

FLIGHT JACKET

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November 26, 2008

Corps' top 'devil dogs' visit SoCal Marines



Cpl. Cindy Alejandrez

Gen. James T. Conway, commandant of the Marine Corps, and Sgt. Maj. Carlton W. Kent, sergeant major of the Marine Corps, addresses Marines and sailors at the School of Infantry West at Camp Pendleton, Nov. 19.

CPL. CINDY ALEJANREZ
Combat Correspondent

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON – Gen. James T. Conway, commandant of the Marine Corps, and Sgt. Maj. Carlton W. Kent, sergeant major of the Marine Corps, kicked off their visit to Southern California by attending a San Diego Military Advisory Council meeting in San Diego Nov. 19. before heading up to Camp Pendleton.

During the two-day visit, Conway and Kent addressed current Marine Corps affairs and listened to the concerns of Marines, sailors and their families.

During their first day on the

installation, the Corps' top leaders toured the new Single Marine Program Facility at Camp Del Mar and enjoyed a meal with the Marines at the 21 Area Mess Hall.

Cpl. Elizabeth Carbajal, radio operator, 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit sat next to Conway during lunch.

"The commandant was very open to our thoughts and asked us what we thought should change," said Carbajal. "He is very concerned about the Marines and what we go through."

After lunch they made several stops around the base and talked with many service members.

"Thank you for doing the right thing at the right time," said Conway.

The next day they talked with Marines at 11 Area Football Field, here to answer questions.

Lance Cpl. Juan Sanchez Miranda, integrated personnel administration center clerk here, asked the commandant for a change in Marine Administrative Message 115/07 to permit Marines in base or station units to deploy, including himself.

"I asked because I have been in for three years and have not deployed," said Sanchez Miranda.

Sanchez Miranda said he enlisted to deploy and although he was nervous to ask the question, he was glad he did because

GO TO **CMC**, PAGE 4

MALS-11 Marine selected for CMC recruiting award

LANCE CPL. AUSTIN GOACHER
Combat Correspondent

The Corps' top leader plans to recognize a 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Marine for the outstanding work he has done to keep Leathernecks in their uniforms.

Staff Sgt. Julio A. Vargasrosa, career retention specialist with Marine Aircraft Group 11, will accept the 2008 Commandant of the Marine Corps Career Retention Specialist of the Year award during a ceremony in Washington, D.C., Dec. 5.

Vargasrosa received the recognition due to his outstanding performance within the Corps-wide CRS force composed of more than 380

other Marines.

He earned the award for his work while vastly improving the retention ratio of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, between March 2007 and July 2008.

"I think the most important part about this award is that it's not just mine, it's a 'unit' award," said Vargasrosa. "Lt. Col. Christopher S. Dowling and the rest of the leadership of 3/5 – they're the ones who made this happen. When you have the support of the commander you just can't go wrong."

Though Vargasrosa is receiving the award due to the dedication he

GO TO **AWARD**, PAGE 4

Tarawa retires after 32 year service

LANCE CPL. CHRISTOPHER O'QUIN
Combat Correspondent

Sunset, Dec. 4, will bring the end of the USS Tarawa's 32-year service to the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps when it is decommissioned at 32nd Street Naval Base San Diego.

The Tarawa has supported 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing for decades, carrying such squadrons as Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 166, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465 and Marine Attack Squadron 211 to various locations throughout the world.

The ship finished its final deployment in the Global War on Terror June 2008, with Marines and sailors from HMM-166 and the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

During their deployment they provided humanitarian aid to victims of Cyclone Sidr that devastated more than one million people in Bangladesh, November, 2007.

"It was my first time serving aboard and I am most proud of the fact we had no mishaps and everyone returned home," said Maj. William J. Casler, the executive officer of HMM-166. "Walking through the 'bowels' of the ship gives you a sense of pride when you see its past history displayed."

The United States Navy commissioned the amphibious assault ship in 1976. The first of its kind, the ship deployed to the Western Pacific in 1979. Since then it has supported

GO TO **TARAWA**, PAGE 4

MCAS Web site

Want to know all the buzz? Then check out the Flight Jacket online.

www.miramar.usmc.mil



FACE OF PAIN

Headquarters Marines participate in security augmentation force training. For full story, see page 5.



MARINES HEAD TO MOUT TOWN

Station Marines head to MCB Camp Pendleton for Warrior Challenge. For full story, see pages 8,9.

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Taking a road trip? Rules to live by

COMPILED BY
Flight Jacket Staff

With the holidays approaching fast, lines at the airports are bound to get a little longer. To avoid the hassle of airport security gates and maybe save a little money, a lot of people are going to be hitting the road this holiday season. With increased traffic comes increased danger, and servicemembers need to keep safety on their minds.

Last Thanksgiving weekend, approximately 33.8 million people traveled over the Thanksgiving weekend, with more than 75 percent of those people driving, according to AAA.

Experts are estimating that even more will travel this Thanksgiving, causing the nation's roads to be more congested than ever. Here are a few things to keep in mind while driving over the Thanksgiving weekend and in the weeks to come that may keep you just a little bit safer.

- Make sure your vehicle is ready to make the trip. Ensure that it has been maintained and is in good shape. Check the tire pressure, oil, and coolant. Having the oil changed before or after the trip will help keep the engine in good

working order.

- Be ready to drive in harsh conditions. Thanksgiving weekend is not only one of the busiest times of the year on the road, it is also one of the first weekends where people will experience winter driving.

- Make sure you bring along an emergency kit in your vehicle that includes a snow scraper, a flashlight, blankets,

remember, never use hand-held cell phones while driving. Not only is it a safety hazard, but some states have laws prohibiting it. Even if you have a hands-free device, use it only when necessary. The best thing to do is pull over to the side of the road to make a call or let a passenger handle the cell phone.

accidents only increase on a crowded road. Keep in mind that the police will most likely be out in force during the holidays to catch speeders and drunk drivers.

Speaking of which – don't drink and drive. Drive defensively. Keep an eye out for drivers who might be intoxicated and report them to the authorities before they have the chance to hurt someone.

According to National Highway Traffic Safety

Administration, more people are killed on the roads during the Thanksgiving weekend than during New Year's Day weekend, and almost 50 percent of those accidents are alcohol related.

- Try to eliminate distractions while driving. Music is good entertainment, but make sure you can still

hear if emergency vehicle come up behind you. Give children something to do that doesn't distract you at the same time as well. Coloring books and travel games are a lot less distracting than a movie or a toy that makes a lot of noise.

Following these tips does not guarantee an accident-free weekend, but it will go a long way in lowering your chances. Do everything to ensure a happy and safe holiday season.



booster cables, a shovel, and flares or emergency triangles.

- Before leaving the house, check on weather and road conditions along the route you plan to take. You can check the Federal Highway Administration's Web site at www.fhwa.dot.gov, for traffic information. To check the weather forecast, try the National Weather Service's Web site at www.nws.noaa.gov.

- Make sure you bring along a fully charged cell phone. But

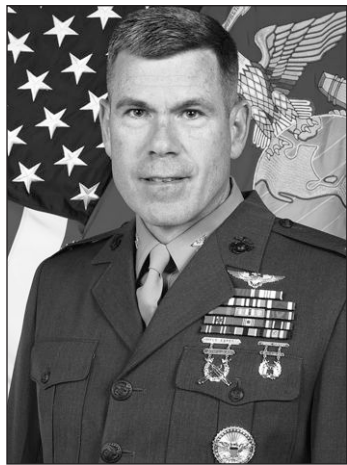
- Wear a seatbelt. It is not only the law, it will help keep everyone safe in case of an accident. Ensure everyone in the vehicle is wearing seatbelts, even when driving in a van or RV.

- Make frequent stops along the way. Stop at least every two hours to take a break -- more often if it's snowing, as falling snow can mesmerize drivers.

- Obey the speed limit. Trying to get somewhere fast can only end in disaster, and the chances for



Maj. Gen. Terry G. Robling
Commanding General
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



Col. Christopher E. O'Connor
Commanding Officer
MCAS Miramar

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Religious Services

The Chaplain's Office, located in building 5632 on Bauer Road, coordinates regularly scheduled services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities, contact the Chaplain's Office at 858-577-1333, or visit www.miramar.usmc.mil.

Sunday:

9 a.m. Protestant Worship Service
9:30 a.m. Protestant Children's Worship
11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist

Religious Education/Sunday:

9:30 – 10:45 a.m. Catholic CCD Children K-12
10 a.m. Protestant Adult Bible Study
Wednesday 6 – 7 p.m. Baptist Service

Weekday Worship Service:

Monday – Friday 11:30 a.m. Catholic Mass
Monday 6:30 p.m. Contemporary Praise and Worship Service
Wednesday 7 p.m. Baptist Service

Study Groups:

Monday Night Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Classroom in the Chapel area
Tuesday morning Prayer Service and study group 6:00 a.m.

Islamic Worship Service:

Fridays at 12:00 p.m.

Located in the Chapel or visit www.icsd.org

Jewish:

Jewish Outreach at 858-571-3444

www.jewishinsandiego.org

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Seaman David A. Brandenburg

Amphibious assault ship USS Tarawa (LHA 1) transits through the Pacific Ocean while on deployment in support of maritime security operations and the Global War on Terrorism.

TARAWA,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

numerous training exercises with foreign militaries. The ship has also provided humanitarian assistance to several nations throughout its career.

The ship will be towed to Hawaii in March, where it will be put on ready reserve status as a mobility

asset. Should a situation present itself, the ship can be restored for service in future conflicts.

Former Tarawa crew members and Marines who served aboard can attend the decommissioning ceremony Dec. 4, at 32nd Street Naval Base San Diego, Pier 13 from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The dress code is dress blue alphas for Marines.

CMC,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the commandant assured him he would deploy by the end of this year.

During their visit, Conway and Kent asked noncommissioned officers to continue to look after junior Marines.

“NCO’s, you are the backbone of our Marine Corps and we need your help for two things - safety and suicide awareness,” said Kent.

At a town hall meeting at the Marine Memorial Chapel, Kent referred to an old saying, ‘If the Marine Corps wanted you to have a

wife, they would have issued you one,’ and added that times are different and family is a priority.

“We are more family conscious today,” said Conway. “If we are going to retain a great future we have to focus on the families.”

Before departing the installation, they thanked service members for their sacrifices and for stepping forward to serve during war. The SMMC also explained to Marines that the term ‘devil dog’ is not a derogatory term.

“Devil dog, that’s a great term,” said Kent. “We earned that in blood, we earned that in combat. You should be proud to be called that.”

AWARD,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

showed while improving a former unit’s retention rate, he looks forward to the impact he can make here.

“My favorite part about my job has been making the difference in Marines’ lives,” said Vargasrosa.

So far, Vargasrosa has continued his trend of excellence with MALS-11, explained Master Sgt. Robert J. Ulz, the 3rd MAW CRS and Vargasrosa’s staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

“Since his assignment to 3rd MAW, his performance has been

nothing short of stellar,” said Ulz. “He made an immediate impact on the junior career retention specialists by providing sound leadership and guidance.”

As a CRS, part of Vargasrosa’s job is to help Marines learn about the opportunities for them within the Marine Corps.

Marines don’t always know all the benefits available, explained Vargasrosa. It’s important for them to know, so they can make an educated decision.

“I love doing my job,” said Vargasrosa. “I wake up everyday looking forward to what I do and that’s how I know this is the job I should be doing.”



Lance Cpl. Justis T. Beauregard

Cpl. Larry Kelly, a bulk fuel specialist from Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, completes the obstacle course after being sprayed with oleoresin capsicum during security augment training here Nov. 20.

Here comes the spray!

SAF training prepares Marines to act as military police officers

LANCE CPL. RYAN RHOLES
Combat Correspondent

“OC...OC...OC,” shouted a non-lethal weapons instructor, as he shot a burst of oleoresin capsicum into the faces of Marines.

The participants from Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron took part in a security augmentation force training course Nov. 19 and 20.

The 16-hour SAF course, conducted by the Provost Marshal’s Office training non-commissioned officer in charge, prepares Marines to assist military police personnel in the event of heightened installation security.

The station command collaborates with PMO to determine the number of augments needed for each class.

During the first day of the two-day course, Marines received classroom instruction about flight line procedures and the force continuum, which explains the relationship

between perceived threat, and the response used to counter that threat.

“You always want to use the least force necessary,” said Cpl. Nicole Cates, the PMO training NCOIC. “If you have a person who is drunk and disorderly, but is cooperative, you wouldn’t just pull your pistol out.



Lance Cpl. Justis T. Beauregard

Lance Cpl. Danielle K. Graves, an aviation operations specialist for Airfield Operations, fights mock attackers after being sprayed with oleoresin capsicum.

Marines also received a class about using OC spray, its physical and psychological effects, and the different delivery systems used to administer the spray.

“There is a lot of fear in Marines’ eyes when they find out they are getting OC sprayed during this course,” said Cates. “There are always a lot of questions about the pain and how long it lasts.”

During the second day of the course Marines learned to search personnel and vehicles, how to operate and fire the Benelli M1014 semi-automatic joint-service combat shotgun, how to properly appre-

hend and handcuff a suspect, and received a level-one oleoresin capsicum spray certification, which allows the SAF Marines to carry OC spray if ever called back to assist PMO.

“Getting sprayed felt horrible, it felt like the devil was digging his fingernails into my eyes,” said Pfc. Kristopher D. Hayden, an administrative clerk with the Installation Personnel Administration Center. “It took over ten hours for the pain to go away.”

A lot of Marines say that getting sprayed was the worst day of their life, explained Cates. But, getting sprayed will keep Marines from over spraying suspects and also builds their confidence in the spray as a non-lethal tool.


Although SAF training ended with a painful experience, many of the students believed it was also a valuable experience and well worth the time.

“You never know what can happen, and the things we are learning can be applied in a lot of situations,” said Lance Cpl. Amber Combs, a navigational aids technician in the maintenance division of H&HS. “It really was a good experience.”

The SAF class rotates Marines so that this temporary, but mission-essential training, does not impact the day-to-day operations of supporting elements.



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Businessman generously donates gifts to Toys for Tots

LANCE CPL. MANUEL GUERRERO
Combat Correspondent

Toys for Tots – It’s an annual drive by Marines to make Christmas a little happier for children who are less fortunate than others. It’s a time for San Diegans to show how big their hearts are. One local did just that when he

donated half of his store.

Joseph M. DeLong, owner of CJ’s Sport Cards and Memorabilia in San Diego, donated a large amount of inventory to Toys for Tots-San Diego County.

DeLong, who downsized his shop from 4,000 ft. to 2,000 ft., had a surplus of inventory and knew he wanted to give it to a charity.

The idea for donating to Toys for Tots was brought up by retired Marine Col. Raymond Adamiec, former installations and logistic officer for Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, now neighbor and friend of DeLong. DeLong then packed approximately 300 items to be picked up by the Marines.

“It was over \$6,000 worth of

items,” said DeLong. “The donations were ranging from action figurines and fishing poles to toys and hats.”

The boxes were picked up and taken back to the warehouse.

“His donation is the biggest one of this year,” said Staff Sgt. Patrick M. Russ, coordinator for Toys for Tots-San Diego County. “It was the most generous donation from an

individual.”

Donations like these help the Toys for Tots mission: to distribute toys as Christmas gifts to needy children in the community.

The official deadline for donating toys to Toys for Tots is Dec. 15.

Information on how to make a donation can be found at the Toys for Tots website, www.toydrive.org.

TRICARE Maternity Medical Plan: What's covered, what's not

SUBMITTED BY:

Diane Mayer
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

TRICARE's maternity benefits include prenatal care, labor, delivery and postpartum care. If you are eligible for TRICARE maternity coverage, here are a few details you'll need to know to ensure that you and your baby are covered.

Eligibility:

Any woman eligible for TRICARE benefits may receive maternity care from the first obstetric visit through six weeks after delivery.

Referrals and Authorizations:

If you think you are pregnant, or you know you are currently expecting, contact your primary care manager if you have not already done so to talk with them about your obstetrical needs.

What's Covered:

- Services and supplies associated with prenatal care, labor, delivery and postpartum care.
- Anesthesia for pain management during delivery



courtesy photo

Expectant mothers need to be aware benefits covered by TRICARE. Services and supplies associated with prenatal care, delivery and post-partum care are covered, while things like routine ultrasound and personal comfort items are not.

- Emergency cesarean section
- Subscription to free weekly e-mail parenting newsletter, "eCareConnect" via www.theparentreview.com/DoD
- An ultrasound or sonogram determined to be medically necessary. A maternal ultrasound is covered only with diagnosis and management of conditions that

constitute a high-risk pregnancy.

TRICARE does NOT cover:

- Personal comfort items such as private rooms and televisions after delivery.
- "Routine" ultrasounds. You may choose to pay for a routine ultrasound separately from your TRICARE benefits.
- Treatments, procedures and

technologies related to artificial methods of reproduction including artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization, gamete intrafallopian transfer or the reversal of a prior surgical sterilization.

- Ultrasounds to determine gender that are not medically necessary
- NOTE:** These lists are not all-inclusive. To determine if a specif-

ic service is covered, visit www.tricare.mil.

Key Points to Remember for Expectant Mothers or Adoptive Parents:

- If you and your spouse are both active duty service members, either of you may become the baby's sponsor.
- Be sure to register your baby in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System as soon as possible after your baby is born or adopted.
- Once your baby is registered in DEERS, you will need to enroll your baby in TRICARE Prime within 60 days of birth or adoption.

A newborn is covered as a TRICARE Prime beneficiary for the first 60 days following birth or adoption as long as one additional family member is enrolled in TRICARE Prime.

For more information on TRICARE benefits, visit their homepage at www.tricare.mil, or call 1-888-TRIWEST (874-9378).

NOT JUST ANOTHER



NOVEMBER 17, SQUADS OF MARINES PATROLLED THROUGH A SMALL VILLAGE, NO, NOT IN IRAQ BUT AS PART OF THE HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON WARRIOR CHALLENGE. APPROXIMATELY 40 MARINES PARTICIPATED IN THE ALL-DAY EVENT DESIGNED TO TEACH THEM ESSENTIAL COMBAT SKILLS WITH AN EMPHASIS ON LEADERSHIP. DURING THE TRAINING THE MARINES USED A VARIETY OF AIRSOFT WEAPONS.



MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON

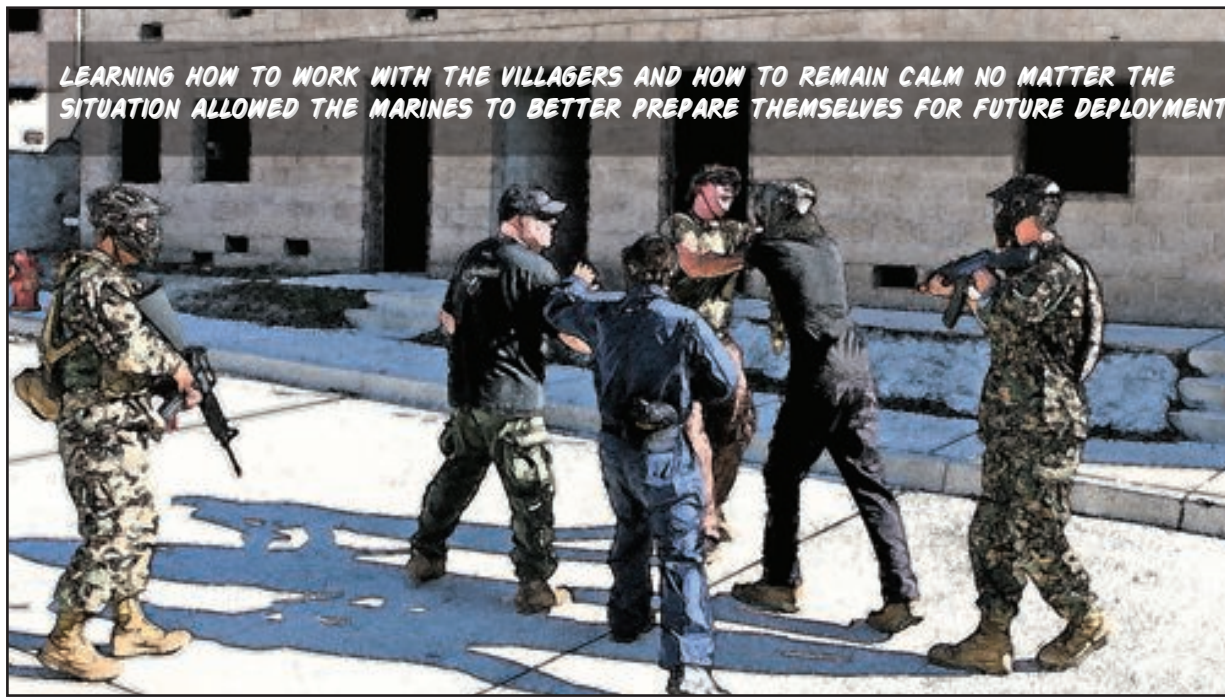


VARIOUS SCENARIOS ALLOWED THE MARINES TO SHARPEN THEIR SKILLS WHILE HAVING FUN



SGT. MAJ.* SAID, "NO MATTER WHAT MOS A MARINE IS IN, THEY SHOULD LEARN TO FIGHT IN URBAN TERRAIN"

*SGT. MAJ. GARY T. BOW, THE SERGEANT MAJOR FOR H+HS



LEARNING HOW TO WORK WITH THE VILLAGERS AND HOW TO REMAIN CALM NO MATTER THE SITUATION ALLOWED THE MARINES TO BETTER PREPARE THEMSELVES FOR FUTURE DEPLOYMENT

DAY AT THE OFFICE

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY:
LANCE CPL. JUSTIS T. BEAUREGARD
GRAPHIC LAYOUT BY:
LANCE CPL. AUSTIN GOACHER

U.S. MARINES PARTICIPATE IN MOUT TRAINING

KABOOM!



THE MARINES EXPERIENCED FIRST HAND HOW QUICKLY SITUATIONS CAN ESCALATE AND EXPERIENCED A SIMULATED SUICIDE BOMBING ATTACK. AT THE END OF THE DAY, THE MARINES HAD FUN, ENHANCED THEIR COMBAT SKILLS, FINISHED THE TRAINING SCENARIO AND RETURNED HOME SAFELY.

THE END



Lance Cpl. Christopher O'Quinn

Marines with station explosive ordnance disposal maneuver a robot known as the remote ordnance neutralization system, away from an abandoned warehouse after completing training Nov. 3. The Marines spent a few hours training with a simulated improvised explosive device. The Marines used the robot to pick up the device and move it to a safer location for disposal.

EOD brings the 'boom' to explosive threats

LANCE CPL. CHRISTOPHER O'QUINN
Combat Correspondent

Situation: A pipe bomb sits inside an abandoned station warehouse.

Remedy: Call station explosive ordnance disposal to respond.

Marines with EOD arrived on site with their gear to neutralize a simulated improvised explosive device scenario, as part of weekly training to improve mission readiness.

The EOD technicians were on their way to the site within minutes of receiving the call, bringing with them many pieces of equipment.

"We are doing this training to stay proficient for any threats here in the local surrounding area or if the police ask of our assistance," said Gunnery Sgt. Ryan R. Glau, the staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge for station EOD. "The unit conducts training one to three times a week so we can keep ourselves prepared."

Marines took the proper safety precautions once on the scene and made sure the area was evacuated and then cordoned off the building. A robot was used to assess the simulated threat.

From the safety of their forward operations center, the Marines maneuvered the robot known as the remote ordnance neutralization system, to pick up the device and move it to a safer location for disposal.

After determining the type of explosive and components, the technicians rendered it safe using a disruptor.

"It was a refresher," said Staff Sgt. Earl W. Wentwood, an EOD team leader.

"Once we started the training, the knowledge came back to me. Practice makes permanent, and repetition is key when training for the real thing. I stay focused, when I confront an explosive, so I can go back to my family."

The Marines on the EOD team have disposed of hundreds of explosive devices during deployment to Iraq. In theater, they are assigned to infantry battalions where they assist with convoy operations.

"My Marines did absolutely well," said Gunnery Sgt. Nick Willoughby, the EOD officer-in-charge. "I'm pleased with their proficiency and skill at their job. In Iraq, it's a vicious cycle. The insurgents create a new trigger to detonate their explosives, we counter them. Once they find out we know how, they create something new and we try and counter that. Keeping up on training is key to staying one step ahead or else skills might fall to the wayside when we deploy."

When an improvised explosive device or a weapon of mass destruction threatens the safety of Marines and their fellow Americans, the EOD team knows it has the proper training to respond to and neutralize the threat.

Ice art chills at messhall

LANCE CPL. MANUEL GUERRERO
Combat Correspondent

Most sculptures are meant to last forever. Whether they are made of clay, marble or stone they leave a lasting impression.

Conversely, ice sculptures leave an impression while their presence is anything but lasting.

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Marines, sailors and civilian employees

recently viewed two meticulously-crafted ice sculptures of the eagle, globe and anchor and the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing logo created by recently retired Gunnery Sgt. James E. Ottens at the Gonzales Messhall.

Ottens, who served 22 years

in the Marine Corps from 1977 to 1999 as a food service specialist, has created over 20 works of art here since 2002. From the recreation of the famous flag raising at Mt. Suribachi to the eagle, globe and anchor,



Ottens has contributed many works for the Corps.

His passion for ice art began early in his career.

“I was curious about the art and I taught myself how to do it,” said Ottens. “I bought various books on the subject and copied what I saw.”

The Corps allowed him to attend Johnson and Wales Culinary Arts College in Rhode Island to enhance his skills as

an ice sculptor.

Ottens explained that his first ice sculptures were crude, using a garden bow saw and cheap chisels. His first sculptures took five hours to complete.

“Through trial and error I got better,” said Ottens. “Practicing and sculpting ice for the Marine Corps was enough for me.”

The professional ice sculptor now uses an electric chainsaw and various Japanese chisels to create his detailed ice sculptures that now take about an hour to create.

Since 1991, Otten has owned Crystal Creations and considers the Marine Corps a large contributor to his success.

“I owe my first business to the Marine Corps,” said Ottens. The Marine Corps gave him the opportunity, training and experience to be able to succeed, explained Ottens.



Lance Cpl. Manuel Guerrero

Retired Gunnery Sgt. James E. Ottens chisels away at the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing logo masterpiece he created at the Gonzales Messhall Nov. 7. Ottens business, Crystal Creations, has been creating sculptures since 1991.

Even though his ice sculpting spans farther than the Marine Corps, he never forgot about his humble beginnings.

“I still like keeping up with Marines,” said Ottens. “It feels good to work with them again.”

Throughout his professional sculpting career he has made ice sculptures for various

MCAS Miramar air shows, Marine Corps balls, and the recent William P.T. Hill Award presentation here.

Ottens plans to continue sculpting ice for Marines. He said it’s good to make the sculptures because it enhances the morale of the troops and esprit de corps.



CPL. MICHAEL STEVENS
Combat Correspondent

Editor's Note: Cpl. Stevens is an avid sports fanatic and regular contributor to the sports section of the Flight Jacket.

Will it be a 'New York, New York' Super Bowl?

There are still five weeks left in the season, but is it too early to think about a Jets/Giants Super Bowl?

There is much to consider before jumping to this conclusion.

The Jets are only one game ahead of the Patriots right now for the lead in the AFC East. Three of their final five opponents have records above .500, two of which are divisional games against the Bills and Dolphins. They may not be the best team in their division but they're certainly playing like it at the moment.

The Giants on the other hand, it pains me to admit it being an avid New York hater, have been looking

nothing but impressive. They have powered through their schedule leaving no mistake on why they're the defending champions.

They do have one of the tougher remaining schedules in the NFL. Their next three games are against the Redskins, Eagles and Cowboys, all divisional rivals.

Tennessee, the only other team with double digits in wins, suffered their first defeat Sunday against those New York Jets 34-13. The Titan running game was virtually non-existent. Despite a solid outing by Kerry Collins, the Titans never lead in this game, only converting four 3rd down conversions and not

capitalizing on the Jets' turnovers.

Even with the loss, Tennessee is still three games ahead of the second place Colts in the AFC South.

Indianapolis has played solid football of late, winning four straight, including the last second win Sunday against the Chargers. San Diego made the mistake of giving Peyton Manning the ball with too much time left on the clock. Given Vinatieri's past, it would've been hard to see him miss such a clutch field goal.

I don't know what it is about the western divisions in football, but they are by far the weakest in each conference.

For the second straight week, a win by the Cardinals will clinch the division title. They battle a fading Eagles club Thursday in Philly and have a legitimate chance of winning that game. As an Eagles fan I say the Birds win, but in reality, last weeks antics ended our season early. Carolina is battling the Packers Sunday in Green Bay. I like the way both teams are playing, but I'm going to pick the Pack in this one. I also like the Saints over the Buccaneers, the Falcons over the Chargers, Vikings over the Bears, the Steelers over the Patriots, and the Giants over the Redskins.

Enjoy the holidays.

FRIDAY 28

• All you can eat
Fish Fry Fridays
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
\$7/person
Legends Sports Grill

Shop at the MCX!

Gifts to Go Sale
begins Nov. 12

After Thanksgiving Sale
Nov. 26 - 30

SATURDAY 29

• L.I.N.K.S Session
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
LINKS House
858-577-4810

• Nov. 29 & 30
Inflatable paintball Megarena,
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
lot east of the Miramar Inn
619-228-4446

MCCS Free Prize Giveaways

Entertainment Ticket Office:
Sea World Gift Pack

Golf Pro Shop:

Round of golf for four with two carts
Stop in and fill out an entry form today!
Winner will be drawn December 31

SUNDAY 30

• Protestant worship
service
9 a.m.

• Protestant
children's service
9:30 a.m.

• Roman Catholic
Eucharist
11 a.m.

MONDAY 1

• Alcoholics
Anonymous
12-step study group
6:30 p.m.
Counseling Center
858-577-6585



TUESDAY 2

• Adecco Staffing Agency Visit
9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Career Resource Center
858-577-6710

• New Parent Support Play
Morning
10- 11:30 a.m.
Children's Library
858-577-9812

• Taco Tuesday Happy Hour
Buffet
5 - 8 p.m.
Legends Sports Grill

WEDNESDAY 3

• Free golf clinic
Active duty service members
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Miramar Golf Course
858-577-4155

• Career Resource Center
"Federal Jobs and Applications"
1 - 3 p.m.
The Hub
858-577-6710

• Fair Fighting for Couples
1 - 4 p.m.
Counseling Center
858-577-6585

THURSDAY 4

• Anger Management I
1- 3 p.m.
Counseling Center
858-577-6585

The Flying Leatherneck
Historical Foundation is the non-
profit 501(c)(3) organization that
supports the Flying Leatherneck
Aviation Museum. Their new
Combined Federal Campaign
number is 15770

Dec. 1 - 4 TAMP/TAP senior (retiree) transition class 7:15 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. The Hub 858-577-6710

Weekly
Events...

- Sports Complex Marine Teen training - Tues. & Sat. 858-577-4128/4129
- Deployment support for preschoolers, elementary and teens - M, T, W 858-577-6959

Don't
Miss...

- Children's Christmas Carnival - Dec. 6
- Parade through Housing - Dec. 17

"Providing over 100 programs for you and your family"



- ★ Marine & Family Services
- ★ Marine Corps Family Team Building
- ★ Semper Fit & Recreation
- ★ Free Special Events
- ★ Dining & Clubs
- ★ Shopping & Services

"Serving Those Who Serve"
www.mccsmiramar.com

Entertainment Ticket Office for all your family fun

Your Entertainment Ticket Office has military discount tickets to a variety of San Diego attractions like SeaWorld, San Diego Zoo, Hornblower Dinner Cruises, San Diego Padres and much more. Save by buying through your Entertainment Ticket Office. Ticketmaster is also available. Don't forget your Big Bear cabin/campsite reservations. Call 858-577-4126/4141 for more information.

Have you checked out the station library?

The library provides a variety of services and programs for people of any age and interest. It offers an oasis of information and educational tools. In addition to books, the Library also has music CDs, videos, over 150 different magazines and a wide selection of audiotapes. The Library has computers with free internet access, as well as word processing and a children's library. Printers, fax and a photocopier machine are available for use for a small fee. The Library is open Mon.- Thurs. from 7 a.m. - 7:30 p.m., Fri. 7 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and closed on Sun. and Holidays. Call 858-577-1261 for more information.

Do you have control of your money?

Through careful planning and money management techniques, a family can feel more confident about its ability to live within its means, reduce debt, handle emergencies and save for the future. Understanding how to manage money and developing the discipline to do it well can make a real difference in your life. Through private counseling, the Financial Management Counselor, Craig Hughes at MCCS will help you take six basic steps to Successful Money Management. You will learn how to assess your current financial situation, develop a spending plan & tracking system, balance your checkbook, manage debt, take charge of credit and set financial goals. Call 858-577-9802 to make an appointment today.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Toys for Tots Golf Tournament

The Flying Leatherneck Historical Foundation to host its seventh annual Toys for Tots Golf Tournament Dec. 16 at the MCAS Miramar Memorial Golf Course. The field is limited to the first 144 entrants. Players must provide a new, unwrapped toy in addition to tournament fees. \$35 for E-5 and below, \$60 for active-duty E-6 and above and \$70 for civilians and guests. The signup deadline is 3 p.m. Dec. 12. Visit www.flying-leathernecks.org or contact Jay Bibler at 858-693-1723.

Free admittance to Buick Invitational

The Century Club of San Diego, the non-profit organization is opening its doors to the PGA TOUR event at Torrey Pines Golf Course from Feb. 2-8, 2009, free of charge to active duty military and their dependents.

Gas station upgrades

Both the Main and Annex gas stations are installing new gas dispensers and the Main Gas

station will be closed from Nov. 17 to Dec. 5. The Annex gas station will be open during this time and will be accepting all forms of payment. The Auto Store and Service Station will remain open during construction. Hours are Mon. - Fri. 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sundays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Annex gas station will be closed from Monday, Dec. 8 through Tuesday Dec. 23.



WHAT'S PLAYING...
AT THE BOB HOPE THEATER

Fri. November 28:

The Express (PG) 6:30 p.m.
Quarantine (R) 9:00 p.m.

Sat. November 29:

Beverly Hills Chihuahua (PG) 6:30 p.m.
*Flash of Genius (PG-13) 9:00 p.m.

Sun. November 30:

Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist (PG-13) 1:00 p.m.
*My Best Friend's Girl (R) 6:30 p.m.

Wed. Dec. 3:

W. (PG-13) 6:30 p.m.

Thurs. Dec. 4:

The Express (PG) 2:00 p.m.
Free Advance Screening: To be Determined 6:30 p.m.

* indicates last showing