we couldn't find our way out. We didn't have a hoseline to follow back to an exit and we got disoriented. We ended up breaking our way out but it is not a good feeling to be stuck somewhere like that.

> **Any fire is dangerous.** We do this job because we love it but I can't deny that it is scary.

> **We train a lot and** we are good at what we do. We try to stay safe as much as we can.

> **As a firefighter**, we love to do a lot of pranks. We would flip mattresses and put wood under the covers to make it look like a real bed and once they get in it, it's hard as a rock. We would also run (an intravenous therapy) through the roof and drip them on people who were sleeping.

> **I am the newest** firefighter here but I have experience so I am not a rookie.

> **My dad is the main** thing that kept me going when I was trying to become a fireman. There were times where I wanted to give up but he gave me the strength to keep going. He was a very strong guy, along with my mom. I look up to him a lot.

> **My dad passed away when** I was 17 from cancer. I was playing football when I was younger and he got sick at my game. We thought it might have been something he ate so we took him to the doctor but it turned out to be a lot more serious. Watching my dad go through that was horrible.

> **It makes you grow up** a lot quicker when you realize how strong your parents are.

> **My mom is** my idol. Growing up, I know I was a pain but looking back I don't know how she did it.

> **She loves that I** am a firefighter. She is a nurse so we talk about medical stuff all the time. Growing up, I had no idea what she was talking about but now my brothers are the ones who have no idea what we are talking about.

> **I requested to come out to** the West Coast because I wanted to be closer to my family and my hometown. I got denied many times but I finally got it.

> **I was kind of freaked out** by the desert but excited at the same time. I get to see different kinds of things out here and we get different kinds of calls but overall, I like it.

> **I have been out here** for a total of five months. We work 48 hours on the job but then we get 48 hours off. I like the schedule here a lot.



Interviewed by Lance Cpl. Alejandro Bedoya
April 26, 2013

BATTLE OF THE BATTALIONS

Cannon Cockers hold artillery show-down

Cpl. Ali Azimi
Combat Correspondant

Marines with Battery C, 11th Marine Regiment rolled up to the firing line at their own pace, but once their boots touched dirt, the clock started. The seven-ton vehicle hauling the M777A2 howitzer detached and circled around to the rear of the gun while the Marines frantically picked and dug their way into the ground to emplace the cannon, sending rocks and debris flying head-high.

The regiment is currently aboard the Combat Center as part of 1st Marine Division's annual Desert Scimitar, a division-sized

exercise bringing together the division's many war fighting assets. Before their division-sized training began, the regiment personnel decided to brew up some friendly competition between the battalions April 21 to 23.

The units were pitted against each other in a competition of artillery efficiency. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalion with 11th Regiment and Battery I, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, showcased their skills as they faced off against each other at the Combat Center's Rainbow Training Area.

Their objective was given to them. They had two minutes to aim and fire three

rounds at their respective targets, tires spread out along the mountainside. They employed the Howitzer in direct fire to engage against their targets, more than 750 meters downrange.

Each explosion created a massive cloud of black smoke and fire downrange as it impacted the side of mountains.

Competition got the

Marines moving. The only prize was bragging rights as the best battalion in the both regiments.

"I feel like it makes us better, more aware of our competition and makes us strive to be better," said Pfc. Nevi Burr, ammunition chief, Battery I, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment.

During Burr's turn on

the line, his mind was set on getting everything done as quickly as possible, Burr added. Their goal is to give 100 percent on the firing line and their competition reinforced their drive.

In addition to a morale booster, the exercise served as speed training, a necessary skill for an artillery crew to have when engaging targets in combat.

"Although artillery is an indirect-fire weapon, at some point in combat, you may be called upon to engage an enemy tank or troops in the open," said Staff Sgt. Anthony Parker, 11th Regiment Artillery Training School instructor, and judge for the

competition. "If need be, they have to use the skills that we've taught them to destroy the enemy."

The Marines were scored on their firing commands, cannon emplacement and displacement times and of course, the hit.

"You guys have shown you have the skill to put steel on target," said Col. Stephen E. Liszewski, commanding officer, 11th Marine Regiment. "This is a combat skill that's been called upon time and again when we go to fight."

The winners of the competition are scheduled to be announced May 5, after the Desert Scimitar training exercise is completed.

"If need be, they have to use the skills that we've taught them to destroy the enemy."

- Staff Sgt. Anthony Parker



[Left] Marines with Battery C, 1st Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, emplace the M777A2 Howitzer at the Rainbow Training Area April 23, as part of an artillery competition against the rest of the regiment. They were scored and timed on their emplacement, fire and displacement.

[Middle] Marines with Battery I, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, execute three rounds of direct fire within two minutes at targets at the Rainbow Training Area April 23. The battery was taking part in 11th Marine Regiment's artillery competition and faced three other battalions from the regiment.

[Right] Marines with Battery C, 1/11, emplace their weapon in the Rainbow Training Area, as part of 11th Regiment's artillery competition. The battalion faced off against 2nd and 3rd Battalion as well as Battery I, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment. The winner of the competition will be announced after the completion of Desert Scimitar, May 5.

SPOUSES, from A1

Entrepreneurship - ensuring that spouses have all of the information and preparation needed to start a successful business of their own.

Portable Careers - working with its advisory council and partners to advocate for quality remote, flex, and temporary work options for all working spouses, so their careers can move with them.

Government and Contracting - preparing spouses for government and contractor positions, especially with agencies and companies that have made a commitment to hire and retain military spouses.

The Hiring Our Heroes program is a part of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and was launched in March 2011 as a nation wide initiative to help veterans and military spouses find meaningful employment. The program works with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's vast network of state and local chambers and other strategic partners from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. This helps to create a movement in communities where veterans and military families frequently return.

Hiring Our Heroes has hosted more than 430 hiring fairs across the country. By Dec. 31, 2012, more than 18,400 veterans and military spouses were assisted in finding employment as a result of these job fairs.

According to Hiring Our Heroes, as the program enters its third year, they are developing online programs to complement the hiring fairs in order to better address the systemic employment issues facing veterans, transitioning service members and military spouses. These include online tools to help translate military service into a strong resume and a job portal that allows veterans and transitioning service members to search for employment opportunities in the fastest growing job markets and industries. These online tools will be integrated into the employment workshops that will take place at every fair to enhance the Hiring Our Heroes experience.

They further note, the lifestyle of a military spouse instills a unique set of skills including resilience, adaptability and unparalleled dedication. Every employer, whether they are a small business or a Fortune 500 company, can benefit from these traits and Hiring Our Heroes is working toward bridging the gap between these talented military spouses and the business community.

For more information about Hiring Our Heroes and the Military Spouse Program, visit www.uschamber.com/hiringourheroes/milspouse.

TANKS, from A1

main gun in the direction of the enemy and potentially return fire.

"This training helps with professional development of the tankers," said Gunnery Sgt. Anthony Marrero, tank leader, Co. B, 1st Tank Battalion. "It helps broaden maneuvering skills and at the end of this training these Marines will be more prepared for combat situations."

The training is scheduled to end May 6.

ARTILLERY, from A1

they are proficient at their cannoneer duties and successfully putting rounds down range safely," Hill added.

The batteries regularly train at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. This was the first time 5/14 has trained at the Combat Center since Javelin Thrust 2012.

"Out here it's open," Hill said. "At Camp Pendleton, we're restricted. We all shoot at the same grid. At Twentynine Palms, it's a more open and free training environment."

The battalion finished working with 11th Regiment April 29. They are scheduled to return in June to support the Integrated Training Exercise.



CPL. ALI AZIMI

Marines with Battery N, 5th Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, fire an M777 A2 howitzer during a series of integrated firing exercises at the Combat Center's Quakenbush Training Area April 26.

VMU-1, from A1

sailors are excited to contribute to Operation Enduring Freedom, said Gilbert.

The unit is scheduled to return to the Combat Center later this year.



LANCE CPL. LAUREN A. KURKIMILIS

[Above] Mackayda Gilbert, 7, daughter of Sgt. Joshua Gilbert, imagery analyst, Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron-1, hugs her father before he departs for Afghanistan April 27.

[Left] Aiden Gordon, son of Sgt. Antoine Gordon, imagery analyst, VMU-1, tries on a Marine Corps cover before his father departs for Afghanistan April 27.

SUDOKU SOLUTIONS

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

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

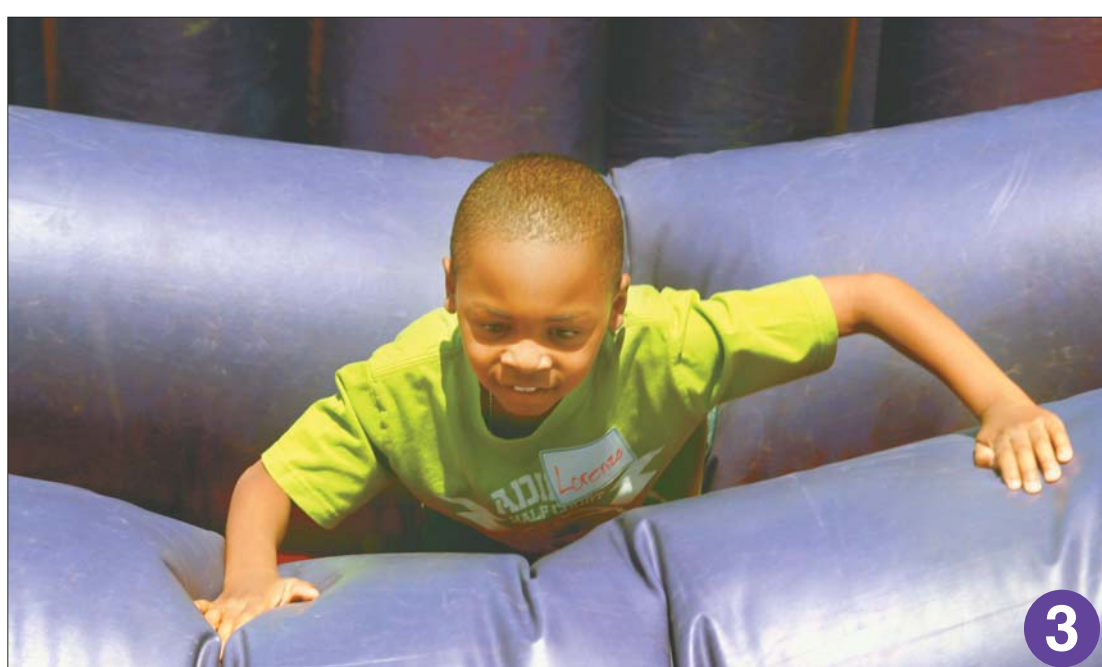
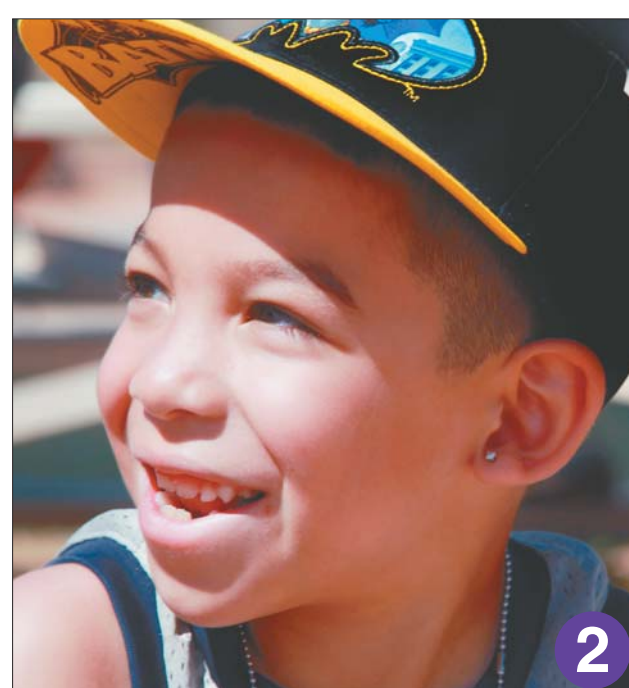
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LOOKING for local entertainment?

See page B2 for our **LIBERTY CALL** section

Visit the official MCAGCC facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter>

Faces in the Crowd



[1] Makayda Gilbert, 7, and Mackenzie Gilbert, 6, daughters of Sgt. Joshua Gilbert, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1, watch a military working dog demonstration during the Lifestyle Insights Networking Knowledge Skills Combined Arms Exercise for Kids program April 25. The demonstration was one part of the day-long event.

[2] Jayden Molina, 6, son of Gunnery Sgt. Jose Molina, with Combat Logistics Battalion 7, watches a military working dog demonstration during the L.I.N.K.S. CAX for Kids program April 25.

[3] Lorenzo Gibbs, 7, son of Gunnery Sgt. William Gibbs, with Marine Air Control Squadron 1, climbs through an inflatable obstacle course during the L.I.N.K.S. CAX for Kids program April 25.

[4] Gillian Mussleman, 7, daughter of Staff Sgt. Terrill Mussleman, with 3rd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, waits for her turn to run through an inflatable obstacle course during the L.I.N.K.S. CAX for Kids program April 25.

Cpl. William Jackson Combat Correspondent

More than 75 Combat Center children attended the Lifestyle Insights Networking Knowledge Skills Combined Armed Exercise for Kids program at Felix Field April 25. The day-long program gives children an understanding of what their active-duty parents do aboard the base and a brief overview of the Marine Corps.

Throughout the day, the children learned about Marine Corps customs, rank structure and the importance of Corps history. They also had the opportunity to climb inside military vehicles, eat pre-packaged military rations and tackle an inflatable obstacle course.

The event was organized to help the children experience what their military parents do for a living and to understand their value as members of the greater Marine Corps family.



Story by Lance Cpl. Alejandro Bedoya

The average temperature aboard the Combat Center during the summer is 98 degrees and with the summer approaching, the days are beginning to heat up. The base provides a cost-efficient and convenient way for service members and their families to escape the desert heat. The Combat Center offers a small water park for children and five pools to help people keep cool this summer.

Classes

- Aqua HITT** - Officers' Club Pool
Mon. - Fri. 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- Swim Clinic** - Officers' Club Pool
Mon. - Fri. 3 p.m. - 4 p.m.
- Unit Training** - Officers' Club Pool
Mon. - Fri. 7 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.
and 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Housing Pools

There are three base-housing pools aboard the Combat Center. The pools are located at Ocotille, Desert View Terrace and Adobe Flats. The regular pool hours for everyone will be 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., seven days a week. The pools opened full time on April 20.

Residents must bring their military identification or their housing pool pass to access any pools in the housing areas. Anyone under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult. If the person is between the ages of 10-13, they can participate in a swim test which allows the person to come to the pool alone. The swim test requires the person to swim the length of the pool and half way back. They must also be able to tread water for one minute.

For those who pass the swim test and other patrons, the pool has designated hours set-up in order to provide patrons with ample time to train or play.

They offer lap swim from 10 to 11 a.m. among many other activities, Monday thru Friday.

MCCS Pools

There are three Marine Corps Community Services pools aboard this Combat Center.

The family pool is located on Cottontail Road. It offers swimming classes for children beginning in June. The family pool also features a water tree for children, sunbathing chairs as well as covered areas with chairs. It is currently closed for repairs but is scheduled to open in June.

MCCS also offers the officer and staff non-commissioned officer's pool. This pool is located next to the officer's club near mainside. The pool area has a slide for children and a deep end for adults and experienced swimmers. The pool is now open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Depending on activities or reservations, operating hours may change.

Another MCCS pool is the Training Tank. It is located between 4th and 5th Street, directly next to the base theater. It is a heated, Olympic-sized swimming pool used for unit training, individual lap swim and recreational swimming. It is currently closed for repairs but is scheduled to open in June. The hours of operation for the Training Tank are 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. Some of the activities offered at the Training Tank are swimming lessons beginning in June, dive-in's, where people can come watch a movie from the pool and the Training Tank is also open for pool parties and other events. Open swim hours are 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. and past 4 p.m. depending on reservations and activities. Lap swim begins at 11 a.m. and ends at 12:45 p.m. The Training Tank is open all year to everyone on base as long as one person can present a dependent or active-duty identification card.

Pool Hours

- Officers'/SNCO's Pool** - Mon. - Fri.
Lap swim - 11 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.
Open Swim - 2:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Sat. and Sun. - 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Housing Pools** - 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- Training Tank** - Opening in June
- Family Pool** - Opening in June

THINGS TO KNOW

- No running at any of the pools
- While entry may be restricted, admission is free of cost
- Showers are available
- Alcohol is not permitted at any of the pools
- Chlorine can irritate eyes, so wearing goggles is advised

- Wear sun block and re-apply throughout the day
- Floating devices should be Coast Guard approved
- Patrons may also reserve a pool for parties or events.
- For more information on housing pools call 368-4021.
- For more information on MCCS pools call 830-6212.



Combat Center Clubs

Excursions Enlisted Club

Monday: Margarita Mondays
 Thursday: Rockin' Karaoke 7 - 10 p.m.
 Friday: Social hour with food, 5 - 7 p.m. followed by DJ Gjettblaque, 8 - 11 p.m., Ladies Night
 Saturday: Variety Night, DJ Gjettblaque 8 to 11 p.m.

Bloodstripes NCO Club

Monday: Margarita Mondays
 Thursday: Warrior Night 4:30 - 9 p.m.
 Friday: Karaoke Night 6 - 9 p.m.

Hashmarks 29 SNCO Club

Friday: Steak Night, 4:30 - 8 p.m.
 Monday-Friday: All-hands lunch, 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
 Monday: All-hands steak night, 4:30 - 8 p.m.

Combat Center Officers' Club

Monday: Steak night, 5 - 7:30 p.m.
 Monday-Friday: All-hands lunch, 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
 Thursday: Taco Night, 5- 7 p.m.

For complete calendars visit <http://www.mccs29palms.com>.

Local Events

Free Line-Dance Lessons

Learn to dance the night away
 When: 5 to 9 p.m., every Sunday
 Where: Willie Boy's Saloon and Dance Hall
 50048 29 Palms Hwy, Morongo Valley, Calif.
 For more information, call 363-3343.

Ragtime

When: May 3 - June 1
 Where: Theatre 29
 73637 Sullivan Rd., Twentynine Palms, Calif.
 For more information call 316-4151
 or visit <http://www.theatre29.org>

Lower Desert

Gabriel Iglesias

Comedian performs
 When: 8 p.m., May 4 and 5
 Where: Agua Caliente Casino, Resort and Spa
 32-250 Bob Hope Dr., Rancho Mirage, Calif.
 For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>

Huey Lewis and the News

American pop rock band performs
 When: 9:00 p.m., Friday, May 17
 Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
 49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon, Calif.
 For more information call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinosort.com>.

II Divo

Crossover quartet performs
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, May 18
 Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
 84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio, Calif.
 For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Scotty McCreery

Country musician performs
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, June 1
 Where: Spotlight 29 Casino Resort
 46-200 Harrison Place, Coachella, Calif.
 For more information call 866-377-6829 or visit <http://www.spotlight29.com>

Sunset Cinema

Friday, May 3

6 p.m. - Admission, Rated PG-13
 Midnight - Olympus Has Fallen, Rated R

Saturday, May 4

10:30 a.m. - Free Matinee, Life of Pi, Rated PG
 12:30 p.m. - Tyler Perry's Temptation, Rated PG-13
 3 p.m. - The Croods, 3-D, Rated PG
 6 p.m. - The Call, Rated R
 9 p.m. - The Host, Rated PG-13
 Midnight - The Incredible Burt Wonderstone, Rated PG-13

Sunday, May 5

12:30 a.m. - The Croods, Rated PG
 3 p.m. - Admission, Rated PG-13
 6 p.m. - G.I. Joe Retaliation, 3-D, Rated PG-13
 9 p.m. - Olympus Has Fallen, Rated R

Monday, May 6

7 p.m. - The Incredible Burt Wonderstone, Rated PG-13

Tuesday, May 7

7 p.m. - Jurassic Park, 3-D, Rated PG-13

Wednesday, May 8

5:30 p.m. - G.I. Joe Retaliation, Rated PG-13
 8:30 p.m. - Admission, Rated PG-13

Thursday, May 9

5:30 p.m. - The Incredible Burt Wonderstone, Rated PG-13
 8:30 p.m. - The Call, Rated R

Tom Cruise plays spaceman in sci-fi mindbender



COURTESY PHOTO

NEIL POND

"Oblivion"

Starring: Tom Cruise, Morgan Freeman and Olga Kurylenko
 Directed by Joseph Kosinski
 Rated PG-13, 126 min.

The first big-budget, sci-fi blowout of the year, "Oblivion" stars Tom Cruise as a survivor of a futuristic space battle that has turned Earth into an uninhabitable, post-nuclear wasteland. Now, 60 years later, he's one of only two humans left after everyone else has been evacuated to live on a moon of Saturn.

Cruise's character, Jack, and his female partner Vika (Andrea Riseborough) have been assigned the task of maintaining and repairing the flying robotic drones that defend massive pumping stations, which purify seawater for the space colony, from sabotaging alien scavengers.

Like everyone else post-apocalypse, Jack and Vika underwent a "mandatory memory wipe," ostensibly to erase all traumas of yesteryear. So no one remembers anything that happened before the war — although Jack is haunted by recurring dreams of a beautiful, exotic-looking woman (former Ukrainian model, "Magic City" TV actress and "Quantum of Solace" Bond girl Olga Kurylenko) and something wonderful that happened involving the two of them atop the Empire State Building.

So imagine his surprise when a

decades-old NASA space pod crashes, and out pops that same beautiful, exotic-looking woman.

Things, which were already a tad chillier between Jack and Vika, get even chillier when Jack brings the beautiful woman back to their hi-tech, hi-rise home in the clouds.

"Oblivion" is a big roll-out for writer, director and co-producer Joseph Kosinski, who previously made a sci-fi splash with his 2010 directorial debut, "Tron: Legacy," which rebooted an '80s classic and re-goosed one of geekdom's most cherished movies of all time.

But up on the screen it's a Tom Cruise vehicle all the way. He dashes around in his dandy form-fitting spacesuit, zaps his space zapper, rappels into dark holes, outruns explosions, pilots a starship, rides a futuristic motorcycle, and takes a nighttime plunge in a futuristic swimming pool with the sexy disrobed Last Woman on Earth...before another sexy woman literally falls out the sky for him, gasping his name with her first breath of fresh air.

Not to give too much away, but — as in most Tom Cruise movies — he once again gets to be the hero, in an epic way.

"Oblivion" often seems like a big, glitzy museum of other movies that make up its DNA, including "2001: A Space Odyssey," "Alien," Pixar's "WALL-E," even previous Cruise classics like "Top Gun" and "Mission: Impossible." If someone came to see it without ever having seen many other films, it might seem a lot more original and thrilling. Instead, it feels more like a highly

polished, extremely ambitious hybrid.

And too often it seems to sacrifice logic and common sense for visual grandeur. It throws a lot of great looking, often gorgeous stuff onto the screen, but it also hurls curveballs left and right; almost no one is who, or what, they seem to be, and it gradually becomes downright confounding.

By the time Morgan Freeman appears, in a cape and sunglasses and puffing on a cigar, there are definitely more puzzles than pieces to fit neatly into them. And when Jack is startled in the desert by another character that... um, well, let's just say I felt like I needed my own memory wipe just to start thinking clearly again.

The jam-packed storyline piles on themes and sci-fi clichés about minds, machines and memories, dreams and destiny, sky gods and earthly creatures, and robots created to serve turned into mercenaries programmed to kill. And then it pompously wraps them around an obscure, Victorian Era poem about a Roman officer and his sacrifice — and throws in an Andrew Wyeth painting, for good cultural measure.

For fans of sci-fi, who like mind bending, time-twisting yarns splayed across sprawling SFX fantasy-scapes possible only in the movies, featuring a big movie star doing all sorts of big, studly movie-star things, this time as a spaceman on a mission that's both personal as well as planetary — this might be your kind of flick.

Everyone else, however, might just find "Oblivion" a bit too much — and a bit too "out there."



Whatever you're looking for, you can find it in the **Observation Post Classified section**

EXERCISE EAGLE RESOLVE

Enhancing regional defense

[1] Marines with Company L, Battalion Landing Team 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, offload from a CH-53 Super Stallion helicopter at Camp Al-Galail, Qatar, to participate in Exercise Eagle Resolve 2013, April 21. Eagle Resolve is an annual, multinational naval, land and air exercise designed to cooperative enhance regional defense efforts of the Gulf Cooperation Council and U.S. Central Command.

[2] A CH-53 Super Stallion helicopter lands at Camp Al-Galail, Qatar, to drop off several Marines assigned to Co. L, BLT 3/2, 26th MEU for EER-13, April 21.

[3] Marines with Co. L, BLT 3/2, 26th MEU, wait for further instruction after arriving at Camp Al-Galail, Qatar, for EER-13, April 21.



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AIR FORCE STAFF SGT. KENNY HOLSTON