

FLIGHT JACKET

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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

March 5, 2012

Dogs sniff out explosives

Military working dogs,
handlers conduct explosive
detection training





HMLA-469 memorial service honors fallen Marines

A memorial service was held aboard Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton for six fallen Marines with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469.

For full story, click

08

Click [HERE](#) for more photos



Explosive training: finding the scent

Military working dog handlers with the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Provost Marshal's Office and their dogs conducted explosives detection training.

For full story, click

18

Click [HERE](#) for more photos



Thinking inside the book: Commandant's Reading List

Books from the Commandant's Reading List are available at the library for Marines to read, giving themselves an upper hand for promotion.

For full story, click

28

Click [HERE](#) for more photos



Maj. Gen. Andrew O'Donnell Jr.
Commanding General
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



Col. Frank A. Richie
Commanding Officer
MCAS Miramar

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The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office. Comments or questions should be directed to 858-577-6000.

Soldiers maintain mission readiness in East Miramar

Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo



Soldiers with the 301st Psychological Operations Company complete improvised explosive device lane training during a warrior skills sustainment exercise here Feb. 25. The training forced soldiers to identify and react to IED detection, including securing an area. These sustainment exercises are held once a month in various locations to maintain mission readiness.

ON THE COVER:

Cpl. David A. Mayes, the chief trainer and Xxerxes' handler with the station Provost Marshal's Office kennel and a St. Michael, Pa., native, holds Xxerxes away from a mock aggressor here Feb. 22. Handlers use aggression training at the end of the course to keep the dogs on their paws. (Photo by Pfc. Christopher Johns)

Col. Frank A. Richie, the commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., gives a plaque of appreciation to celebrity chef Richard Sweeney, the head chef with R-Gang Eatery and a Long Island, N.Y., native, during a cooking demonstration here Feb. 25.



Food for thought

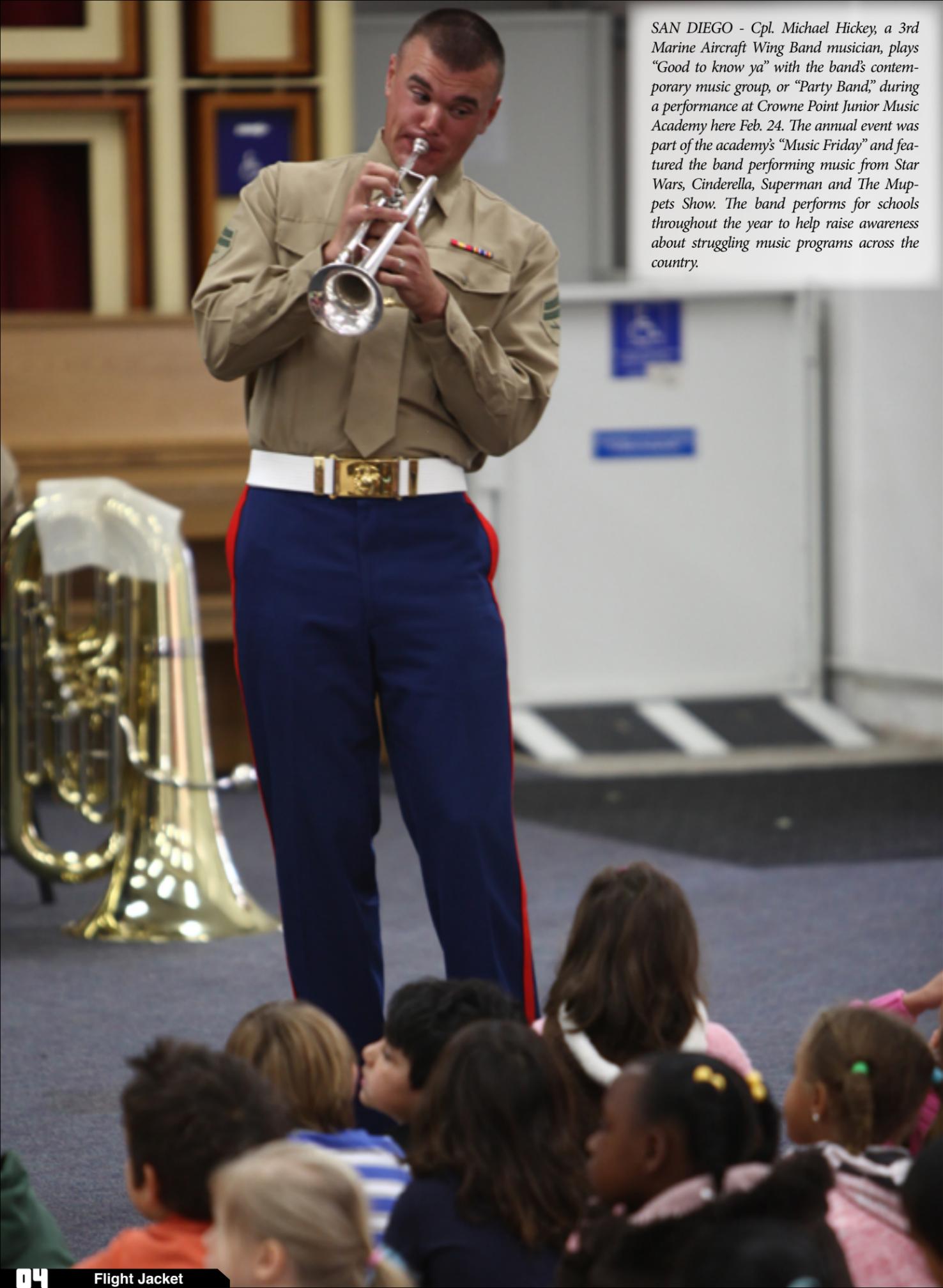
Celebrity chef shows cooking know how

Photos by Pfc. Christopher Johns
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(Above) Celebrity chef Richard Sweeney, the head chef with R-Gang Eatery and a Long Island, N.Y., native, demonstrates cooking a simple meal here Feb. 25. Sweeney was a contestant on the reality television show “Iron Chef” and now is the head chef of his own restaurant.

(Left) Lance Cpls. Taylor Boggio, right, a La Mirada, Calif., native, and Joshua Riosbaas, left, an Antioch, Calif., native, both aviation technicians with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, enjoy the cooking of former “Iron Chef” contestant Richard Sweeney, who made an appearance here Feb. 25. Sweeney came aboard the air station to demonstrate easy-to-cook dishes for Marines and Families.



SAN DIEGO - Cpl. Michael Hickey, a 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band musician, plays "Good to know ya" with the band's contemporary music group, or "Party Band," during a performance at Crowne Point Junior Music Academy here Feb. 24. The annual event was part of the academy's "Music Friday" and featured the band performing music from Star Wars, Cinderella, Superman and The Muppets Show. The band performs for schools throughout the year to help raise awareness about struggling music programs across the country.



SAN DIEGO - Gunnery Sgt. Victor Ney, the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band enlisted conductor, interacts with elementary students during a band performance at Crowne Point Junior Music Academy here Feb. 24.

3RD MAW BAND GOES BACK TO SCHOOL

Photos by Cpl. Alexandra M. Vazquez
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SAN DIEGO - Cpl. Dawson Yeakel, a 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band musician, plays a base drum during a band performance at Crowne Point Junior Music Academy here Feb. 24.

Goal: lunch time soccer showdown



Marines and sailors fight for control of the ball during a game of soccer here Feb. 28. Intramural sports provide Marines and sailors with the air station opportunities to improve camaraderie, keep fit and practice sportsman-like behavior. (Photo by Pfc. Christopher Johns)

[Click HERE for more photos](#)



Petty Officer 2nd Class Nana Oduro, left, a culinary specialist with the Naval Consolidated Brig and a Jersey City, N.J., native, intercepts a pass here Feb. 28. (Photo by Pfc. Christopher Johns)

(Left) Marines and sailors compete in a soccer game here Feb. 28. Marines from various units aboard the air station take part in intramural sports like soccer during lunch or after work. (Photo by Pfc. Christopher Johns)

HMLA-469 Memorial service honors fallen Marines

*Video by Gunnery Sgt. Steven Williams
Photos by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller*



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. - A "21 Gun Salute" is given as Marines fire shots from their rifles to honor six fallen Marines from Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469 during a memorial service here March 2.



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. - Military battle crosses are set up as a symbolic representation honoring fallen Marines here March 2. A memorial service was held honoring six Marines from Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469 who were killed during a helicopter collision near Yuma, Ariz., Feb. 22.



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. - Military battle crosses and photos are displayed honoring six fallen Marines here March 2. The fallen Marines with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469 were honored during a memorial service.

To view video on NMCI computers, click [HERE](#)

RETURN TO TOP [Flight Jacket](#)



JULIAN, Calif. – Heavy-equipment Marines with Marine Wing Support Squadron 473 signed a newly created driveway at Camp Whispering Oaks here Jan 31. In response to a postponed deployment, the unit reached out to Girl Scouts San Diego for community service opportunities to maintain job capabilities. Since October 2011 MWSS-473 Marines have fixed dirt roads, cleared underbrush, built concrete pads, performed electrical repairs and cleared a field that is to be turned into an athletic field at Girl Scout camp facilities in Julian, Calif.



JULIAN, Calif. – A once brush-filled area is now leveled and cleared for the creation of a future athletic field at a Girl Scout camp site here March 1. The area was cleared and reconstructed by engineer and heavy-equipment operator Marines with Marine Wing Support Squadron 473 during community service efforts for Girl Scouts San Diego. The unit's maintenance and construction work served to not only build the local community but maintain and increase Marine's job skill sets.



JULIAN, Calif. – Marlene Williams, left, the volunteer coordinator, and Jo Dee Jacob, right, the chief executive officer of Girl Scouts San Diego, stands with engineering Marines from Marine Wing Support Squadron 473 at Camp Whispering Oaks here March 1. In response to a postponed deployment, the unit reached out to Girl Scouts San Diego for community service opportunities to maintain job capabilities.

MWSS-473 builds skills, Girl Scout Camp

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo

JULIAN, Calif. – Girl Scouts San Diego presented Marine Wing Support Squadron 473 with The 2012 Community Partner Award and a plaque announcing March 1 as the official MWSS-473 day during a presentation at Camp Whispering Oaks in Julian, Calif., March 1.

MWSS-473 received the awards for continuous volunteer efforts serving Girl Scouts San Diego that began in October of 2011.

The squadron's heavy equipment shop began searching for alternative and community beneficial training opportunities after a deployment was postponed.

"When I realized that we had an unplanned gap in training, I began searching for training opportunities in the community by contacting San Diego outlets like the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts," said Cpl. John V. Geary, a heavy equipment operator and engineer section training noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the MWSS-473 engineer section. "The Girl Scouts called me back immedi-

ately, and said they could definitely use the help. We started all kinds of projects including surveying, construction and earth work, things we are trained to do in our [military occupational specialty]."

Over the course of five months the Marines fixed dirt roads, cleared underbrush, built concrete pads, performed electrical repairs and cleared a field that is to be turned into an athletic field.

Each project provided Marines with hands-on and cross-training opportunities into other skill sets.

"Every project was focused on a particular skill, and those who knew what they were doing would teach the other guys," said Greary. "This way we all came together and learned something we wouldn't have [previously]. For example, myself and one other Marine knew how to hang drywall, and we taught others. This idea applied to other things like electrical and dirt work too."

Beginning in early January, the unit traveled to the Girl

Scouts San Diego camp sites located in Julian each Monday and stayed on site until Friday evening, working on various projects across more than 600 acres of land, before heading back to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

After the efforts of MWSS-473's heavy equipment operators throughout the previous months, the heavy equipment shop has now received approval to complete other community relations projects in the community until 2017.

"I think it is incredibly important as Marines to help the community, and this work is a win-win for not only the Marines with their training but in reaching out to the area," Lt. Col. John F. Peterson, the former executive officer of MWSS-473 and a Setauket, N.Y. native.

MWSS-473 plans to continue building job capabilities sets while building up the community in upcoming service projects for Girl Scouts San Diego as the year persists.

Click [HERE](#) for more photos



Marines with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 enjoy a breakfast in honor the unit's 60th anniversary here March 1. Marines with MALS-16 gathered to hear about the accomplishments of the Marines before them and the accomplishments of the current MALS Marines.



Senior leadership with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 serve eggs, sausage and pancakes for a breakfast in honor of the unit's 60th anniversary here March 1.



Col. Richard Coleman, the assistant chief of staff with the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Aviation Logistics Department and a New Orleans native, speaks Marines with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 at its 60th anniversary celebration here March 1.

Providing support since '52: Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 serves 60 years

Story and photos by Pfc. Christopher Johns

Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 celebrated its 60th anniversary aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., March 1.

Six decades before MALS-16 had become the unit it is today, it started with humble beginnings at Marine Corps Air Facility Santa Ana, Calif., March 1, 1952, as Headquarters Squadron 16.

HS-16's mission was to provide logistical and administrative support to a new aircraft group called Marine Aircraft Group 16.

Since its activation, MALS-16 has been all over the world, from California to Japan, to the jungles of Korea and the deserts of Afghanistan, until finally coming back to California again where the aviation unit celebrated its 60th year of service to the Marine Corps.

After 60 years of providing maintenance and logistical support to MAG-16, the unit decided to gather Marines for a morning to celebrate.

Marines with the logistics squadron listened to a speech by guest speaker Col. Richard Coleman, the assistant chief of staff

with the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Aviation Logistics Department and a New Orleans native, then enjoyed a breakfast and cake to celebrate this wonderful occasion.

"We invited significant leadership ranging from the squadron to all levels," said Capt. Aniema Utuk, the assistant operations officer and command historian.

Marines with MALS-16 gathered to hear about the accomplishments of Marines before them and accomplishments current MALS Marines have achieved as well.

The unit also received 10 consecutive V.C. Sledge Awards for T-64 engine support and the DOD Maintenance Excellence Award for 1988 and 1991.

In 1988, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 16 became Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, but the awards didn't stop with a name change.

MALS-16 was the first aviation logistics squadron to receive the Department of Defense Phoenix Award in 1991 for outstanding performance in logistical support and maintenance. Later that

year, they also received the Marine Corps Aviation Association's Mike Yunck Award for superior performance in the maintenance field.

Marines with MALS-16 have done their part to not only provide the best aviation support, but to provide the best Marine support as well.

"I've been a part of several MALS, in Japan, the East coast and here as well," said Sgt. Gregory Craig, an assistant operations chief with MALS-16 and a Houston native. "This MALS is a pretty tight knit group. It's probably one of the closest MALS I've seen."

With as tight knit a group as the award-winning unit is comes the ability to perform missions with zeal unlike any other MALS.

"The cohesion of the Marines has kind of taken on its own form," said Craig. "It's evident by the operational tempo of MALS-16, which has been so great, it's something I've never seen before."

The unit always has its Marines in a constant state of readiness. The unit has Marines anywhere they are needed, making sure the missions of MAG-16 go off without a hitch.

"Whether it's ten Marines or two hundred, MALS-16 always has Marines forward deployed," said Craig. "The Marines are always preparing for that, always getting themselves ready."

While maintaining a constant readiness to deploy, Marines with MALS-16 always strive to be the ultimate professionals.

"One thing I try to convey to my Marines is a sense of passion," said Lt. Col. Thomas Lenhardt, the commanding officer for MALS-16 and a Woodbridge, Va., native.

Always teach Marines that good is never enough, there is always a way to better your standards and set the par for excellence higher and higher, added Lenhardt, who believes the Marines at MALS-16 understand that concept and live by it.

MALS-16 has proven over 60 years that their professionalism is only equaled by the need to set the bar higher for maintenance excellence and logistical support to the aircraft of MAG-16, making sure the war-fighter on the ground has a protector over head for years to come.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)



Capt. Scott Symons, an instructor pilot with Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101 and a Rochester, Mich., native, suits up for training flight here Feb. 29. Symons has been an instructor for more than two years and recently received the instructor pilot of the year award.

Capt. Scott Symons, an instructor pilot with Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101 and a Rochester, Mich., native, goes over flying techniques with a fellow pilot here Feb. 29. Symons recently received the instructor pilot of the year award with VMFAT-101.

Capt. Scott Symons, an instructor pilot with Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101 and a Rochester, Mich., native, returns from a training flight here Feb. 29. Out of more than 40 pilots, Symons was chosen as the instructor pilot of the year with VMFAT-101.

Instructor pilot of the year receives award

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller

More than 40 pilots competed to be the instructor pilot of the year with Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101. Capt. Scott Symons, a Rochester, Mich., native, was that pilot.

Symons received a Navy Achievement Medal for his period of instruction from September 2010 - October 2011.

“He’s well respected by the other instructors,” said Capt. Matt Roberts, an assistant operations officer with VMFAT-101 and a Windsor, Va., native. “Obviously the students excel when they fly or [fly] a simulator with him. He’s the type of guy who is always available to answer questions off-line; he’s always willing to go the extra mile to help out the students.”

The students and instructors had a meeting and each voted who they felt was deserving of the instructor pilot of the year.

“It was very humbling, very surprising,” said Symons. “We have a tremendous amount of experience and very good instructors who have a great knowledge base, so it was overwhelming and definitely unexpected to be voted by peers.”

Symons was a student at VMFAT-101 in 2005-2006 and has wanted to return to be an instructor due to his experience.

“I had a lot of instructors who were very inspiring and they really cared about you learning,” said Symons. “They wanted you to do better and they went above and beyond to do that.”

Symons has been an instructor with VMFAT-101 for more than two years and enjoys instructing and helping the student pilots excel.

“Any time a student succeeds is the best part about being an instructor,” said Symons. “There’s nothing better than that, to be able to relay and teach someone and actually physically see them succeed in the aircraft.”

Even though Symons was not expecting to win the award, he was voted the instructor pilot of the year because of his approachable demeanor and his ability to relay to the students how to prioritize in the aircraft and how to succeed.

“He’s very deservedly awarded,” said Robert. “There’s not a person in the ready room who is surprised that he got it.”

“He’s well respected by the other instructors. Obviously the students excel when they fly or [fly] a simulator with him. He’s the type of guy who is always available to answer questions off-line; he’s always willing to go the extra mile to help out the students.”

Capt. Matt Roberts

Assistant operations officer with Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101



Educators from Kansas City, Mo., and Milwaukee, Wis., listen to a panel of Marines talk about their experiences in the Corps as part of the educators' workshop here Feb. 29. In addition to the air station, educators also visited Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.



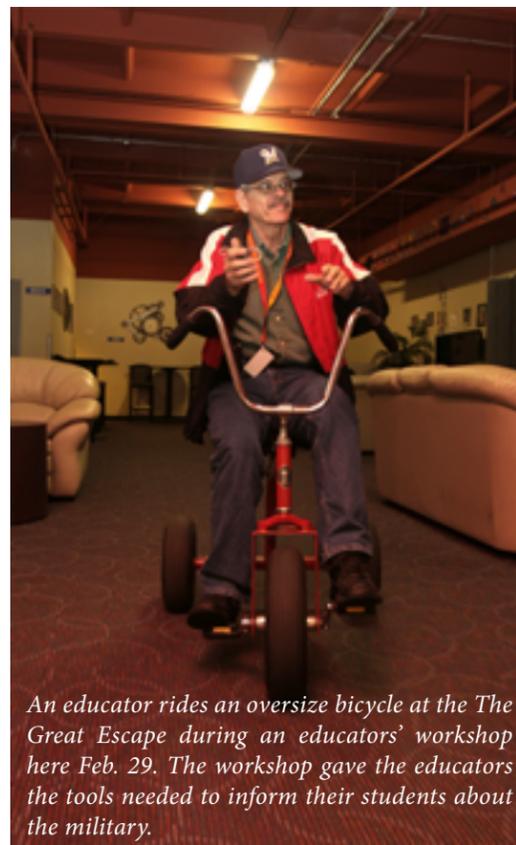
Educators from Kansas City, Mo., and Milwaukee, Wis., explore the back of an MV-22B Osprey during an educators' workshop here Feb. 29. In addition to the air station, educators also visited Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

Educators visit MCAS Miramar

Story and photos by Cpl. Sarah Fiocco



An educator sits in the cockpit of an MV-22B Osprey during an educators' workshop here Feb. 29. The workshop allowed educators to see the Marine Corps in a hands-on learning environment.



An educator rides an oversize bicycle at the The Great Escape during an educators' workshop here Feb. 29. The workshop gave the educators the tools needed to inform their students about the military.

Educators from Kansas City, Mo., and Milwaukee, Wis., peeked into the jobs, benefits and lifestyles of military personnel during an educators' workshop here Feb. 29.

Educators visited Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, MCAS Miramar and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton in a week's time to see the different missions of each military installation. The workshop gave the educators the tools needed to inform their students about the military.

"This opportunity opened their eyes to our world," said Staff Sgt. Justin Park, a drill instructor with Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion aboard MCRD San Diego and an escort during the workshop. "They have a clearer picture of the benefits the military offers, as well as the transition that occurs from civilian to Marine."

While the educators toured the air station, they asked a panel of active-duty Marines questions, visited the library, The Great Escape and the education center, walked through a barracks room and explored an MV-22B Osprey, F/A-18 and an Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting fire truck.

"This was a good experience for them," said Cpl. Jessi-

ca Wilkinson, a Milwaukee, Wis., native who participated on the panel. "A lot of high school kids don't consider the military a good career path. The educators can go back and tell them about the benefits and their experience here."

The workshop allowed educators to see the Marine Corps in a hands-on learning environment.

This experience gave educators the knowledge and vision to help students make a career decision in the military, added Lisa Duncan, a guidance counselor from Kansas City, Mo.

Duncan said the most useful knowledge she walked away with was the vast educational opportunities offered to active-duty service members.

"You have education counselors here and school [opportunities] available on base," she explained. "I knew the opportunities, but I didn't know how readily available they were."

After a week of observing military life on multiple military installations, the educators can return to school, answering students' military-related questions with a greater understanding of the Marine Corps.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)



Explosive training: finding the scent

Story and photos by Pfc. Christopher Johns



Thomas, a military working dog with the station Provost Marshal's Office kennel, dashes to attack a mock aggressor here Feb. 22. All dogs with the kennel train to attack on command if an assailant becomes a hazard to others or refuses to cooperate with the dog's handler.



Rex, a military working dog with the station Provost Marshal's Office kennel, catches a reward here Feb. 22. Once the dog finds the explosive scent at its strongest point, the dog receives his reward and the aids, or explosives, are properly removed.



Cpl. Wayne S. Williams, a military working dog handler with the station Provost Marshal's Office kennel and a New York, N.Y., native, praises his canine partner Rex here Feb. 22. The dogs train to associate finding explosive training aids with receiving rewards, so they don't work to find the aid itself, but to get their reward.

His four legs scramble over a rocky trail, while his nose follows the scent of what he's looking for. As he looks up into the brush, the wired aid becomes visible and he sits to the sounds of praise from his handler. Rex, a military working dog with the station Provost Marshal's Office kennel, found one of many objects he'd been trained to find — explosives.

Handlers with the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Provost Marshal's Office and their dogs conducted explosives detection training here, Feb. 22.

If a hostile situation were to arise where bombs are a factor, handlers and their dogs are trained to effectively seek them out, possibly saving many lives.

"The dogs are initially trained on the [odors of the training aids] aboard Lackland Air Force Base, Texas," said Cpl. David A. Mayes, the chief trainer for the kennel and a St. Michael, Pa., native. "The dogs then have a basic understanding of the aids they have to find, and we advance their training as far as making it harder to find the aids."

Continued next page



Xxerxes, a military working dog with the station Provost Marshal's Office kennel, bites a mock aggressor here Feb. 22. Once the dogs bite an aggressor, the handler must give a command before they will release their target.

The initial training takes about six months. After the dogs arrive at a military police kennel, the handlers continue training the dogs until the dogs no longer work at the kennel.

“Things are always changing out there,” said Cpl. Wayne S. Williams, a military working dog handler and a New York, N.Y., native. “So the dogs’ training is never complete.”

To keep the dogs in top form, handlers train them in finding explosives at least once a week, making sure the dogs don’t become complacent.

“The training we do here, and the practice we get out in the field, shows everything is constantly changing,” said Mayes. “So our training here has to change too.”

Along with the training comes a reward system. When the dog finds an aid or an explosive device, the handler immediately praises and rewards the dog with a toy.

“We associate the aid that you want the dog to find with the reward the dog is given,” said Mayes. “He doesn’t know what he’s looking for, but he knows once he finds that certain aid that you taught him to find, he’s going to get his reward.”

The dog’s specific job is to find the scent of the aid. To do this, the dog brackets back and forth along a field looking for the “scent cone.”

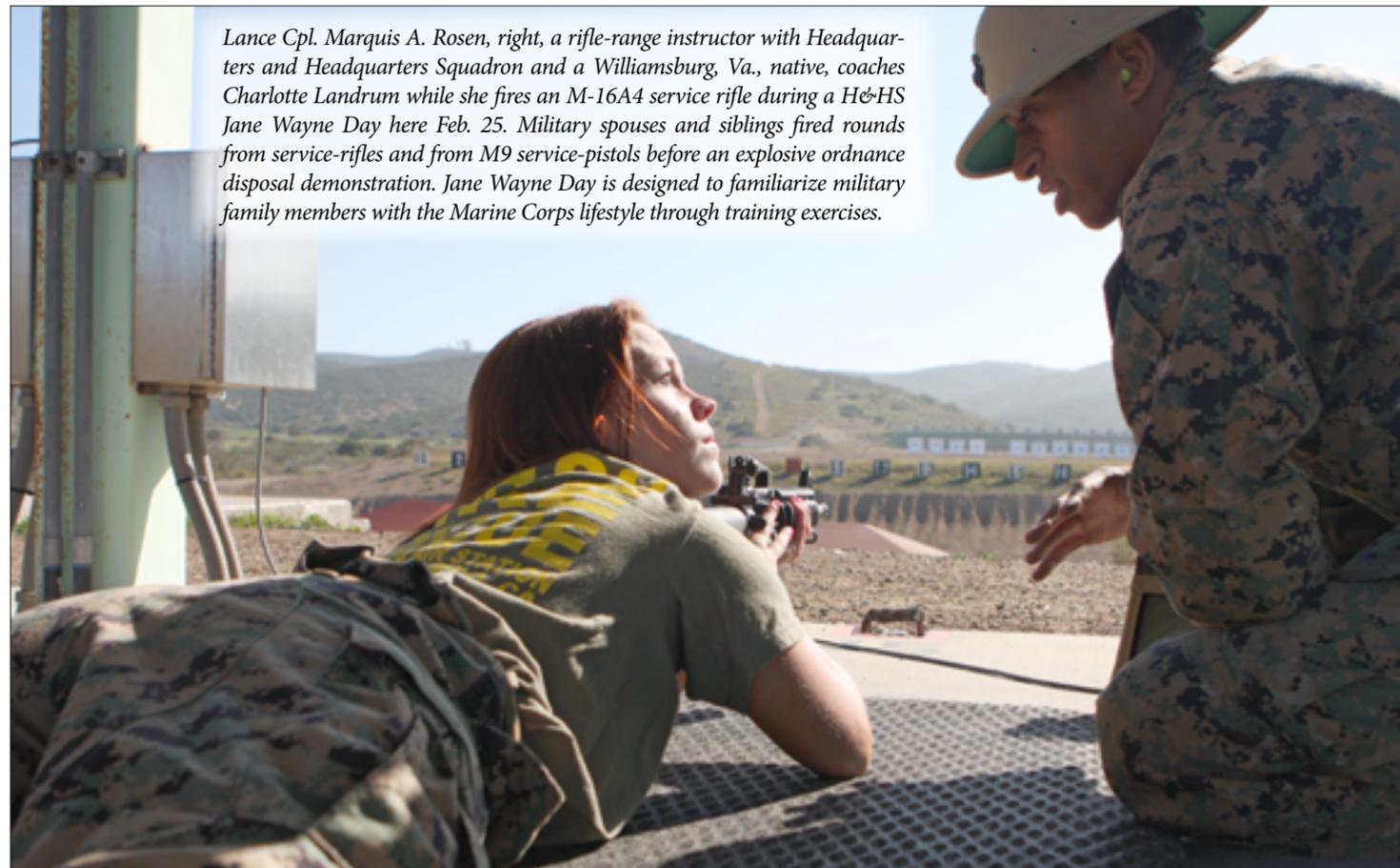
The aid is the tip of the scent cone, the scent flowing outward in a cone-like shape, but as the scent gets further away from its origin it gets weaker. The closer the dogs get to the training aid, the stronger and more reliable the scent becomes, leading the dog to the aid.

Once the dog finds the scent at its strongest point, the dog receives his reward and the aids or explosives are properly removed.

After a long day of searching through rocks and trees to find the aids, the dogs’ and handlers’ training is complete. The completion of this training may one day save the lives of hundreds of people, or the lives of a squad of Marines.



Thomas, a military working dog with the station Provost Marshal’s Office kennel, holds his reward after finding a training aid here Feb. 22. The dogs associate finding training aids with receiving a reward.



Lance Cpl. Marquis A. Rosen, right, a rifle-range instructor with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron and a Williamsburg, Va., native, coaches Charlotte Landrum while she fires an M-16A4 service rifle during a H&HS Jane Wayne Day here Feb. 25. Military spouses and siblings fired rounds from service-rifles and from M9 service-pistols before an explosive ordnance disposal demonstration. Jane Wayne Day is designed to familiarize military family members with the Marine Corps lifestyle through training exercises.

Jane Wayne Days starts with a tap, rack, bang

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo



Cpl. Jonathan K. Harkins, right, a range block-instructor with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron and a Manchester, N.H., native, teaches his fiancé, Amanda Hull, how to properly hold an M9 service-pistol during a Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron Jane Wayne Day here Feb. 25.

More than 20 Marine spouses and siblings spent the afternoon sending bullets down range while experiencing a small taste of military training during a Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron Jane Wayne Day aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Feb. 25.

Twice a year, during the fall and early spring, H&HS family members familiarize themselves with the roles of Marines by participating in various training events.

Jane Wayne Day is held to help family members understand the different activities Marines are asked to do throughout their careers, explained Maria Lengerke, the H&HS Family Readiness Officer.

The event highlighted the idea that every Marine is a rifleman. Each family member fired both an M-16A4 service-rifle and M9 service-pistol on the Carlos Hathcock Range.

“We always try to make this as realistic and fun as possible for the spouses while maintaining proper safety precautions,” said Lengerke. “They start off with weapons-handling classes to make sure they understand what they will be doing, as well as techniques for firing.”

Continued next page



Magazines filled with 5.56 mm rounds are stacked in preparation for a Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron Jane Wayne Day here Feb. 25. Military spouses and siblings familiarized themselves with Marine roles by participating in Marine Corps training for the day. Participants shot M-16A4 service-rifles and M9 service-pistols at the Carlos Hathcock Range before watching an explosive ordnance disposal demonstration.



Cpl. Travis J. Bradley, left, a combat marksmanship trainer with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron and an Ehrenberg, Ariz., native, explains proper weapon handling techniques for the M-16A4 service-rifle during a Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron Jane Wayne Day here Feb. 25. Jane Wayne Day is a way for family members to experience a small aspect of Marine Corps training in an attempt to understand the role of their loved one.



Cpl. Jonathan K. Harkins, left, a range block-instructor with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron and a Manchester, N.H., native, takes apart an M9 service-pistol for military spouses and siblings during a Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron Jane Wayne Day here Feb. 25. Jane Wayne Day is a way for family members to experience a small aspect of Marine Corps training in an attempt to understand the Marines' roles.

Every visitor was paired with a Carlos Hathcock Range rifle and pistol coach for each course of fire. Coaches taught marksmanship fundamentals such as aiming, proper breathing and controlling the trigger.

“My fiancé is actually one of the coaches here on the range,” said Amanda Hull. “The shooting was my favorite part because I really liked being able to see what he does every day.”

After every family member finished shooting, everyone sat down to

enjoy a Meal Ready-to-Eat. These MREs are what Marines are given while they are working in a field environment. Each meal includes an entrée, drink and often dessert option inside a sealed plastic brown bag. While many Marines dread the sight of these meals, the Janes seemed to enjoy the idea.

“I like the MREs,” said Charlotte Landrum. “I think it is cool to be out here and have the meal ready to go.”

To finish the day’s event, everyone loaded into vans and drove to the explosive ordnance disposal range for a demonstration.

The EOD team, along with multiple firefighters, demonstrated the effects of a blasting cap and two explosions from a safe distance.

After the final blast and more than seven hours of training exercises each wife, husband and sibling attending Jane Wayne day walked away with a better understanding of the Marine Corps’ way of life.



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. – A Marine inserts the fuel nozzle into an AH-1W Super Cobra to pump fuel aboard Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., Feb. 14. Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 bulk-fuel Marines ensure aircraft are functional, allowing the air station to run smoothly.

“We are solely responsible to maintain safety and to ensure that we are expedient in getting the mission done.”

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Randy Banks

Fuel officer with Marine Wing Support Squadron 373

No fuel no fly: MWSS-373 bulk fuel

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller

For an aircraft to be fully functional, the engine, landing gear, avionics and blades are vital, but without fuel all the right parts still will not make an aircraft fly.

Bulk-fuel Marines with Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 fuel aircraft to make them functional and allow operations to run smoothly.

“We are solely responsible for the receipt and distribution of all ground and aviation fuel,” said Sgt. Christopher Shanks, a bulk-fuel specialist with MWSS-373 and a Mason City, Iowa, native. “[Bulk-fuel] is essential, because we have to do this in both training evolutions and on deployments.”

These Marines test fuel, set up fuel systems and fuel aircraft. They test for water, particles and dirt to ensure the fuel type is correct for the aircraft.

The different testing bulk fuel uses

are the Compliance Contaminant Fuel Detector, a B-2 test kit and an aviation test kit.

“The B-2 test kit determines the percent volume of anti-icing additives or FSII, which is Fuel Systems Icing Inhibitor,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Randy Banks, the fuel officer with MWSS-373 and a Yazoo City, Miss., native. “Basically, the FSII prevents water from freezing in the aircraft fuel line, and it prevents microbiological growth. Either of those two could make a plane fall out of the sky.”

Another duty of bulk-fuel Marines is to build the fuel systems they use. There are three different systems, the Ground Expedient Refueling System, Helicopter Expedient Refueling System and Tactical Air Fuel Dispensing System.

“Tactical Air Fuel Dispensing System is a bigger system,” said Gunnery Sgt. Erick Lee, the staff non-commissioned officer in charge with MWSS-373

and a Fairfax, Va., native. “We have 320,000 gallons of [fuel] in that system. That’s mostly in support of expeditionary air fields. It’s mostly used for the long term type of support.”

Aside from testing the fuel and setting up the systems, Marines in bulk fuel maintain safety standards.

Proper fuel safety procedures help a faster return for the pilots to resume their mission.

“We are solely responsible to maintain safety and to ensure that we are expedient in getting the mission done,” said Shanks.

Fuel is the lifeline of aircraft functionality. Without bulk-fuel Marines, other parts of the aircraft would not function. Bulk-fuel Marines allow pilots and ground crew to continue with the support of the mission for the troops.

Click [HERE](#) for more photos

RETURN TO TOP

Thinking inside the book: Commandant's Reading List

Story by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller

Marines are constantly trying to better themselves to be the best they can be. With the Marine Corps downsizing, Marines are looking to improve cutting scores, setting themselves apart through physical fitness and involving themselves in the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program.

Many Marines may not consider the Commandant's Reading List as a possible option for promotion. Books from the list are available at the library for Marines to read, giving themselves an upper hand for promotion.

"The Commandant's Reading List is important to me because not only does it help impress your higher-ups when it comes to getting promoted, but it teaches you lessons about life and the military," said Lance Cpl. Sterling Jeffrey, a data network specialist with Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 and a Springdale, Ark., native.

Also known as the Marine Corps Professional Reading Program, the Commandant's Reading List was established to enhance Marines' thinking and decision-making skills.

"[Marine Administrative Message] says Marines are supposed to read at least one [book] off the list every year," said Staff Sgt. Jason Biggers, staff noncommissioned officer in charge with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron training and an Albuquerque, N.M., native. "We have the library here so when the Marines want to check out and read a book, they can further their proficiency within the Marine Corps and learn some Marine Corps history at the same time."

Reading books from the list will not directly affect a Marines' cutting score, but it can help with proficiency and conduct scores.

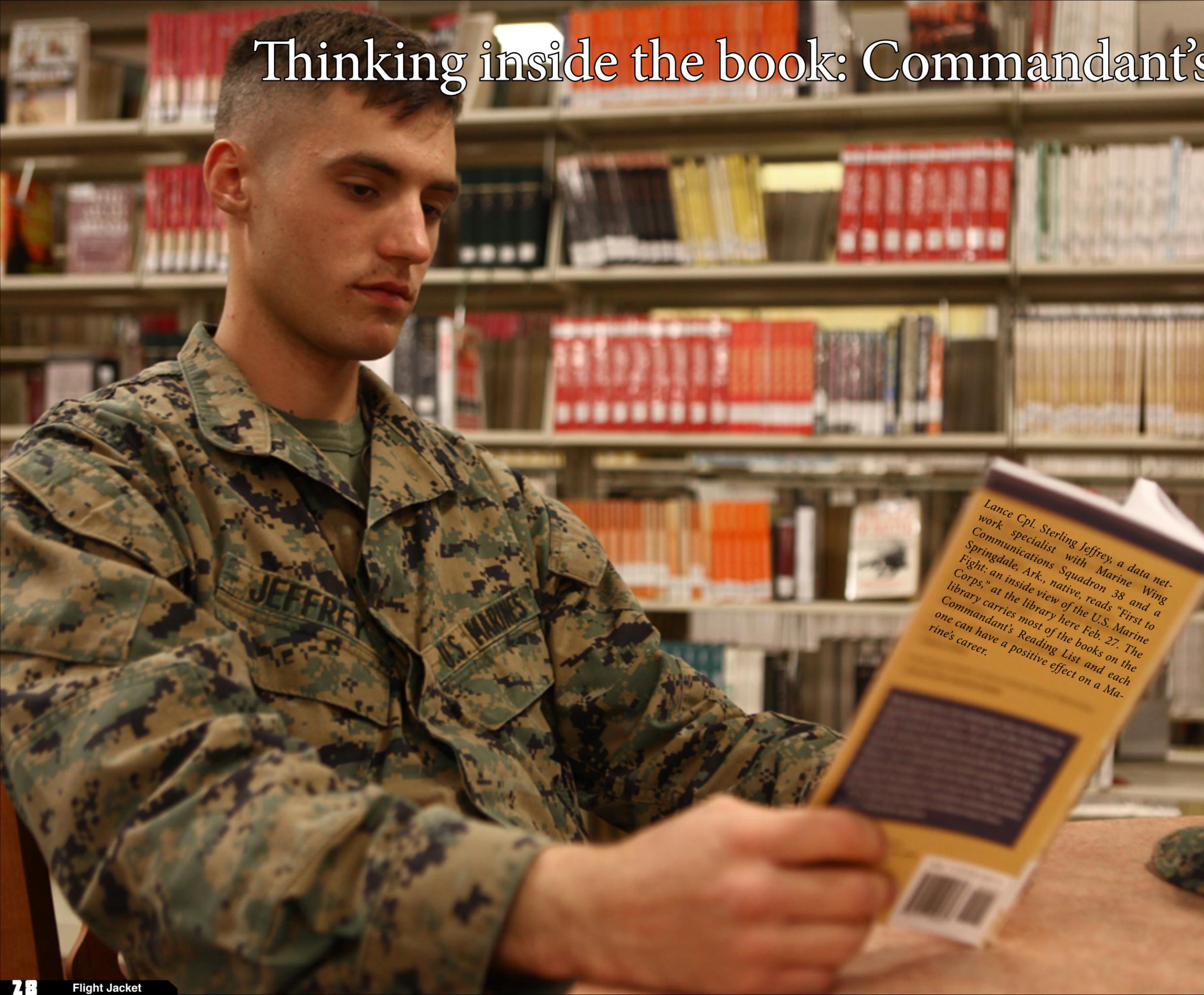
"It would make [Marines] more competitive," said Biggers. "If a lance corporal on a meritorious corporal board has read two books off the Marine Corps reading list and the lance corporals he's going up against haven't read any, it'll look favorable to the board members."

If a Marine is not going on a board for promotion, the books help Marines better themselves in other ways through learning life experiences.

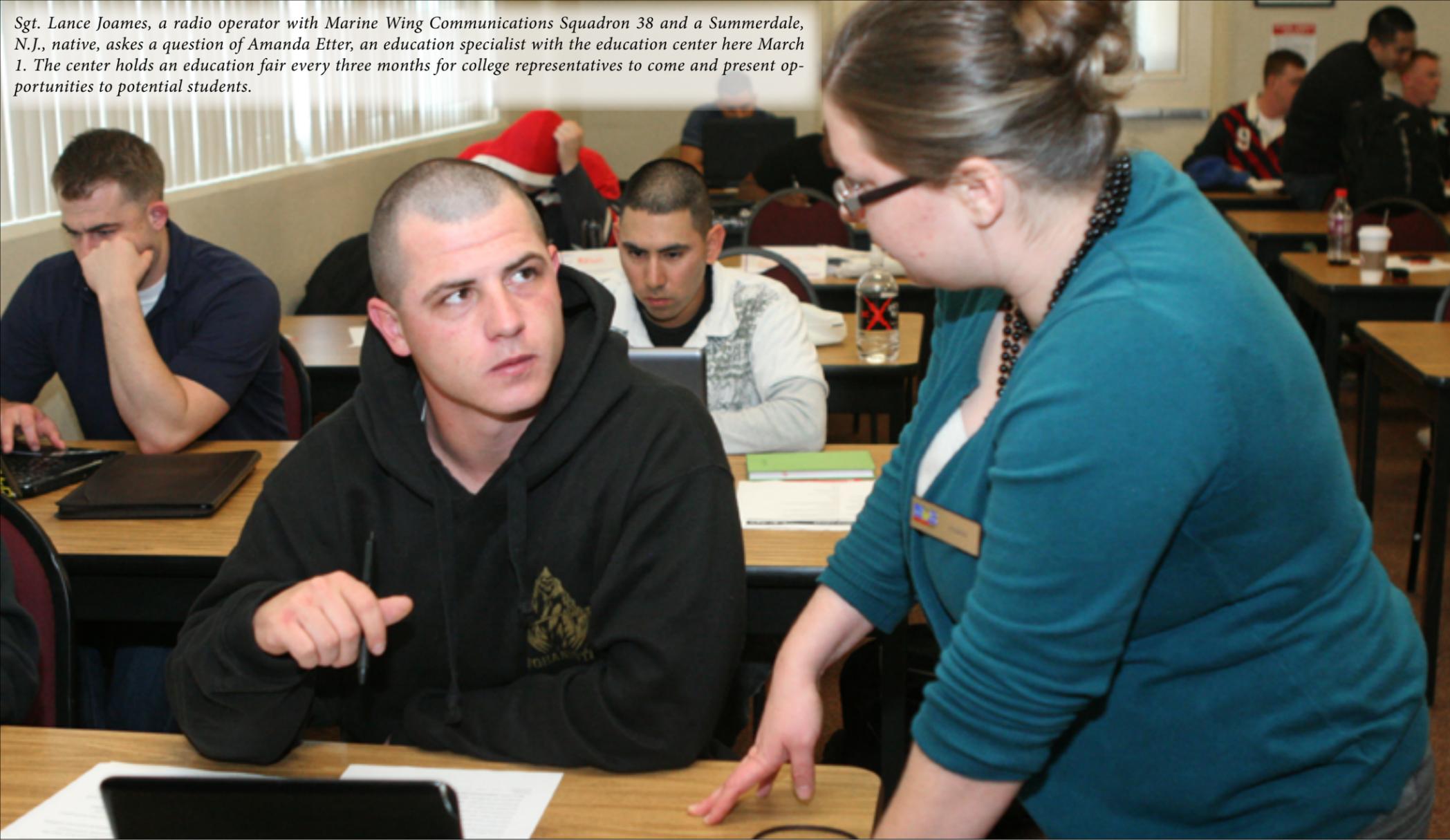
The library's funding priority is the Commandant's Reading List, and it has spent more than \$3,000 in support of the program by purchasing the books.

With most of the books on the list housed at the library, each can have a positive effect on a Marine's career.

Click [HERE](#) to view video



Sgt. Lance Joames, a radio operator with Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 and a Summerdale, N.J., native, asks a question of Amanda Etter, an education specialist with the education center here March 1. The center holds an education fair every three months for college representatives to come and present opportunities to potential students.



Higher standards in learning for those held to higher standards

Story and photos by Pfc. Christopher Johns

Getting an education while working full time can be daunting to anyone, but there are educational services on base that make balancing the two an easier process.

People like Warren Schmitt, the education officer with the station education center and a St. Louis native, with the education center are available to make this monstrous task seem like a no brainer.

“We offer a multitude of services here for active-duty service members and family members,” said Schmitt. “We have two academic counselors who work on helping [service members] determine what programs and degrees fit [their] needs the best.”

We also work with tuition assistance funding, which provides up to 4,500 dollars per fiscal year, added Schmitt.

With tuition assistance comes help finding the school that maximizes educational potential for the individual student.

“We have three schools represented on base with permanent offices, and then we have a list of about 25 institutions that visit once or twice a month for about two hours at a time,” said Schmitt.

Miramar Community College and Central Texas College offer associates degree programs, while National University offers bachelors and masters degree programs.

With these colleges comes the distance learning program, which allows Marines to use computers and CDs to complete classes and courses while aboard ships or deployed.

The education center also gives service members and families the opportunity to take tests that require certified proctors, such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test and American College Testing. For active duty service members, the center offers the Defense Language Proficiency Test and the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery.

Even though service members move frequently, there is still hope to get an education.

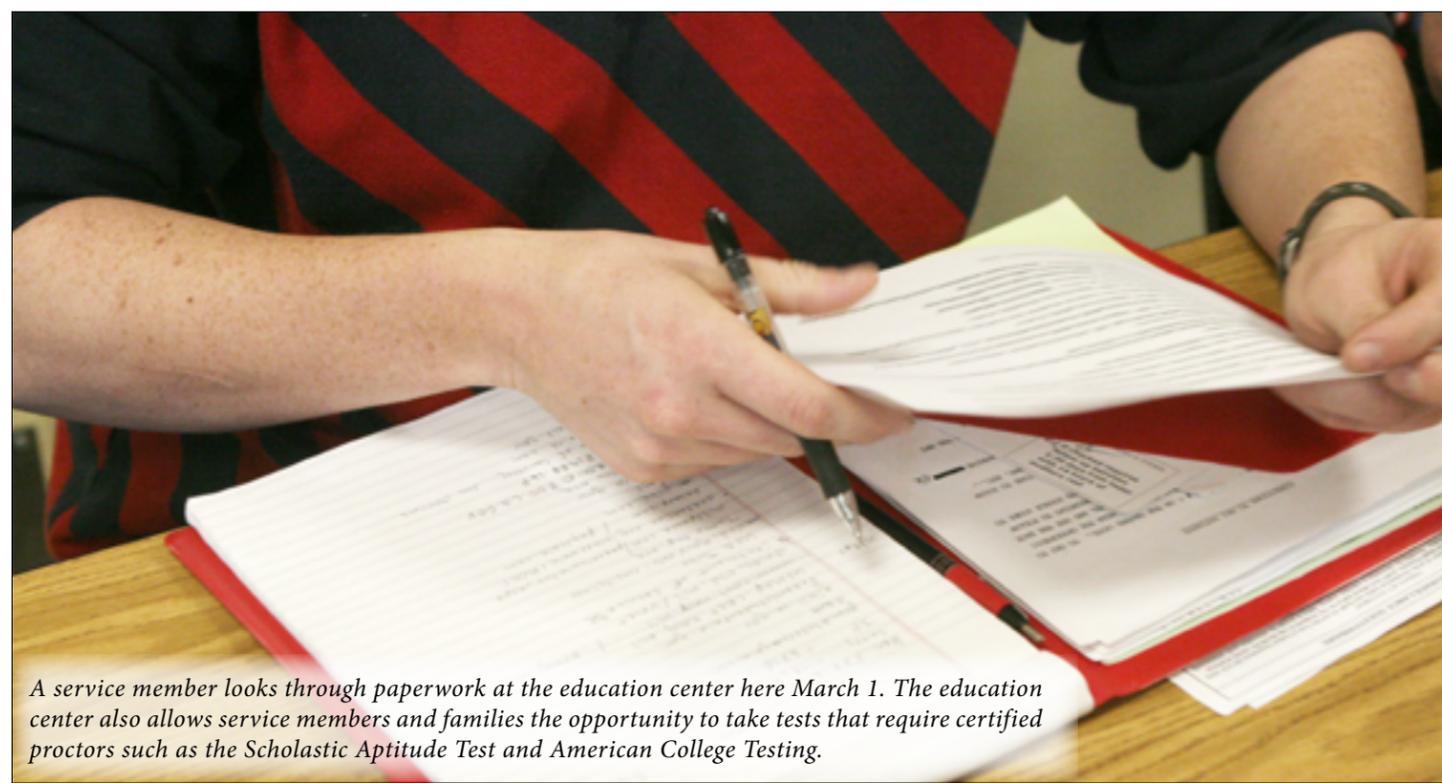
“Although Marines and spouses choose to do their part serving their country instead of seeking higher education we allow them the chance to get an education,” said Vivianne Cruz-Cancel, the personal and professional development program manager with the education center.

Potential students are also encouraged to partake of briefs that explain the advantages and disadvantages of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill and the Montgomery G.I. Bill on Tuesdays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

For more information on education benefits, visit the education center located inside The Hub, where personal and professional growth is paramount.

Click [HERE](#) for more photos

Service members use computers to work on classwork at the education center here March 1.



A service member looks through paperwork at the education center here March 1. The education center also allows service members and families the opportunity to take tests that require certified proctors such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test and American College Testing.

The Miramar Minute

Funeral detail Marines prepare to answer the call

Video by Sgt. Justin Martinez



MIRAMAR MINUTE



To view on NMCI computers, click [HERE](#)

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