

Desert **WARRIOR**



DOWNHILL DEVIL DOGS

February 2, 2012
Volume 11, Number 3

Single Marines hit fresh powder



THE HEIGHT OF WESTERN INSTALLATIONS

YUMA MARINES RECOGNIZED FOR SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE

A NEW TARGET PRESENTS ITSELF

VMFT-401 AND THE F-35B

THE FUTURE OF MCAS YUMA

STATION CO SPEAKS ON ONCOMING OPERATIONS



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PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Photo by Lance Cpl. Martin R. Egnash

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION NEW RIVER, N.C. -Marines from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 365 fly 8 MV-22B Ospreys in an echelon right formation on their way back to Marine Corps Air Station New River, Dec. 29. These eight Ospreys were some of the last aircraft to be tested out before the squadron goes on their deployment to Afghanistan. "This flight tests eight different aircraft," said Capt. Mark A. Stefanski, VMM-365 co-pilot. "We take them up and make sure they are in perfectly-good working order."

Desert *WARRIOR*

MCAS Yuma's Official Newspaper

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Commanding Officer

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Station Sergeant Major

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81-B-PXMh2s&feature=youtu.be>

MCAS Yuma Marines enjoy Leatherneck Comedy Tour.



<http://www.marines.mil/news/pages/marinestv.aspx?>

Marines learn from and teach Singaporean service members.

HOT VIDEOS OF THE WEEK



Front Page Photo Credit
Lance Cpl. Bill Waterstreet
Desert Warrior Staff

Quarterly Award Winners

H&HS

Cpl. Maxmillion Page - NCO of the quarter
Lance Cpl. Henry L. Lima - Marine of the quarter

VMA-311

Cpl. James D. Hall - NCO of the quarter
Cpl. Aaron J. Wald - Marine of the quarter

MAG-13

Sgt. Van Luong - NCO of the quarter
Lance Cpl. Bryan Graham - Marine of the quarter VMA-214

VMFT-401

Sgt. Robert D. Rauch - NCO of the quarter

MACS-1

Cpl. Andrew Colaiacomo - NCO of the quarter
Lance Cpl. Jason Reeves - Marine of the quarter



News to Use

JSF CONSTRUCTION ROAD/PARKING CLOSURE UPDATE

From Jan 27 to Feb. 20, 2012:

- Temporary Parking Plan on Vaupell and O'Neill St.
 - Partial closure of Loesch St. from O'Neill to Keith
- JSF construction will be taking place in several locations throughout the base over an extended period of time.

The POCs for any concerns are the resident officer in charge of construction (ROICC), Lt. Palrose at ext. 3423, JSF site activation task force (SATAF), Mr. Jon Botten at ext. 7403 or station I&L, CDR Sullivan at ext. 2071.

SCAM TARGETS FAMILIES OF DEPLOYED MILITARY MEMBERS

The American Red Cross has confirmed that a scam is currently taking place in which a caller, posing as a Red Cross agent, is contacting family members of deployed military members, reporting that their loved one has been killed in the line of duty and proceeds to ask for personal information to include the military member's social security number. Additionally, the caller also makes a request for money to be transferred to Red Cross to handle casualty requirements.

A Casualty Assistance Calls Officer (CACO) notifies the next of kin in the event of serious injury, illness or death of a Marine. This information will never come from the American Red Cross. The next of kin is the immediate family member(s) listed on the Marine's Record of Emergency Data (RED) form.

FREE WARRIOR SPA NIGHT

On Feb. 7, MCAS Yuma in coordination with MCCS will provide FREE massages, mini facials, hair consultation and makeup application to active duty Marines and Sailors (both males and females). These services will be offered by Lotus Day Spa. Registration for the event is required so please call (928)269-6544 for more information or to register today!

VOTING MADE EASY

Remember, voting assistance representatives are available on station to provide help with registering to vote, submitting absentee ballots if voting outside of Arizona or while deployed and answering any other questions about the voting process. Contact the Installation Voting Officer, Capt. Staci Reidinger at 928-269-3609, or visit www.fvap.gov to get started today.

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



What a purr-ty girl

Bobo is 6-year-old sweetie pie with a coat as white as sugar. She loves to cuddle and loves everyone. For more information about adopting, contact the Humane Society of Yuma at 928-782-1621.



5 Questions for the Station Post Office Clerk

David Ager

Q How does the process work?

A. I am a U.S. Postal Service employee, and this is a U.S. post office. When you come here, you get the same service as with any post office. We sell stamps, provide packaging, ship packages and provide patrons PO boxes. It's worth noting that if people come to the post office with packages ready to go, with a customs form, it will expedite their trip to the window.

Q. What do Marines deploying need to do in order to get their mail?

Whenever Marines deploy, there is a predeployment brief that outlines what must wives, girlfriends, boyfriends or friends do to get their packages shipped to their Marines. As well, the family readiness officers also provide the same information. They have a pretty well-oiled machine for that. There are, however, certain things that cannot be mailed out, and all packages must have customs orders.

Q. What is the post office's package acceptance policy?

A. We ask basic questions when you bring a package in. There are certain things you cannot mail overseas. For example, hand sanitizer: that's flammable. We have to refuse hand sanitizer. Those're things we look for. There are also special rules to tobacco we have to enforce, mailing only less than 10 ounces, due to the 2010 PACT Act.

Q. How much mail to you guys receive each day and is it distributed by hand?

A. The mail leaves from Phoenix and comes to Yuma. We hand process all mail to the right delivery points. If it's addressed to a PO Box, it goes there. If it's to a unit, we deliver it to the unit, though some units pick it up.

Q. For Marines who are PCSing or EASing what do they need to be aware of when checking out with Postal?

A. If somebody leaves and they don't notify the post office when they move, they won't get their mail, simple as that. We don't have an online database that keeps track of everyone's addresses. If you live in the barracks, in housing or out in town, you need to let us know where to forward your mail until your change of address kicks in. The post office policy is we hold onto mail for ten days before sending it back to sender. If it's not deliverable, it goes to our mail recovery center in Atlanta, Ga. Your personal privacy is important to us.

Yuma Marines among best in the West

Lance Cpl. Sean Dennison
Desert Warrior

Two station enlisted Marines received awards for their exemplary service to the Marine Corps at the San Diego Convention Center in California, Jan. 25.

Sgt. Paulina Alvarado, an Installation Personnel Administration Center quality assurance clerk and a native of El Paso, Texas and Cpl. Raymond Thiesen, a military policeman and a native of East Islip, N.Y., stood among approximately 100 other enlisted Marines and sailors recognized as Enlisted Superior Performers for Marine Corps Installations-West.

The ceremony, part of a convention hosted by the U.S. Naval Institute and the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association, comprised of Marines selected by their commands for attributes ranging from leadership abilities to dedication to the Corps' missions and traditions, Marines like Alvarado and Thiesen.

"I nominated both of these Marines for their unmatched professionalism held in concert with their potential for upward mobility and the immediate impact they have

on their Marines, their unit, and the Corps," said Sgt. Maj. William Wiseman, the Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron sergeant major.

But where do these two Marines come from?

Alvarado, who joined in 2006, had no idea she would eventually be recognized as a Marine to be emulated, much less the Corps existed back then.

"One of my very good friends had cancer, so he couldn't join," Alvarado said. "That's when I decided to join. Before that, I didn't know what the Marine Corps was."

For Thiesen's part, he joined the Corps later in life after working in construction. "It's the best," said Thiesen of his decision to join the Corps. "The most elite want to be in the Marine Corps."

"I floundered around for bit," he added. "I didn't want to live with regret."

Both Marines agree their decision has worked out for them, and then some.

"I've loved the people I've worked with," said Alvarado, who is in Yuma as her third duty station. "It's like a family away from family."

"I'm going to stay in as long as I'm enjoying myself," said Thiesen, who was selected for the station non-commissioned officer of the year in 2011. "If I'm in for 25 years and I'm still enjoying myself, so be it."

That the Marines were selected is evident of the command's faith in their abilities to smoothly navigate Corps life for both themselves and their Marines.

"It makes me feel really proud," said Alvarado. "I'm doing something right, and people are noticing. It gives you motivation to keep going and keep doing things right."

"It was nice to be in the company of people who take the Marine Corps very seriously," added Thiesen. "I like to be around Marines who are motivated."

With both Marines aiming their career trajectories toward Drill Instructor School, it is little surprise they both share the same philosophy on what makes a good Marine a good Marine.

"It's leading by example," said Alvarado. "Keep working hard for everything you want. Even if things don't go your way, you've got to keep pressing and go for it."

"Leading by example and being consistent," said Thiesen. "It's impossible to be an effective leader if you're a hypocrite."

On top of the accolades, both Marines are now members of the U.S. Naval Institute and the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association for one year. On top of that, both expect great things for themselves and their Marines in the years to come.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Sean Dennison

Sgt. Paulina Alvarado, left, an Installation Personnel Administration Center quality assurance clerk and a native of El Paso, Texas, and Cpl. Raymond Thiesen, a military policeman and a native of East Islip, N.Y., stand as their names are called during a recognition ceremony realizing Enlisted Superior Performers at the San Diego Convention Center, Jan. 25.

Military Service Organization News

The Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society consists of individuals who have been inducted into the Arizona Veterans Hall, their immediate family members, and the leadership of the Arizona Department of Veterans Services and the Unified Arizona Veterans. The AVHOF Society's goals are to form a bond of friendship and camaraderie among all inductees of the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame while continuing to serve the community, state, and country. The society also works to protect, uphold and preserve the dignity and honor of the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame at all times and on all occasions, while providing appropriate aid to all persons inducted to the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame, their widows or their children. Additionally the recipients work to inspire and stimulate our youth to become worthy citizens of our State and our Country, and foster and perpetuate service and patriotism to our State and the Nation while helping fellow veterans whenever and wherever possible.

The Graduates

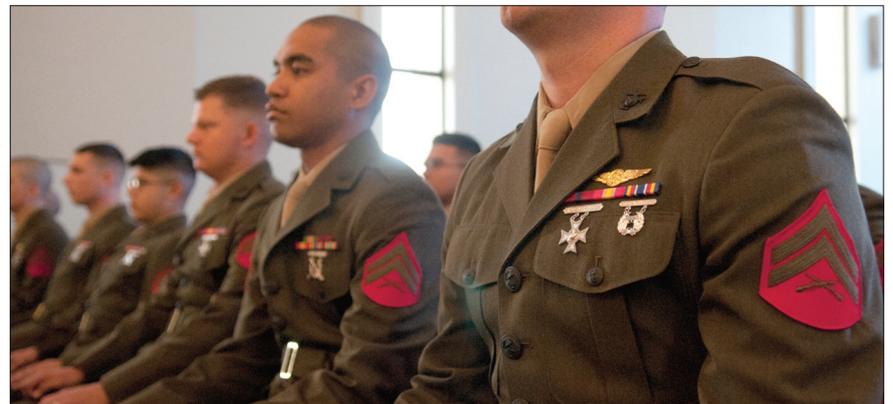


Photo by Lance Cpl. Sean Dennison

Corporal's Course Class 310-12 waits for their names to be called during the class' graduation ceremony at the station chapel, Jan. 27. The class completed four weeks of instruction designed to strengthen their leadership capabilities.

Station to be hit by Desert Impact Exercise

Cpl. Jakob Schulz
Desert Warrior Staff

The station's Mission Assurance Department is slated to hold an exercise testing the emergency response procedures on station Feb. 14.

The department is looking for volunteers from families on station to help in the exercise.

"We want them to come out and participate,"

said William Tait, installation emergency manager. "Their help will be of tremendous value to the station and units. We look forward to having them come and have some fun."

The exercise will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and encompass the area from Meyers Park to Victoria Ave. and up to the station identification center.

During these times the Branch Medical Clinic

will only offer limited services, the station chapel will be closed as well as the station ID center and the station legal center.

However, no roads will be closed and those living in Lincoln Military Housing will still be able to leave and return to their homes.

Those interested in volunteering should contact Tait at 928-269-6754 or go to the station theater at 2 p.m. on Feb. 7.

Leatherneck Comedy Tour entertains station

Lance Cpl. Sean Dennison
Desert Warrior Staff

Four performers with the Leatherneck Comedy and Entertainment Tour regaled station personnel at the Sonoran Pueblo on station, Jan. 27.

Rudy Rush, Bill Posley, Kimberly Cole and Alex Scott, in an event hosted through Marine Corps Community Services, kept Marines, sailors and civilians in high spirits with a combination of comedy, music and dance.

The performers are veterans of the entertainment circuit, with backgrounds including the Laff Mobb comedy troupe and the Def Jam Comedy Tour, as well as HBO and Showtime specials.

The tour, which includes installations in Japan and throughout the United States, is designed to boost morale while providing entertainment for service members.

"Troops are regular people," said Scott, who served with the Air Force for seven years. "When we take the uniform off, we're regular people."

Each performer draws upon different sources, be it the military lifestyle or subjective experiences with everyday life.

"Just live your life and have fun," said Scott. "You have to be serious at your job. You've got to let some steam off."

"It's giving them a sense of a good time," added Rush. "(Most service members) are a lot younger than people know, and they live a serious life."

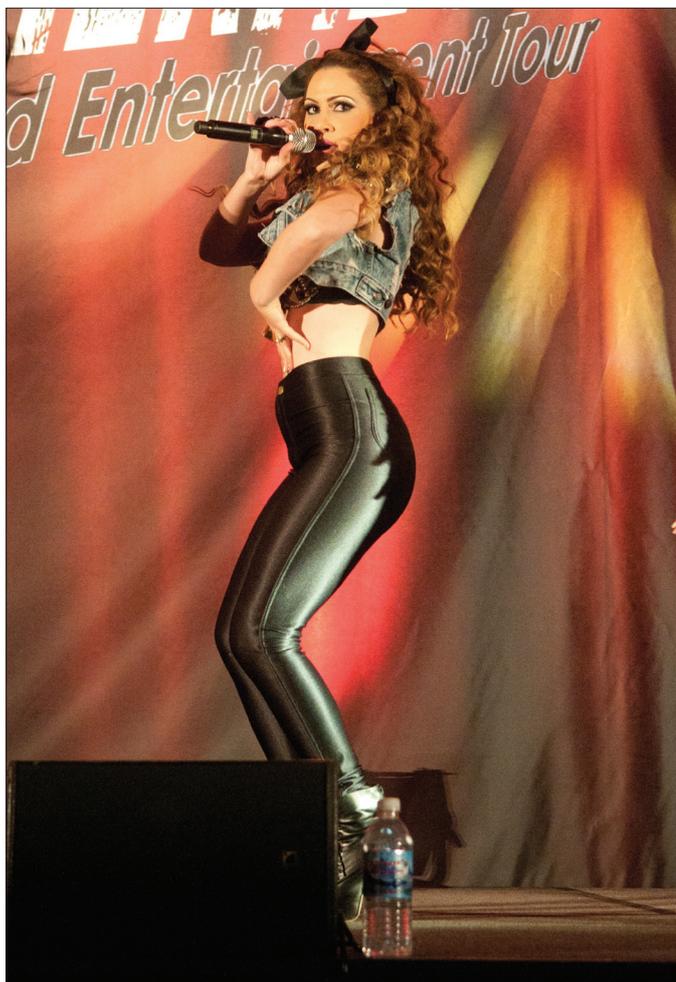
However, it was all laughs as the performers got on stage. Posley, who served in the Army National Guard, gave a humorous interpretation of Sgt. Maj. Karl Villalino, the station sergeant major, not requiring a microphone to make himself heard, while Rush expressed his desire for his nephew to join the service to increase his fitness.

Cole ended the event with a dance that required audience participation, with two Marines joining the stage and showing off their dance moves. The audience left with smiles, and the weekend seemed to kick off with good vibes.

"Awesome," said Cpl. Michael West, a Marine Attack Squadron 513 operations clerk. "That's all I've got to say."

"I did not think I'd laugh as hard as I did," added Cpl. Kelly McManus, a Marine Attack Squadron 513 embarkation specialist.

Marines carry great responsibilities. In that regard, the comedians do have advice for those tougher days. "You're a joke away from a better day," Rush said.



Photos by Lance Cpl. Sean Dennison

Clockwise from top left: Kimberly Cole, Rudy Rush, Bill Mosley and Rush entertain station Marines at the Sonoran Pueblo, Jan. 27, as part of the Leatherneck Comedy and Entertainment Tour. The event, hosted by Marine Corps Community Services, kept Marines, sailors and civilians in high spirits with a mix of comedy, music and dance.



Full Ads

Panetta Announces Fiscal 2013 Budget Priorities

Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

Spending priorities in the forthcoming fiscal 2013 defense budget request call for reductions in the end strength of the Army and Marine Corps, an increase in special operations forces and maintaining the number of big-deck carriers, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said here today.

The Pentagon's budget top line request is set at \$525 billion for fiscal 2013 with an additional \$88.4 billion for overseas contingency operations -- mostly in Afghanistan. This is down from \$531 billion and \$115 billion, respectively, in this fiscal year.

Defense Department officials used the new defense strategy guidance that President Barack Obama announced earlier this month to shape the budget request, the secretary said.

The budget seeks to minimize the impact of cuts on personnel accounts. Service members will receive their full pay raises in fiscal 2013 and 2014, Panetta said. "We will achieve some cost savings by providing more limited pay raises beginning in 2015," he added.

Health care is another important benefit, and one that has far outpaced inflation. Changes to health care will not affect active duty personnel or their families, Panetta said.

"We decided that to help control growth of health care costs, we are recommending increases in health care fees, co-pays and deductibles for retirees," he said. "But let me be clear that even after these increases, the cost borne by military retirees will remain below the levels in comparable private-sector plans."

Overall, the request puts DOD on the path to save \$259 billion over the next five years and \$487 billion over the next 10. Panetta called the budget "a balanced, complete package" that keeps the American military the pre-eminent force in the world.

It is a balanced package, the secretary said, because

while some programs are eliminated or delayed, others are increased. The budget looks to re-shape the military to be more agile, quick and flexible that incorporates the lessons learned in 10 years of war, he added.

Increasing the number of special operations forces is key to the plan, Panetta said, and special operators will begin to shift back to their traditional pre-9/11 mission of instructing local forces.

The request puts the Army on a path to drop to 490,000 soldiers and the Marine Corps to 182,000 Marines over five years. Currently, the two services have 562,000 and 202,000 active-duty members, respectively. The secretary noted this is still higher than the numbers on 9/11.

The budget treats the reserve components very carefully, Panetta said. After a decade of being an integral part of America's wars, the reserve components will not go back to being a strategic Cold War-era reserve. The reserves will be the nation's hedge against the unexpected, the secretary said.

"We are making only marginal reductions in the Army Reserve and Army National Guard, and no reductions in the Marine Corps Reserve," the secretary said. "The Air Force will make balanced reductions in the Air Guard that are consistent with reductions in the active component and Air Force Reserve."

The request also calls for more base realignments and closures, and a "BRAC-like" authority to recommend changes to military retirement. "But the president and department have made clear that the retirement benefits of those who currently serve will be protected by grandfathering their benefits," Panetta said.



DOD photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Chad J. McNeeley

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta and Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, brief the press on major budget decisions stemming from the defense strategic guidance at the Pentagon, Jan. 26, 2012.

**For full story, visit
<http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=65987>**

SNIPERS PREPARE TO TAKE AIM AT F-35

Cpl. Aaron Diamant
Desert Warrior Staff

While most Marine fighter and attack pilots are looking forward to transitioning to the new F-35B Lightning, one squadron's pilots will be flying against it rather than in it.

Also known as the Joint Strike Fighter, the F-35B is arguably the world's most advanced fifth-generation fighter, however Marine Fighter Training Squadron 401's pilots will fly against it in an airplane designed in the 1960s.

With greatly outdated avionics and radar, the Snipers' F-5 Tiger IIs are barely considered second-generation fighters, while newer and more advanced platforms like the F/A-18 and F-16 are considered 4th generation.

"What we lack in avionics, we make up for with wily pilots," quipped Maj. Eric Jessen, VMFT-401 pilot training officer.

The pilots do have experience flying against other fifth-generation fighters, namely the F-22 Raptor flown by the Air Force.

"What the F-5 is really great at is sortie generation," said Jessen. "We're a relatively low cost option to serve as a radar reflector for new pilots learning to fly their magic jets."

With its small stature, the F-5 can prove difficult for newer pilots to spot in visual engagements. While the newer aircraft's Doppler-pulse radars might be able to show the Tiger on the displays, it's still hard to spot and confirm

visually, said Jessen.

With no plans on transitioning to a new aircraft of upgrading their current fleet until at least the 2020s, the Snipers will continue to use their skill and flight experience to train new pilots in air-to-air engagements.

"We need a more advanced and capable fighter to truly test a fifth-generation fighter," said Jessen. "We need a 4th generation-plus fighter. We could update the F-5's avionics and radar and be a cost effective solution to provide a threat, but any new aircraft or upgrades have yet to be determined by Headquarters Marine Corps."

While some might argue the "dog fight" is no longer relevant with today's advanced radar and weaponry, the Snipers will continue to train their fellow pilots in the skills necessary to achieve air superiority against other fighter aircraft.

"Back in Desert Storm, the Air Force did a great job at the onset of the war," said Jessen. "They didn't achieve air superiority, they achieved air supremacy. That's a large reason why they Iraqis buried their jets instead of launching against us in Operation Iraqi Freedom. But that doesn't mean it won't happen again. Someday, somebody will launch against us again, so somebody needs to maintain and pass on those skill sets. We'll continue to pass the torch on for when those skills are needed."

VMFT-401 has been providing air-to-air training since the 80s and will continue well into the future.

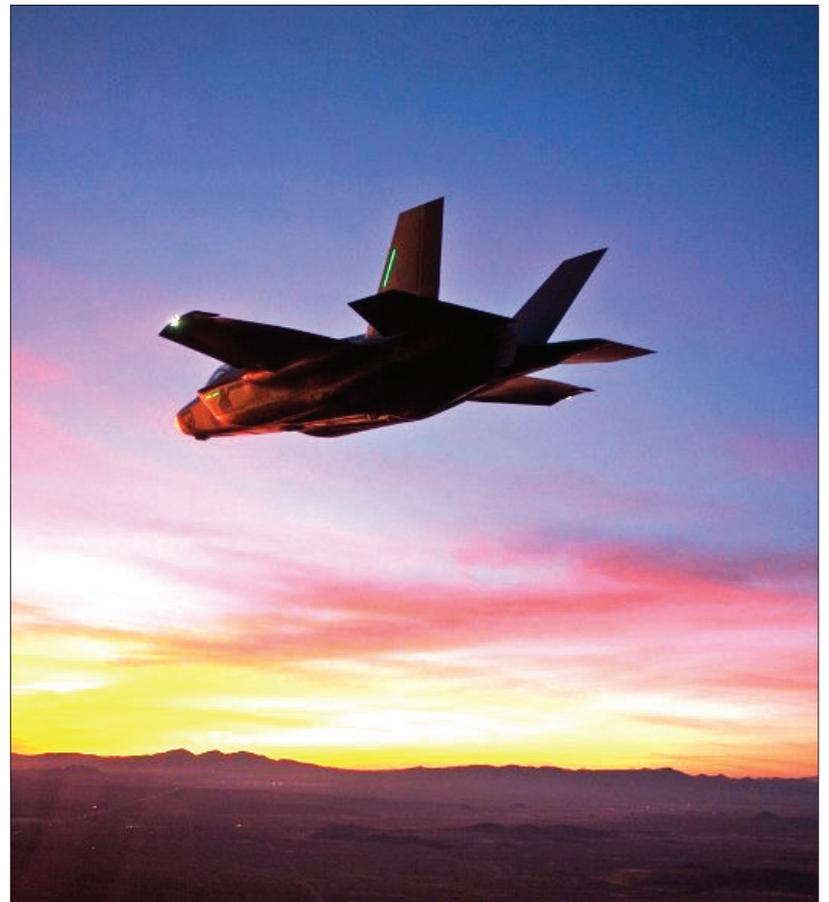


Photo by Lockheed Martin

An F-35B Lightning II soars overhead the country pilots will use the aircraft to protect.

1/2 Ads

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

"Honor, Courage, Commitment"

Lt. Greg Woodard, Station Chaplain

In my role as a Station Chaplain, I have the joy of welcoming Marines to the station and of providing counseling to many of them. Each time I meet with a young Marine, I remind them that the decision that they make today will affect their future. I get a nod of agreement, and a statement of understanding this.

I generally proceed to tell the Marines that as a 40ish year old chaplain, I have the advantage of being able to look back on the 20 years that have gone by since I began my 20s. I can see the results of decisions made – both good results and bad results.

Each time I meet to counsel someone, I listen carefully to the issues that are of concern to them.

I listen to decisions that were made that provide a foundation to their current concerns. In my experience, there is a general lack of consideration about how the decisions made in the moment may affect the future. I often find that there is little in the way of guiding principles that provide a framework for making decisions.

I'd like to offer three guiding principles that all of us who serve on the Navy / Marine Corps team are aware of: Honor, Courage, and Commitment. Honor is living with integrity, responsibility, and accountability. Are we honest in our dealings with others? Is our word our bond? Do we take responsibility for our actions and do we have people in our lives to whom we can be accountable?

Courage is doing the right thing, in the right way, for the right reasons. Do we cut corners in trying to move our careers ahead? Are we willing to compromise our standards in order to make ourselves look good?

Commitment is devotion to our organization and to our fellow Marines & Sailors. Do we live by the motto of treating others as you would have them treat you? Do we demonstrate this commitment by our words and actions?

I believe that if we will commit to living according to the principles of honor, courage and commitment that our chances of making decisions that will positively affect our future will be greatly enhanced.

REGISTER AND REQUEST YOUR BALLOT FOR UPCOMING PRIMARIES

Go to FVAP.gov and get started! It only takes a few minutes!

All members of the U.S. Uniformed Services, their family members, and citizens residing outside the U.S. who are residents from these States should submit an FPCA for these elections by going to the FVAP.gov web portal or by following the instructions in the Voting Assistance Guide, also available at FVAP.gov.

Be sure you include an email address, phone number, and/or fax number on your absentee ballot application in case your local election official needs to contact you. Remember, many States allow you to submit your form electronically, and deliver your ballot electronically or provide online ballot access. Go to FVAP.gov or your State's election website to see how you can return your form.

To find out the status of your registration/absentee ballot request, contact your local election office at <http://www.fvap.gov/shortcuts/wheresendfpca.html>, or visit your State website.

Vote the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

The FWAB is a backup ballot. If 30 days before the election (or longer based on your geographic location) you think you will not receive your State ballot in time to vote and return it (especially in February Primary States), vote the FWAB at FVAP.gov. The FWAB is also available in embassies and consulates and military installations around the world.

Additional Information

Check your State's election website for specific information on candidates, elections, contact information, and links to your local election offices. Find your State's website at FVAP's web portal: <http://www.fvap.gov/reference/links.html>.

1/2 Ads

Single Marines Hit snowboarding scene

Lance Cpl. Bill Waterstreet
Desert Warrior Staff

At 1 a.m., Jan. 29, nine Marines stood around a campfire in the freezing cold. The only light in the sea of black was the warm glow of the flickering, orange flames. Music filled the chill air at the top of an 8,000 foot mountain. The aroma of pepper steak roasting over the fire drifted on the night breeze as the group laughed and talked the hours away. Most of these Marines had met only the day before, but that would be impossible to tell by looking at them.

This was the scene during the Single Marine Program's Big Bear Mountain snowboarding trip. This was the first SMP experience for many of the Marines who embarked on the trip. The program resides on MCAS Yuma as an underutilized resource for the rest, relaxation and recovery of Marines.

"A lot of Marines shy away from the recreation center, because they think it's just Marines from Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course, Temporary Assigned Duty and other units not from here who come to the rec center," said Eric Cabalbag, a recreation assistant with SMP and a native of San Diego. "Not a lot of people know about what we offer."

SMP just held a dodge ball tournament before the skiing trip and is slated to host a flag football tournament Feb. 29. The SMP recreation center will also be having a Super Bowl party, Feb. 5. In addition, there will be another skiing trip to Flagstaff, Ariz., Feb. 24, and details are being worked out for a possible shuttle once every other weekend for day trips to San Diego.

"We're here for you," said Cabalbag. "The individual Marine is extremely important. You support (America), so we support you. SMP exists to be a home away from home for Marines."

"The reason we do these trips is for morale, to help Marines get out and relieve some stress," said Cabalbag. "The trips provide more freedom to unwind. Marines go through a stressful week, and if you want to release some tension, this takes you out of your workspace and helps you relax."

There is no excuse for skipping SMP events as most are free, and the ones that aren't are less expensive due to the subsidizing Marine Corps Community Services provides.

Even lack of experience did not deter many of the Marines who journeyed to Big Bear Mountain. The majority of those present had never stepped on a board or ski before, but nevertheless hit everything the mountain had to offer.

"It's well worth the money," said Lance Cpl. Sean Jevicky, a target repairman with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron range maintenance and a native of Huntington Beach, Calif. "The cabins are nice, and the travel is free. It's great to be out with a group of people where there's always someone to hang out with."

"The trip is calming, soothing and relaxing, except when you're falling," said Jevicky.

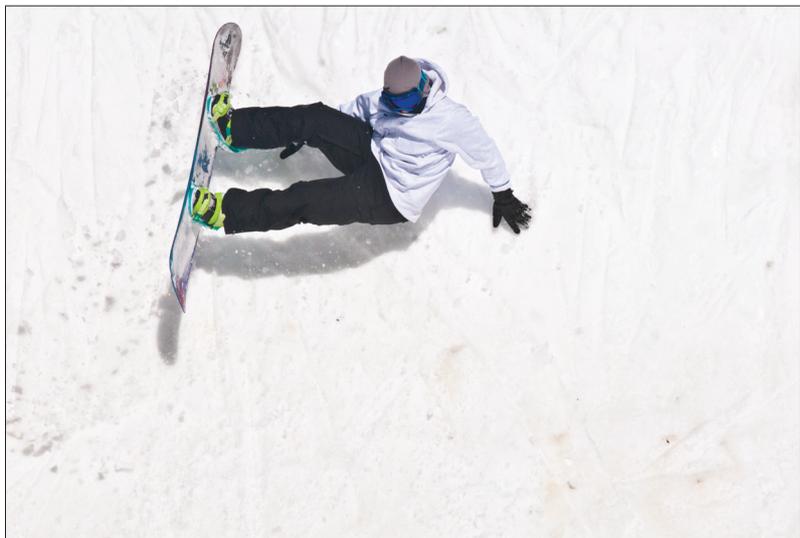
Personally, this mini-vacation through SMP made for one of the best weekends I have experienced since coming to Yuma. I know now that I will be taking a much more active part in SMP, and that this is just the tip of the iceberg for the events I will take part in. I highly recommend the activities provided by the Single Marine Program to anyone who is looking for things to do.



Photos by Lance Cpl. Bill Waterstreet



Top left: Lance Cpl. Yshurun Ayly, an air-traffic-control communications technician with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, and a native of Parker, Col., cuts across a black diamond slope on Big Bear Mountain, Calif., Jan. 28. Above: Cpl. Josh Paulkapahuilima Huitt, left, Cpl. Able G. Aaron and Cpl. Bryant E. Cabezas, hydraulic and diesel mechanics with Marine Aircraft Logistics Squadron 13, sit at the top of a run relaxing and preparing to begin their ride down Big Bear Mountain, Calif., Jan. 28. Scenes like these were common during the Single Marine Program's snowboard trip in Big Bear, Calif. For many Marines this would be the first time embarking on such an adventure.



The MCAS Yuma Single Marine Program hosted a snowboard trip to Big Bear Mountain in California, Jan. 27-29. Marines from squadrons across station spent the weekend in white, some on a snowboard for the first time, others using their veteran experiences to tear up the slopes. "It's well worth the money," said Lance Cpl. Sean Jevicky, a target repairman with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron range maintenance and a native of Huntington Beach, Calif. "The cabins are nice, and the travel is free. It's great to be out with a group of people where there's always someone to hang out with."

Clockwise from top left: Lance Cpl. Yshurun Ayly, a Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron air-traffic-control communications technician, and a native of Parker, Col., prepares to land after taking on a near vertical jump. Cpl. Josh Paulkapahuilima Huitt, a Marine Aircraft Logistics Squadron 13 hydraulic and diesel mechanic, and a native of Porter, Texas, catches air off of a jump. Jevicky lays on top of Ayly after colliding with him at low speeds. Jevicky prepares to grind a ramp with his snowboard. Jevicky prepares to land after taking on a near vertical jump.

Full Ads

Help Preparing Your Tax Return

Mycreditunion.gov

Resources are available for individuals who need assistance preparing their tax returns, including free tax preparation services for those who qualify. In addition, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) offers a wide range of free tax help services.

Getting Organized

Before preparing your taxes, take the time to organize your paystubs, W-2 forms sent from your employers, tax statements sent by banks or credit unions and other important documents. This will not only help you with preparing your taxes, but a good habit to maintain while managing your finances.

Free Tax Return Assistance

Qualified individuals can seek assistance from a free tax assistance program. These programs offer help to low-to moderate-income individuals, military and the elderly.

Paid Tax Return Preparer

If you prefer to have your tax return prepared by a paid tax return preparer, the IRS offers Tips for Choosing a Tax Return Preparer.

Additional Resources

For more information regarding tax preparation:

- www.irs.gov
- IRS Publication 17, Your Federal Income Tax (wealth of information for individual taxpayers)
- IRS Forms and Publications

CO PSA: The Invisible Killer

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Carbon monoxide, also known as CO, is called the "Invisible Killer" because it's a colorless, odorless, poisonous gas.

More than 150 people in the United States die every year from accidental non-fire related CO poisoning associated with consumer products. These products include faulty, improperly-used or incorrectly-vented fuel-burning appliances such as furnaces, stoves, water heaters and fireplaces.

Never use portable generators inside your home, garage, basement or shed. CO from a generator can kill your family in minutes. Only use them outside and far away from windows, doors and vents.

Keep charcoal grills outside where they belong. Never use a charcoal grill in the house or garage. They can produce lethal levels of carbon monoxide.

To protect your family from deadly carbon monoxide, see our Safety Tips.

Safety Tips

- Have your home heating systems (including chimneys and vents) inspected and serviced annually by a trained service technician.
- Never use portable generators inside homes or garages, even if doors and windows are open. Use generators outside only, far away from the home.
- Never bring a charcoal grill into the house for heating or cooking. Do not barbecue in the garage.
- Never use a gas range or oven for heating.
- Open the fireplace damper before lighting a fire and keep it open until the ashes are cool. An open damper may help prevent build-up of poisonous gases inside the home.
- Install battery-operated CO alarms or CO alarms with battery backup in your home outside separate sleeping areas.
- Know the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning: headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, sleepiness, and confusion. If you suspect CO poisoning, get outside to fresh air immediately, and then call 911.

Know the Symptoms of CO Poisoning

- Because CO is odorless, colorless, and otherwise undetectable to the human senses, people may not know that they are being exposed. The initial symptoms of low to moderate CO poisoning are similar to the flu (but without the fever). They include:
 - Headache
 - Fatigue
 - Shortness of breath
 - Nausea
 - Dizziness
- High level CO poisoning results in progressively more severe symptoms, including:
 - Mental confusion
 - Vomiting
 - Loss of muscular coordination
 - Loss of consciousness
 - Ultimately death

LEAVING THE CORPS

Veterans preference in Federal jobs

defense.gov

Veterans' Preference gives eligible veterans preference in appointment over many other applicants. Veterans' preference applies, to virtually all new appointments in both the competitive and excepted service. Veterans' preference does not guarantee veterans a job and it does not apply to internal agency actions such as promotions, transfers, reassignments and reinstatements.

Only veterans discharged or released from active duty in the armed forces under honorable conditions are eligible for veterans' preference. This means you must have been discharged under an honorable or general discharge.

If you are a "retired member of the armed forces" you are not included in the definition of preference eligible unless you are a disabled veteran OR you retired below the rank of major or its equivalent.

Two things that make you eligible are the following

1. 180 or more consecutive days, any part of which occurred during the period beginning September 11, 2001 and ending on a future date prescribed by Presidential proclamation or law.
2. Have a service connected disability, OR received a Purple Heart.

STDs & Pregnancy

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

When a woman is pregnant STDs can be more serious for her and her baby.

- A pregnant woman with an STD can infect her baby before, during, or after the baby's birth.
- She may also have early labor or early rupture of the membranes surrounding the baby in the uterus.
- Pregnant women should ask their doctors about getting tested for STDs, since some doctors do not routinely perform these tests.

Can pregnant women become infected with STDs?

- Yes, women who are pregnant can become infected with the same sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) as women who are not pregnant. Pregnancy does not provide women or their babies any protection against STDs. The consequences of an STD can be significantly more serious, even life threatening, for a woman and her baby if the woman becomes infected with an STD while pregnant. It is important that women be aware of the harmful effects of STDs and know how to protect themselves and their children against infection.

How do STDs affect a pregnant woman and her baby?

STDs can have many of the same consequences for pregnant women as women who are not pregnant. STDs can cause cervical and other cancers, chronic hepatitis, pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility, and other complica-

tions. Many STDs in women are silent; that is, without signs or symptoms.

STDs can be passed from a pregnant woman to the baby before, during, or after the baby's birth. Some STDs (like syphilis) cross the placenta and infect the baby while it is in the uterus (womb). Other STDs (like gonorrhea, chlamydia, hepatitis B, and genital herpes) can be transmitted from the mother to the baby during delivery as the baby passes through the birth canal. HIV can cross the placenta during pregnancy, infect the baby during the birth process, and unlike most other STDs, can infect the baby through breastfeeding.

Can STDs be treated during pregnancy?

- Chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, trichomoniasis, and bacterial vaginosis (BV) can be treated and cured with antibiotics during pregnancy. There is no cure for viral STDs, such as genital herpes and HIV, but antiviral medication may be appropriate for pregnant women with herpes and definitely is for those with HIV. For women who have active genital herpes lesions at the time of delivery, a cesarean delivery (C-section) may be performed to protect the newborn against infection. C-section is also an option for some HIV-infected women. Women who test negative for hepatitis B may receive the hepatitis B vaccine during pregnancy.

- For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/std.

Full Ads

A tribute to Black History Month

by Sgt. Michael T. Knight

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. — The United States celebrates February as Black History Month by recognizing the many contributions made by African-Americans throughout history.

Although blacks were brought to America as slaves, many African-Americans contributed to the foundation of American society. One of the most prestigious contributions included serving as Marines.

“We didn’t learn much about black history growing up,” said Maj. Gen. Anthony L. Jackson, Marine Corps Installations West commanding general. “But, we did learn how slaves help to build America.”

Although the Marine Corps would not officially accept African-Americans until World War II, a few documented blacks did serve as Marines on land and aboard ships during the American Revolution, according to the book, “African-Americans in the Revolutionary War” by Army Lt. Col. Michael Lee Lanning.

A total of 13 veterans from that era are identified on the Marine Corps’ roster as black.

At least one black Marine by the name of John Martin died in action, aboard the brig Reprisal in 1777.

Martin was a slave who was recruited into the Continental service without his owner’s knowledge in April 1776, according to an article in the “Black Collegian.”

After America earned its independence, it would be more than 150 years before blacks were officially allowed to join the Corps.

The country was still segregated during that time. Therefore, the first official black Marines trained separate from other recruits at Montford Point Camp, N.C., from 1942 until President Truman signed an executive order to force full integration of the United States in 1949. A total of 20,000 blacks trained at the camp.

Today, African-Americans represent approximately 11 percent of the Marine Corps, according to a recent demographic profile of the U. S. military.

The U.S. Census Bureau most recent report shows that 12.8 percent of the U.S. population is made up of black Americans. Therefore, African-Americans are well represented in the Corps today.

“Over the time I have served, I’ve been able to witness the Marine Corps diversify, especially in the senior enlisted ranks,” said Jackson. “When I first joined in 1975 there were no black generals.”

Today, Jackson is one of four major generals and approximately 27 percent of the Marine Corps sergeants major are black.

“I feel proud to be part of an organization that is always striving to do the right thing,” said Jackson, who has served 35 years.

America has made many strides towards equality; from the uncomfortable truth of having slaves that served, to now having a black commander-in-chief.

“The creation of Black History Month helped to sensitize the whole nation that African-Americans have a role in society,” said Jackson.



Photo by Sgt. Michael T. Knight

Sgt. Togai Y. Andrews, administrative law noncommissioned officer in charge, Marine Corps Installations West, Camp Pendleton, renders honors to the American flag with a salute, at bldg. 1160, Feb. 10. As the United States celebrates February as Black History Month, the Marine Corps recognize the many African-Americans who served as Marines.

1/2 Ads

CREDO Marriage Retreat

Cpl. Jolene Bopp
Desert Warrior Staff

The CREDO Marriage Enrichment Retreat, a program provided by Marine Corps Family Team Building, was offered in Yuma for the first time Jan. 28-29.

CREDO, normally offered in the Camp Pendleton, Cal. area, has multiple retreat opportunities. The purpose of the MER is to provide Marines and their spouse tools to effectively communicate appreciation, concerns and dreams. The retreat was not a therapy or counseling session.

I have been with my spouse for three years and I am already realizing my marriage will quickly crumble without properly communicating with each other. We, yes both of us, decided to try out the marriage enrichment retreat. How could it be bad, free lodging at a beautiful hotel, free food, time together and local?

In the beginning, being a dual military couple, my husband and I joked about death by power point when the retreat first started. Fortunately that lasted only a few minutes and we began learning about the importance of communicating.

One couple shared their concern about video games. She told her husband she didn't like his personality when he played video games. The tools allowed her to calmly explain that she just wanted to spend more time with him and felt like she couldn't because his competitive personality over powered their relationship. At the end of the discussion the technique allowed them to come to a compromise and hopefully ended that fight.

The techniques were taught step by step to ensure no one was ranting or belittling each other. My husband enjoyed the techniques because they helped him untangle his thoughts and tell me when I interrupt him or tell him to get to the point, it makes him feel inadequate and his feelings are ultimately irrelevant.

The tools given helped me realize how much I ignore what he tries to tell me and helped me figure out exactly what he was trying to say. I see everything as a problem needing to be solved. I want the conversation to be direct and to the point. Behaving this way makes him shut down and causes me to grow distant because of lack of communication.

One of the most important things I realized during the retreat was learning my husband's love language. Love Languages are acts that make a person feel loved. Some people enjoy receiving words of affirmation and others feel loved by acts of service. By using your own love language you are not fulfilling your partner's needs.

The practices seemed silly, uncomfortable and probably something we wouldn't realistically use on a day to day basis but it did bring awareness to the both of us.

Though there are some events that the military provides that do not seem relevant this one is definitely worth going to. Whether you are in a healthy marriage or on the verge of being aired on "Snapped" I believe there is a little something for everyone willing to help their marriage.

The next Yuma CREDO is in the works for spring 2012. For questions about CREDO opportunities contact the Chaplains office at 928-269-2371.

The Grey "Movie Review"

Lance Cpl. Sean Dennison
Desert Warrior Staff

I don't usually go for the survival thriller films. The situations allow viewers to live vicariously through the characters facing the elements. And yet, the characters always seem to have a reserve of almost supernatural energy waiting to be tapped into, nullifying the realism most directors strive toward.

Call me a convert after seeing *The Grey*.

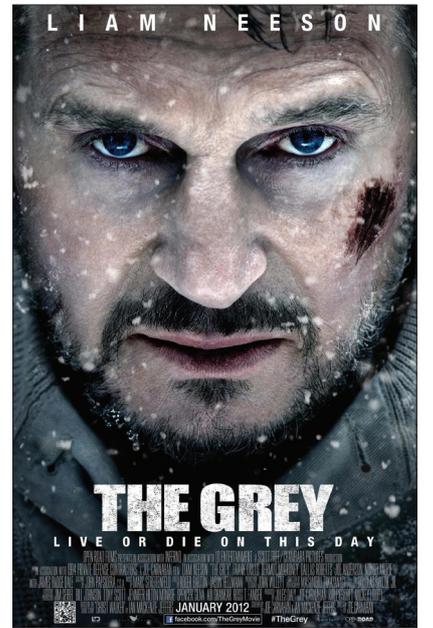
I love Liam Neeson, as Ottway. The film catches Ottway at a particularly low point: he puts his own gun in his mouth, ready to end it all but not quite ready enough. This man has demons, weaknesses. The next thing we know, he's on a plane, back to civilization with a band of oil workers, which

then crashes into the wilderness, leaving only a few passengers alive.

What follows isn't a tale of human endurance, but of nature's tenacity to test man.

While Ottway is the most fleshed out character (how are you going to steal a scene from Neeson?), each actor displays their strengths by showing weakness on screen. The carnivorous antagonists aren't even human, which is terrifying: these wolves are acting on instinct, but they're intelligent and the men are in their world.

The movie provides enough action and drama to satisfy the needs of the casual movie goer and provide ample discussion for the more intellectual critic. Performance-wise, Neeson is in top form, melding fear, hope and strength into one character that the director skillfully restrains until the end.



moviereview.com courtesy photo

The Grey is an exciting tale of survival, with a sympathetic protagonist and a surprising philosophical agenda. Gruesome at times, and sometimes suffering from cliché movie conventions, the film nonetheless provides the thrill people seek in survival films with little of the grueling optimism so often found in them.

Don't judge a comic by its cover

Lance Cpl. Bill Waterstreet
Desert Warrior Staff

What is considered art has come a long way through history. From the cave paintings of Prehistoric men to the Parthenon to television and movies today, great art has electrified the soul and shined light on aspects of the human condition we scarcely knew existed.

Today, our most prevalent and mainstream forms of art are television, film and music. In these mediums are some of the greatest works of our time. Sadly, much of what is popularized today is pure entertainment with no deeper thought behind it. Jersey Shore comes to mind.

Fortunately, beautiful art still exists in lesser known or lesser respected mediums. The works of art that have appeared in video games, anime, manga and comics have been looked down upon by large portions of society as being nerdy or childish. The truth is these creations have been equal or greater in their intelligence, creativity and emotional connection than the works that appear in more mainstream media.

Most of these works dwell in the realm of science fiction or fantasy, and while those genres have since their beginnings been masters of societal commentary, such as the novels *1984* or *Brave New World*, many people undervalue them due to their departure from reality.

Anyone older than 30 remembers the beginnings of many of these forms of media and has the original impression left by Super Mario resounding in his mind. The creations of today are a far cry from their humble origins.

Comic books and graphic novels have been around for decades and today the image that comes to mind when someone says comic reader is the overweight 40-year-old who lives with his mother. This is a sad stereotype because many graphic novels of today are written better and have more in depth plots than the vast majority of contemporary novels.

Many graphic novels have been adapted to movies and television shows, which take up their plot lines and have been largely successful. The vast majority of superhero based television and movies, *300*, *Blade*, *The Road to Perdition*, *Unbreakable* and *The Walking Dead* have all been based on the stories and art of graphic novels.

Manga is the term for the Japanese counterpart to American comics, and anime is television or motion picture

animation, often an adaptation of manga. Large numbers of Americans look down on these arts, but in Japan the mindset is completely different. Japanese of all ages read manga, and anime has become widely accepted in the past few decades. These art forms emerged as central to Japanese culture during and after the U.S. occupation and are as respected in the East as television is in the West.

There is no reason for us as a developed society to turn away from an art form just because it is reminiscent of the cartoons our children watch. Animation does not mean a product is meant only for children or that it lacks intelligence. Manga and anime have become a style of storytelling that is as respectable as any Hollywood screenplay.

America's newest favorite hobby, video games, has also experienced a revolution in its artistry. Video games have evolved into a massive industry and have massive production values. In 2008, the NDP, a sales tracking group, released a study that stated 72 percent of Americans play video games. *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3* made \$775 million in its first five days where as *Avatar*, the highest grossing movie as of yet, made only \$232 million on its opening weekend.

This is how widespread games have become in the world of media. Video games have reached and influenced the lives of the majority of Americans. While gaming has become as prevalent as film in society, games with moving storylines and deep, heartfelt morals are still not given the artistic credit they deserve. Numerous games develop a story and characters better than most films, and it is very common that film adaptations of games pale in comparison. Games that exist now examine complex issues of morality and allow players to make decisions on them. If that is not a measure of the expression of the human soul, which is the basis of all art, then I do not know what is.

The impression of what art is has been changing, and the market for its production and sale has changed along with it. Mediums that were once considered geeky and immature are now influencing more people than can be counted. There is a reason behind this. Video games, manga, anime and comics have developed into masterpieces that rival film and television in scale and depth.

The world is constantly changing, art and media included, and antiquated beliefs about the definition of artwork are not worth holding onto.

Station CO: Yuma, JSF key in Corps aviation's future

Sgt. Danial Malta
Desert Warrior Staff

2012 will be a year filled with change for Marine Corps Air Station Yuma in support of the future of Marine Corps aviation.

Many of the buildings and roads on station are under construction, which has raised some frustrations as well as questions.

The reason for most of the construction and changes being made on station is due to the incoming F-35B Joint Strike Fighter Program, according to Marine Corps Air Station Yuma Commanding Officer Col. Robert C. Kuckuk.

"The biggest change you're going to see is obviously the construction," said Kuckuk. "The station is continually modernizing, because buildings get old and they need to be replaced, but more specifically, the JSF has unique requirements for data, fuel, electricity, water and security and almost all of the new buildings are exclusively for the JSF to meet those design requirements."

"We will be the first in the Marine Corps to have an operational F-35B squadron and we are going to be constantly evolving the station, ranges and everything surrounding the training," he added.

The first JSFs are due in September, but before their arrival, there are many more things that need to happen to support the aircraft.

"The hangar where it will be housed will be ready to start receiving JSF equipment in March and will be finished by mid-May for people to start moving in," said Kuckuk. "We will be getting two aircraft then (September) and eventually there will be five JSF squadrons that will belong to Marine Aircraft Group 13."

Beyond the first two aircraft, it is unknown when the rest will be received.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Sean Dennison

Maj. Gen. James Kessler, left, Marine Corps Installations Command commander, surveys the JSF hangar construction site with Col. Robert Kuckuk, MCAS Yuma commanding officer, Jan. 30.

Along with the five JSF squadrons, there will be one more addition to support the program.

"There will also be a follow-on test evaluation, which will be a smaller unit based here to do continuing testing for the aircraft. The point of that happening is also yet to be determined," said Kuckuk.

Even though MCAS Yuma will be getting the newest, most technologically advanced aircraft in the world, the primary mission will continue to be training.

Another change to the station will include an increase in the station's security posture.

"The JSF has greater security requirements than the AV-8B Harrier, and we have to be aware of that. People won't be allowed up close to the aircraft and flight line access will be harder to acquire," said Kuckuk.

With the new squadrons and support roles needed for the JSF, there will also be a small increase in personnel, which is why a new chow hall will be constructed.

"What I'd like to see is people (military pilots) from

around the western United States to be able to refuel, spend the night, use the ranges and anything else needed anytime, any day of the week," said Kuckuk. "We're inexpensive and any responsible person would want to get the biggest bang for their training buck. We want to be the go-to base."

MCAS Yuma was strategically chosen to head off the JSF program. With over 2.8 million acres of training ranges, perfect weather and its longstanding training track record with the Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course, it's a wonder why this isn't every military aviator's destination.

The station has high hopes for the program and the future of the base, but achieving those goals can only be attained through change.

"Keep in mind, the upgrades we are doing with the roads, the lines, sewer, water, data, electrical and telephone are all being completed to replace what was originally laid in 1956," he added. "MCAS Yuma won't make it to 2056 with the current infrastructure that's in place now. For the greater good and the safety of this air station, we have to make this right."

In September 2011, MCAS Yuma and much of the Southwest experienced a massive power outage and the new power distribution scheme being installed should alleviate any problems in the future. Also a new high speed addition is the new data cable being installed, which will give Yuma the best data capabilities in the Department of Defense, bringing the station into the future along with the JSF, according to Kuckuk.

Additional new things that will be seen within the next year is the replacement of the Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron's UH-1N model Huey's and the most recently replaced C-12's.

Also, Meyer's Park will be getting a true renovation, adding a track, baseball fields and more.

At times things may get a bit rocky with new construction, road closures, budget cuts, etc., but the future here at MCAS Yuma is looking brighter than ever.

1/2 Ads