RotoVue

Serving Marine Corps Air Station New River and Jacksonville, N.C. www.newriver.usmc.mil

March 22, 2006 Vol. 45 No. 6

MWSS-272 returns

"Untouchables" come home after seven-month long deployment in support of OIF

SEE PAGE 3

Stay hands free, Marine

Military Police District cracks down on cell phone use while driving on Station

SEE PAGE 6

'Gunny' motivates All-Stars

'Condors' Marine coaches girls' basketball team to state playoffs

SEE PAGE 18

'Blue Knights' ACE TRUEX with MEU

SEE PAGES 14, 15

Command Message

The post office (military side) hours of operation are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

On Wednesday, official mail may be dropped off between 7:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.

For more information concerning their hours of operation, contact Staff Sgt. Mohammed A. Eyiowuawi at 449-6501, 449-4431 or Mr. Ashford at 449-5476

The Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune Auto Hobby Shop now has a service department for minor repairs.

This service is provided by appointment only. For more information call (910) 451-9306.

By order of the commanding officer, MCAS New River, the parking lot behind the Station Dining Facility is closed between the hours of 4 a.m. and 8 p.m., except to food service Marines and contracted civilian employees who work in the building.

There will be a Texas Hold 'Em Poker Night at the Staff Noncommissioned Officers' Club every third Friday of each month.

The first cards will be dealt at 6:30 p.m. and play ends at midnight.

There are 100 seats available and tickets cost $20.

Prizes are awarded to those who come in 1st through 5th place.

Community

The Wounded Warrior Spouses' Support Group meets every third Wednesday of each month.

The meetings start at 6:30 p.m. at the Key Volunteer Center, Building H-14, and are open to all Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., and Marine Corps Air Station New River families.

For more information, call Shannon Maxwell at 347-4450 or Becky Klepper at 353-4625.

The Educational and Developmental Intervention Services are offering free developmental screenings for children up to 36 months of age.

For more information, call Raymond Applewhite at 450-4463.

The New River Tax Center is open to provide free tax service to military personnel until April 17.

Visit Building AS-232 or call 449-7400 for more information.

The 2006 Thalian Hall 10K and 5K Run will take place May 27 at 8 a.m., at Thalian Hall in downtown Wilmington, N.C.

Entry fees for the races are $20 for pre-registration and $25 for the day of the race. All entry fees include a T-shirt, a post race party and a breakfast provided by Angie's of Chris's Restaurant.

Awards will be given to the top three runners of each age group.

For more information, contact the Thalian Hall Center Administration at (910) 343-3660 or by email at czechlewski@thalianhall.com.

The Kinston 8000: A Run for the River race will take place March 26 at 8:30 a.m.

Marines interested in running the race can call Tim Knobeloch at (252) 939-3336.

The Onslow Art Society invites all artists, 18 and older, to enter the 46th Annual Spring Art Show.

For more information, call 455-1441.

In the Corps

Active Duty Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Fund Drive kicked off March 1.

Fund drive representatives have been trained and can assist you with donating.

The team of representatives have undergone fund drive classes to ensure they build on last year's success.

Donators can expect higher visibility and more opportunities to give this year with programs like the "Round Up," as well as incentive-based donating.

Those interested in donating, or who have questions about the drive, can contact Capt. Charles Hart at 449-5446.

The Marine South Military Exposition is scheduled for April 5 and 6 at the Goettge Fieldhouse aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune.

The exposition is a forum for defense contractors to display and promote the latest equipment and technology. The exposition also provides an opportunity for Marines to meet with industry leaders and discuss the latest equipment being introduced to the Marine Corps. The expo is open to all servicemembers and civilian employees.

Religious Info

The Weekly Men's Bible Study Group meets every Thursday morning at 6 a.m., at the Mainside Protestant Chapel Annex behind the Base Chapel.

For more information, contact Chaplain James Dance at 451-3210, Maj. Jo Rozier at 451-7842, Staff Sgt. Stacey Lafferty at 450-8595 or Jim Sides at 451-5024.

Recruiting

Earn promotion points for recruiter's assistance in the Northeast Region.

Recruiters assistants are needed at Recruiting Stations Albany, N.Y., Buffalo, N.Y., Harrisburg, Pa., New Jersey, New York, N.Y., Pittsburgh, Pa., Portsmouth, N.H., and Springfield, Mass.

For more information, applicants are encouraged to please contact 1st MCD at (516) 288-5656.

Marines interested in recruiters assistance in the Colorado, Wyoming, Western Nebraska or Western South Dakota areas should contact Sgt. Maj. Robert Cadle at cadlerg@marines.usmc.mil or call (303) 241-8102.

Civilian Spotlight

Donald W. Feazell
MCAS New River Education Officer education services specialist

Hometown: Anniston, Ala.

Family: Donald is married and together, he and his wife have one son, Andrew, 15.

Military background: Donald is a retired Marine Corps gunnery sergeant with more than 20 years of service.

Time on Station: He said he has been on Station for approximately one year.

Best part of job: Donald, who is an employee of Indtai Incorporated, a Virginia-based firm contracted to provide education services to the Marine Corps Lifelong Learning Program, said the best part of his job is being able to go home everyday feeling that he has somehow impacted someone's life.

Best part of working with the military: "I get to continue being part of the Marine culture," he said.

Proudest accomplishment: Donald said his proudest accomplishment is being surrounded by a loving family.

Best advice received: "Better to have something and not need it, than to need something and not have it," said Donald.

What would you want your last words to be: "I tried," he said.

Person whose lifestyle you'd like to emulate: "I like being me," he said.

Personal hero: "Anyone who believes in themselves and believes in their own worth," said Donald.

Personal motto: "I like fun in my life and a little life in my fun," he said.

Why is it important for Marines to continue their education? Because education encourages, empowers and enables us to abstain from drinking life from an empty cup.

RotoVue

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MWSS-272 main body returns

Lance Cpl. Jonathan A. Tabb
correspondent

For the last several weeks, Marines from Marine Wing Support Squadron-272 have been returning from Iraq by the bus-load – literally. March 16 marked the final return of the "Untouchables" main body.

The main body returned in three waves, said Staff Sgt. Tevis J. Mitchell, MWSS-272 family readiness staff non-commissioned officer-in-charge.

March 10, 14 and 16, the family members of nearly 300 Marines lined the MWSS-272 parking lot holding signs, ribbons and in some cases, a child their husband had never met.

Among the crowd of cheers, a young boy dressed from head-to-toe in desert digital camouflage utilities stood anxiously searching the mass of Marines, his eyes darting back and forth.

Young Maxwell Reaves' eyes lit up once he finally caught sight of his father, Sgt. Earnell Reaves, MWSS-272 motor transport operator.

"It's great to be home and to see my family again," Reaves said. "This is the best part of a deployment."

While being away from your family for months at a time is hard to cope with, Sgt. Felix A. Lora, MWSS-272 refueler, said he believes deployments are necessary for a Marine to develop into a good leader.

"I'm very happy to be home," said Lora. "Deploying with your fellow Marines really helps to build unit morale."

Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White

Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White

(Left) Sergeant Earnell Reaves, Marine Wing Support Squadron-272 motor transport operator, hugs his son Maxwell during the squadron's return ceremony March 14. (Above) Families and friends hold signs for their loved ones to be dismissed after stepping off the bus March 14. MWSS-272's main body returned after seven months in Iraq.

HMM-266 Marines receive warm welcome home

Lance Cpl. M. L. Meier
correspondent

One hundred and thirty-six "Fighting Griffins" from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-266 were welcomed home during a ceremony March 7, on the Station flightline.

The deployment, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, marked their last as HMM-266 before their scheduled transition to an MV-22 Osprey squadron in June.

When the "Fighting Griffins" stand up as Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-266, they will become the third operational Osprey squadron.

"This 'phrog' squadron, as we know it, is only a couple of months from going away forever," said Sgt. Maj. Donald G. de Hagara, HMM-266 sergeant major. "The Marines who have been with the CH-46E feel a certain sadness that we have to retire them."

There were always enough parts on the shelf and the group worked well together to get things done, said Lt. Col. Joseph E. George, HMM-266 commanding officer.

"The maintenance effort was phenomenal. The support we received from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26 helped enable that," said George. "The ability of our aircrews to focus on what they had to do day in and day out, our good analysis of the threat and the mission allowed us to complete all our missions with no mishaps."

The work ethic of the enlisted Marines who were maintaining the aircraft was the biggest thing that made the deployment a success, according to 1st Lt. Charles W. Parris, HMM-266 CH-46E pilot.

The leadership of the officers, staff noncommissioned officers and NCO's, as well as the teamwork of the squadron, led to the mission's success, said de Hagara.

In addition, the "Fighting Griffins" brought every deployed Marine and Sailor back home with them, adding to the mission's accomplishments.

"The mission was extremely successful," said Cpl. Jared A. McComb, HMM-266 avionics technician. "Now, it's so surreal to be home."

"It was long and tiring, but everyone really came together like a family to get the job done," said McComb.

HMM-266 Marines earn aircrew combat wings

Pfc. Andy Kalwitz
correspondent

Twenty-one crew chiefs and aerial observers from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-266 received their aircrew combat wings March 15 at the Station Officers' Club.

To earn combat wings, Marines must fly a certain number of hours in combat, depending on their command.

The Marines of HMM-266 earned their combat wings during their recent seven-month deployment to Iraq.

These Marines really worked hard to earn their combat wings while they were in Iraq, said Lt. Col. Joseph E. George, HMM-266 commanding officer. "I'm extremely proud of them."

They worked hard for a lot of hours and had only one day off for every month of the deployment, said Sgt. Maj. Donald G. de Hagara, HMM-266 sergeant major.

The ranks of the recipients of the combat wings ranged from lance corporal to master gunnery sergeant, which makes this a very special accomplishment, said George.

"These Marines, especially the junior Marines, earned a lot of experience in a short amount of time," he said. "They're going to be great leaders."

"It's a great honor. Not many people get them," said Lance Cpl. David J. Meury, an HMM-266 crew chief. "I'm very happy about it."

When Marines earn their combat wings, it reflects extremely well on the rest of the unit, said de Hagara.

It shows they were trained well by their noncommissioned officers and staff NCOs, he added.

"I'm glad that I got the opportunity to get out there and do my job and earn them," said Cpl. Douglas C. Fox, HMM-266 crew chief.

The hard work and professionalism the Marines of HMM-266 displayed while on deployment makes them more than deserving of their aircrew combat wings, said George.

"It recognizes Marines for hard work. Their combat wings show they were involved in the fight."

Hey, Marine, have you been practicing ORM?

NMCRS here to help

Lance Cpl. M. L. Meier
correspondent

Through the month of March, Station personnel have the opportunity to take care of the Society that has been taking care of them for more than 100 years.

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society has always been there in the background, not just ready to help, but actively helping Marines and Sailors in times of financial and personal hardship.

"It is here to help us, but it is our responsibility to help it," said Col. Stephen L. Forand, Station commanding officer. "It is ours; it belongs to us, it is ours to use and support."

Operating and salary costs come from the interest on the reserve fund that was established during World War II. This means donations go directly to help active-duty and retired Marines and Sailors and their eligible family members; therefore, the funds are not only the Marines and Sailors to provide, but also theirs to have, said Sandi Isherwood, Station NMCRS director.

"Last year, New River's NMCRS assisted all ranks from private through captain with the exception of E-9s and chief warrant officers," said Capt. Charles N. Hart, NMCRS Station representative.

In January 2006, 36 Station Marines were assisted with both monetary and non-monetary support. Nineteen Marines received more than $9,000 in grants and low-interest loans for unforeseen emergencies and financial mismanagement. Others received support through the nonfinancial services offered, such as financial counseling, the layette program and Budget for Baby classes, food lockers, and visiting nurse services.

From Jan. 1 to Dec. 3,1 2005, NMCRS provided $213,166 to 302 Station personnel in the form of low-interest loans and grants. Non-monetary services were provided to 216 Station personnel. Navy and Marine Corps-wide, more than $33 million in support was provided to more than 39,677 Marines and Sailors. More than $5 million was handed out in grants to 9,076 personnel.

"A lot of money is being collected and a lot of money is being given out," said Forand. "This organization is here for you, even though you may not need it, your buddy may need it someday."

As the fund drive runs through the month of March, Forand said he hopes to see 100 percent of Station Marines supporting an organization that supports them 100 percent.

MPD on the lookout for cell phone users

Lance Cpl. Randall A. Clinton
correspondent

Traffic court here begins promptly at 8:45 a.m. By 8:10 a.m., a line of ticketed Marines has formed in the hallway. Mumbling to each other, they wonder about their punishments and seek advice from barracks lawyers amongst them.

The scene plays out week after week, year after year. The same questions asked with new answers.

"If you are caught on Station without using a hands-free device, you will receive a 30-day suspension of driving privileges," said Sgt. Chad E. Bumgarner, New River Military Police District traffic court clerk and Richmond, Va. native.

Gunnery Sgt. Tyree M. Padilla, MPD operations chief, said using a hands-free device while driving a vehicle is just common sense.

"You cannot maintain proper control of your vehicle if one of your hands is occupied," said Padilla, a Pittsboro, N.C. native.

Air Station Order 5100.12g restricts cell phone use to hands-free devices, said Bumgarner.

"What can the Marine Corps do to prevent accidents? Eliminate distractions," he said.

"Most accidents are due to inattentive driving," added Padilla.

According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, motorists who use cell phones while driving are four times more likely to get into a crash resulting in injuries.

New York, New Jersey and the District of Columbia have banned the use of cell phones without a hands-free device. The National Safety Council estimates cell phone users spend 60 percent of their time talking while driving.

Recently, MPD has stepped up its efforts to crack down on this distracting and dangerous behavior.

"We have implemented random seatbelt and cell phone use inspections," Padilla said.

What qualifies as hands-free and what does not may surprise some Marines. Using the speakerphone function of a cell phone may not qualify as hands-free. Even dialing a number on a cell phone could attract the attention of an onlooking military policeman.

Bumgarner sums the order up with a simple rule of thumb: "If it's in your hand, it's not hands free."

(Editor's note: statistical information for this article was gathered from the Department of Transportation's Web site.)

New River recognizes Women's History Month

Pfc. Andy Kalwitz
correspondent

Long before women were given the opportunity to serve in the military, females were making contributions to our country and the American spirit. For all those years of hard labor and service, in 1987 a month was dedicated to the recognition of their achievements.

Women's History Month, held throughout the month of March, will close with a luncheon at the Station Officers' Club March 30.

Colonel Adele E. Hodges, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune commanding officer, will be the guest speaker.

The luncheon was organized by the Station equal opportunity representatives to give recognition for Women's History Month and female involvement in the military, said Gunnery Sgt. Michael A. Knowlton, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron air traffic controller and equal opportunity representative.

One of the first and most significant steps toward female participation in the Marine Corps was Opha Mae Johnson's enlistment Aug. 13, 1918 – the first woman to earn the title Marine. But it wasn't until July 30, 1942 when the Marine Corps Women's Reserve was officially established as part of the Marine Corps. This enabled women to provide assistance back home so men could be released for combat duty.

"I have seen history in the making," said Knowlton. "I've seen the first female pilot, women Marines permitted to serve on naval ships, some of the first women Marines to serve in combat, and some of the first female sergeants major."

Females have come far in the journey of equality. Today, they serve in 93 percent of all occupational fields and constitute 6.2 percent of the Marine Corps.

"The title Marine doesn't differentiate between genders.

See *HISTORY* on page 12

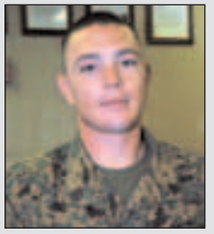
USMC Image Archive

ROTO VIEW

What's the best April Fools' Day prank you've ever heard?

"We gave one of the guys leaving the number for Captain D's (restaurant) and told him he needed to call the captain for information on his orders."

**Cpl. Justin A. Shadrick,
Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-263,
crew chief.
College Park, Md.**



"I put plastic wrap over my brother's toilet."

**Sgt. Jeffery A. Walsh,
Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting,
firefighter.
Gatesville, TX**

"My 1965 Mustang was towed away and my friends told me the cops did it. Later I found out they had the car at their house."

**Cpl. Ivan D. Aguirre,
Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron-204,
flightline mechanic.
El Monte, Calif.**

RotoVue

Station Cub Scouts compete in Pinewood Derby

Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. M. L. Meier
correspondent

Tigers and Wolves and Bears and Webelos! Oh, my!" The windows of DeLalio Elementary School shook as Cub Scout Troop 216 roared, "Screamin' down the track!"

Racecars of all shapes and colors zoomed down the pinewood racetrack in the school's cafeteria Saturday at the Troop's annual Pinewood Derby.

"It's all about kid entertainment, but fun for us too," said Staff Sgt Benjamin T. McKinney, Troop 216 Den Master. "We compete for gloating rights."

The Cub Scouts carved, painted and weighted the cars in hopes of winning those rights in one of three competitions. Not only did the dens rival for the fastest car but also the "Best in Show" and "Best of Effort" awards. Judges had the difficult task of sorting through the brightly colored cars before the races began.

"The cars can't weigh more than five ounces; you can not alter the axles at all. You also have to use the original wheels," said Stephanie E. Kelsey, Troop 216 Derby Queen. "As far as decorating them, you have your own go ahead."

The competitions had their winners, but for the Cub Scouts it was more about the friendly competition, the self-confidence gained from creating a car to be proud of, and the quality time spent with parents and other Scouts in their dens.

A group of DeLalio Elementary School Cub Scouts with Pack 216 hold towels at the end of the track to keep the pinewood cars from getting damaged as they cross the finish line, March 18.

A group of DeLalio Elementary School Cub Scouts with Pack 216 cheer for their fellow scout members as they compete during the Pinewood Derby, March 18.

VMM-263 Marine makes historic flight

Lance Cpl. Jonathan A. Tabb
correspondent

Each day Marines around the world make history. One pilot with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-263 made history March 13 when she became the first female ever to pilot the MV-22 Osprey.

Captain Elizabeth A. Okoreeh-Baah spent the first five and a half years of her career in the Marine Corps as a CH-46E "Sea Knight" pilot, but when Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-263 began transitioning to the Osprey Program while she was stationed there, she became one of the first female pilots to begin training on the controls of the tiltrotor aircraft.

"She was the first female selected on the V-22 transition conversion board and out of sheer fate, she's here, she's in the pipeline going through the syllabus and she's passed everything so far with flying colors," said Col. Joel P. Kane, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron-204 commanding officer.

Okoreeh-Baah spent her first three months with VMMT-204 training on the flight simulators at Marine Aircrew Training Systems Squadron.

"All her ground school and all her simulator flights have gone spectacularly," said Kane. "After she completes her co-pilot's syllabus, it'll be nine months to a year before she's a certified Osprey pilot."

Okoreeh-Baah said her decision to become one of the few and the proud is a direct result of living in Memphis, Tenn., and attending a very small high school.

"I went out to different schools pretty often because my school was so small. The influences I got were mostly from seeing all the people around who had been in the Army," Okoreeh-Baah explained. "At one time they had good plans; they were professional, but they just didn't do anything with themselves. They lacked drive. I think that's why the Corps appealed to me so much."

Okoreeh-Baah said that while she was greatly influenced by outside sources, her family was also very encouraging throughout her life.

"She's going to go a long way because she never quits. She can succeed at anything she puts her mind to," said Okoreeh-Baah's father, Isaac K. Okoreeh-Baah Sr., a native of Ghana, North Africa. "She gets that from me, I think."

After meeting the Marine recruiters and noticing they were the only ones who showed up on time, Okoreeh-Baah made her decision and signed up for enlistment through the Delayed Entry Program.

Okoreeh-Baah said her parents were strongly against her enlisting and wanted her to do something that wouldn't put her in harm's way.

"My parents called the captain in charge of my recruiting station told him they didn't want me going. They wanted me to go to Yale and not do anything that might put me in danger," she explained. "The captain was a graduate of the Naval Academy and after talking to him, my parents got on board and were able to sell me on the Naval Academy being just like the Marine Corps, except I could get my education."

After arriving at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., Okoreeh-Baah said her urge to be a Marine was heightened greatly.

"It became very evident that the only leaders who had a consistent influence on my growth at the Academy were Marine Corps officers," she explained. "The Marine instructors are the ones who made a real difference in my life."

Okoreeh-Baah said she doesn't know exactly what her future holds, but she's sure her experiences in the Corps will help her with everything she does in life.

"It's a whole new world, a whole new military. I'd love to have my own squadron but there's no set path because I'm not even a co-pilot yet," she said. "I would also like to be an instructor one day."

Lance Cpl. Jonathan A. Tabb

Captain Elizabeth A. Okoreeh-Baah, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-263 schedules officer and Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron-204 student, poses in front of an MV-22 Osprey March 14. March 13 marked her first flight in the Osprey and the first time a female has piloted the tiltrotor aircraft.

Miss USA visits

Miss USA, Chelsea Cooley, visits with Marines from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-263 and Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron-204. She was given a tour of the VMMT-204 hangar and MV-22 Osprey. The Marines presented her with a flight suit and patches for both units. (photo by Lance Cpl. Randall A. Clinton)

Rich s pyrotechnics to heat up Air Show

Rich and Dee Gibson and their trained pyrotechnics crew travel all over the world "blowing things up." Both Rich and Dee received formal training in the United States Army. Rich served a tour in Vietnam, putting his skills to work with the 101st Airborne Division. Dee, a retired U.S. Army Major, helped blast rock in Honduras while building roads between small villages. Rich and Dee rely heavily on their pyrotechnics crew to assist in the setup and detonation of the charges. Each team member is specially trained to set up, prime, and detonate each of the high-explosive charges on the field. They travel and perform at air shows throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, Central America, Asia, and Australia.

This can be a dangerous business, but Rich and Dee continually try to eliminate as many risks as possible with knowledge and updated training. Both state that safety is the main element in their setup.

Using a carefully controlled mixture of dynamite, gasoline, and other explosives, Rich & Dee and their crew create special effects to simulate an air attack on the airfield. They work closely with the pilots to choreograph a truly realistic bombing display, where the spectators will surely "Feel the heat."

Rich's Incredible Pyro has made their mark in the special effects and the air show industry. In 2003 and 2004, they broke the existing Guinness World Record three separate times, and they now hold the coveted record for the longest wall of fire: 300 feet high and 3600 feet long! The team also created the special effects for the new IMAX movie, "Fighter Pilot", working alongside the U. S. Air Force A-10's and F-15's as they bombed and strafed a convoy of vehicles for "Operation Red Flag." And in 2003, the team won the prestigious Art Scholl Memorial Showmanship Award for their exceptional special effects choreography and the unique entertainment value they bring to the air show industry.

All information gathered at
http://www.richsincrediblepyro.com/press.html

May 13, 14 Air Show acts will include:

Canadian Forces Snowbirds
Army Black Daggers Parachute Team
AV-8B Harrier demonstration
MV-22 Osprey demo
Marine Air Ground Task Force demo
Red Baron Pizza Squadron
A-10 Thunderbolt demo
Rich's Incredible Pyrotechnics
Jim Leroy
Kurtis Kairys
Dale Snodgrass
Tin Sticks of Dynamite
John Curan and a C-123
Larry Kelly and a B-25

Air Show Hotline: (910) 449-4173

HISTORY, from page 6

It only identifies one member of the team, whose role is equally important in the overall accomplishment of the mission," said Knowlton.

The best word of advice anyone can offer female Marines is to know their job well, said Sgt. Molly A. Muldoon, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron-204 crew chief.

There seems to be a dividing line between males and females in the Marine Corps; unfortunately a lot of people still believe women aren't as capable as men, she added.

Muldoon holds the distinction of becoming the first female Marine Tiltrotor Test and evaluation Squadron-22 MV-22 Osprey crew chief and added, "When a Marine looks at you, they see a female Marine. If you know your job well, that dividing line is blurred."

By working in an environment with both males and females, it allows for a variety of different ideas and unique contributions, said Staff Sgt. Virginia C. Camacho, VMX-22 career retention specialist and equal opportunity representative.

"Women should continue to display good leadership," said Camacho.

"That way, the respect they've earned in history is continued and deserved," she added.

Camacho said Women's History Month not only recognizes the outstanding achievements of the women in our country, but it also glorifies their display of professionalism in the Marine Corps.

History of women's contributions in the Marine Corps

1918: Pvt. Opha Mae Johnson becomes the first woman to enlist in the Marine Corps Reserve
1943: Captain Anne Lentz, first commissioned officer
1943: Colonel Ruth Cheney Streeter became the first Director of Women Marine Reservists
1943: Private Lucille McClarren, first active-duty enlisted woman
1945: First detachment of Women Marines arrives in Hawaii for duty
1948: Colonel Katherine A. Towle, first Director of Women Marines
1961: The first Woman Marine is promoted to Sergeant Major.
1979: The Marine Corps assigns women as embassy guards.
1985: Colonel Gail M. Reals, the first woman selected by a board of general officers to be advanced to brigadier general
1992: Brigadier General Carol A. Mutter assumed command of the 3d Force Service Support Group, Okinawa, the first woman to command a Fleet Marine Force unit at the flag level
1993: Second Lt. Sarah Deal became the first woman Marine selected for Naval aviation training
1993: The Marine Corps opens pilot positions to women.
1994: Brigadier General Mutter became the first woman major general in the Marine Corps and the senior woman on active duty in the armed services
1995: The first female Marine pilot pins on Naval flight wings.
1996: Lieutenant Gen. Mutter became the first woman Marine and the second woman in the history of the armed services to wear three stars
Today: Women serve in 93 percent of all occupational fields and 62 percent of all billets.

RotoVue

HMM-365 'Blue Knights': Anatomy of a helo raid

Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Jeffery A. Cosola
correspondent

NAVAL STATION NORFOLK, Va. -- The 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit's Maritime Special Purpose Force performed a raid at a simulated insurgent stronghold as part of the MEUs Training in an Urban Environment Exercise taking part throughout the Hampton Roads, Va., area.

The MSPF was supported by a fleet of helicopters from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-365 (Reinforced), the MEUs Aviation Combat Element, and troop transport and assault vehicles with MEU Service Support Group-24.

The TRUEX is the premier training event during the MEUs six-month pre-deployment workups that kicked off Nov. 30. The exercise has involved each of the MEU components: Command Element; Battalion Landing Team 1/8; HMM-365(Reinforced); and MSSG-24.

The 24th MEU is scheduled to deploy this spring to the European and Central Command theaters of operations.

Move!

Maritime Special Purpose Force Marines with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit sweep into their battle objective with bad intent - moving swift, silent and deadly during a raid exercise March 10.

Hasty extract

CH-46E "Sea Knights" with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-365 (Reinforced) move to extract Maritime Special Purpose Force from a raid site March 10. Hastily extracting troops from the battlefield is key to ensuring each Marine comes home alive.

Troop insert

Maritime Special Purpose Force Marines on the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit hold security during an insert at a raid site and provide security March 10. Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-365 (Reinforced) acts as the Air Combat Element of the MEU and provides troop transport, as well as close-air support during raid missions The raid came as part of the MEU's Training in an Urban Environment, or TRUEX, taking place in Hampton Roads, Va.

Into the breach!

Maritime Special Purpose Force Marines with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit gather speed as they prepare to breach a suspected terrorist camp during the MEU's Training in an Urban Environment Exercise March 10. Marines attack the camp in unison with the Air Combat Element - Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-365 (Reinforced) - and provide them with close-air support and casualty evacuation capabilities. TRUEX provided each of the MEU's four key elements - the Command Element; the Ground Combat Element or Battalion Landing Team 1st Marines, 8th Marine Regiment, MEU Service Support Group-24 and HMM-365 - an opportunity to train together, perfecting their raid techniques.

HMT-302 deploys to Key West, Fla.

Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White
Correspondent

At the end of every fall season, various species birds in the United States leave their nests and fly south to escape the harsh winters and temperatures common of the season. Upon arrival, they find plenty of food and sunshine to survive the four-month long relocation before heading back home for the start of spring.

While migration may not be commonplace for this time of year, the Key West, Fla., skies fill with approximately 150 "Phoenix" Marines who show up to the sunny region three months late every year.

Eight CH-53E "Super Stallions," that call Marine Helicopter Training Squadron-302 home, deployed from Marine Corps Air Station New River March 16 and 17, and several hours later landed on the flightline of Naval Air Station Key West.

"Being able to come to Key West and have this experience is invaluable for both our pilots and crew chiefs," said Lt. Col. Timothy A. Herndon, HMT-302 commanding officer.

"They need to see more than just the MCAS New River area; they need to be familiar with operating in different airfields and different environments and Key West provides that," he added.

Getting the aircraft and gear prepared for departure can be a very tedious task, but the Marines of HMT-302 executed their jobs to perfection, Herndon said.

"I couldn't have asked for anything better," Herndon added. "The maintenance department did a phenomenal job both preparing the aircrafts and keeping them running and our (administrative) shops kept everything flowing perfectly."

During the 12-day training deployment, the squadron's mission is to both test their deployment capability and conduct flight training.

"Our squadron does not usually have this opportunity to deploy," said Herndon. "Knowing that, I want my Marines to understand the capability that this squadron has, so if we are required to deploy someplace in support of a task we are able to do it."

Some of the operations and flight exercises will consist of aircraft, instrument and area familiarization, navigational training and confined area landing.

"Flying in an unknown environment creates for different stressors than you'll find in the New River area," said Maj. Melinda Rizer, CH-53E pilot and St. Louis, Missouri, native.

"It's important for pilots to get out of their comfort zones and remove the complacency factor," she added.

And though the Marines of HMT-302 will have time to enjoy the nightlife and scenery that Key West is known for, both the command and the Marines of the squadron have stressed and understand the importance of separating liberty from work.

Key West is a great place to deploy to, not only for the training, but for the environment, said Herndon.

"I'm a firm believer in 'you work hard, you play hard,' so I want them to go out and have fun. They understand, though, that when they come back to work, they need to be ready for any task at hand," he explained.

Lance Cpl. Samuel D. White

Lt. Col. Timothy A. Herndon, Marine Helicopter Training Squadron-302 commanding officer, pilots one of eight CH-53E "Super Stallions" to Key West, Fla., March 17.

Soldiers assist Marines with defensive operations

Cpl. Daniel J. Redding
1st Marine Logistics Group

CAMP TAQADDUM, Iraq (Mar. 12, 2006) -- Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry Regiment performed a multi-faceted mission near Camp Taqaddum, Iraq, March 12, as they carried out weapons cache sweeps, investigated possible improvised explosive devices and conducted route clearance operations during the daylong operation.

Along the way, the Illinois-based National Guard unit took time to interact with the locals, stopping in local villages around the base.

The soldiers' primary mission is to provide base security for the Marines and Sailors of the forward-deployed 1st Marine Logistics Group. The 4,200 joint-service members of 1st MLG are part of the 25,000 Marines, Airmen, Soldiers and Sailors of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force's forward deployed element.

The 1st MLG's mission is to provide sustained logistics support to I MEF and Iraqi Security Forces operating in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Marines with 1st MLG will also support the development of the Iraqi Security Forces' logistic capabilities in order to enable independent ISF led counter insurgency operations.

During their mission, the Soldiers were acquainting themselves with the routes in their newly assigned area to ensure the safety of the roads for future convoys, said Staff Sgt. Thomas D. Reif, convoy patrol leader and 37-year-old native of Raymond, Ill.

To clear a route for future convoys, the soldiers scan the roads for possible signs of makeshift bombs called improvised explosive devices.

Cpl. Daniel J. Redding

Sgt. Robert R. Anderson, infantryman, interacts with a local Iraqi child, in a village near Camp Taqaddum, Iraq, March 12th, 2006.

The IEDs are manufactured in a variety of ways with a variety of explosives, and have been one of the leading causes of casualties for troops in Iraq. While on this patrol, a suspicious mound of dirt drew the soldiers' attention – a possible IED. After close inspection of the surrounding area with no results, it was decided that the mound of dirt was just that – a mount of dirt.

Later in the day, after they conducted the route clearing and terrain association mission, the Soldiers stopped in two local towns to pass out stuffed animals, candy and toothbrushes to the Iraqi children. Although their primary mission was defensive patrols against the insurgency, the soldiers frequently interacted with the Iraqis, lightening the mood of their operations.

The Soldiers were grateful it wasn't business as usual and could do something a little light hearted. Whether it's handing out candy or searching for IEDs, the soldiers are proud of what they are doing in Iraq, said Sgt. 1st Class Timothy J. Atteberry, platoon sergeant.

"The individual, personal satisfaction of helping another human being really comes from these kinds of humanitarian-aid type missions," said Atteberry, a 38-year-old native of Champagne, Ill.

While the day ended with no weapons caches or IEDs discovered, it was ultimately a success for the Soldiers, said Spec. Sean M. Seahausen, a 30-year-old native of Godfrey, Ill.

"As long as everybody gets back inside the wire safe (and) we put a few smiles on the faces around here… it's definitely a good day," said Seahausen.

Call the local 24 hour hot line 938-3273

CRIME Stoppers

* Report crime anywhere in our community.
* Caller never reveals his/her identidy.
* Pays **CASH** rewards up to $2,500.00.
* Information must lead to arrest and indictment.
* Reward is collected through code system.

ROTOVUE

Semper Fitness

4 types of weight training

Lynda F. Itro
MCCS personal trainer

Weight training is a form of muscular exercise using resistance or weights to stimulate strength or muscle size. Depending on personal goals, the type of program designed will be based on those needs.

There are four types of training methods with weights. They are:

1) Body building- attempt to change the way your body looks by exercising with heavier weights. This will lead to toning and an increase in the size of the muscle.

2) Competitive lifting- both men and women can compete in this sport. It is based on speed and power. This is a higher risk form of training. It is not a common proctive for the general population seeking health and fitness benefits.

3) Endurance training- this can be for sports or used for weight-loss programs. It consist of lighter weights or resistance bands and has a number of repetitions.

4) Strength training is also performed in rehabs too. After people recover from an injury, usually the most common side effect is weakness in the muscle. This type of training is provided by sports medicine and physical therapist. MCCS also offers an RTR program for post physical therapy Marines.

You can train in your home or in a gym. Remember our services are free to the military. For beginners who have never strength trained, it is best to see a personal trainer to give you an orientation and show you proper form. We can help you establish what type of program you need. If you would like more in-depth information you can get a Fitness Assessment offered by the trainers; again this is a free service to Marines and dependents. Teens over the age of 12 are welcome to begin learning how to use the facility too. If you are over age 16, you can come in without a parent.

Weight training itself is not a weight-loss exercise, but the more lean tissue you have, the higher your at-rest metabolism will be. Everyone needs some type of strength training program.

Those looking to further their fitness accomplishments, or simply need some extra workout ideas, are encouraged to remember that the Personal Training aboard Marine Corps Air Station New River is a free service to all active-duty personnel, their spouses and dependents (be aware of age limits in facilities).

Trainers hold different hours at each facility to better accommodate individual needs. Please feel free to call building AS-4000 at 449-5854 or AS-204 at 449-5267 to make an appointment.

Gunnery Sgt. makes it happen, on and off the court

Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Randall A. Clinton
correspondent

Gunnery sergeants get things done in the Marine Corps. If there is something you need, usually a "gunny" can fix it, get it, or make it happen.

That statement might hold water within the gates of Marine Corps Air Station New River, but what about on the basketball court?

Gunnery Sgt. Luis E. Santos, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron-464 administration and personnel chief, coaches the Southwest District All-Stars with the drive and intensity that has brought him so much success in his career.

Santos spends the spring seasons on the sideline coaching his daughter's basketball team with head coach James Jordan to help the girls reach their potential.

"He brings a lot of motivation," said the first-year head coach.

In the office or on the court, don't expect Santos to be quiet.

"He's loud; he doesn't yell, just loud," said Lance Cpl. Lynn K. Lopes Garcia, an HMH-464 administration clerk.

Jasmine Jordan, daughter of head coach James Jordan, brushes off defenders as she lays-in another two points. Jasmine demonstrated the lightning speed that has become the hallmark of the team during a scrimmage March 13, to prepare for an upcoming game.

The Marines of the HMH-464 administration office know Santos' leadership style, and know he brings the same expectations to his All-Stars.

"He's demanding in a good way," said Lopes Garcia.

"There was a girl on his team who wouldn't put out, so he pulled her from the game. He told her that if she wants to play, she needs to play hard," Cpl. Rafael A. Carbuccia, HMH-464 operations chief, added.

As the season winds down, his volume increases, said Lopes Garcia.

"He gets really excited now. He brags about his kids a lot," the Bronx, N.Y. native added.

By bringing the Southwest District its first State Championship in history, and winning games by an average of 25 points, Santos has some room to boast.

Janika Meban goes to the basket as she finishes a fast break. In preparation for their State Championship game, the Southwest District All-Stars scrimmaged an older girls All-Star team. The girls fell one game shy of state champs.

After each game, his Marines know what to expect when they come to work the next day, said Carbuccia.

"If they win, its crazy in here. If they lose, he'll tell you about it," said Carbuccia.

Even the office furniture can't escape the celebration, he said.

"He starts imitating his players; jumping around the office and spinning off the desks," said Carbuccia.

After a win, the squadron sergeant major can even hear the excited Santos. He starts yelling and screaming, and you can hear him at the other end of the hall, said Carbuccia.

Much like the Corps, he sees each game as an opportunity for the girls to grow both individually and as a team.

Beyond the contest on the court, the game allows the girls to develop into better people – learning about family, teamwork, and discipline, said Santos.

Santos said he enjoys the success the team has had in recent years, but also realizes what the sport is all about: "Seeing the kids have fun. I like seeing them improve and having a good time with each other."

Youth Baseball Registration

Baseball registration for ages five to 15 at the Jacksonville Recreation and Parks Department ends March 24.
For more information, contact Melody Strickland at 938-2538.

Women s Basketball

Women interested in applying for the 2006 Marine Corps Women's Basketball Trial Camp should contact the Marine Corps Community Services athletic director at 449-5609 or 449-6410.

Girl s Fast-Pitch Softball

Females, ages seven to 16 interested in playing fast-pitch softball should register between now and March 24.
For more information, contact the Jacksonville Recreation and Parks Department at 938-2538.

Marriages, families that soar

A healthy home life is key to a successful career

Cmdr. Frederick Hilder
MAG-29 chaplain

A year ago, in May, the "War Eagles" of Marine Aircraft Group-29 sponsored a month-long emphasis on strengthening marriages throughout Marine Corps Air Station New River.

At that time, MAG-26 Headquarters and several squadrons were deployed while other squadrons were just returning or in the preparation stage to leave once again.

We had New River Marines and Sailors in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa and with the Marine Expeditionary Unit.

It was, and still is, a busy, stressful, and in a peculiar way, exciting time.

We continue to steadily and faithfully support the call of our country to forward deploy as we battle the forces that are determined to prevent others from living in freedom and peace.

Through it all, the strain on Marine and Navy marriages and families is constant and of great concern to all our leadership.

Not only do we have a moral and practical responsibility to help our military families stay healthy physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually, but the better our home life, the more capable and focused we in uniform will be on the job.

During April and May there will once again be a variety of opportunities at MCAS New River to strengthen marriages, parenting and families.

This two-month emphasis, called "Marriages and Families That Soar," is a combined effort of the Religious Ministries Teams of New River Memorial Chapel, MAG-26, MAG-29, and the 2d Marine Aircraft Wing, Family Services Center, Marine Corps Community Services/Family Team Building Center, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, and Spiritual Fitness Center/Chaplains Religious Enrichment Development Operation on Camp Lejeune.

We encourage all Marines and Sailors to try to fit at least one event into their schedule.

For more information about classes, you may call any of the New River chaplain's offices (MAG-29, 449-6866; MAG-26, 449-7180; Chapel, 449-6801) or the activity hosting the event.

"MARRIAGES AND FAMILIES THAT SOAR"

Building Stronger Marriages and Families at MCAS New River
April/May 2006

* Healthy Homes and Healthy Children – April 18 and 11, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
* Budget for Baby – April 11, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.
* Singles Seminar: Learn How Not to Marry (or be) a Jerk – April 12, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
* Pre-Marriage (& Newly Married) One-Day Workshop – April 13, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
* Marriage Enrichment One-Day Workshop – April 19, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
* Making Marriage Work – April 24 - 27, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
* "Dinner and a Prayer" for Spouse/Family of Deployed Marines/Sailors – April 27, 6:30 p.m.
* Prayer Breakfast – National Day of Prayer – May 4, 7:15 a.m.
* Covenant of Marriage Celebration – May 21, 11 a.m.
* Marriage Enrichment One-Day Seminar - "His Needs, Her Needs" – May 9, 11, 23 and 25, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
* Divorce Care – May 1, 8, 15 and 22, 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.
* Effects of Divorce on Children – April 25, 1 - 3:30 p.m.
* Stress Management Class – begins May 2 and is held every Thursday following for four weeks, 1:30 - 4 p.m.
* CREDO Personal Growth Retreat – Free for military (active and retired), dependents and Department of Defense civilian employees including lodging and meals.

Safety Snippets:

6 ways to protect your assests

1. The next time you order checks, have only your initials (instead of first name) and last name put on them. If someone takes your checkbook, they will not know if you sign your checks with just your initials or your first name, but your bank will know how you sign your checks.

2. Do not sign the back of your credit cards. Instead, put "Photo ID required."

3. When you are writing checks to pay on your credit card accounts, do not put the complete account number on the "For" line. Instead, just put the last four numbers. The credit card company knows the rest of the number, and anyone who might be handling your check as it passes through all the check-processing channels will not have access to it.

4. Put your work phone number on your checks instead of your home phone. If you have a PO Box, use that instead of your home address. If you do not have a PO Box, use your work address. Never have your social security number printed on your checks. You can add it if necessary.

5. Place the contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine. Do both sides of each license, credit card, etc. You will know what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call and cancel. Keep the photocopy in a safe place. Also carry a photocopy of your passport when traveling either here or abroad.

6. When you check out of a hotel that uses cards for keys (and they all seem to do that now), do not turn the "keys" in. Take them with you and destroy them. Those little cards have on them all of the information you gave the hotel, including address and credit card numbers and expiration dates. Someone with a card reader, or employee of the hotel, can access all that information with no problem whatsoever.

Memorial Chapel services

Sunday Services
Catholic 9 a.m.
Protestant 11 a.m.
For more information, call the Memorial Chapel at 449-6801.

A message of thanks from the family of 1st Lt. Brandon Dronet

There are times when saying "I'm sorry" doesn't seem like enough.

There are times when offering to do anything to help doesn't seem like enough. And there are times when saying "thank you" doesn't seem like enough.

On February 17, 2006, a very bright light went out in the hearts of all the people who knew, respected, and loved 1st Lt. Brandon Dronet.

It is fair to say that anyone who knew him respected him.

It's also fair to say that most who knew him and who respected him as a leader also loved him.

1st. Lt. Job Armenta said, "To better ourselves, we tend to surround ourselves with people who are better than we are."

That's what Brandon's family and friends did – surrounded themselves with a better person, a presence that will be greatly missed.

Beginning with the notification of the tragic accident that claimed Brandon's life until today, there are so many people who entered our lives to offer their support and comfort.

Although it may seem as though it wasn't enough -- it was.

Everyone's thoughts, prayers, guidance and assistance had its proper place in our hearts and in our lives.

Brandon's wife Summer has had her spirit lifted by the outpouring of generosity from the military family of Marine Corps Air Station New River. Such kindness has brought Summer and her children strength in their time of need.

To Col. Stephen Forand, Col. Christopher Owens, Lt. Col. Jeffery Martinez, Father Richard Yagish, Chaplain Lt. Doug McCormick, and all the squadron commanders, we thank you.

To all the officers, staff noncommissioned officers, and NCO's in Brandon's squadron, we thank you.

To all the Marine wives, mothers, children, school faculty and "special" friends who stayed with Summer and are still with her today, we thank you.

Although we will always wonder why we had to let go of someone so promising so soon, we have come to understand why Brandon chose to be an officer in the United States Marine Corps.

The standard to which Brandon considered proper and acceptable has shown through all of you in this darkest hour.

With all of our respect and appreciation,
The family of 1st Lt. Brandon Ryan Dronet

This month in Marine Corps history

-March 1867: Col. Jacob Zeilin, 7th Commandant of the Marine Corps, was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General making it the first time Congress authorized this rank for the Marine Corps. The statute, however, was repealed in June 1874 so that the rank of Commandant would again revert to colonel upon Zeilin's retirement.

-8 March, 1965: The 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade landed at DaNang, Republic of Vietnam, as the first United States ground combat troops to be committed to that conflict. The 3,500 men arrived both across the beach with Battalion Landing Team 3/9, and at DaNang Airfield with Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion 3rd Marines.

-25 March, 1945: After 35 days of bitter fighting, the amphibious assault on the rocky fortress of Iwo Jima finally appeared over. However, a 300-man Japanese force launched a vicious final counterattack in the vicinity of Airfield Number 2. Marines fought the Japanese force until morning, but suffered heavy casualties - more than l00 killed and another 200 wounded.

-31 March, 1801: Lt. Col. William W. Burrows, 2nd Commandant of the Marine Corps rode with president Thomas Jefferson to look for "a proper place to fix the Marine Barracks on." They chose a square in Washington D.C., bounded by 8th and 9th streets, and A & I streets, because it lay near the Navy Yard and was within easy marching distance of the Capitol.

Paintball provides for training, fun

Jennifer Moore
contributor

Crouching behind an inflatable barrier, you see the enemy ahead. You hear your teammates running around you as you aim, pull the trigger, and BAM! – an explosion of yellow paint marks the hit on his chest.

At Coastal Paintball at Camp Lejeune, this scene plays out over and over again, as players use strategy and skills to "eliminate" their friends and opponents.

"I just like the rush," said David Killian, a member of the Coastal Paintball team. "It is a good way to relax."

For Stuart Walker, paintball is good "R and R."

"It's awesome," he said.

Coastal Paintball has three locations – one at Camp Lejeune on Parachute Tower Road, another on U.S. 17 and one in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

The base location offers a wooded field and an arena, with multiple options for each field.

Marines can play scenario games or do unit training in the wooded fields, which can give participants a better idea of how to use terrain to their advantage, according to Gregg Lubas, assistant manager of Coastal Paintball.

Coastal Paintball also hosts special events – such as Skins tournaments, usually on the first weekend of each month. Participants in the tournaments compete for points, which add up to rankings in the International Skins Association and Services.

The fields are open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Certified referees are always present to ensure there are no safety or equipment problems, according to Lubas.

The facility is the only safety certified and insured paintball facility in this area, according to Lubas.

Some players – like Killian – are part of the Coastal Paintball team, a group that practices and competes for the facility. Team members also often serve as referees.

Players must wear long-sleeved shirts, pants and sturdy shoes with ankle support. The paint is water soluble, so it will come out of clothing. Gloves are recommended.

Coastal Paintball has masks, markers, tanks, parts and other supplies for rent or to buy. A rental package – which includes the field fee, marker, hopper, tank with air for all day and 500 rounds – is $28 before tax.

For more information about Coastal Paintball, call 347-4199 or visit www.coastal-paintball.com.

Naval Hospital offers new service center

Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune
press release

It is our honor and privilege to provide the very best healthcare services to active-duty servicemembers, military retirees, and their family members, and we are fully accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and an institutional member of the American Hospital Association.

We are focused on establishing and maintaining health through improved "access" to your primary care manager (PCM). A PCM is responsible for guiding all your medical care needs, including referrals to a specialist.

If you are a TRICARE Prime Enrollee to the Naval Hospital you are assigned to a particular PCM and Team for all your health care needs. If you are an active duty family member and would like to enroll at the Naval Hospital, you may visit the Lejeune Reception Center, building 59, on base. We currently have capacity for active duty family members in our Family Medicine and Pediatric clinics.

We have established the Health Services Center (HSC), (450-HELP) to assist you if you need help contacting your PCM at the Naval Hospital or in the network.

The HSC is open 24-hours a day, and is located just inside the main entrance of the Naval Hospital. For life threatening emergencies, the emergency medical department is open 24-hours a day. For other healthcare concerns, please call your PCM directly by dialing 450-HELP select your PCM team. The HSC also offers 24/7 advice nurse services to NHCL Prime enrollees by calling 450-HELP option 2.

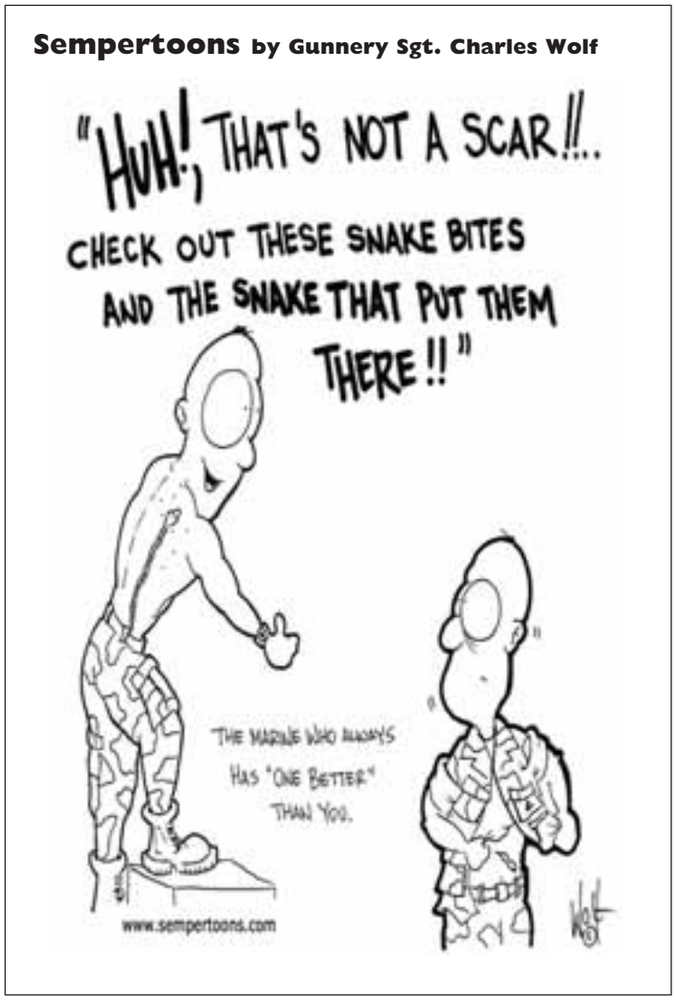
Another benefit to becoming a Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune TRICARE Prime enrollee is online booking. You may book an appointment with your PCM at TRICARE Online at www.tricareonline.com

For appointments or 24-hour information and assistance, Health Services Center (910) 450-HELP (4357) or 800-450-HELP if you are out of the area.

Family Clinic (MCAS)	(910) 449-5527
Family Clinic (Hospital)	(910) 450-4698
OB/GYN Clinic	(910) 450-4561
Pediatrics	(910) 450-4500
Pharmacy and refills	(910) 450-4171
Hospital Information	(910) 450-4300

The hospital is located on Hospital Corpsman Way, 100 Brewster Boulevard, aboard Camp Lejeune and you can visit us online at http://lej-www.med.navy.mil.

Sempertoons by Gunnery Sgt. Charles Wolf



Action! 24th MEU goes 'Hollywood'

Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Jeffrey A. Cosola
24th Marine Expeditionary Unit

NAVAL STATION NORFOLK, Va. (March 6, 2006) -- Marines and Sailors with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, were "Hollywood Marines" for a day during their participation in cultural and combat immersion training here March 5.

Explosions, Iraqi-American extras and small-arms fire created the "hyper-realistic" environment catered by special effects technicians whose primary focus is generating illusions for movie projects, said Stu Segall, president and owner of Strategic Operations, a tactical training off-shoot of his Hollywood production business.

"We try to make it as realistic as possible to make it feel as though they were 'in-country,'" explained Segall. "This is stress inoculation – we want them to train in combat without having to actually be in combat."

The training came as part of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Battalion Landing Team's Training in an Urban Environment Exercise, or TRUEX, taking place throughout the Hampton Roads, Va., area. Each rifle company in BLT 1/8 – the MEUs Ground Combat Element – as well as members of MEU Service Support Group-24 undergo a three-day, intelligence-intensive evolution culminating in a company-sized cordon-and-search raid at a simulated Iraqi village.

"This is set up so they can make the mistakes here and not 'in-country,'" said Cpl. Trevor D. Ihlan, an instructor at the exercise and part of the Urban Warfare Training Center at Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command in Twentynine Palms, Calif. "The realism really gives the Marines a good shock of combat."

During the training mission, the Marines began executing a cordon-and-search mission at an Iraqi village when a series of explosions – beginning with a massive blast from a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device – disrupted the operation. Marines were surrounded by casualties elaborately dressed by make-up artists with authentic-looking wounds and Iraqi role players who invaded the area and utilized enemy weaponry and blank rounds to simulate small-arms fire.

"They really put on an awesome show," said Staff Sgt. Michael J. Simon, the staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the instructors from the UWTC. "The best part is the realism of the training. So much is thrown at them that they really have to work their language and tactics training."

After dealing with casualties, outraged locals and insurgents setting new IEDs, Marines began searching the village for intelligence, weapons caches and high-value targets. The process incorporated the use of interpreters, cultural interaction and security maintenance, said Lt. Col. Chris A. Ross, the deputy director of the UWTC.

"This is more than just a tactical battle – it's more than locate, close with and destroy the enemy," said Ross. "Just like in theater, there are so many dynamics. It adds stress to the squad leaders; it's not only a kinetic fight, it's also about dealing with the population."

"It was great to be able to deal with the role players and interact with the local population," added Lance Cpl. Cody S. Allen, an assaultman with Alpha. Co., preparing for his first deployment. "This will definitely prepare us for what we might face overseas."

With each phase of the training – including a mass-casualty evacuation with air support from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-365 (Reinforced) – the Marines and Sailors were given an insight into the difficulties of combat, said Capt. Nathan T. Perkkio, Alpha. Co. commanding officer.

"You can always learn something from every exercise," said Perkkio. "This was good training because of the role players and the realism this exercise gives to the Marines. They did a good job today. We've come a long way – we need more training like this."

The training operation succeeded in its key mission of training the Marines to make decisions under fire, communicate on the battlefield and react properly to the community. Marines left the exercise learning the necessary lessons that will keep them alive during scenarios they could each face in the coming months, said Cpl. Peter S. Ramos, a senior instructor with UWTC.

"No matter how many times they've been to Iraq, there are still benefits to this training," said Ramos. "The feedback they receive here is a substantial building block toward their deployment."

The TRUEX is the premier training event during the MEU's six-month pre-deployment workups that kicked off Nov. 30. The exercise involves each of the MEU components: Command Element; Battalion Landing Team 1/8; HMM-365(Reinforced); and MSSG-24.

The 24th MEU is scheduled to deploy this spring to the European and Central Command theaters of operations.

(Above) Marines with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, are surprised by a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device while on patrol in a simulated Iraqi village during cultural and combat immersion training on March 5. (Right) A Marine with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, provides security while role players reach out for help.