



COMMUNITY DIGEST

WINTER 2021

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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER

MAJOR GENERAL EDWARD D. BANTA

On behalf of Sergeant Major Charles Williams, Dr. Todd Calhoun and myself, we want to express our true gratification for the hard work provided by each and every one of you throughout the past year. Regardless of the challenges that we faced in 2020, your sacrifice, unwavering dedication and contributions to the command were invaluable and did not go unrecognized.

It is important that we take the time to reflect on the past year and assess where we wish to be in the future. With that, let us create goals and remain innovative in order to remain the most advanced force in the world and to always be prepared for tomorrow.

2020 was an eventful year for MCICOM Marines, civilians and their families; however, we have become a more adaptable entity and are equipped to conquer challenges in the future. Your commitment to MCICOM and the United States Marine Corps remains unparalleled, and what you do each day truly makes a difference!

Semper Fi,
Major General Ted Banta



SUPPORTING MAJOR GENERAL BANTA'S PREPARE FOR TOMORROW PILLAR

Next Generation Installations, Captain Logan Wilhelm

MajGen Banta's Core Pillars, including the Prepare for Tomorrow pillar, aligns with and supports the Commandant's Planning Guidance.

General Berger's planning guidance uses some form of the term innovation 13 times, more times than each of the last three Commandants, and most prominently when he states:

"Innovation will be critical, but it is in the actual implementation of our innovative concepts that we will be judged. For the Marine Corps, meaningful innovation is not just having great thoughts and concepts, rather, it is about translating great thoughts and concepts into action."¹

To translate innovation concepts into action, I-neXt focuses on three levels

What is MajGen Banta's Prepare for Tomorrow Pillar?

Meeting future requirements involves preserving the full spectrum of our training areas and natural resources, maintaining close and mutually supporting ties with our civilian leadership, allies, partners and local communities, and ensuring our installations evolve in concert with future requirements operating concerns and statutory or policy imperatives.

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of effort (LOEs): technology, organizational adaptation and process improvement; and nine lines of operations (LOOs), or vectors: protection, resilience, command and control, operational reach, mobility, maintenance, training and range support, community and data.

Through these LOEs and LOOs, I-neXt utilizes a six-step process with a bottom-up innovation strategy to aggressively pursue solutions for the most pressing issues facing our installations today and in the future.

¹ Berger, Gen D. (2019). Commandant's Planning Guidance

COMMUNITY MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Ms. Cathleen Close

Cathleen Close (Cathy) graduated from Boston College and joined the Marine Corps in 1986. She attended the Defense Information School and served on active duty as a Public Affairs Officer (PAO) for eight years. During that time, she was assigned to the Marine Corps Base (MCB) Camp Lejeune Public Affairs Office, serving as both the Press Officer and Media Officer. She was also deployed to Norway as Senior PAO for Exercise Battle Griffin. To follow, she was assigned as the Director of Public Affairs Officer, Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., 8th & I. She then returned to Camp Lejeune to serve as the Deputy Director for the Consolidated Public Affairs Office. During this period, Cathy deployed as the Senior PAO for the Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF) supporting humanitarian relief efforts after Hurricane Andrew in Dade County, Fla. After this tour, she transferred to the Marine Corps Reserve where she served an additional 14 years assigned as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee with HQMC Division of Public Affairs. During this assignment, she provided public affairs support to a number of initiatives ranging from the Warfighting Lab's Advance Warfighting Exercise Hunter Warrior, SPMAGTF

(Experimental) to conducting public affairs training for the Marine Corps Command and Staff College. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, she was activated to serve as the Director of Public Affairs at MCB Hawaii. Cathy retired from the Marine Corps Reserves in 2009.



Cathy has volunteered in a variety of community relations billets. She was elected to the MCB Camp Lejeune DoDEA School Board for two terms. She served as the president of the Paradise Point Child Care Center Parent Advisory Board. She also served on the Advisory Committee for the Commandant's Commanders' Course and was a small group facilitator for the course. Cathy has been a mentor for The Basic School Spouse Mentor Program, was a Key Volunteer Coordinator and developed an after-school writing program for MCB Camp Lejeune Bitz Intermediate School. Most recently, she volunteered as president of the Colonial Forge High School Boys Lacrosse Boosters, as a merit badge counselor for Boys Scout Troop 850 in Stafford, Va., and as a certified therapy dog handler with Blue Gray Therapy Dogs in the PAWS for Reading Program.

Cathy is married to a retired Marine and has three children, two sons currently attending Texas A&M University and a daughter currently attending Northern Michigan University.

Cathy's New Year's Resolutions:

- 1 Cathy wishes to continue to volunteer in her community and find opportunities to help Marine families.
- 2 Cathy also hopes to reach her goal of running 20 half marathons in 2021.



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COVID-19 VACCINE FAQ

Q: Can someone get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

A: No, it is impossible to get COVID-19 from vaccines. Vaccines against COVID-19 use inactivated virus, parts of the virus or a gene from the virus. None of these can cause COVID-19.

Q: How does the COVID-19 vaccine work?

A: The Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna vaccine and other vaccines under consideration activate your body to make antibodies that can block entry of the SARS-CoV-2 virus into your cells. The Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines are mRNA vaccines that take advantage of the process that cells use to make proteins in order to trigger an immune response.

Q: Are the vaccines effective and safe?

A: The FDA authorized the use of a COVID-19 vaccine only after careful and rigorous testing and trials. For example, for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, the FDA reviewed the data from over 43,000 individuals 16 years of age and older who participated in clinical trials and found a 90-97% efficacy in preventing a symptomatic laboratory-confirmed infection. The effectiveness data to support the Moderna vaccine included an analysis of 28,207 participants in the ongoing randomized, placebo-controlled U.S. study who did not have evidence of SARS-CoV-2 infection prior to the first dose of the vaccine. The vaccine was 94.1% effective in preventing COVID-19 disease in individuals 18 years of age and older. Many people were recruited to participate in these trials to see how the vaccines offer protection to people of different ages, races and ethnicities, as well as those with different medical conditions. Safety monitoring will continue. If a safety issue is detected, immediate action will take place to determine if the issue is related to the COVID-19 vaccine and determine the best course of action. The CDC has an

independent group of experts that reviews all the safety data as it comes in and provides regular safety updates. However, it does take time and more people being vaccinated before we learn about very rare or long-term side effects.

Q: What are the side effects of taking the vaccine?

A: There have been some side effects identified with the vaccine, including injection site pain, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain and fever. These side effects are a sign that your immune system is doing exactly what it is supposed to do; it is working and building up protection to the disease. It is best to talk to your health care provider about potential side effects. In addition, health care providers are required to answer questions and provide written information about the side effects prior to giving the vaccine.

CPFD AND LOCAL AGENCIES BATTLE CREEK FIRE

Lance Cpl. Angela Wilcox, Marine Corp Base Camp Pendleton

Camp Pendleton Fire Department and Cal Fire worked together to fight the Creek Fire that blazed in Fallbrook and the installation beginning Thursday, Dec. 24, 2020.

By Saturday evening, the fire was 90 percent contained and over 4,200 acres. The fire initially posed a threat to eastern areas of base. However, through firefighting strategies of back burns and control lines, by 5 p.m. on Dec. 24, the fire no longer posed any threat to structures.

Residents living in the Lake O'Neill Campground, O'Neill Heights, Wounded Warrior Battalion, and De Luz base housing areas were ordered to evacuate early Thursday morning. They gathered at Paige Fieldhouse where they

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awaited updates and heard from Brig. Gen. Dan Conley, commanding general of Marine Corps Installations West, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

“While neither one of the housing areas are threatened right now, out of an abundance of caution, we don’t want to put folks [back in their homes],” Conley said to the evacuees. “We don’t want to put folks in. The winds shift, and then we got really bad problems.”

Volunteers with the United Service Organization were present at the shelter location, distributing food and gifts to evacuees. Santa Claus made an appearance as well to raise spirits, arriving in his Camp Pendleton Fire Department firetruck to visit the children.

“I appreciate the fire department, Santa, and all the volunteers for coming out and trying to make this something more than just sitting around in a parking lot.”

“I appreciate the fire department, Santa, and all the volunteers for coming out and trying to make this something more than just sitting around in a parking lot,” Conley said of their efforts.

Evacuees were then cleared by CFPD and Cal Fire to return to their homes Thursday evening, as the fire had been quickly contained from reaching any structures.

Camp Pendleton Fire Department and Cal Fire worked together non-stop to contain the fire and prevent it from reaching more populated areas. Fire fighting helicopters were cleared to conduct operations on base Friday morning.

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A San Diego Sheriff Bell 205 A1 fire and rescue helicopter drops water in an effort to extinguish the Creek Fire aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California, Dec. 24, 2020. Camp Pendleton Fire Department and Cal Fire San Diego are in a unified command to battle the 3,000 acre fire. (U.S. Marine Corps Photo by Lance Cpl. Kerstin Roberts)

Firefighters were able to hold the perimeter, preventing any increase in acreage. Cal Fire Capt. Thomas Shoots said the weather was cooperative and that calm winds helped crews keep this perimeter strong.

The Creek Fire was 70 percent contained by Saturday morning, and 90 percent contained by the evening. Outside resources from off-base fire departments were released at this point and the unified command terminated. Camp Pendleton Fire Department took charge of patrols from this point onward.

The cause of the fire has not yet been determined.

To read the story on DVIDS, visit <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/385839/cpfd-and-local-agencies-battle-creek-fire>.

If you would like to nominate someone to be featured in the next newsletter, please email the MCICOM COMMSTRAT team at mcicomcomstrat@usmc.mil.



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RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

COVID-19 and the factors surrounding the global pandemic, as well as the colder, shorter days during the winter can be stressful for many people, causing strong feelings of isolation or loneliness that can impact mental health. Learning how to cope with these new or worsening feelings can be difficult, but the Marine Corps provides many different valuable resources to assist Marines and their families.

- Your chain of command or MCICOM Chaplain Captain Yolanda Gillen should be your go-to point of contact if you need to speak to someone. You can reach CAPT Gillen at yolanda.gillen@usmc.mil.
- You can also reach out to the MCICOM and Henderson Hall Sexual Assault Response Coordinators Lindsay Charles and Priscilla Willett at Lindsay.charles@usmc.mil and Priscilla.willett@usmc.mil, respectively.
- Service members and their families can also connect with a Military Family Life Counselor (MFLC) who understands military life and its unique challenges. You can contact the Henderson Hall MFLC by calling (703) 414-9885.

MCICOM MISSION

MCICOM exercises command and control of Marine Corps installations via regional commanders in order to provide oversight, direction and coordination of installation services and to optimize support to the Operating Forces, tenants and activities. For installations under the command and control of the Commanding General of Marine Corps Training and Education Command (TECOM), MCICOM will only provide installation support.

For more information on MCICOM, visit <https://www.mcicom.marines.mil/>.

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