

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA

Desert **WARRIOR**



March 15, 2012

Volume 11, Number 9

YUMA RANGES HOST ROYALTY

Royal Air Force conducts
Afghan deployment training

TO HELL'S KITCHEN AND BACK AGAIN

YUMA MESS HALL MANAGER REFLECTS ON THREE DECADES OF SERVICE

HOW HIGH DO YOU WANT ME TO FLY?

YUMA HARRIER SQUADRON CONDUCTS VERTICAL TAKEOFFS ON MEU

THE DARK AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER

ATC MARINES CONTROL YUMA SKIES FOR PILOT SAFETY



U.S. AIR FORCE
Thunderbirds

50th Annual

MCAS Yuma Airshow 2012

Visit us March 17 for the 50th MCAS Yuma Air Show

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flyingshutters.com



PHOTO OF THE WEEK



“Oh man do you think he heard me? He totally heard me.”

Send your caption ideas to www.editorial@gmail.com. The top three captions will be featured in next week's Desert Warrior.

Desert WARRIOR

MCAS Yuma's Official Newspaper

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LAST WEEK'S TOP CAPTIONS



Donna Diane:
“All this fuss because I had to take a whiz!?!”

Charity Metcalf Pruitt:
“I'm mean and lean I'm a pet Marine !!!!”

Krystal Simpson:
“COME ON LET ME OUT, I WON'T BITE.... HARD”



www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3urBiZ1i8g&feature=relmfu

Marines honor Pendleton flight crew

HOT VIDEOS OF THE WEEK



Front Page Photo Credit

Cpl. Aaron Diamant



www.youtube.com/watch?v=_gfBkXFbODQ&feature=relmfu

DoD officials witness Corps' newest nonlethal weapon



Marine Wing Support Squadron 371
Helmand Province, Afghanistan

Marine Attack Squadron 311
31st MEU



Marine Attack Squadron 214
11th MEU

News to Use

2012 MCAS YUMA AIRSHOW TRAFFIC AND PARKING

Please be aware of road closures and heavy traffic near the air station on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

- 32nd Street, between Pacific and Avenue 3E will be closed between the hours of 12:30 to 2p.m. on Thursday and 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.

- Avenue 2-1/2E from Palo Verde St. to 32nd St. and Palo Verde St. from Lakin Ave. to Avenue 3E will be closed from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

- Airport Loop, from 40th St. to Avenue A, 39th St. from Arizona Ave. to Pico Ave. and 39th Place from Arizona Ave. to Pico Ave. will be closed from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday, March 16 and the same on Saturday, March 17.

Airshow Parking

- On Station General Parking will be available via County 14th St. and County 13th St. with designated signs providing guidance to the entrances to the air station. A free shuttle service from the on station parking will be provided to the entrance of the airshow.

- New for 2012, Off Station General Parking will be available at the North Yuma County Fairgrounds Parking Lot to include free shuttle service to the entrance of the airshow provided by YCAT.

- Patrons with handicap accessible parking passes may arrive in the North Gate off of Avenue 3E and park in specially designated locations on station.

HOUSEHOLD GOODS SHIPMENT/STORAGE BUSY SEASON

Distribution Management Office (DMO) urges all personnel in receipt of orders (PCS/Seps/Ret) to plan their move immediately. Those who plan to have a government contracted moving company ship or store their household goods will need to visit the Defense Personal Property System (DPS) self-counseling program at www.move.mil to create their individual account. Instructions are on the website. Once your application is submitted in DPS, contact our office at (928)-269-2311 to schedule a date/time to turn-in forms and attend a mandatory Counseling Session.

STATION GYM WATER OUTAGE UPDATE

The MCAS Yuma Station Gym has made repairs to the plumbing system and reports that as of Thursday, 15 March, hot water will be available for regular use.

COMMISSARY SIDEWALK SALE

On March 15-17, the Commissary will offer great deals on food, drinks and home care products as a part of their "Sidewalk Sale". Please contact the MCAS Yuma Commissary at (928)269-5333 for more details.

MESS HALL HOURS

Monday-Friday:

Breakfast: 5:30-7:30 a.m.

Lunch: 11a.m. to 1 p.m. / Dinner: 4-6 p.m.

Midrats: 11 p.m. to 12:45 a.m.

SubMarine Bar: 7-9 p.m.

Weekend Schedule:

Brunch 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Dinner: 3-5 p.m.

For full menu online, www.yuma.usmc.mil.



Tailspotter



Elena

She is an expert at neck snuggling, providing smiles and just making all your troubles melt away. This little girl is only about a year old and ready to find a home. For more information about adopting, contact the Humane Society of Yuma at 928-782-1621.



5 Questions

for the Airfield Operations Officer

Greg McShane

What are the main attractions at this year's air show?

The 50th Annual MCAS Yuma Airshow & Open House will be the most entertaining airshow ever conducted at MCAS Yuma - I guarantee it! Headlining the show will be the incredible U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron, Thunderbirds. For the first time here at Yuma, conducting the new single aircraft demonstration and starting its first airshow season ever, will be the Marine Corps' MV-22 Osprey. Also performing will be the Commemorative Air Force's (CAF) Tora Tora Tora, returning to MCAS Yuma having performed here in 2009 when they shattered the Guinness World Book of Records for the longest wall of fire (10,178.3ft); be prepared to feel the heat when they perform! The U.S Navy Strike Fighter Squadron 122 will also be demonstrating the awesome combat capability of the F/A-18E Super Hornet, just to name a few of our performers.

Where should patrons park for the event?

Free parking is available in two very large parking lots on the south side of the air station. These parking lots can be accessed via both East County 13th Street and East County 14th Street. Handicap and VIP parking can be accessed by the Air Station's North Gate on Avenue 3E. DoD decals can enter the Air Station through the Main Gate on Avenue 3E. For the first time we are offering free parking and shuttle service from the Yuma County Fairgrounds northern most parking lot. Airshow gates open at 0800. We ask those attending not to arrive earlier than 0745. Early arrivals cause traffic to backup that have resulted in an increase in traffic accidents in the vicinity of the base. Please be patient and careful driving.

Can patrons bring their own seating? Will there be seats provided?

Certainly, those attending can bring their own folding chairs. For the first time ever at our airshow we'll have various levels of preferred seating offered at very reasonable rates, starting as low as \$3. Grandstand, Box Seats, or Flight Deck Chalet seating options are available by ordering online at yumaairshow.com or calling 269-5300.

What can/can't I bring to the air show?

We ask that people not bring any backpacks, coolers, food, beverages or alcohol onto the flightline. Water will be available free of charge on the flightline. In addition, please leave your pets at home. Also, no weapons of any kind will be allowed. All carried items such as purses or handbags are subject to search.

What types of amenities (food, water, etc.) will be available?

We have lots of various types of food and drinks on sale, in addition to vendors of all sorts. The funnel cake, in particular, has been a highlight in recent times.

Local schools get a taste of air station operations

Station Marines visited several Yuma schools to give students and teachers a preview of what to expect at the 50th annual Yuma Air Show. Below left: Capt Zachary Hartnett, a Marine Attack Squadron 513 AV-8B Harrier pilot, shows a video highlighting the aircraft's capabilities to students, at Palmcroft Elementary School, March 9. Hartnett also taught students about life as a pilot and the technology used by pilots. Below right: Capt. Staci Reidinger, the station public affairs officer, holds a push-up contest with students at Alice Byrne Elementary School, March 8.



Photos by Sgt. Daniel Malta

Marines answer call for community service

Lance Cpl. Bill Waterstreet
Desert Warrior

Five Marines from Marine Aircraft Logistics Squadron 13 and Marine Corps Air Station Yuma Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron came to the Yuma Community Food Bank as part of a volunteer opportunity through the MCAS Yuma Single Marine Program, March 7.

The Marines took time out of their busy schedules and volunteered their Wednesday mornings to help provide food for people in need.

SMP sends volunteers to help at the food bank every other week. In the past, nearly 20 Marines came to volunteer, but lately the number has fallen. Some of the food bank's labor comes from volunteers from Arizona State Prison Complex Yuma.

"There needs to be more support to get Marines out to events like this," said volunteer Gunnery Sgt. Matthew Tannehill, an H&HS air traffic controller, and a Las Vegas native. "This is a great opportunity to get Marines involved with the community and to help Yuma understand who we are and what we do."

The MCAS Yuma SMP works to get Marines active in the local community through events like this, and the Marines' assistance is not taken for granted.

"The Marines are always a big help when they come out. We really appreciate it," said Mike Ivers, the president and CEO of the Yuma Community Food Bank. "The Yuma Community Food Bank is very grateful to the many individual donors from the community and the Marine Corps."

The food bank serves all of Yuma County and can feed up to 20,000 people each month. "We serve mostly families who have children," said Shanell Hernandez, the Commodities Supplemental Food Program and volunteer coordinator for the food bank. "We take care of anyone who needs help: the unemployed, single mothers, and those who don't have family to rely on out here."

The food bank also acts as a reference point for those in need of other types of assistance. "If people come in here and are looking for a job, we send them to the library, where

they have job training classes," said Hernandez. "There's a lot of need out there. You don't really know until you're here."

The food mostly comes from local donations, such as supermarket chains and school food drives. These benefactors, volunteers and the organizers of the food bank are shining examples of compassion and generosity.

"I'm here because I like to help people," said Hernandez. "If I can help make somebody out there smile, then I've done my job."

"It's not our place to judge one another about status or situation," added Ivers. "We don't really have a clue as to what goes on in the lives of other people. I am truly blessed to be doing what I do in Yuma."

There is great purpose in the work done at the food bank, purpose that should not be lost to Marines. For more information contact your local SMP representative.



Photos by Lance Cpl. Bill Waterstreet

Gunnery Sgt. Matthew Tannehill, a Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron air traffic controller, and a native of Las Vegas, and Cpl. Tim Taylor, a 6th Engineer Support Battalion, 4th Marine Logistics Group bulk fuel specialist, and a native of Tempe, Ariz., sort and bag grapefruits at the Yuma Community Food Bank, Feb. 22. The Marines were part of a volunteer group organized by the station's Single Marine Program to help the food bank and give back to the local community.

Environmental seeks to protect station from runoff debris

Lance Cpl. Sean Dennison
Desert Warrior

With all the construction going on around base and Yuma entering its rainy season, the station environmental department is keying in on environmental runoff protection.

Environmental runoff is an environmental threat that is caused by both human and natural elements.

"That's when we have a storm or rain event and that water is sufficient enough to collect all runoff into either a storm drain or into the street," said Ronald K Angeles, the station's environmental water quality and storm water manager. "It collects debris from construction sites, street debris that's deposited on the road from other vehicles, and any trash, in essence any kind of debris you find out in the road, that runs into the municipal separate storm system."

There are actually two systems. The sewer system receives storm water, however, is not a storm system.

"The other is the storm water system that actually runs into the main water body," said Angeles. "The sewer system is anything that runs from a drain or toilet, commode or sink into the city water treatment plant."

The station's design can quickly become a problem during downpours, as there are no gutters.

"We're considered stewards of the government and by that we're a high-profile industrial facility and people look upon us to set the example," said Angeles.

The environmental department manages runoff procedures and prevention in accordance with the Clean Water Act, establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States and regu-

lating quality standards for surface waters.

"The one main tool is called the best management practice system," said Angeles. "The best management practice encompasses two elements. One, we have structural BMPs which would be anything that's permanent such as concrete containment area and water catch basins. Two, a non structural would be sweeping, picking up debris and keeping trash can lids closed."

"What we're doing is we're going through and doing oversight throughout base as well as looking at all the construction projects going on and making sure everything is going in accordance to the written BMP's we have in place," he added.

Marines can help reduce pollution by disposing trash in waste receptacles and picking up trash found on the station.

Alfred Schutt served Corps before you were even born



Photo by Cpl. Jakob Schulz

Cpl. Jakob Schulz
Desert Warrior

Dedication to your fellow Marines and service to the Marine Corps, is said to be the goal of every Marine. However, for one man this dedication has lasted more than 30 years, beginning before most active duty Marines were even born.

Alfred Schutt, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma mess hall manager, has been in the food service industry since he was 16, giving him 35 years of making sure people have something to eat.

"It's just always been a passion of mine," said Schutt, 52, and retired master sergeant with 24 years in the Corps. "I've been working in the industry for longer than I can remember and can't see myself doing anything else."

Raised in New Baltimore, Mich., Schutt joined the Corps in 1980 looking for a change of pace.

"I needed to get out of Michigan and the Corps offered that," said Schutt. "Without the Marines I wouldn't have seen all the places I have. I wouldn't have had all the great experiences."

Though Schutt was enlisted in the Corps for so long, he was only stationed in a few places.

"Well I started in Hawaii, then moved to Yuma then Hawaii and back again a few times," said Schutt. "I was also stationed at Pendleton and 29 Palms, but I'd say 12 of my 24 years have been in Yuma."

Despite only being stationed in a few places, Schutt

still managed to see the world. He went on six Marine Expeditionary Units throughout the Pacific.

"Well, the most fun place I visited has to be Australia," said Schutt. "Then the most interesting place was Thailand. It's just so different from America. It's nice but really different."

Schutt then retired in 2003 to take the head manager job here in the station's mess hall, continuing his service to the Corps and the Marines.

"Well, the mess hall was having trouble filling the position, so when I was getting close to retirement the company running the mess hall said that if I retired they'd give me the head manager position," said Schutt. "So I retired one day, went home, put on a tie and went back to work the next."

Now, on his 9th year working as a civilian in the mess hall, Schutt's goal is to serve Marines for a total of 40 years before retiring. Afterwards, he plans to volunteer at a local school, helping develop their lunch program.

"I'm never going to really stop being in the food service industry," said Schutt. "I just can't see myself ever just sitting around doing nothing."

Among his accomplishments, Schutt oversaw the mess hall when it took home the Hill Award three times in a row for best mess hall in the Corps. However, he says his biggest accomplishment has been serving the Marines.

"Clean plates and satisfied patrons," said Schutt. "That's what I love most about this job, when I see a fulfilled Marine put a clean plate in to be washed."

Yuma pilots practice vertical landing aboard ship

Cpl. Gary J. Welch
31st MEU

USS ESSEX, At sea — Coming in to land vertically onto the pitching, moving deck of the USS Essex (LHD 2), is no easy task, but the Marines of Marine Attack Squadron 311, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, skillfully completed that very task, March 4.

Flying on five AV-8B Harriers, VMA 311 joined its brothers at sea, and is now preparing to support the 31st MEU as it moves into Amphibious Integration Training and Certification Exercise.

"We are here to support the MEU," said Lt. Col. Peter S. Blake, the commanding officer of VMA 311, 31st MEU. "We provide them all the close air support, non-traditional intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, as well as convoy escort or aerial escort for the helicopters and ground assets out there."

To ensure VMA 311 is fully prepared to support the 31st MEU during the day and night, the pilots of VMA 311 wasted no time and began conducting carrier landing qualifications.

"We are conducting landings during the day and will transition straight into night landings so we can get current on our carrier landing qualifications," said Capt. Brandon G. Lev, the quality assurance officer, and harrier pilot with VMA 311, 31st MEU.

Landing during the day allows the pilots a chance to familiarize themselves with important reference points on the ship that are needed when landing during the night.

Although many of the pilots have done this training on multiple occasions, there are still factors that challenge their skills, making the training even more important for the pilots to conduct.

"If there's a full moon out then it's like flying during the day as long as the sky is clear," said Lev. "But if there is a cloud layer and it's already dark it just makes it that much more difficult, even if we are using night vision goggles."

The pilots will conduct what is called aided, and unaided night landings; meaning they will do some utilizing night vision goggles, and others with only the moonlight and dim deck lights on the flight deck of the USS Essex to guide them.

Another challenge the pilots must overcome is just landing on a moving ship. To do this, they have to be moving forward as fast as the ship is, and land vertically at the same time.

"It's a little bit weird when you're trying to land straight down while the boat is

still moving," said Lev. "You don't realize you're still moving forward as your coming down. It's not too hard but you definitely have to pay close attention to what is going on."

The Marines of VMA 311 are currently preparing for the MEU's Certification Exercise, where they will be evaluated on their abilities to operate from ship.

The 31st MEU is the only continuously forward-deployed MEU and remains the nation's force in readiness in the Asia-Pacific region.



Photo by Cpl. Gary J. Welch

AV-8B Harriers of Marine Attack Squadron 311, part of the Air Combat Element of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, land aboard the flight deck of USS Essex (LHD 2), March 5. The squadron joined the 31st MEU to support it during the upcoming Amphibious Integration Training and Certification Exercise. The 31st MEU is the only continuously forward-deployed MEU and remains the nation's force in readiness in the Asia-Pacific region.

Full Ads

Officials Condemn Afghanistan Shooting, Offer Condolences

Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 11, 2012 – President Barack Obama, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta, Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and International Security Assistance Force leaders all condemned a shooting incident in Southern Afghanistan, and pledged to work with Afghan authorities in fully investigating the incident.

“This incident is tragic and shocking, and does not represent the exceptional character of our military and the respect that the United States has for the people of Afghanistan,” Obama said in a statement released by the White House.

Panetta spoke with Afghan President Hamid Karzai to offer his deepest condolences and profound regret for the tragic incident in Kandahar province. The incident resulted in the loss of life and injuries to innocent Afghan civilians, including women and children.

ISAF Commander Marine Corps Gen. John R. Allen, who is here to testify this week, issued a statement today saying he was “shocked and saddened” to hear of the shooting incident.

“I offer my profound regret and deepest condolences to the victims and their families,” Allen said in his statement.

In a Facebook post, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Martin Dempsey offered his condolences to the victims of the attack and their families.

“I’m confident that General Allen and his staff are taking the appropriate steps to quickly and thoroughly investigate the circumstances of this incident,” Dempsey said.

Allegedly, an American service member left his base in Kandahar province, entered homes in the area and shot the

inhabitants. Karzai said in a statement that the service member had killed 16 and wounded at least five others.

“I condemn such violence and am shocked and saddened that a U.S. service member is alleged to be involved, clearly



DoD Courtesy photo

acting outside his chain of command,” Panetta said. “I told President Karzai that the American people share the outrage felt by President Karzai and his fellow citizens. This tragic incident does not reflect the commitment of the U.S. military to protect the Afghan people and help build a strong and stable Afghanistan.”

“I cannot explain the motivation behind such callous acts, but they were in no way part of authorized ISAF military activity,” said British Lt. Gen. Adrian J. Bradshaw in a written

statement. Bradshaw is deputy ISAF commander.

The service member is in ISAF custody and will remain there as ISAF and Afghans conduct an investigation, Allen said. Those wounded in the incident are receiving care from ISAF medics. “I am absolutely dedicated to making sure that anyone who is found to have committed wrong-doing is held fully accountable,” Allen said.

Panetta gave Karzai his assurances that U.S. officials will bring those responsible to justice. “We will spare no effort in getting the facts as quickly as possible, and we will hold any perpetrator who is responsible for this violence fully accountable under the law,” he said in his statement.

The incident happens just weeks after rioting over the accidental burning of Qurans at Bagram Air Field.

Both Allen and the American embassy spoke of the partnership between the United States and Afghanistan.

“This deeply appalling incident in no way represents the values of ISAF and coalition troops or the abiding respect we feel for the Afghan people,” the general said. “Nor does it impugn or diminish the spirit of cooperation and partnership we have worked so hard to foster with the Afghan National Security Forces.”

An embassy statement reiterated that the United States is committed to “an enduring partnership with Afghanistan to obtain greater peace and security in the region, which is our common interest. We deplore any attack by a member of the U.S. armed forces against innocent civilians, and denounce all violence against civilians. We assure the people of Afghanistan that the individual or individuals responsible for this act will be identified and brought to justice.”

Air traffic controllers keep Yuma airways safe



Photos by Cpl. Laura Cardoso

Cpl. Jefferson Yu, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron tower air traffic controller and 20-year-old native of New York City, looks through binoculars to better survey the flightline at the air traffic control tower, March 13.

Cpl. Laura Cardoso Desert Warrior

Making a mistake in most job fields might not be a big deal, but Air Traffic Controllers have to be right 100 percent of the time.

ATC Marines are accountable for directing hundreds of aircraft, civilian and military, to safety every day.

"ATC is important to the Marine Corps because we ensure that our pilots are getting their missions done safely," said Sgt. Andrea Murphy, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron ATC tower watch supervisor and 22-year-old native of North Platte, Nebraska. "In this job, we ensure the Marines are not only trained correctly but trained to do their job in a safe and expeditious manner so that one day they can continue to hold others to such high standards."

They direct traffic on a 352 foot tower and control both aircraft and maintenance trucks working on the flight line.

ATC ensures the safe and speedy flow of air and ground traffic within the tower environment. They do so by breaking down into two major sections, radar and tower.

Although they are equally difficult, they are a completely different ball game. Murphy describes working the tower is more like painting a picture, where as radar is more like dealing with mathematical numbers. In tower Marines have to be very creative in the way they deal with conflicts.

Because the tower is responsible for a 5-mile radius, controlling traffic can be challenging. Working in such a small radius, means everything is a lot closer and things happen a lot faster. Marines need to stay vigilant and have quick and correct answers to any problems that arise.

Marines control approximately 350 vehicles, on a slow day, and over 500 during the Weapons and Tactics Instruc-

tor course.

"It is challenging and always changing," added Murphy. "You come in and see different things every single day. You're always learning something new."

Marines are constantly being tested and quizzed through written, oral or simulation tests. These tests are given to keep the Marines sharp and always prepared.

"In order to survive in ATC a Marine has to be determined. You have to want to make it, because if you don't want it chances are you won't do it."

ATC can get stressful at times because they are ultimately accountable for what happens during their watch; somebody could be harmed if a mistake is made.

"A lot of Marines and civilians here thrive under the stress," said Murphy. "The stress of the day is what keeps us going, almost like a cup of coffee. It's an adrenaline rush because we have to be right a hundred percent of the time. It's almost something that we start to embrace. ATC really gets in your blood."



An overview of the flightline, taken from the air traffic control tower, March 13.

1/2 Ads

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

"Family Values"

Cmdr. Timothy Power, MAG-13 Chaplain

Once again, after the family arrived in Yuma, I was driving my children around to various activities like music lessons, sports practices, babysitting opportunities, and school events. Some call this part of the parenting job being a taxi driver, but there is really so much more to driving with your children than just getting them to their destination. In fact, it gives dads an opportunity to increase their talk time with their kids which one recent author claimed can be as low as a minute a day with each child on average. And during a 20 minute car ride there's so much that can be covered, such as preparing them for the activity, motivating them, telling them how much you care about them, sharing your own stories and enjoying humorous, fun time.

If you have more than one of your children in the car, you can still talk with just one child or engage a conversation as a group. Doing either alternative trains the next generation in good social skills.

Distractions like hand-held video games, portable DVD players and other appliances can take away from car talk. If you want to gradually promote a good talk environment maybe you could suggest a car talk a week per child to begin with, and then see if you and the children can find your voice again. After the awkward beginnings of this undistracted time with each other, good talk and listening habits will form in your lives on the road.

Proverbs tells us that there's so much to share about life in our words, and our families play a big part in this. One proverb reads, "Say to wisdom, 'you are my sister,' and call understanding your nearest kin." Keep conversation going at home and in the car. And it goes without saying that spouses and friends can enjoy the benefits of good conversation wherever it happens as well.

It's Your Country, Exercise Your Right to Vote!

If you are on active duty stationed in the United States, you can vote in the state in which you reside or choose to vote absentee in your home of record state. It's your choice where your vote.

Elections are managed individually by all 55 states and territories but the basic steps to vote are simple:

1. Register to vote at www.fvap.gov and this site will walk you through the process of choosing the appropriate state and completing the appropriate registration paperwork.
2. If voting absentee, the state-level election official approves/disapproves the Federal Postcard Application or requests additional information. If the application is approved, the election official sends you an absentee ballot in the mail and often an email reminder.
3. If voting absentee, you vote on the ballot and return it to your state-level election official via mail by the state's deadline.

Remember: FVAP.gov Web Portal is Your 2012 Election Resource

If you'd like more information on the Federal Voting Assistance Program or need help with the absentee voting process please go to the www.fvap.gov

web portal or contact the MCAS Yuma Installation Voting Assistance Officer at (928)269-3609.

Upcoming State and Presidential Preference primary elections:

March: Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia:

April: Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Wisconsin

May: Arkansas, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oregon, West Virginia

1/2 Ads



Photos by Cpl. Aaron Diamant

Royal Air Force uses Yuma's ranges for Afghan workup

Cpl. Aaron Diamant
Desert Warrior

Yuma has an environment unlike any in England, which is why 125 members of the Royal Air Force's 18 Squadron spent two and a half weeks training here.

The Rampant Pegasus Squadron, based at RAF Odiham, England, flies the CH-47 Chinook HC2, a large cargo helicopter, and needed to thoroughly prepare themselves for an upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

With the British homeland devoid of any deserts, instead cold and snowing this time of year, the Royal Airmen required a warm, dusty environment to get a taste of what life in Afghanistan would be like.

With the right sort of weather and nearly 3 million square miles of ranges to use, Yuma seemed like the perfect place.

"Yuma has proven to be absolutely perfect for what we require," said Squadron Leader Tim Brooks. "And the support we've received from the air station, Million Air and the Yuma International Airport has been superb. The quality of the training we get here, the environmental conditions being dusty and the terrain having a similarity to that of Afghanistan; it all makes it more realistic for us."

Training the crews for what they face on deployment was the squadron's primary objective.

"Flying in the desert environment, both day and night, and in formations was our first priority," said Brooks. "The ranges here are excellent, and allowed us to qualify all of our crewman on firing the aircraft guns."

The squadron spent their time conducting training in some of the typical types of missions they can expect to be carrying out in Afghanistan, including troop transportation, cargo loads and the immediate response team, one of the most important missions they are tasked to undertake.

During IRT missions, the crews are tasked with medical evacuations of wounded troops. The Chinook becomes a "flying ambulance," said Flight Sgt. Liz McConaghy, CH-47 crew chief.

Calling the Chinook outfitted for an IRT mission a flying ambulance could be construed as a bit of an understatement.

It almost becomes a flying emergency room, with a compliment including a doctor, nurses, paramedics and extra riflemen for protection, the cargo bay is fitted to carry up to 11 stretchers and also carries IV fluids, defibrillators, and other medical supplies for the onboard crew, in addition to extra medical supply kits to leave for the troops on the ground, said

Sgt. Chris Newton, CH-47 crewman.

Flight crews are on standby, awaiting a call to run to their waiting aircraft and rescue injured soldiers as fast as they can.

Some of the experienced flight crews will admit they've pulled muscles running to their aircraft on previous deployments, because every moment counts.

"That's why we decided instead of just giving the injured person a ride back to the hospital, we'd do everything we could to bring the hospital to them," said Newton.

While the flight crews didn't have all of the medical personnel with them, they still flew the missions as accurately as they would in combat, with other pilots providing realistic scenarios while in flight, such as enemy contact and damage to the aircraft.

On the occasional break from training, the crews explored the city of Yuma and got to know some locals.

"The local population has been very supportive, friendly and made us feel welcome," said Brooks.

After weeks of training here, the squadron will continue to train at Naval Air Facility El Centro, before returning to England and ultimately heading to Afghanistan to support the NATO mission there.





Photo by Cpl. Aaron Diamant

Royal Air Force Sgt. Chris Newton, crewman and weapons systems operator, checks one of the CH-47's Miniguns prior to takeoff, March 8. While they weren't flying a live-fire training mission, the squadron left the weapons mounted to provide realistic training.



Photo by Cpl. Aaron Diamant

Top: Royal Air Force Flight Sgt. Liz McConaghy, crew chief, keeps a watchful eye for other air and ground traffic out of one of the side windows of the CH-47, March 8. The crewmen serve as extra pairs of eyes for the pilots during flight, as well as man the helicopter's array of defensive weapons.

Right: A Royal Air Force 18 Squadron CH-47 Chinook HC2 flies into the sunset over the Sonoran Desert, March 8.



Photo by RAF Sgt. Chris Newton



Photo by RAF Sgt. Chris Newton

Top: A Royal Air Force CH-47 Chinook HC2 sits on the flight line of MCAS Yuma, March 8

Bottom: Royal Air Force Flying Officer Stuart Skippy inspects the underside of a CH-47 Chinook HC2 on the MCAS Yuma flight line prior to takeoff, March 8. The pilots and crew perform many of the preflight checks of the aircraft ahead of time, to save time when they are rushed out on an emergency call.



Photo by Cpl. Aaron Diamant

Royal Air Force Flight Sgt. Dave Coates, crew chief, keeps a watchful eye for enemy movement as his CH-47 approaches an improvised landing zone near Pilot's Knob in California, March 8. The crewmen serve as extra pairs of eyes for the pilots during flight, as well as man the helicopter's array of defensive weapons. While the helicopter serves as a flying ambulance during some missions, it still maintains its defensive weapons.



Photo by Cpl. Aaron Diamant

Photos opposite page- Top: A Royal Air Force flight crew runs to their CH-47 Chinook HC2 on the flight line, March 8. The crew was on standby, waiting for a simulated emergency call to rescue injured personnel. Bottom: A member of the Royal Air Force Regiment carries an RAF officer role playing a casualty onto the back of a CH-47 under the watchful eye of crew chief Flight Sgt. Liz McConaghy, March 8. The training missions the squadron participated in are to prepare them for an upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

Full Ads

Tips for Choosing an Insurance Policy

usa.gov

When buying insurance, whether its home, life, auto, rental or other:

- Find out whether your state insurance department offers any information concerning insurance companies and rates. This is a good way to get a feeling for the range of prices and the lowest-cost providers in your area.
- Check several sources for the best deal. Try getting quotes from an insurance focused website, but be aware that many online services may provide prices for just a few companies. An independent insurance agent that works with several insurers in your local area might be able to get you a better deal.
- Make sure the insurance company is licensed and covered by the state's guaranty fund. The fund pays claims in case the company defaults. Your state insurance department can provide this information.
- Check the financial stability and soundness of the insurance company. Ratings from A.M. Best, Standard and Poor's, and Moody's Investors Services are available online and at most public libraries.
- Research the complaint record of the company. Contact your state insurance department or visit the website of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, which has a database of complaints filed with state regulators.
- Find out what others think about the company's customer service. Consumers can rate homeowner insurance companies at J.D. Power's website.
- Once you pay your first insurance premium, make sure you receive a written policy. This tells you the agent forwarded your premium to the insurance company. If you don't receive a policy within 60 days, contact your agent and the insurance company.

Drug Interactions

fda.gov

Drug Interactions: What You Should Know

- Drug-drug interactions occur when two or more drugs react with each other. This drug-drug interaction may cause you to experience an unexpected side effect. For example, mixing a drug you take to help you sleep (a sedative) and a drug you take for allergies (an antihistamine) can slow your reactions and make driving a car or operating machinery dangerous.
- Drug-food/beverage interactions result from drugs reacting with foods or beverages. For example, mixing alcohol with some drugs may cause you to feel tired or slow your reactions.
- Drug-condition interactions may occur when an existing medical condition makes certain drugs potentially harmful. For example, if you have high blood pressure you could experience an unwanted reaction if you take a nasal decongestant.

Drug Interactions and Over-the-Counter Medicines

Over-the-counter (OTC) drug labels contain information about ingredients, uses, warnings and directions that is important to read and understand. The label also includes important information about possible drug interactions. Further, drug labels may change as new information becomes known. That's why it's especially important to read the label every time you use a drug.

The "Active Ingredients" and "Purpose" sections list:

- the name and amount of each active ingredient
- the purpose of each active ingredient

The "Uses" section of the label:

- tells you what the drug is used for
- helps you find the best drug for your specific symptoms

The "Warnings" section of the label provides important drug interaction and precaution information such as:

- when to talk to a doctor or pharmacist before use
- the medical conditions that may make the drug less effective or not safe
- under what circumstances the drug should not be used
- when to stop taking the drug

The "Directions" section of the label tells you:

- the length of time and the amount of the product that you may safely use
- any special instructions on how to use the product

The "Other Information" section of the label tells you:

- required information about certain ingredients, such as sodium content, for people with dietary restrictions or allergies

The "Inactive Ingredients" section of the label tells you:

- the name of each inactive ingredient (such as colorings, binders, etc.)

The "Questions?" or "Questions or Comments?" section of the label (if included):

- provides telephone numbers of a source to answer questions about the product

LEAVING THE CORPS

Military Skills Translation Tips

vetsuccess.gov

The following links, provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, are pathways for veterans to use the skills they learned in their military occupational speciality to smoothly transition to the civilian workforce.

Mil2FedJobs Federal Jobs Crosswalk:

www.Mil2FedJobs.com

Mil2FedJobs helps translate military occupations to federal jobs. This website assists Servicemembers and Veterans identify federal jobs related to their military occupational specialty. Mil2FedJobs.com also assists Servicemembers and Veterans identify federal job characteristics, such as duties, pay grade, and qualifications of existing vacancies.

Department of Labor (DOL) Military to Civilian Occupation Translator:

<http://www.acinet.org/acinet/moc/default.aspx?nodeid=213>

The Military to Civilian Occupation Translator helps servicemembers match military skills and experience to civilian occupations. Sponsored by the U. S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.

O*NET Military Skills Translator:

<http://online.onetcenter.org/crosswalk/>

O*NET, the Occupational Information Network, is a comprehensive database of occupational skills, knowledge, and other occupational characteristics - including those that veterans bring to the workforce. O*NET can help you align military educational and job training curricula with current civilian workplace needs.

Protecting Your Computer

Federal Bureau of Investigation

The same advice parents might deliver to young drivers on their first solo journey applies to everyone who wants to navigate safely online. A special agent in our Cyber Division offered the following:

- "Don't drive in bad neighborhoods."
- "If you don't lock your car, it's vulnerable; if you don't secure your computer, it's vulnerable."
- "Reduce your vulnerability, and you reduce the threat."

Below are some key steps to protecting your computer from intrusion:

- Keep Your Firewall Turned On: A firewall helps protect your computer from hackers who might try to gain access to crash it, delete information, or even steal passwords or other sensitive information. Software firewalls are recommended for single computers. For networked computers, hardware routers typically provide firewall protection.

- Install or Update Your Antivirus Software: Antivirus software is designed to prevent malicious software programs from embedding on your computer. If it detects malicious code, like a virus or a worm, it works to disarm or remove it.

- Install or Update Your Antispyware Technology: Spyware is software that is surreptitiously installed on your computer to let others peer into your activities on the computer. Some operating systems offer free spyware protection, and inexpensive software is readily available for download on the Internet or at your local computer store. Be wary of ads on the Internet offering downloadable antispyware

- Keep Your Operating System Up to Date: Computer operating systems are periodically updated to stay in tune with technology requirements and to fix security holes. Be sure to install the updates to ensure your computer has the latest protection.

- Be Careful What You Download: Never open an e-mail attachment from someone you don't know. Be wary of forwarded attachments from people you do know. They may have accidentally sent malicious code.

- Turn Off Your Computer: With the growth of high-speed Internet connections, many opt to leave their computers on and ready for action. The downside is that being "always on" renders computers more susceptible. Beyond firewall protection, which is designed to fend off unwanted attacks, turning the computer off effectively severs an attacker's connection.



Full Ads

The History of Marine Corps Recruit Training

www.tecom.usmc.mil

For most of the Marine Corps' history, there was no highly structured program of instruction for Marine recruits, such as we know today. Only in the last 90 years have there been centralized recruit depots with the mission of transforming civilians into basically trained Marines prepared to perform on the battlefield.

Early Marine recruit training was conducted at various posts and stations by noncommissioned officers who trained recruits in the "principles of military movements" and the use of the rifle. Commandant Franklin Wharton, who led the Corps from 1804 until his death in 1818, was the first to recognize the need for organized training and created a school for Marine recruits at the Marine Barracks in Washington where young men learned the basics of discipline, drill, the manual of arms and marksmanship.

The sea-going nature of the Marine Corps, however, coupled with the recurring shortages of money and men, kept the Marine Corps system for training recruits quite primitive throughout the 19th century. In 1911, however, Major General William P. Biddle, 11th Commandant of the Marine Corps, instituted some sweeping changes that



Lance Cpl. Crystal J. Druery

Sgt. Daniel C. Downing, drill instructor, Company G., 2nd Recruit Training Battalion motivates recruit Aaron G. Real, Co. G, 2nd RTBn. during an inventory physical fitness test March 5 aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego.

would have profound and long-lasting effects on the training of Marines.

On assuming command of the Corps, Biddle made two months of recruit training mandatory and set up four recruit training depots – at Philadelphia, Norfolk (later at Port Royal, South Carolina), Puget Sound, Washington, and Mare Island, California. Mare Island became the sole west coast depot during the following year, and east coast recruit training was shifted to Parris Island, South Carolina, in 1915. The training program Biddle outlined included drill, physical exercise, personal combat, and intensive marksmanship qualification with the recently-adopted M1903 Springfield rifle.

General Biddle's innovation met its first real test during World War I when the Corps expanded from about 15,000 to nearly 70,000 Marines in less than 18 months. During that period, the recruit training load expanded from 835 to a peak of 13,286. Living conditions at both depots were Spartan and the training was intense. Upon completion of recruit training, Marines received

**For full story, visit
yuma.usmc.mil**

1/2 Ads

Sahaiti Camel Farm

Lance Cpl. Sean Dennison
Desert Warrior Staff

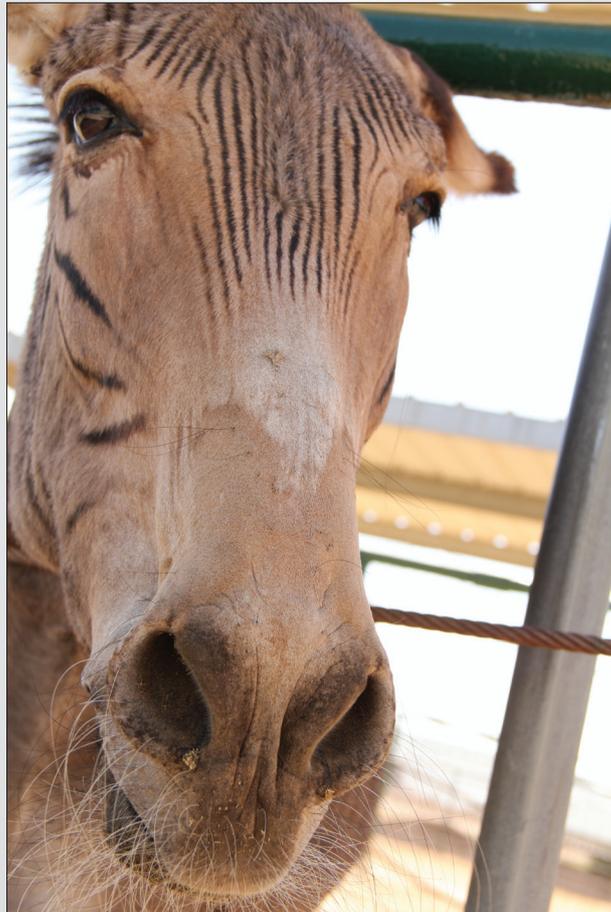
Every city has hidden gems, including Yuma. Sahaiti Camel Farm seems more like fool's gold.

Not that the place is a bad time, quite the opposite, just a camel farm is the last thing I expected to find in Yuma, though in retrospect it makes sense. I mean environment wise.

Admission is cheap, only \$5 for adults and cheaper for the kids, with a \$1 getting you a full cup of animal food. From there you're free to explore the farm.

Boasting one of the largest camel herds in North America, as well as several different species of animals, the camel farm is a perfectly enjoyable outing for families and friends.

I'm not too sure what else there is to say, if you like camels (or ostriches, emus, wallaroos, rooster, bunnies, mini hinnies or zeedonks), then you need to get out there.



Photos by Lance Cpl. Sean Dennison



Book Review: The Old Man's Trail

Cpl. Jakob Schulz
Desert Warrior Staff

In Tom Campbell's debut novel, *The Old Man's Trail*, deals with the journey of a North Vietnamese supply platoon down a torturous 650-mile trail.

Campbell, a retired Marine colonel who served in Vietnam, tells the story through the eyes of combat-hardened platoon leader Pham Van Duan, who must lead a band of new recruits, laden with critical cargo, to the end of the trail.

Along the way, the soldiers encounter dangerous terrain, jungle predators, shortages of food and medicine and the hovering presence of the American enemy.

Campbell is a competent storyteller who observes most of the standard war novel conventions, including an emphasis on action at the expense of character development. This slows the story, especially in its first half, as the drama of the platoon's difficulties barely balances a multitude of stereotypes and overly familiar scenes.

The novel's latter half, however, races along after an American attack traps Duan and his charges between a group of deadly U.S. planes and North Vietnamese forces seeking to shoot them down.

Throughout, Campbell offers an excellent analysis of tactical issues, and with richer characters the novel might have been a genre stand-out; in any case, it's of note as one of the few American-written books to tell of the Vietnam war from the eyes of the Vietnamese.

I have to say Campbell's book is extremely well written. The narrative is amazing, bringing the reader into the mysterious maze of the Viet Cong supply route that subverted the powerful

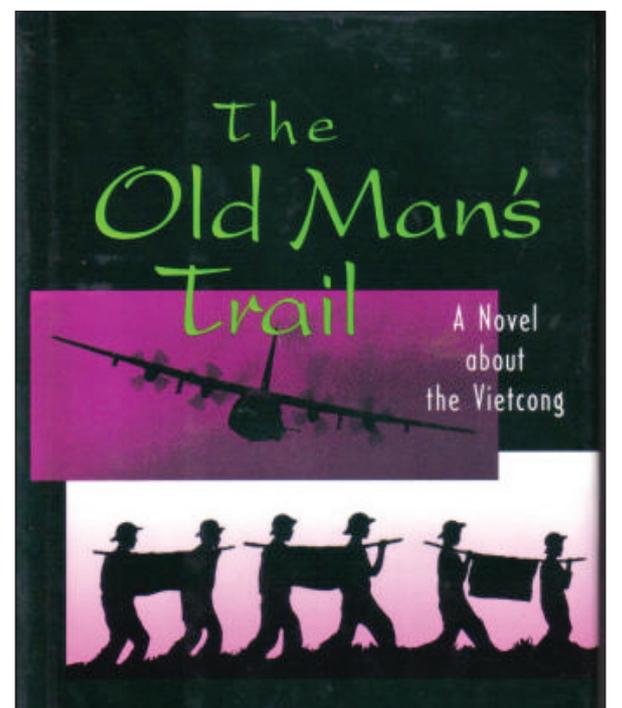
bombing capacities of the U.S. military.

It is written from the eyes of the teenagers conscripted into military duty, beginning with their grueling boot camp and their seasoned drill instructor. Scenes of the trail are splendidly presented, and readers will find themselves caught up in the suspense of the outcome.

The book also keenly observes the minutia details that play into the larger wartime perspective.

Campbell isn't overly sympathetic to either side, but humanly presents the gritty daily decisions both sides were forced to make.

I would recommend the book to anyone interested in the Vietnam War and is looking for a perspective of the war from the other side.



Courtesy photo by bookmine.com

Opinion: Service over sourness

Cpl. Jakob Schulz
Desert Warrior Staff

I often hear Marines talk of how hard their lives are, how they never get any assistance and no one is there to help them with their problems.

What I think is happening is that Marines don't understand or know about what kind of services are offered to them, mostly free, from the Marine Corps.

For single Marines living in the barracks and think they have nothing to do in Yuma except drink alcohol, play video games and complain, I only have three words; the Single Marine Program. This program is a godsend for the lonely Marine. With it you get discounted trips, like a trip to Las Vegas that would most likely cost you upwards of \$200 just to get there and spend two nights and that's just gas and lodging.

The same trip with the SMP costs around \$65, including a ride to and from the strip as well a hotel.

If trips aren't your thing but exercising is, the station's gym also offers a variety of programs, free of charge, to all Marines as well as family members. Need to lose weight or pack on some muscle? The gym's personal trainers are there, as well as a health assessment on how to eat better and stay fit and trim.

For the Marines who have tied the knot, the Marine Corps Family Team Building team is there for you, offering plenty of opportunities to go on couples' retreats, and family building exercises.

For families and single Marines looking for a bit more fun, Arizona Adventures offers float downs on the river, canoes, kayaks and a multitude of other items for rent at a great price.

In essence, the Corps offers everything to Marines, all they have to do is ask or put in a little effort to find it. However, more often than not, Marines decide that they'll just complain and live lives that could be monumentally better.

Station softball gets serious

Cpl. Shelby Shields
Desert Warrior Staff

Intramural sports, like softball, have been a means of building camaraderie among units Marine Corps-wide for decades, by getting Marines out of the office and offering a fun way to get to know one another.

For the Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 13 cryogenics team, the Master Batters, it's much more than just having fun.

"We're probably the most competitive team on station," said Josh Wright, team pitcher and assistant coach. "It's the fact that we are so competitive that makes it fun."

Softball seasons consist of two parts, regular season games and tournaments, ultimately ending in the station championships.

As the station's reigning Intramural Softball Champions, the team's competitive nature seems to be paying off, earning them a six and one record so far this season.

"Our biggest rivals are ordinance and we've only lost to them once," said Drew Stringer, 1st baseman and team head coach. "Sometimes it starts rivalries with other teams in the squadron and around base, but it makes our section tighter."

Other crucial aspects to the team's success are their team unity, playing history and stringent selection process.

"Most of us are friends outside of work and sports," said Wright. "Most of us have been playing for years."

Many members of the team played baseball together, and a handful played on the Marine Corps Air Station Yuma team.

"We pick some of the new joins to come out with us," added Stringer. "It helps bring them closer to the unit, and we can train them to carry on

the legacy."

Training consists of two to three practices a week, focusing mostly on batting practice since most of the fielders have already played.

The team is now moving on to the tournaments, and hopes to bring home a second championship title.



Photos by Cpl. Shelby Shields

Right: Josh Wright, Master Batter's team pitcher and assistant coach, throws a strike during an intramural softball game against the Branch Medical Clinic Team, March 8 at the station softball field. Wright played on the team last season when they won the station softball championships.



Below: Drew Stringer, team first baseman and head coach, hits a base hit during an intramural softball game against the Branch Medical Clinic Team, March 8 at the station softball field. The team has two to three batting practices per week, helping them earn their six and one record so far this season.



1/2 Ads