

FLIGHT JACKET

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August 27, 2004

Deadline for absentee ballot requests nears

Story by Lance Cpl. Heidi E. Lore

MCAGCC 29 Palms Combat Correspondent

The pressure is on for military members and their spouses to submit absentee ballot requests before the deadline for the 2004 presidential election on Nov. 2.

Unit voting assistance officers want to ensure that Marines, Sailors and family members are aware of the armed forces absentee voting registration process.

In the 2000 election, 69 percent of all U.S. armed services personnel voted. However, only 68 percent of the Navy and 62 percent of the Marine Corps voted, both below average.

"It seems we're being urged to vote more during this election because in the past the military has not come up to the plate," said Lt. Cmdr. Candace Cornett, voting assistance officer, Robert E. Bush Naval Hospital, here. "It's very important that our voice is heard. We are the ones out there fighting for our country, and we need to let people know who we think should be in office. It's our privilege. We need to encourage our members to take part in the democratic process."

Everyone who falls under the Status of Forces Agreement can vote with an absentee ballot, which must be submitted each year when a person has an address change.

"To register to vote and request an absentee ballot a voter must submit a single federal postcard application," said Cornett. "The voter must then mail his application to his state of residence. The voter can log onto the Federal Voting assistance Program Web site at <http://www.fvap.ncr.gov> to find out about his state's voting laws."

The deadline is Sept. 15 although Cornett suggests mailing it in earlier. Once the request is mailed, the voter will receive a ballot in the mail. Officials are faced with the problem of disposed absentee ballots because military voters often send them in too late.

When the ballot is filled out, the voter should send it to their state's election officials immediately. The deadline for election officials to receive the ballots is different for each state. Each states' deadlines can also be found at the Federal Voting Assistance Program Web site.

"What officials suggest is to mail the ballot immediately," said Cornett. "Don't sit there and hold on to it until Nov. 11. The goal for the states are to get the ballots to the voters as soon as possible so they can mail them in at least a week before Nov. 11."

According to the voting assistance Web site, a voter's legal voting residence can be the state or territory where he or she last resided prior to entering military service or the state or territory they claimed as their legal residence. To claim a new legal residence voters must have simultaneous physical presence and the intent to return to that location as their primary residence. Military and family members may

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Sgt. Maj. John L. Estrada, sergeant major of the Marine Corps, gives words of wisdom to a group of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Marines during a visit to Al Asad, Iraq, Aug. 18. Photo by Cpl. Joel A. Chaverri

Top enlisted revisits 3rd MAW

Story by Cpl. Joel A. Chaverri

3rd MAW Combat Correspondent

AL ASAD, Iraq — Morale was high and spirits were lifted when Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps John L. Estrada paid a visit to the deployed Marines and Sailors of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing here August 18.

Traveling across the region alongside Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Terry D. Scott on a joint tour intended to motivate and inspire the deployed Marines and Sailors here, Estrada, the former sergeant major of 3rd MAW, had an opportunity to visit the unit he lead during the initial stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I have my (3rd MAW) Marines in combat," said Estrada, "and while they are in combat I'm going to come see them every chance I have. It gives me a chance to get the pulse of morale over here."

"It's important that I'm here," he stressed, "This is where I want to be. I feel pumped up when I see my Marines over here and I hope the same thing happens when they see me."

Estrada and Scott visited various units throughout the air base, letting Marines and Sailors know that they are proud of the work they are doing and that their efforts are not going unnoticed.

"Every opportunity I have, I brag about my Marines

and what they are doing for our country," Estrada said. "I am one of their biggest fans."

He continued, "I want my Marines to know that I appreciate their sacrifices and the sacrifices of their family and to know that the vast majority of the citizens back home recognize and appreciate that too."

Estrada and Scott agreed that, when combined, their two branches of service create a unified fighting force capable of accomplishing any mission.

"The Navy and Marine Corps team is the epitome of expeditionary warfare," said Scott. "We can (take on the enemy) harder, faster, and better than anyone."

"(The Navy) has been alongside us throughout our history," added Estrada. "I appreciate their commitment to the Marine Corps."

According to the sergeant major, the morale of the troops is extremely important to the success of the Marine Corps' efforts in the Middle East.

"I care a lot about my Marines," said Estrada. "I want to see what their concerns are, and I'm going to do everything I can to ensure that they are given the support they need to be successful."

Following the sergeant major's tour of the air base here, several Marines expressed that having the enlisted

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76°/61°
Today



79°/62°
Saturday



79°/63°
Sunday

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TOP DOG
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Marine commandant wants big 'W' in Iraq

Story by Samantha L. Quigley

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – The sports world is awash with war analogies, and today the Marine Corps' top officer turned the tables by applying a sports term to war.

The Marines are looking for a "Big W" in Iraq, Gen. Michael W. Hagee told an audience at the National Press Club here.

"We don't want a 'Little W,'" he said. "There is no one in Iraq who does not understand that if we wanted to come in and level Fallujah, level Ramadi, level An-Najaf, we could do that, but that's not mission accomplishment. That's the 'Little W.' We need the 'Big W' here."

The Marines, he said, are working with Multi-national Force Iraq and with the interim Iraqi government headed by Prime Minister Ayad Allawi to bring about the right kind of victory in the war-torn country. The "Big W" – helping the Iraqi people — is achievable with patience, he said.

Those comments came during a question-and-answer session after Hagee addressed the group on the future of warfighting. He cited a new twist on the "joint sea basing" concept as a key factor in future wars.

In use since World War II, joint sea basing is not a new concept. Sixty years ago, it meant securing a foothold and building a "gigantic mound of supplies and logistics," Hagee said.

The new and improved version of this old tactic

would keep the arrival and assembly of the forces at sea and employ selective off-loading of supplies and logistics. This concept would provide the ability to send forces wherever they need to be "without waiting for a permission slip," Hagee said, quoting Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Vern Clark.

When the new vision of joint sea basing becomes common practice, Hagee said the result will be the ability to place 15,000 Marines anywhere in the world within 10-12 days. This, he explained, will provide more capability to the joint force commanders faster.

Joint sea basing is only one concept currently in development, the general said. With a goal of excellence in warfighting, the armed services are looking at ways to more closely tie the services' resources, he added.

One such concept is TacAir integration. TacAir would meld the Navy's and the Marine Corps' strike assets into one team. Models demonstrate that by employing TacAir integration and tying the Navy and Marine air assets together to use as one force, more sorties and more combat capability are possible at less cost to the taxpayer.

But, Hagee said, it's not technologies or tactics that are the most important aspect of the Navy and the Marine Corps.

"All of those are important," he said. "But the most important thing to us, of course, is that individual Marine and that individual Sailor. And I can tell you, the most dangerous thing on any battlefield is an armed, trained and educated United States Marine."



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MIRAMARKS

"How can the Marines ensure they record a big 'W' in Iraq?"



SGT. JOSE C. MENDOZA
Motor Transport Mechanic
MACS-1

"I think the war is won on our part. The rest needs to be taken care of on an Iraqi national level. I don't think any more Marines should go out there."



LANCE CPL. CHRIS MCCOMSEY
Postal Clerk
H&HS

"Marines in Iraq need to see the big picture and embrace the cause so that their kids and grandkids can benefit from it. The rest of us need to keep supporting them to help them build the confidence they need to get the job done."



CPL. CALEB C. JONES
Ejection Seat Mechanic
VMFA(AW)-121

"Marines need to keep it simple out there, stick to what they learned in boot camp and following their leaders."

Bush hosts defense strategy meeting

Story by Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The world has become a safer place, thanks to the United States and its coalition allies who are leading the world in the war on terror, President Bush told reporters Monday following his annual defense strategy meeting at his ranch in Crawford, Texas.

Following a far-reaching meeting with key defense advisers, including Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and Joint Chiefs Chairman Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers, Bush cited successes in the war on terror: the Taliban seriously weakened, former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein behind bars and Libyan leader Col. Muammar Qadhafi now operating as a U.S. ally, among them.

Following briefings by Rumsfeld; Myers; Army Gen. John Abizaid, head of U.S. Central Command; and Gen. George W. Casey Jr., the top U.S. general in Iraq, who participated via teleconference, Bush told reporters the fight against terrorism is far from over.

"There's more work to be done in fighting off these terrorists. I clearly see that," the president said. "I understand we've got to use all resources at our disposal to find and bring these people to justice."

Bush called intelligence "a vital part of winning this war against these terrorists" and said that to do so, "You've got to know who they are, what they're thinking, where they are."

The president told reporters he's "interested in how to get the best intelligence to my desk so I can be a good decision maker on behalf of the people of this country" and said he welcomes input on how to reform the U.S. intelligence effort.

"We're looking at all options ... aimed at making sure that I and future presidents have got the best information possible," he said.

Although the president did not share details, he said the defense strategy meeting included discussions about subjects ranging from progress in Iraq to defense transformation to the reconfiguration of U.S. forces around the world.

Bush praised Rumsfeld for doing "a great job" in proposing a strategy that will enable the United States to better protect itself and its allies in the 21st century. This proposal, the president pointed out, followed close, positive consultations with U.S. allies.

Also participating in the session were Vice President Dick Cheney, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice and other White House and Pentagon officials.

FLIGHT JACKET

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Marines outfit Rasheed police station

Story by Cpl. Shawn C. Rhodes

1st MarDiv Combat Correspondent

CAMP MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq — Five blue and white vehicles paraded down the highway here recently, interspersed with U.S. military humvees. It wasn't a raid or a joint patrol, though. It was a special delivery.

The vehicles were given to the Rasheed Police Department by 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment Aug. 18 to aid in their duties.

"It was a smooth mission overall but there was a lot involved in getting the vehicles to the police department," said Staff Sgt. Christopher E. Kelly, assistant team leader of the civil affairs group here. "Ultimately, we hope the vehicles benefit both the Marines and the police force."

Ten vehicles altogether changed hands between Baghdad and Kalsu. The battalion's CAG unit, which is responsible for the police departments in the area, traveled to Kalsu to pick up the four sedans and one sport utility vehicle.

"We hit a (roadside bomb) on the way down there but other than that it was uneventful," said Kelly, a 34-year-old from Arroyo, Calif.

Five of the vehicles went to the Rasheed Police Department. The other five autos will be dispersed between Mahmudiyah and Ladafiyah police departments.

"We gave five of the vehicles to Rasheed because right now they have the capability to patrol and get outside the police station," said Maj. Robert J. Derocher, the CAG team leader.

The chief of police signed for the vehicles. He also assured the Marines the vehicles would be properly utilized, as the police force is still learning the new way of running things.

"Now that they have these vehicles they'll be able to respond to calls in their area and assist the Iraqi National Guard if they need help," Kelly said.

There are no plans at the present time for additional vehicles. However, additional requests can be submitted, added Derocher, 36, of Riverside, Calif.

The police officers were happy to see the vehicles and inspected them when they arrived by discovering which dial did what on their new equipment.

"The cars are outfitted with police radios and sirens," Kelly said. "The Iraqis were excited about getting them. You could see it on their faces."

One police officer took a vehicle for a spin around the parking lot, testing its turning capabilities.

When he appeared to be satisfied, he parked it next to their new fleet of police cars and smiled.

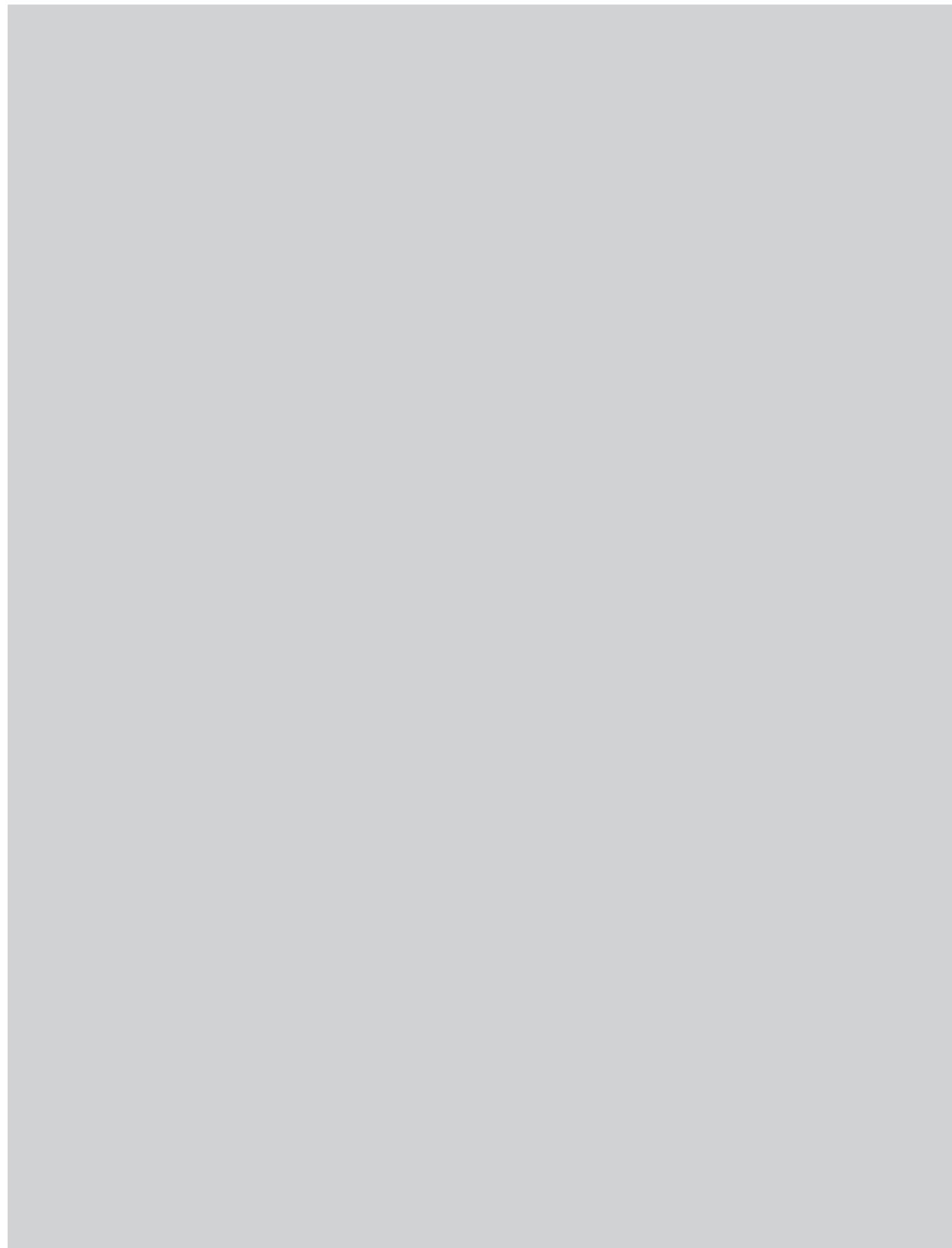
"These cars mean they'll actually be able to go out on patrol. There's no reason for them not to now," said John Chapman, 61, of Joshua, Texas.

Chapman brings 15 years of experience working for various police and sheriff's departments to the team as an International Police Officer. He works as a liaison to the police departments in the district.

"They're nice cars ... we expect good things out of them," he added.



The Rasheed Police Department will now be riding in style while keeping their streets safe. Four sedans and one SUV were delivered by 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment to the police Aug. 18 for the department's use. Photo by Cpl. Shawn C. Rhodes





A welcomed return

More than 280 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Marines returned home Monday after serving in Iraq. Most of the Marines deployed earlier this year with Marine Air Control Group 38. Photo by Cpl. Jeff Zaccaro

Lack of light creates SAD servicemembers

Story by Cpl. T.D. Smith

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Marines often find themselves in harsh conditions, like the frozen lands of Korea or the scorching heat of the Iraq desert, and that may have adverse effects on their mental state, morale and overall performance. But, something less obvious than extreme temperatures may be affecting Marines.

Lance Cpl. Kevin Allen, multichannel equipment repair technician, Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 explained why in addition to temperature, lighting is an important part of the environment, as he has experienced effects of poor light. "I have (experienced) lack of ambient and natural light. It caused me to (feel symptoms associated with) Seasonal Affective Disorder, which is a mood disorder associated with depression episodes and related to seasonal variation of light as well as reduced lighting in the work and living areas."

According to the National Mental Health Association's Web site, "As seasons change, there is a shift in our biological internal clocks or circadian rhythm, due partly to these changes in sunlight patterns. This can cause our biological clocks to be out of step with our daily schedules. Melatonin, a sleep-related hormone secreted by the pineal gland in the brain, has been linked to SAD. This hormone, which may cause symptoms of depression, is produced at increased levels in the dark. Therefore, when the (environment) is darker the production of this hormone increases."

Navy Lt. Russell Saari, physician assistant, Branch Medical Clinic, explained, "The brain needs light stimulus to keep moods level. With dark conditions there

will be a decreased level of serotonin. Artificial light will help with that."

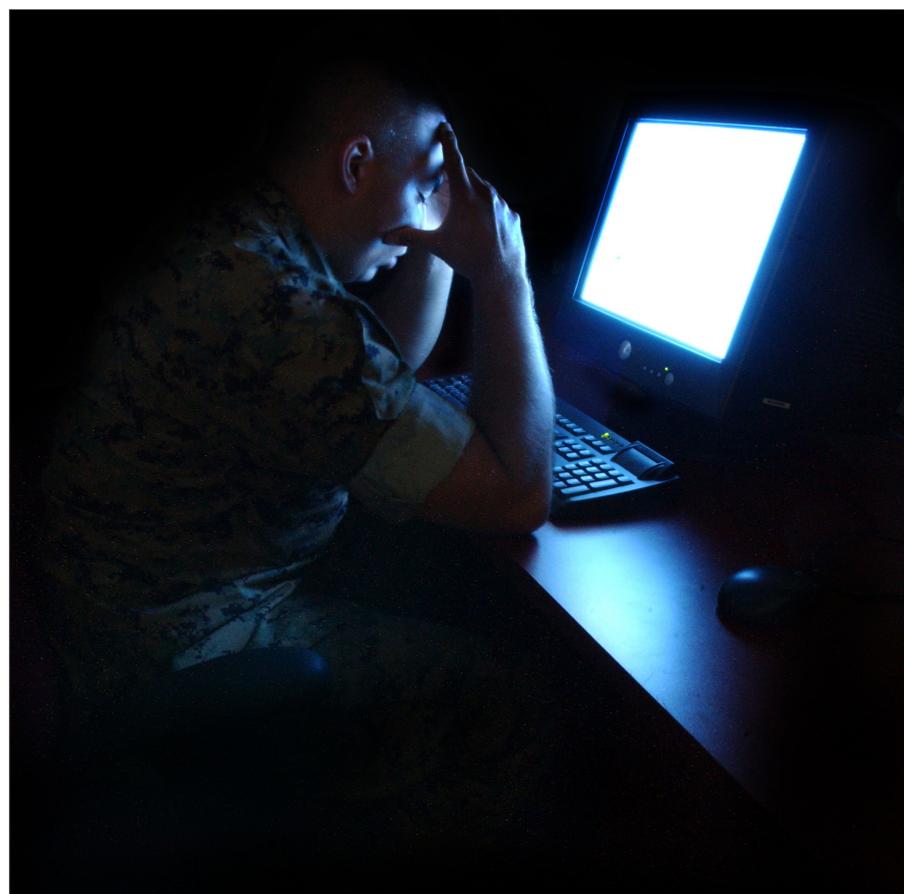
Some symptoms of SAD include depression, loss of self-esteem, hopelessness, despair and apathy, according to the SAD Association's Web site. Physical afflictions due to SAD include craving of carbohydrates and sweet foods, usually resulting in weight gain, fatigue and an inability to carry out normal routines.

Allen stated why he did research on SAD and made recommendations to increase light in workspaces and living quarters. "I grew up in Maine where many people, including myself, suffered from it (SAD) in the winter. After doing a little research, I found that the most common cure for SAD was to increase the lighting in your primary living and working places. It affects lots of people that live in areas with long winters, like Maine, Alaska, and Washington for example. What motivated me the most was my search for a cure. It is the want for a normal non-depressive life."

If Marines are experiencing the effects of low light, there are ways they can resolve the issue. Barracks managers can be a valuable resource. They can be contacted to obtain lighting sources and to pass the information up the chain of command.

The Single Marine Program also offers quality of life issue forms that can be used to increase the comforts for Marines. The forms can be obtained from any Single Marine Program representative and then passed up to the SMP coordinator and then to the presiding authority on the issue being presented.

"That is what is great about the quality of life issues form. Marines can do the research figure out the problem and suggest solutions. Those in charge take it seriously," said Alisa Hertzler, SMP coordinator.



Proper lighting is a key element in a person's daily life. Low or insufficient light can create stress on the eyes and possibly lead to Seasonal Affective Disorder. Photo by Cpl. T.D. Smith

Two new messhalls offer new options for Miramar Marines

Story by Cpl. Cecilia Sequeira

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Five sets of scissors simultaneously cut through a red ribbon Aug. 20 to bring fresh potential to air station Marines working on the flight line. Brig. Gen. Carl B. Jensen, commander of Marine Corps Bases Western Area and commanding general of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, spoke at a brief opening ceremony for two new messhalls, six months in the making.

The mess halls replace two trailer units. Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron's food service technician, Master Sgt. Brenda K. Valentine described the two old trailers as upgraded "roach coaches," a common term for mobile chow wagons often found bringing snacks to Marines firing on the rifle or pistol range.

"My Marines have always made the best food. Whether they are working in a trailer or a new chow hall, they will always put forth a superior effort; but now the appearance has really improved. If you had a choice between steak and hot dogs you'd probably choose steak; the same thing applies to the appearance of your facility," said Valentine, a Dallas, Ala., native.

"From the time we got the furniture installed, eyeballs after eyeballs have been in there checking it out. Of course, it is motivating because you have an eagle, globe and anchor carved out of the back of your chair, and the aviation themed artwork dates back from 1912 to the present. You can sit there and eat while your eyes browse around the room," said H&HS mess hall operations chief Gunnery Sgt. Paul J. Rieper.

In addition to the many aesthetic changes to the flight line eating environment, there has also been an improvement in the variety of food available. H&HS cash collection agent Sgt. Franklin J. Bugner said, "I don't think Marines were too impressed with the trailer food — burgers and hot dogs. They didn't all have a chance to go down to the main chow hall and eat the healthy entrees. Having these new choices here is like bringing Gonzales Hall down the street to the flight line."

Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 food service specialist Pvt. Nayeli T. Luna has noticed the change in flight line Marines' eating habits. "They eat more of the prepared food now; they don't order as many cheeseburgers and they get a kick out of the salad bar," said the Garden Grove, Calif., native.

Air framer Cpl. Greg A. Slusher of Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101 said, "The salads are great because it keeps us from getting fat from too much chili cheese. Having lids and flexi-straws for the cups is an added bonus."

Fellow air framer, and VMFAT-101 "Sharpshooter", Lance Cpl. Thomas R. Kopp feels the same way about the change. "I think it's much better food. There will be no more chili cheese dogs for me."

While flight line Marines appreciate the variety, most of the mess hall Marines are thankful for the new environment. "It's better for the cooks because before, it was a very small area and very hard to work around. There was little ventilation. But now it is nice and big with better equipment and air conditioning. The change is good for morale," said Bugner.

H&HS food service property noncommissioned officer Sgt. Gary D. Hernandez says the difference between the trailers and the new mess halls is like night and day. "You can't compare the trailers to this facility. In the trailers you can

hear the airplanes flying by all day. I'm sure eventually it affects your hearing. Here it is enclosed and you don't have to worry about noise, bugs crawling in, or dust kicking in through the windows."

"The biggest bonus for me was that I could sit at the bar stool countertop and look out the window, watch the aircraft fly by, and enjoy my meal with the air conditioning on vice sit outside, at the trailer, in the heat, and sweat while I am eating," Rieper said.

Chow halls 9410 and 9610 are conveniently located near the flight line and open to all servicemembers holding a Department of Defense identification card.

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Food service specialists serve Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101 airframer, Cpl. Greg A. Slusher, a healthy meal at a new air conditioned flight line mess hall. Photo by Cpl. Cecilia Sequeira

Four-legged devil dog touches hearts of H&HS ordnance Marines

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Molly was only three years old when her lance corporal chevrons were pinned on Aug. 12. She dutifully served in the Marine Corps for two years, touching the hearts of every Marine she has come in contact with.

Entering the Marine Corps as a private first class, Molly has earned a Meritorious Unit Citation and a National Defense Service Medal. She was scheduled to pick up lance corporal last year, however, she scratched her major's brand new car, resulting in a minor infraction.

"Molly will protect everyone in this shop," said Gunnery Sgt. Patrick McDonald, ordnance noncommissioned officer-in-charge, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron. "However, her main purpose here is to boost morale."

Molly is a pit bull. She was adopted as the H&HS mascot in June 2002 and resides in the H&HS ordnance shop on East Miramar.

"Our major wanted to enhance everyone's spirits here, so he suggested that we get a dog," explained McDonald, a Sachse, Texas, native. "One of our gunnys got online, saw a picture of Molly and went to the Rancho Coastal Humane Society and brought her back to the shop. Everyone immediately fell in love with her."

Molly is treated like any other Marine. She has her own service record book, complete with her very own orders that Lt. Col. Lawrence Oliver, commanding officer, H&HS signed off on. Molly even dipped her paws in ink to "sign" her own orders.

In addition to having her own documents, including medical and dental records to keep track of her free health care, Molly has her own uniform. The tailor shop on base made a special cammie blouse just for her, complete with a built-in harness for her leash. In the future, Molly might even have a set of blues tailored for her.

Molly upholds all of the standards of a great Marine. She runs physical training sessions with the troops, goes to the air shows, attends formations and other events like softball games and squadron picnics.

"It's easy to be forgotten out here, since we're so far from main side," said Sgt. David Rubio, ordnance technician, H&HS. "But we're seldom forgotten thanks to Molly. It's just fun to bring her out to different squadron events at the air station."

The ordnance shop also lets other units borrow Molly to boost morale in their individual shops.

"Before Molly came to our shop, the morale wasn't as high as it could have been," said Cpl. Jeremy Sampson, quality assurance safety observer, H&HS. "Now, the work tempo has increased and everyone has been more productive since she arrived here."

If the Marines are having a down day, Molly will instantly cheer them up.

"I can remember this one day when things weren't going well. I just got back from leave and was feeling down," said Rubio, a Dallas, Texas, native. "Molly ran up to me and automatically cheered me up."

The Marines in the ordnance shop look out for one another, just like their most junior Marine. Molly, has looked out for them. She has her own food and water dish, basket of toys and even her own golf cart that she rides around at the shop.

"That green cart is her car. She just hops along and a Marine will take her out to the rifle range or somewhere else out here," said McDonald.

Anytime the Marines go somewhere in a car, they follow protocol by putting Molly in the front seat.

"Molly has a little bit of everybody in her and she has brought everyone closer with her presence alone," said McDonald. "I wish I could take her with me when I transfer duty stations, but it would crush everybody's spirits."

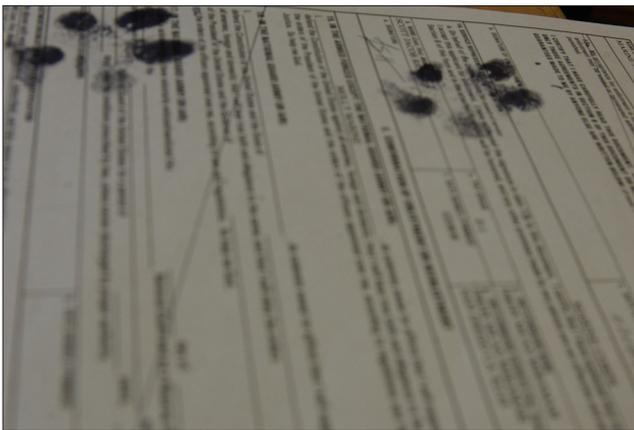
McDonald has been one of the main caretakers of Molly



Lance Cpl. Molly Marine, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron mascot, has her chevrons pinned on Aug. 12. Molly's main mission is to boost morale everywhere she goes. Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

and he had the option of taking her with him when he transferred duty stations. However, he left her at the shop to benefit his Marines.

"If he was going to take Molly, he would have to replace her," said Sampson, a Houston native. "She just has so much personality. I don't know if she could ever be replaced."



Nametapes and 'printed' orders are just a few things that make 'Molly Marine', Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron pit bull and mascot, a real Marine. Molly Marine was 'enlisted' in the Corps more than two years ago and was promoted early this month to the rank of lance corporal at the H&HS ordnance shop. Photos by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

Helicopter simulators prepare pilots for flight

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

One CH series helicopter can cost the Marine Corps more than \$26 million, but when it comes to expeditious warfare, the heavy hauling and ship to shore movement capabilities of the Super Stallion and Sea Knight helicopters are priceless.

That is why the air station has invested more than \$80 million in two state of the art flight simulators; one for both the CH-53 and CH-46 aircraft.

“Our main mission is to prepare students in the simulators for their first flights in an actual aircraft,” explained Robert G. Eberly, simulator manager. “We support the CH-46 and CH-53 warfighter.”

After finishing flight school, Marines and Sailors check into a training squadron, complete the necessary classes and then advance to the simulator.

“You see guys that come in here starting at ground zero, and after seven flights they have a very good knowledge of the aircraft,” stated Orange County, Calif., native, Richard McKenzie, simulator instructor.

The helicopter simulator facility instructors here train eight pilots per day in their simulators. Each instructor has an extensive background in flying. All instructors were former pilots in the Marine Corps or Navy.

“The instructors put you in the right direction. They focus your abilities and give you confidence,” said 1st Lt. Mike McClendon, replacement air crew, Medium Marine Helicopter Training Squadron 164. “They all bring a vast amount of experience into their teachings. For example, when we’re practicing emergency procedures, they can tell you ‘one time when I was flying...’ and explain how often that procedure has really been used,” continued the Shreveport, La., native.

Each future pilot receives a 30-minute brief before entering the simulator. The helicopter simulator is balanced on a hydraulic tripod, which simulates the action of the aircraft. On the projector, the pilot can see the runway, sky



David M. Cavanaugh, CH-53 flight simulator instructor exercises the helicopter simulator to ensure that it will provide the most realistic training possible when Marines come in to practice. *Photo by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III*

and land. If the pilot crashes, the screen flashes red.

“The first time I flew in the simulator, I felt a lot of trepidation and I was nervous,” expressed McClendon. “However, the instructors are in there with you to help you through each step.”

Normally, two Marines or Sailors go in the simulator and each has approximately one hour in the pilot’s seat and one hour in the copilot’s seat. Inside the aircraft, the future pilots

are evaluated in different exercises like engine fail takeoff, running landing, hydraulic failure and other numerous drills.

When McClendon was in the pilot’s seat of the helicopter simulator, McKenzie repeatedly explained, “this is why I teach it this way” and “that’s why it’s done that way” to give him a better idea of what would happen in an actual aircraft.

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Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 Shockers and the Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 Dawgs duke it out on the field in the first intramural softball game of the fall season. The Dawgs beat the Shockers 15-10. Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones.

MWHS-3 Dawgs bite into 15-10 victory over MALS-16 Shockers

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Tyrone Butler, Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 Dawgs' heavy hitter, propelled

his team to the lead, scoring two homeruns in the season's first intramural softball match Aug. 16, leaving behind the Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 Shockers, 15-10.

Although the first-year

Shockers presented little threat to the 7-time champions, the Dawgs knew that they could not underestimate the opposition going in to the game.

"This is the first time we're playing a new team in the

league. We can't underestimate them though," said John Aragon, pitcher for the Dawgs. "We're just going into this with confidence. If you lack that, you can keep swinging your bat, but your not going to win the game."

Starting strong, the Shockers scored three runs in the first inning, intimidating the Dawgs with a great first impression.

They hit a homerun "right when they went up to bat," said Butler, coach for the Dawgs. "We knew that they were good after the first inning. So they actually helped us out, making us play that much better. We didn't let our confidence or experience get to us."

The Dawgs showed the Shockers who was boss early in the game, scoring seven runs in the first inning.

"I felt nervous batting for the first time this season," said Lucas Wangen, left fielder for the Dawgs. "But I knew we could beat the Shockers easily."

However, the Shockers didn't let the Dawgs take a bite out of their spirit in the first inning. They scored four runs to the Dawgs' three in the second inning.

"Our main plan of attack is to hit the ball and score," said Christian Rodas, first baseman for the Shockers. "We just need

to hang in there."

Both teams tried to "hang in there" in the third inning, but neither of them scored. The new Shockers were only three points behind the experienced Dawgs going into the fourth inning, 10-7.

The Dawgs stayed strong and fought to reclaim their title, scoring five more runs in the fourth inning, while the Shockers did not score any runs, resulting in a score of 15-7.

"We're spreading out our lineup," said Butler. "Our base and power hitters are distributed, so we have an advantage going up to bat."

The Shockers tried to even out the score in the fifth inning, but it was too late. Even though they scored two more runs to the Dawgs' zero, there was not enough time to catch up. The score going into the sixth inning was 15-9.

The 55-minute time limit for the game allotted for one more inning, where the Shockers were able to score one more run before the game was cut short. The Dawgs won, 15-10.

"Honestly, I think we did well for as young as a team we are," said Rodas. "This was my first time ever playing on a team, just like most of the other guys, and I had fun."

Marines tryout for Miramar varsity basketball team

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Tryouts for the varsity men's basketball team are currently being held in the Semper Fit Center gymnasium, Monday through Wednesday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The trials started Aug. 9, giving active duty and reserve Marines and Sailors at the air station an opportunity to try out for the team, which will begin play Sept. 15. However, servicemembers can try out anytime, even after the season has begun.

Master Gunnery Sgt. James A. Stewart, Headquarters and Services Battalion, Service Company, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, has been coaching Miramar's varsity men's basketball team for five years and according to the staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge and officer in charge West Coast food management team, potential players must have heart and a willingness to learn in order to make the team.

"I want to give everybody on base an opportunity to come and make the team. When I pick players, I look for skill, attitude, and a desire to play the game," said Stewart, a Baltimore, Md., native. "Basically I want players who are willing to work hard enough to compete to the next level."

Players begin the tryouts by stretching, running four laps and then going to the baseline to execute sprints, skipping and any other exercise the coach deems necessary.

After warming up, each player has an opportunity to practice drills such as lay-ups, slam-dunks and different passes.

The players then play actual games against one another, giving Stewart an opportunity to evaluate them. Stewart might even stop the players in the middle of the game to test their endurance, such as sitting against a wall for two minutes.

After the practice, Lance Cpl. Jeremiah Howard, administrative clerk, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, was ready to go home.

"I'm worn out and exhausted," said Howard, a Portland, Ore., native. "But I'm ready to come back and do it again tomorrow. I know it sounds cliché, but it's all for the love of the game."

Stewart evaluates the Marines on their quickness, agility and abilities. He also looks at the players by their position, so it benefits the team as a whole.

The team will be playing at a junior college level, competing against other armed forces and junior college teams on the West Coast.

"You have players who come in the Marine Corps who played basketball when they were in high school," explained Stewart. "This gives them a chance to play at a competitive level. This is their college basketball."

Twelve players and two extras will be selected to represent Miramar during the season, which consists of approximately 80 games, ending in May with the men's regionals.

"The regionals give players a chance to represent the Marine Corps with their skills," mentioned Stewart. "Scouts who teach the all-Marine team come out to the tournament and pick individuals to go to their three-week camp."

In the five years Stewart has been coaching, Miramar's varsity team has come in second place every year.

"This is a very competitive sport and to win you have to have teamwork," explained Cpl. Allen K. Jones, avionics operations specialist, H&HS. "If you work hard and are willing to do whatever it takes, you have a good chance of making the team."

According to Jones, a two-year veteran, playing competitive basketball is like a big family.

"There will be some days where you just want to sit down, but everybody's going through it together and that keeps you going. The camaraderie is definitely here," said Jones.

For more information contact Stewart at (760) 725-3968 or the Semper Fit Sports Office at (858) 577-1202.



ABOVE: Marines give it their all at the men's varsity basketball tryouts. It is not too late to try out. The season starts Sept. 15, but active duty and reserve servicemembers can try out any time. **BELOW:** A Marine gets ready to pass the ball during try outs. The coach wants Marines with the drive and heart to play the game. Photo by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones.



Personal finance class teaches servicemembers value of dollar

Story by Lance Cpl. Skye Jones

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Living paycheck to paycheck is a way of life for many Marines. In fact, 90 percent of the population lives this way, according to Tom Graneau, financial management counselor, Marine Corps Community Services.

Graneau teaches the fundamentals of check writing in personal finance class, which is open to all personnel aboard the station at the MCCS counseling center. The two-hour course answers the question, "Are you controlling your money, or is your money controlling you?"

Money goes in and money goes out. It provides food, shelter, clothes, and transportation. According to Graneau, a Temecula, Calif., native, "As long as you're living, you need money. Therefore, money is, in fact, life."

Many Marines use their paycheck to get by for two weeks and wait for the next one to do the same, all without thinking about future financial problems such as potential purchases, incurred debts and retirement funds.

"I spent my first enlistment living in the moment and not thinking about the future. Instead of saving, I kept withdrawing," explained Staff Sgt. Aaron J. Cross, non-destructive inspector, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11. "I didn't see the long run picture, like having a nice house or car. Now I am paying for the choices I made earlier in my life."

According to Graneau, it is not too late to turn a seemingly hopeless financial situation into a bountiful one.

"I have a lot of sergeants major and other high ranking servicemembers, who come to me and say that they wish they heard these things when they were 20."

Each servicemember receives two paychecks a month that can be used to save money for the future. The government gives out pay for the time a servicemember invests, explained Graneau.

"Dollars translate into life. Before retirement you need to work, making it vital to plan for your future now," said Graneau. "If you do not save now, your paychecks won't be able to pay for everything when you are older. That's when people look for solutions, because they can no longer pay for all of their expenses."

Many people have debts and bills to pay, but neglect to pay their savings account. Graneau advises that the account be treated like a bill.

"I used to have a lot of debts and I didn't manage my finances correctly," said Lance Cpl. Eddie Castillo, CH-46 helicopter mechanic, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 165. "Now I am trying to use the resources here and change my lifestyle to accommodate savings into my financial plan."

Graneau explained that the rich will get richer and the poor will continue to get poorer because money makes money. This makes it imperative to start building money now, not later.

"Each paycheck should be divided into three areas: bills, savings and fun," said Graneau. "You need all three to create a truly successful plan."

For example, if corporal made approximately \$1300 each month and used \$300 of that to pay bills, put \$800 into savings and used the remaining amount to have fun, he or she would have almost \$30,000 in three years.

If a Marine started saving a mere \$95 a month at age 20 with a 10 percent annual return, \$1,004,136 would be saved by retirement. However, if a Marine started saving the same amount ten years later, he or she would only accumulate \$363,686 by retirement. The later money is

invested into savings, the smaller the return.

"Even if you can only afford to put \$20 into savings, your money will still grow, the sooner you start saving, the better," said Graneau.

For more information contact Tom Graneau at (858) 577-9802.

"I can provide financial training, but it is ultimately up to individuals to take charge of their finances," said Graneau.



BALLOTS

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change their legal residence every time they change permanent duty stations or they may retain their legal residence without change. Family members may have a different legal voting residence from the member.

Armed Forces Voters Week will take place Sept. 1 to 7. During this week, local events will be held to inform the public of the importance of voting and of the upcoming elections.

For more information concerning voting and absentee voting, call the voting information center, 1-800-438-VOTE or contact a voting assistance officer.

VISIT

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leader of the Corps pay them a visit in a combat zone provided a much needed boost to their morale.

"It was pretty motivating to have the sergeant major of the Marine Corps take the time out of his busy schedule to come and talk to us," said Sgt. Daryl W. Thomas Jr., radar technician, Marine Aircraft Control Squadron 1, Marine Aircraft Group 16, and 22-year-old native of Ft. Worth, Texas. "Most of us have families and don't feel too comfortable being out here, but having encouragement from the sergeant major makes it that much easier."

MESS

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Before the new mess halls' completion, there were three trailers available to Marines on the flight line. Now, Marines can choose from two new mess halls or the leftover trailer.

While the last trailer may still be more convenient for some Marines, the new mess halls are certainly capable of feeding those who choose variety and comfort. The trailers on average fed 29 servicemembers each meal, per trailer. Each new mess hall is capable of feeding one hundred servicemembers during any given chow period.

According to Valentine, the two mess halls may soon have a new addition to promote entertainment in the dining atmosphere. "We're looking forward to adding an 18 inch TV in the next month or so," she said.

The chow halls are open Monday through Friday from 7:30-8:30 a.m. for breakfast and 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for lunch and Monday through Thursday from 3:30-5 p.m. for dinner. Friday evenings and weekends servicemembers are welcome at building 5500, Gonzales Hall for their meals.

SIM

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"These instructors directly impact the future of aviation in the Marine Corps," explained McKenzie. "Their professionalism and dedication to their job is reflected in what we learn."

Once all simulator exercises are complete, the students receive another brief and their instructor reviews everything that was conducted in the simulator. After completing the exercises in the simulator, the Marine or Sailor advances to flying an actual aircraft.

"It's the pilots that make this happen. Without them, it's just hardware and people," said Eberly.

Miramar Movies

The Station Auditorium is located in building 2242, and will be featuring the following movies free of charge. Outside food and drinks are not permitted. For more information contact 577-4143 or log on to www.mccsmiramar.com.

Today:

4:30 p.m. Anchorman (PG-13)
6:30 p.m. I, Robot (PG-13)
8:45 p.m. Spider-Man 2 (PG-13)

Saturday:

1 p.m. Spider-Man 2 (PG-13)
6:30 p.m. A Cinderella Story (PG)
8:30 p.m. Sleepover (PG)

Sunday:

1 p.m. Sleepover (PG)
6:30 p.m. Spider-Man 2 (PG-13)

Wednesday:

6:30 p.m. The Bourne Supremacy (PG-13)

Thursday:

2 p.m. A Cinderella Story (PG)
6:30 p.m. I, Robot (PG-13)

Presentations and time subject to change.

Soccer Tryouts

Tryouts for the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar varsity soccer team will be held Wednesday and Thursday at Mills Park at 5 p.m.

Participants are encouraged to bring a soccer ball and shinguards if they have them.

For more information contact Lt. Lee Friedman at 577-9902.

Religious Services

The Chaplain's Office is located in building 5632 and coordinates regularly-scheduled worship services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities contact the Chaplain's Office at 577-1333.

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Protestant worship service
11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist

Wednesday:

7 p.m. Baptist service

Monday-Friday:

11:30 a.m. Roman Catholic Daily Mass

Jewish:

7 p.m. First Friday of the month MCRD
7:30 p.m. Last Friday at Edson Range Chapel

3rd MAW OIF book

Marine Corps Association bookstores will soon carry an exclusive new title detailing the exploits of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Third Marine Aircraft Wing: Operation Iraqi Freedom" follows the journey of 3rd MAW in support of I Marine Expeditionary Force and coalition forces in liberating Iraq and toppling Saddam Hussein during OIF. The book is a testament to the Marines' well-proven, colorful battle history.

The cost of the book is \$34 for members and \$36 for non-members.

Marines can visit the MCA Bookstore located at Camp Pendleton's Main Exchange, Building T1100 on Vandegrift Ave., or call 888-237-7683 to order a copy.

Fire Awareness

The Cleveland National Forest has implemented a new Fire Danger Awareness System for residents and visitors. Residents and visitors can now call (619) 563-2183 or log on to www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland to find out current fire danger levels before visiting the Cleveland National Forest. The Forest Service is asking all visitors to check prior to visiting, as the fire level will determine what activities will be allowed in the forest.

Links Meeting

There will be a LINKS Session Sept. 18 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the LINKS House in building 2273.

To register call 577-4810.

Impounded Vehicles

The following vehicles have been impounded and need to be claimed by the owners. Towing fees average \$113, storage fees \$28 daily. For more information contact the Provost Marshal's Office at 577-1461.

Vehicle:	License:	Date:	Stored at:
Green 1995 Dodge Neon	CA/3KGZ374	Jul. 7	Eastgate Towing
Blue 1989 Subaru GL	CA/1REE135	Jul. 16	Eastgate Towing
Red Honda Prelude	NONE	Jul. 16	Eastgate Towing
Red Sea King Boat	NONE	Jul. 22	Eastgate Towing
White Hydra Sports Boat	FL/CZ639M	Jul. 22	Eastgate Towing
Black VW Jetta	NONE	Jul. 27	Eastgate Towing