

Don't Ask Don't Tell



1st MLG conducts repeal training

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Jennifer Brofer
Public Affairs Chief

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Does a straight Marine have to live with a gay Marine? Can a Marine with a same-sex partner receive housing allowance? Will being openly gay affect recruitment, assignments or promotion?

Questions like these were answered here, April 28, as about 185 Marines with Landing Support Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, conducted

See DADT, Page 3

 [Click here to watch Marines training.](#)

Pfc. Chris Copeland, landing support specialist, Landing Support Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, 27, from Broken Arrow, Okla., participates in Tier 3 "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" repeal training at Camp Pendleton, Calif., April 28. After repeal, gay men and women will be allowed to serve openly in the military.

CLB-1 Marines prepare for deployment

Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Kenneth Jasik
Staff Writer

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT TRAINING CENTER TWENTYNINE PALMS, Calif. – After

a month of constant combat logistics patrols, counter-insurgency training and live-fire shoots in the sun-scorched desert, the Marines and sailors with Combat Logistics Battalion 1, Combat Logistics Regiment 1,

1st Marine Logistics Group, completed Enhanced Mojave Viper training here, April 28.

During the monthlong training evolution, the Marines and sailors trained in realistic sce-

See SHOOT, Page 7



A CLB-1 Marine provides security during a vehicle-recovery mission.

INSIDE



CLB-11 Marines perfect shooting skills in 29 Palms

Page 6

1st MLG Marines attend 'Sex Signals'.....Page 2

Reaction to Osama bin Laden's deathPage 5

Military families attend L.I.N.K.S.....Page 7

'Sex Signals' educates troops

Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Jerrick Griffin
Staff Writer

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. –The setting was at a bar around midnight. A Marine spots a girl sitting alone waiting on her friends, so he swoops over to talk. He asks her to leave with him, but she refuses. He then grabs her by her arm. Pause.

This scene was a part of 'Sex Signals,' a play that aims to educate service members on sexual assault prevention. Service members with 1st Marine Logistics Group attended the show at the base theater here, April 26. Sex Signals is an improv-based play with two actors, a guy and a girl, who act out different scenes and interact with the audience. The crowd gets involved by providing settings and pick-up lines, asking and answering questions about how a person in a scene might be "going too far."

"They got the crowd into it by asking questions and getting suggestions," said Lance Cpl. Courtland Lambert, landing support specialist, Landing Support Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st MLG, 21, from Nashville. "They made the subjects more



Marines and sailors watch as actors in the play 'Sex Signals' go through various sexual assault-related scenarios at Camp Pendleton, Calif., April 26. Sex Signals is an improv-based play with two actors, a guy and a girl, who aim to teach service members about sexual assault prevention. The crowd participated by providing settings, pick-up lines, asking and answering questions for the show. The play touched on subjects such as sexual assault, consent and rape.

interesting and really made you think. It was very informative."

During the play, the actors touched on different subjects ranging from sexual harassment to rape. Other topics included how alcohol plays a role in sexual assault, and how an individual conducts themselves and reacts to situations differently when sober.

"It's very interesting and makes you actually listen to what they say," said Lance Cpl. Cara Stehle, financial resource management analyst, disbursing section, G-8, 1st MLG. "You are giving the answers or making the scenes to the show."

According to one of the actors, the majority of reported rapes are committed by men. Although, it does happen to males, and most of the time the victim knows the attacker. Also, seven percent of reported rapes have been found to be false, added the actor.

"Some of the facts kind of catch you off guard," said Stehle, 20, from Riverside, Ohio. "When

they talked about consent, some of the things they were saying in the play didn't show signs that they weren't consenting, and it resulted in someone being blamed for rape. It just shows that people have to be careful with what they are doing."

The Marines and sailors attending the play seemed to enjoy the interactive show. They thought it was a great way to learn about sexual assault, they said.

"I think it's a better way to learn things rather than sitting around looking at slides," said Cpl. Michael Stephen, motor transport operator, Motor Transport Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 1, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st MLG.

"This gets you going because you are actually participating," added Stephen, 23, from Memphis. "You get to learn more from it because you ask questions and give answers. It just makes you think."



Marines and sailors raise their hands to answer a question during the Sex Signals play held at Camp Pendleton, Calif., April 26.

HAPPENINGS

Motorcycle Safety Courses

An Advanced Riders Course will be held weekly on Wednesday from 7:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. A Basic Riders Course will be held weekly, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 7:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Both courses will take place at Bldg. 200071. For more information, call Kevin Frantum at (760) 725-2897.

Free Music Concert

Pacific Views/South Mesa Club will host a free live-band event May 20 from 8 p.m. – 1:30 a.m. All ranks are welcome to the Sea View Room to enjoy a cover band that will play classic rock tunes from Bon Jovi, AC/DC, Van Halen, Led Zeppelin and more.

2011 Junior Lifeguard Program

Tryouts for the 2011 Junior Lifeguard Program will take place at the 13 Area pool May 28, June 4 and June 11 from 8-11 a.m. Those who qualify will participate in one of two summer lifeguard programs ranging 5-6 weeks. At a minimum, applicants must be able to tread water for five minutes and swim underwater for 10 meters. For more information, call 760-725-2703.

Celebrate America

Pacific Views/South Mesa Club will host a free multi-cultural celebration May 18 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The Pendleton Roadhouse

Kick up your country heels at this fun, entertaining and energetic country fest, May 6, at the Pacific Views/South Mesa Club from 7 p.m. – 2 a.m. The event will feature KSON Radio MC, DJ and dancers, a live-band performance by Austin Law, dance competitions with prize giveaways and free line dancing before 8 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased from the Information Travel & Tours office by calling 760-725-5863.

Family Fun Fitness Festival

Join for a fun-filled day of fitness, giveaways, activities and demonstrations at the Pacific Plaza Commissary, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.



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DADT

continued from Page 1

Tier 3 training to learn how the repeal of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy will affect the Marine Corps.

The current policy prohibits openly gay men and women from serving in the U.S. armed forces. On December 22, 2010, President Barack Obama signed a law that set conditions for repeal of the 18-year-old law.

One of the requirements for repeal is the implementation of training consistent with readiness and unit cohesion, while stressing that all service members should continue to treat each other with dignity and respect.

“Marines are still going to be Marines, we’re still going to wear the same uniform, we’re still going to respect each other and we’re still going to have the same discipline,” said Cpl. Vanessa Huff, operations non-commissioned officer, Landing Support Co., CLR-17, 1st MLG. “However, it will be with DADT being repealed.”

Repeal implementation training was first given to individuals in the Tier 1 group, including unit chaplains, judge advocates, recruiters and family readiness officers. Tier 2 included commanders, senior enlisted advisors and civilian supervisors of Marines. Tier 3 training will be given to all other Marines, sailors and civilian supervisors. The majority of Marines are expected to complete the training by May 31.

“We’re Marines and what do Marines do? Follow orders. It’s not going to be any different. We’ll just continue to be the professionals that we are.”

Col. Bruce Nickle
Commanding Officer
Combat Logistics Regiment 17

The hourlong, one-time-only class was aimed to educate Marines on what policies would change after the repeal of DADT – allowing individuals to serve in the military regardless of sexual orientation. The class began with a brief introduction by the regimental commander, Col. Bruce Nickle, in which he said he expects a smooth transition after repeal.

“In my mind, this isn’t going to be much of a challenge,” said Nickle. “Why? We’re Marines, and what do Marines do? Follow orders. It’s not going to be any different. We’ll just continue to evolve and continue to be the professionals that we are.”

After the introduction, the instructor, Maj. Daryl DeSimone, answered several repeal-related questions from Marines, such as “Will I have to live with a gay Marine?” After repeal, billeting assignments will not be made with regard to sexual orientation.

“You can live with somebody in the barracks; you don’t have to be their friend,” said DeSimone, who added that commanders may elect to reassign roommates on a case-by-case basis if it poses “too much of a disruption for the unit.”

A Marine who marries a person of the same gender, however, will not receive extra benefits, such as Base Allowance for Housing “with dependent,” because a same-sex partner does not qualify under the Defense of Marriage Act, said DeSimone.

Another question raised was, “What if homosexuality goes against my religion?” Likewise, Marines retain the right to their religious beliefs, but their conduct must remain professional and they must treat fellow Marines with dignity and respect.

After repeal, sexual orientation will not bar an individual from joining the military or have any effect on assignments or promotion. What will not change after the repeal, DeSimone stressed, are the Marine Corps’ standards of personal and professional conduct. Also, evaluation will continue to be based on merit, fitness and capability.

“I just ask that you all remain professional, any time you’re faced



Maj. Daryl DeSimone, instructor, speaks to Marines with Landing Support Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, during Tier 3 “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” repeal training at Camp Pendleton, Calif., April 28. After repeal, gay men and women will be allowed to serve openly in the military.

with situations where sexual orientation comes into play, just like you remain professional when you’re faced with any other leadership challenges out there; as long as you do that, we shouldn’t have any problems with the Marines,” said DeSimone. “These are new challenges you will face, and we’re going to have to figure that out together to move forward.”

The DADT policy will remain in effect until 60 days after the President, Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs

all certify that the requirements for repeal have been met.

The training, Huff said, gave her and fellow leaders the knowledge necessary to ensure a smooth transition.

“As long as our leadership is involved, our junior troops will have what they need in order for this to be a smooth transition,” said Huff. “When I’m out in combat, what’s going to matter is that the Marine to my left and my right will save my life, and I will save theirs.”



- GIVE HIM ONE! -

GYSGT JASON A. BYRON

Story and photo by
Lance Cpl. Kenneth Jasik
Staff Writer

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Although Marines are considered America’s force in readiness, many Marines hail from nations outside the United States.

Gunnery Sgt. Jason A. Byron, communications chief, Headquarters and Service Co., Combat Logistics Battalion 1, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, has dedicated more than 20 years to defending the United States, although he is originally from the small Caribbean island of Saint Kitts.

The small island of St. Kitts is only about 68 square miles with a population of 40,000 people. Byron, 42 was born and raised on the island.

While he was in high school, Byron witnessed a rehearsal for Operation Urgent Fury, in which U.S. forces secured the Caribbean island of Grenada.

“I was in high school, and there was an amphibious landing on the beach, right there in the town, and I was impressed by their skill,” said Byron of the training evolution he witnessed. “I decided right then that one day I wanted to be a Marine. My grandmother was standing right there and she was like ‘yeah right.’”

After graduating high school, Byron moved to the United States with one mis-

“I was in high school and there was an amphibious landing on the beach right in the town. I was impressed by their skill.”

- Gunnery Sgt. Jason A. Byron
Communications Chief, H&S Co. CLB-1



Gunnery Sgt. Jason A. Byron, communications chief, Headquarters and Service Co., Combat Logistics Battalion 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, has dedicated more than 20 years to defending the United States, although he is originally from the small Caribbean island of Saint Kitts. He decided to join the Marine Corps when he saw Marines training for Operation Urgent Fury near his home.

sion: to join the Marine Corps.

“I moved to America in ’88, because my father lived here and he was a citizen,” he said. “So I decided to move over here to join the Marine Corps.”

Byron joined the Marine Corps in 1989.

During his first enlistment, Byron was an artillery Marine and deployed to Iraq in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Soon after returning to the states from his deployment, he be-

came a U.S. citizen.

After his four-year enlistment, Byron wanted to change his military occupational specialty from artillery. Unfortunately, the Marine Corps was downsizing at the time, and he wasn’t given the opportunity to move. Byron left the Marine Corps for a year with the intention of returning in order to change his MOS.

After reenlisting about a year later, Byron trained to be a radio operator, and after placing within the top four in his class, he went on to an advanced satellite communications course.

Following the course, Byron served as a radio operator until he became a recruiter in 2004 in Chattanooga, Tenn., from 2004-2007.

“They knew from my accent that I was not American,” said Byron, who added that his Caribbean accent actually made prospective Marines more receptive to someone who was in the Marine Corps and not from the United States.

Today, as a communications chief, Byron still feels the same about the Marine Corps as the day he saw the mock amphibious landing in Saint Kitts.

“I have the same enthusiasm,” said Byron. “It’s all about the Marine Corps for me now. I did 20 years already, and I’ve got my retirement soon. I have no complaints. I’ve gained a lot of skills, and I try to pass on what I know to the younger Marines.”

United they serve

CLB-7 Marines continue mission in Afghanistan

Commentary by
Maj. Greg Lewis
Executive Officer
Combat Logistics Battalion 7

CAMP DWYER, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTHWEST), HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – It's atypical for a Monday to ever start off with good news. However, on Monday, May 2, 2011, American forces serving in Afghanistan awoke to the announcement that U.S. forces had killed public enemy number one, Osama bin Laden, in the neighboring country of Pakistan. Back in the United States, the news spread quickly, and people rallied from Ground Zero in New York City to Washington, D.C., to every city and town all the way to the west coast and beyond to the global American Diaspora. It was the antithesis of the collective pain felt 10 years earlier on Sept. 11, 2001. The present and former commanders-in-chief eloquently noted how once again a singular unifying event caused demographics to be forgotten as Americans stood together, "one nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all."

For America's service members serving abroad, the past 10 years of conflict have forged a steadfast unity that is often lacking at home. It's almost cliché to say how we find "strength through diversity;" however, our shared focus of effort truly enables us to ignore the gratuitous socio-economic lines that so often divide our nation and choose instead to capitalize on the varied talents and backgrounds of our service members.

On this first Monday of May, a Marine corporal sits in the Combat Logistics Battalion 7 medical clinic having his arm sutured by a trio of hospital corpsmen eager to demonstrate their skills: Petty Officer 3rd Class Paul McCoy, born in Pusan, Korea, Petty Officer 3rd Class Christopher Bermudez, from Laguna Island in the Philippines, and Seaman Richard Lasky, from Dallas, Texas. The junior hospital corpsmen are supervised by Petty Officer 2nd Class Volker Schweyer, a naturalized citizen from Munich, Germany. Nearby, the clinic leadership, Senior Chief Petty Officer Renato Tolosa, a native of Luzon in the Philippines, and Navy Lt. Victoria Divis, a Japanese-American from Hawaii, work to ensure the battalion's Marines and sailors receive the best possible medical care.

The corporal undergoing the field expedient operation is Clement Teganya, originally from Ruhengeri, Rwanda. His father, a member of the Tutsi tribe, was lost in the April 1994 genocide, and his mother fled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo with her family and eventually to America. They now reside in Buffalo, N.Y., where his mother serves in the Rwandan Consulate. Ironically, the night prior, Corporal Teganya had a dream that he had personally terminated bin Laden while providing security for a convoy on the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan.



Cpl. Teganya shows Sgt. Sadaghiani how to operate the Mobile Electronic Power 805 Generator at Camp Dwyer, Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

A few days earlier, Corporal Teganya, a combat electrician, set up a generator at a patrol base in order to provide air conditioning for a group of Marines reservists from the 1st Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment based out of Texas and Louisiana. As he set up the power system, the company commander for the 1/23 Marines, Maj. James Korth, a 6-foot 9-inch "tiny" Texan, walked the lines checking on his Marines and identifying areas where he wanted CLB-7's engineers to emplace Hesco barriers, guard posts and concertina wire for their new patrol base.

After setting up the generator, Sergeant Kamram Sadaghiani, one of the 1/23 Marines, received a "hip-pocket" class on how to operate and maintain the system from Corporal Teganya. An Orange County, Calif., native, Sergeant Sadaghiani is a fluent Farsi speaker and has quickly picked up on the similar Dari language as he liaises with the Afghanistan National Army unit they serve with. His parents fled Iran in 1978 ahead of the toppling of the Shah's Pahlavi Dynasty by the Islamic Revolution of Ayatollah Khomeini. Satisfied that the Marines knew how to maintain the generator and will have some respite from the upcoming 120-degree temperatures of the Helmand province, we mount up for our ride back to base in our Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles. On the trip back, the radio operator, Corporal Gary Levron, a native of New Orleans, La., talks about his wife's college classes, their plans for a restaurant and most importantly, the pending birth of their first son due in a month's time.

The day has been a reminder of how the stereotypically monolithic Marine Corps is actually a juxtaposition of genuinely talented individuals. It further reinforced how the strength of our national treasure is derived from the amalgamation of these unique men and women whose honor, courage and commitment is a living testament to the universally self-evident truths of great Americans serving their country and making a difference halfway around the world.

Word on the Street

What was your initial reaction to the news that Osama bin Laden was dead?



"I was happy, but I don't think it's going to change anything. It's good because of what he did to us, but I don't think it will change anything in Afghanistan."

Cpl. Steve W. Coak
Motor T operator, CLR-1, 1st MLG



"I think it's a great relief for the United States that he's finally dead."

Sgt. Markeisha R. Richardson
Group Inspector NCOIC, 1st MLG

Two to the chest

one to the head



(Left) Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 11 fire on targets during a Combat Marksmanship Program training shoot at Camp Pendleton, Calif., April 28.

Marines perfect marksmanship

Story and photos by
Cpl. Khoa Pelczar
Staff Writer

MARINE AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER TWENTYNINE PALMS, Calif. – Approximately 50 Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 11, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, built upon their valuable skills as riflemen during a Combat Marksmanship Program shoot here, April 28.

The purpose of the training was to prepare the Marines for potential combat engagements during their upcoming deployment with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, explained Cpl. Michael McLaughlin, line noncommissioned officer, CLB-11, CLR-17, 1st MLG.

“This is more combat-oriented than the rifle range,” said McLaughlin, 23, from Douglas, Mass. “It makes you think while moving on your feet, thus preparing you better for combat missions.”

During the training, Marines were required to fire at a target while moving, perform speed reloading drills, and fire as they pivoted left and right, said McLaughlin. The training helped Marines get in the mindset that they won’t always be shooting at stationary targets.

“Firing while moving was my favorite part,” said



A Marine with Combat Logistics Battalion 11 sights-in on a target during a Combat Marksmanship Program shoot on Camp Pendleton, Calif., April 28.

Lance Cpl. Jason Lupton, tactical network specialist, CLB-11, CLR-17, 1st MLG. “It’s more realistic as this is what we do in combat, not just point and shoot at our target.”

According to Lupton, 23, from Barnesville, Ga., it couldn’t have been a better day to conduct the training. There were no clouds, the wind was calm and the sun kept them warm. Lupton said it allowed him to do better as he could focus more on the shot, find out what he was doing wrong, correct his mistakes and become more accurate.

“The coaches have a lot of knowledge,” Lupton said. “They gave good advice and were always looking out and making sure that everyone is doing the right thing.”

McLaughlin said the training may save lives. “They should take the training seriously,” said McLaughlin. “If they ever get in this situation, they’ll know exactly what to do and will be able to maintain their composure. It is awesome that I get to help others improve.”



Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 11 prepare to pivot left and fire at their targets during a Combat Marksmanship Program shoot on Camp Pendleton, Calif., April 28.



A Marine with Combat Logistics Battalion 11, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, sights-in on a target during a Combat Marksmanship Program shoot on Camp Pendleton, Calif., April 28.

Class 'L.I.N.K.S' Marine families

Story and photo by
Lance Cpl. Jerrick Griffin
Staff Writer

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Marines and spouses with Combat Logistics Battalion 11, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, learned about life in the military and the challenges that come with it during a Lifestyle, Insights, Networking, Knowledge and Skills class here, April 29.

L.I.N.K.S. is a volunteer program designed by military families. Additionally, the class gives an opportunity for participants to learn how to adapt to the lifestyle of the military and overcome challenges that may occur. The curriculum targets those who are new to the Marine Corps, but the information can be beneficial to those who have been in the Marine Corps for years.

"A majority of them are newlyweds," said Toni Ramirez, the CLB-11 family readiness officer. "Since they are newlyweds, this provides a lot of information to benefit both of them."

Lessons in lifestyle teach the ways of living and understanding the military community and the unique opportunities it offers. The period on insights is taught by Marine Corps spouses who relate their experiences of living the Marine Corps lifestyle and understand firsthand what the participants are going through. Networking represents the people they get to know during L.I.N.K.S. and throughout their jour-



Lt. Col. Andrew Bergen, commanding officer of Combat Logistics Battalion 11, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, talks to Marines and their spouses about the upcoming deployment with 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit during a L.I.N.K.S class at Camp Pendleton, Calif., April 29.

ney in the Marine Corps. The families learn that knowledge is what they will leave with and what will help them understand and navigate the Marine Corps culture. Lastly, they receive a lecture about the new skills they will learn to help them enjoy and thrive in the Marine Corps community.

"L.I.N.K.S is a good way for the Marines and their spouses to know what is entitled to them while they are in the Marine Corps," said Ramirez. "This class has a lot to teach them about the Marine Corps. Even if they have been

in a while, they still learn something new."

L.I.N.K.S. provides information on Marine Corps history, traditions, services, ways to deal with separation and deployments and tips on moving and communication.

To learn about resources available and how to utilize them, the Marines and family members play games, such as a trivia game in which the service member and spouse receive a description of a service and they have to match it with the correct answer.

"The information they provide for us is very useful," said Lance Cpl. Jason Lupton, tactical network specialist, CLB-11, CLR-17, 1st MLG. "I didn't know that we had most of these benefits. It's amazing what is offered to us."

All service members and military family members are eligible to participate in L.I.N.K.S. Marine Corps civilian employees and their spouses are also able to participate.

For more information, Marines and sailors can contact their unit's FRO or visit www.usmc-mccs.org/links/train-

SHOOT

continued from Page 1

narios using mock towns and villages populated with role-players. The training helped them understand how to successfully apply counter-insurgency techniques and interact with the native population. Throughout the training, CLB-1 mainly supported 2nd Marine Division's 3rd Battalion, 6th Marines and 1st Battalion, 9th Marines.

"Key leader engagements were part of combat logistics patrols through towns," said Lt. Col. Brian H. Kane, commanding officer, CLB-1, CLR-1, 1st MLG. "We were asked to deliver medical supplies and basically interact with the personnel

in the hospital. We would also ask other questions to see if we could get basic [intelligence]. Basically for us, our key leader engagements revolved around our combat logistics patrols and what we can do."

As the Marines prepare for their deployment later this year, they are well on track to becoming an efficient logistical element in southern Helmand province, where they will be based during most of their deployment.

"The Marines and sailors basically exceeded all expectations," said Kane, 40, from Dover N.J. "We just all came together as well with our different elements. The biggest reason was just having a learning attitude. It came together well; our NCOs and junior Ma-

rines just made it happen."

The training exemplified what each Marine's role will be in Afghanistan. It gave each of them a taste of what they will be doing when they deploy in a few short months. CLB-1 plans to return to Enhanced Mojave Viper training in July to further perfect their skills.

"It's a great training experience," said Lance Cpl. Stephen B. Smith, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist, CLB-1, CLR-1, 1st MLG. "I haven't deployed yet, and it was an interesting way of looking at things. We still have a little room for improvement, and I'm looking forward to the next [Enhanced Mojave Viper] and seeing how we improve," added Smith, 21, from Littleton, Colo.



Cpl. Carlos A. Gonzales, optics technician, Support Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 1, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, provides security during nocturnal medical evacuation training at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Training Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., April 25.

Minds come together on subject of stress

Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Jerrick Griffen
Staff Writer

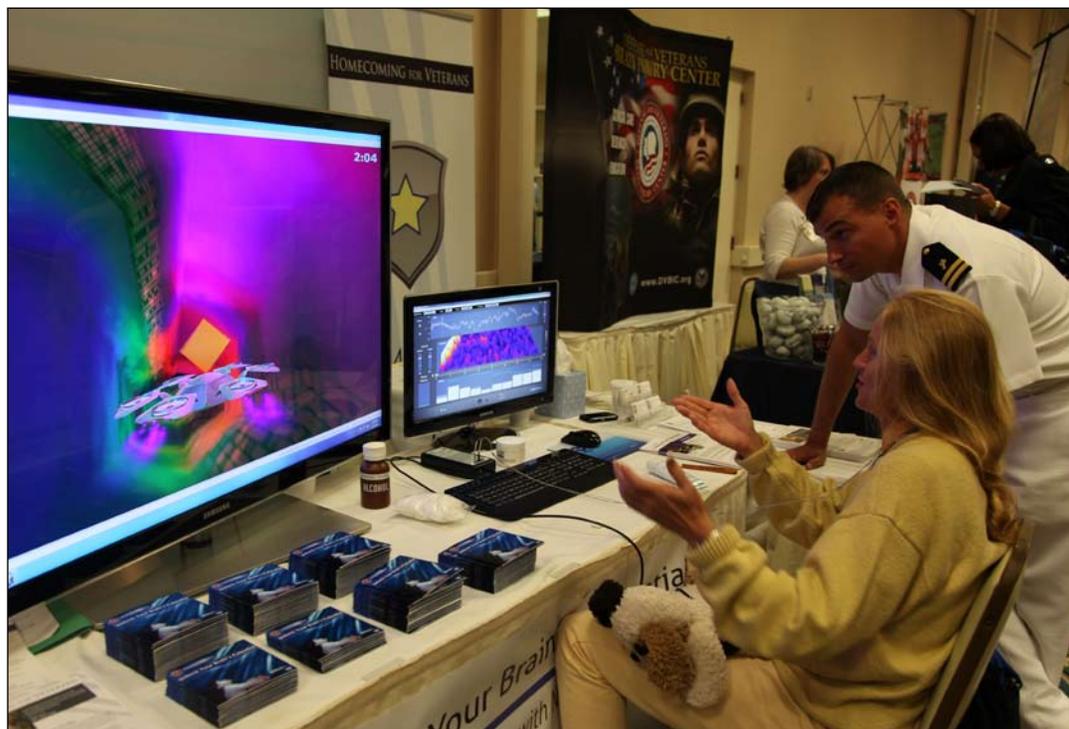
SAN DIEGO – Service members from every branch of the military and civilian personnel attended the Navy and Marine Corps Combat and Operational Stress Control Conference here, April 26-29.

The purpose of the four-day COSC conference was to bring together the expertise of different subject matter experts relating to stress control in order to inform service members of COSC policies, programs and practices that are specifically for Marines, sailors and their families.

“A lot of military [personnel] come to the conference to learn how to deal with stress either for themselves or for the ones under their command,” said Staff Sgt. Kenneth Hagedorn, fire support man, 1st Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, 1 Marine Expeditionary Force. “There’s information that can benefit anyone suffering from any stress disorder and services that can provide help.”

Some of the key areas covered in the conference are similar to OSCAR training. OSCAR, or Operational Stress Control and Readiness, is a program that focuses on helping Marines and sailors recover from stress by going through a series of steps to aid them in recovery.

One topic covered in the conference was titled “Substance Abuse and Post-Traumatic Stress: The Prevalence of Co-Existing Orders,” which related the connection between Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and substance abuse amongst combat veterans and civilians. According to studies provided by the Department of Defense, from 1998-2008 the Marine Corps led in the number of people that participated in binge drinking. These studies define binge drinking as when a person consumes five or more



Participants at the Navy and Marine Corps Combat and Operational Stress Control Conference use the neurofeedback machine to visually detect emotional levels of an individual.

drinks at a time.

“The increase in illicit drug use from 2005-2008 is driven by increases in non-medical use of prescription drugs,” said George Mangual, substance abuse counselor.

One of the other topics included at the conference was called “The Generation of Moral Injury and the Basis of Stigma in the U.S. Marine Corps: A Cultural Values Viewpoint.” It talked about what the Marine Corps expects of Marines. One example was a scenario in which a sergeant was severely injured in com-

bat. Instead of losing his mind or going into shock, he kept his composure and continued to direct his Marines in battle. That was a prime example of a Marine controlling stress in combat in order to continue on and accomplish his mission.

“From observing the [Marine Corps Martial Arts Program], I saw Marines push through the injuries they had, just to complete the course,” said Dr. Frank Tortorello, one of the many speakers at the conference. “The Marine Corps expects them to keep calm and complete

their task, even if he or she is hurt.”

In addition to lectures, booths were set up with static displays, questionnaires and pamphlets to aid in combating stress in service members. Some of the aids were courses that service members can take to learn various techniques on how to focus and sleep better.

By the end of the conference, each service member and civilian gained knowledge on how to control their stress or better help an individual who maybe having a problem with stress.



Military personnel discuss different ways to help combat stress during the Navy and Marine Corps Combat and Operational Stress Control Conference in San Diego, April 27. The purpose of the four-day COSC conference was to bring together the expertise of different subject matter experts relating to stress control.

Hotlines

Military OneSource
1-800-342-9647
Fleet and Family Support Center
1-800-372-5463
USMC Wounded Warrior Regiment
1-877-487-6299
Navy Safe Harbor
1-877-746-8563
National Domestic Violence
1-800-799-7233
National Drug & Alcohol Treatment
1-800-662-4357
Military Family Support Line
1-800-242-4940
National Suicide Prevention
Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255
Military and Family Life Consultant
1-888-755-9355
Families Overcoming Under Stress
www.focusproject.org
Navy Fleet and Family Support
www.nffsp.org
Marine Corps Community Services
www.usmc-mecs.org