

FLIGHT JACKET

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Dangers of East Miramar

Encroachment raises
safety, preservation
concerns



Encroachment causes safety risks in East Miramar

Random police patrols have increased on East Miramar due to encroachment by the public and acts of vandalism to historic sites located in the area.

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Food Locker feeds 650 families holiday meals

The station food locker rallied volunteers to help in the creation of approximately 650 Thanksgiving meal boxes.

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Stingers return home from Afghanistan

Marines with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 267 "Stingers" returned home after a seven-month deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

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



Col. Frank A. Richie
Commanding Officer
MCAS Miramar

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Off-roading endangers protected animal, plant species

Compiled by the Flight Jacket Staff and Miramar Environmental

The air station contains 10 species protected by the Endangered Species Act. There are six plants, two birds and two species of fairy shrimp that are listed as threatened or endangered.

Federal law and Marine Corps regulations protect threatened and endangered species and prohibit the damage to or destruction of their habitat and wetlands. Much of the undeveloped land on the air station contains natural habitats such as vernal pools and coastal sage scrub that support many of the threatened and endangered species present. Miramar is also home to national natural landmarks.

These resources can be severely damaged by off-road activity. This is especially the case during the rainy winter season. Off-road vehicle operation is not permitted on the station, with the exception of those performing official duties. All vehicles should be kept on established and maintained roads, particularly when the soil is wet. In short, POV's are not authorized to operate off of paved or gravel surfaces. Many protected areas are identified with signs, orange stakes or fence, however for various reasons not all areas can be fenced off or marked appropriately. In past years, individuals chose to operate their vehicles off of paved areas, thereby causing thousands of dollars worth of damage. Damage to our natural resources creates costly restoration requirements, can expose individuals to civil and criminal penalties and may further restrict our land use. This also takes away needed funds from being allocated to increasing our mission readiness.

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ON THE COVER:

Signs warning of the danger of trespassing throughout East Miramar aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., have been torn down, destroyed and stolen, leading to public safety risks. Trespassers aboard the military installation are putting themselves at risk of gunfire and explosive ordnance detonation as well as the destruction of endangered plant and animal habitats. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)



“Unimproved dirt roads that were good and hard all summer will soon be soft and problematic to drive. Some years, military vehicles have been the problem,” said David Boyer, a specialist with the Environment Management Department here.

Recreational off-roading opportunities in the region are very limited. The California Department of Parks and Recreation manages numerous off-highway vehicle recreation areas including the 40,000 acre Ocotillo Wells SVRA just over the mountains in the desert. For more information, log on the state Web site www.ohv.parks.ca.gov. The Bureau of Land Management maintains some off-road vehicle areas in the East county and desert. For more information, log on the government website www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/elcentro/recreation/ohvs.html. Log on to the Cleveland National Forest website and read about OHV opportunities in the Cleveland National Forest in the mountains to the east www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland/recreation/ohv.

For additional information about Marine Corps environmental regulations, see Marine Corps Order P5090.2A or visit the Natural Resources Program Page on the Miramar Environmental Management System website at www.miramarems.com.

(Left) Trespassers have been causing habitat destruction aboard East Miramar through off-road driving. The air station contains 10 species protected by the Endangered Species Act. (Courtesy Photo)

Encroachment causes safety risks in East Miramar

Story by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo

Continuing vandalism at East Miramar here is leading to multiple public safety risks. Trespassers aboard the military installation are putting themselves at risk of gunfire and explosive ordnance detonation as well as the destruction of endangered plant and animal habitats. Trespassers also risk interfering the final clean-up process of polychlorinated biphenyls, a cancer causing chemical agent, also known as PCB, created after the destruction of a transformer during previous years' wild fires. Increased encroachment and vandalism to historical sites on East Miramar have also led to increased random police patrols in the area. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)

Random police patrols have increased on East Miramar aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar due to encroachment by the public and acts of vandalism to historic sites located in the area.

Officials at MCAS Miramar have noticed increased incursions into the more remote eastern areas of the base. Local hikers and mountain bikers have been traversing federal government property along a 3-mile portion of the Stowe Trail that connects with regional outdoor recreational areas, including Mission Trails Park. Evidence of graffiti and other destruction of government property have been witnessed in the area.

“While we are concerned with people violating

the law, our main concern is ultimately the dangers of that area,” said Lt. Col. Mike Mizell, provost marshal for MCAS Miramar and a Yakima, Wash., native. “This land is a training area with multiple different safety and environmental risks.”

The remote area of the base that is being trespassed is part of the East Miramar Training Areas. While many hiking and biking trail publications feature Stowe Trail as a public route, there is a 3-mile stretch that cuts through portions of Federally-owned land within those training areas. They are used by all branches of the military to conduct patrol training, rifle and pistol training, and explosive ordnance disposal. As well, a large portion of East Miramar was used during and shortly after World War II as a training area for



Continuing vandalism at East Miramar here is leading to multiple public safety risks. Trespassers aboard the military installation are putting themselves at risk of gunfire and explosive ordnance detonation as well as the destruction of endangered plant and animal habitats. Trespassers also risk interfering with the final clean-up process of polychlorinated biphenyls, a cancer causing chemical agent, also known as PCB, created after the destruction of a transformer during previous years' wild fires. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)

The habitat of the Willowy Monardella, an endangered mint species native to this area, is currently being destroyed by civilian encroachment into East Miramar. The air station contains 10 species protected by the Endangered Species Act. There are six plants, two birds and two species of fairy shrimp that are listed as threatened or endangered. For years, off-roading has been a problem aboard the air station. All the areas hosting the endangered species around the station are not marked. However, the large areas with vernal pools have signs reading 'no entry'. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)

artillery and mortar firing. Miramar officials continue to find unexploded ordnance periodically and it is a real concern for public safety.

“People have been breaking into dangerous areas by cutting fences and destroying or tearing down the signs that we put out about the danger and risks,” said Maj. Richard Thompson, MCAS Miramar training officer and a Portland, Ore., native. “When people tear down these signs, it puts others at risk for what can end up being fatal injuries. They may not even know they are on East Miramar when they are wandering around.”

The rough and varied terrain, combined with the remote nature of this region increases the risks of injury because of the lack of radio and cell phone coverage in the area. Marines patrolling the region are routinely without radio contact to the mainside facilities west of I-15 and worry that injured trespassers would be able to reach vital emergency services.

“If by some miracle someone were to call us in the event of an injury, it would be a minimum of 45 minutes to reach them,” said Mizell. “That is assuming they could even accurately describe which canyon they were even in. That area can be very easy to get lost in for those that don't know it very well.”

This area being encroached upon is also home to various endangered species. As people walk, hike, or bike through this area, they are destroying the natural habitat of protected plants and animals.

“The area along the Stowe trail on East Miramar is home to different rare and endangered species like the Willowy

Monardella, a type of mint,” said JoEllen Kassebaum, a botanist with MCAS Miramar Environmental Management Services. “This portion of land, especially down in the canyons, is also the habitat of the Least Bell's Vireo, a bird that is currently endangered as well. People encroaching in this area are also endangering the few oaks that remain after the 2003 fire.”

The use of off-road vehicles in these areas also contributes to corrosion of natural waterways, paths and the further disruption of endangered species like the fairy shrimp, which live in vernal pools. These pools are seasonal wetlands that fill with water during fall and winter rains and are home to many plants and animals that, in turn, form a valuable part of the food chain for a wide array of animals. Following rain fall, many parts of the canyons are impassable and off-road vehicles transiting through these areas disturb the environment and pose a greater risk for flooding and damage to these endangered species.

To decrease interest in possible encroachment on East Miramar, the Provost Marshal's Office treats all cases of trespassing very seriously.

“Trespassers must also understand that while they risk injury, they are also allowing themselves to be treated as trespassers on federal land by military police,” said Mizell. “They can be arrested. The hazards are a great risk to civilians wandering around on a military installation.”

In response to increased public encroachment, authorities are replacing signs and increasing patrols in the area, but it is ultimately up to the public to maintain their own safety.



(Above) SANTIAGO, Dominican Republic – 1st Lt. Jose Quezada, left, an air support control officer with Marine Air Support Squadron 3 and a Santiago, Dominican Republic, native, watches as employees of a toy store in Santiago, Dominican Republic, bag newly purchased toys Dec. 21, 2008. The Quezada family purchased several hundred toys to be distributed to various schools in the Dominican Republic. (Courtesy photo)

(Left) SAN JOSE ADENTRO, Santiago – 1st Lt. Jose Quezada, bottom left, then a staff sergeant, an air support control officer with Marine Air Support Squadron 3 and a Santiago, Dominican Republic, native, poses with children from the Dominican Republic, after distributing toys Dec. 23, 2006. The Quezada family approved several schools' sponsorship for this upcoming holiday season. (Courtesy photo)

(Below) SANTIAGO, Dominican Republic – Nilda Quezada, left, 1st Lt. Jose Quezada, middle, and Jose Grullon, right, review a toy list at El Mundo De Juguetes after filling the first of many carts with toys in Santiago, Dominican Republic, Dec. 21, 2008. Each list is broken down by grade and gender. (Courtesy photo)

Toys, food and clothing: Marine helps impoverished families

Story by Lance Cpl. Kevin Crist

Thoughts of a United States Marine in support of a mission are typically associated with hardened individuals who will take the fight to the enemy's front door or storm off naval ships and aircraft platforms in support of humanitarian efforts. However, Marines worldwide are making a difference in other aspects who do not require a weapon.

Every year, Quezada Family Charities, a charity run by 1st Lt. Jose Quezada, an air support control officer with Marine Air Support Squadron 3 and a Santiago, Dominican Republic native, hosts a toy giveaway during the Christmas season for elementary schools in the Dominican Republic. QFC provides hundreds of children with gifts their parents would otherwise not be able to afford.

"You never really know how good your life is until you have seen these places," said Quezada. "These families have almost nothing. I will give a little girl a doll, and I can tell by the way that she smiles and squeezes it that she appreciates it a lot."

Quezada explained that his mother, Lidia Quezada, creator

and vice president of QFC, coordinates with school directors and principals in the Dominican Republic to make this event an annual success.

This year, QFC will add San Jose Adentro and Los Cocos, both Dominican Republic schools, to the sponsorship list. As a result, those schools' students will receive hundreds of toys, school supplies and uniforms for students, according to QFC's website, <http://quezadafamilycharity.org>.

"I have seen 16-year-olds in third grade," said Quezada. "I want to do everything I can to make sure these kids have a better education."

QFC established the Quezada Family Scholarship Program as a method of motivating and supporting students and their families. Since the implementation of this program, 70 percent of classes involved have improved grades and test results, according to <http://quezadafamilycharity.org>.

At the end of each school year, three schools participate in the scholarship program for grades four through 11. One boy and girl from each grade receive a plaque and funding based on the highest overall grade point average.

"We just gave someone a QFC full-ride academic scholarship to medical school," said Quezada. "We saw that he was the best in his class and that he deserved it. He will have to find a job if he wants to do things away from school, but as for the schooling itself, he doesn't have to worry about it."

The Quezada family collects donations, such as gently used clothing to support the program, but most of the monetary funding comes from the Quezada family, he explained. QFC distributes dozens of uniform items to impoverished students who do not have the funds to purchase them each year.

In addition to clothing, toys and school supplies, the Quezada family arranges an annual Christmas food giveaway, providing families with rice, beans, oil, sauces and many more cooking supplies so they can enjoy a great meal with their families. Fresh meat accompanies the cooking supplies.

"[Marines] are continuing to win hearts and minds around the globe," Quezada said. "At the moment, this charity only impacts several hundred, but I hope to continue its growth and eventually have it listed in the Combined Federal Campaign where it can reach tens of thousands."



Food locker feeds 650 families holiday meals



Marines volunteering at the Navy Wives Club of America Miramar #122 food locker fill more than 650 boxes with Thanksgiving meals aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Nov. 18. The meal boxes contained everything for a complete traditional Thanksgiving dinner including a turkey, vegetables and a pumpkin pie. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)

Story by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo

The station food locker, sponsored by the Navy Wives Club of America Miramar #122, rallied volunteers to help in the creation of approximately 650 Thanksgiving meal boxes aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Nov. 18.

For more than 20 years, the food locker has been providing free meals for families in need aboard the air station. E-5 and below service members as well as their spouses are offered frozen food items, milk, eggs and a variety of vegetables monthly. Bread is also available daily. All groceries are supplied by donations from the local community.

The food locker is a volunteer-run organization led by Peggy Brandenburg, who founded the food locker in 1990. It provides two-week supply food baskets for any military family aboard MCAS Miramar who needs assistance.

"We make sure and provide for anyone who needs help," said Brandenburg. "People in San Diego bring in food and cash donations to make sure everyone is taken care of, and we make sure it goes to people that don't have enough on their plates."

This year's donations were able to supply more than twice the amount of Thanksgiving meals of 2010. While only 300 Marines and sailors signed up for assistance last year, 650 families requested a Thanksgiving meal basket this year.

"I was shocked to see so many people on the list this year, but

we actually ended up having more than what was requested," said Brandenburg. "Someone donated an additional 200 turkeys at the last minute."

The meal boxes were designed to create a complete traditional Thanksgiving dinner including a turkey, vegetables and a pumpkin pie.

Servic members and civilians from across the air station gathered at the food locker to create the multitude of meals.

"I came out here because I think it is important to help people that may not have as much as some others do," said Sgt. Vieto V. Salas, a food service technician with Marine Wing Support Group 37 and a Los Angeles native. "The food locker helps out a lot of people on base. It is great to see everyone working together to help those who need a little extra during the holidays."

Many of the volunteers who created the meal packages returned Nov. 21 to aid the food locker staff with the distribution process.

The volunteer staff was able to break the record for largest amount food distribution from the food locker this Thanksgiving holiday.

The food locker staff and service members who give their time to maintain and distribute groceries continue to feed families across MCAS Miramar.

To volunteer, contact Peggy Brandenburg at 858-577-6550.



Staff Sgt. Matthew M. Talicuran, a data chief with Marine Aircraft Group 11 and a Vancouver, Wash., native, gathers boxes for Thanksgiving meals here Nov. 18. The Navy Wives Club of America Miramar #122 food locker prepared more than 650 boxed meals for service members who have at least one child aboard the air station and requested assistance. Approximately 25 civilian and military volunteers gathered to create meals for the Thanksgiving holiday. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Erica DiSalvo)

HMM-163 welcomes new commander, Ospreys

Compiled by The Flight Jacket Staff

Lt. Col. Joseph Levreault relinquished command of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 to Lt. Col. Eric Garcia during a change of command and re-designation ceremony Dec. 2. During the ceremony, HMM-163 was re-designated as Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 163 and is 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing's newest Osprey Squadron.

Levreault graduated from Western New England College, earning a bachelors degree in business administration in December 1991. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps through the Platoon Leaders Course in April 1992.

Upon graduating from The Basic School in February 1993, he proceeded to Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., for flight training. He was designated a naval aviator on Dec. 16, 1994. He then reported to Marine Medium Helicopter Training Squadron 204, Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C., for initial training in the CH-46E.

In November 1995, Levreault reported to Marine Aircraft Group 16 at MCAS Tustin, Calif., for duty with HMM-161 and in January 2000, he reported to HMM-166.

Upon completion of the Naval War College in Newport, R.I., in June 2004, Levreault reported to Joint Forces Command in Norfolk, Va., where he served in joint operations, Force Deployment Section and Central Command/European Command Division.

In August 2006, after completing refresher training at HMMT-164 at MCAS Camp Pendleton, Calif., Levreault reported to HMM-161 at MCAS Miramar. While attached to the squadron he served as the operations officer and executive officer. In March 2009, he reported to MAG-16 and served as the executive officer. He assumed command of HMM-163 in September 2009.

Levreault's personal awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal with Bronze numeral 9, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with one gold star and Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with one gold star.

Garcia attended New Mexico State University, earning a bachelors degree in Psychology. He was commissioned a second lieutenant through the Platoon Leaders Course in February 1994. Upon completion of The Basic School he reported to Marine

Aviation Training Support Group, NAS Pensacola for flight training and was designated a naval aviator in December 1996.

In January 1997, Garcia reported to HMT-204 at MCAS New River for Replacement Aircrew Training in the CH-46E Sea Knight. Upon completion of initial training in the CH-46E, he reported to HMM-162, MAG-29. During this period, he deployed twice with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit supporting Operation Joint Forge in the Adriatic Sea and Albania. Upon returning from his second deployment, Garcia reported to Quantico to attend Amphibious Warfare School. Following graduation from AWS, he returned to HMM-162 where he served as the director of safety, standardization and NATOPS. During this period he deployed with 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Upon return from OIF, Garcia reported to Marine Tiltrotor Operational Test and Evaluation Squadron 22 at MCAS New River in September 2003 to begin the transition to the MV-22B Osprey. Following this tour, Garcia transferred to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron 204 at MCAS New River where he served as the future operations officer and as an instructor pilot.

In March 2006, Garcia reported to VMM-263 at MCAS New River where he served as the DSSN. During this tour, he participated in the transition of the squadron from CH-46E to MV-22B. In September 2007, he deployed with VMM-263 in support of OIF 06-8 with 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) and 06-8.2 under 3d MAW (Fwd) in Al Asad Airbase, Iraq.

Following return from this deployment, Garcia transferred to VMM-261 at MCAS New River. While at VMM-261, he served as the aircraft maintenance officer participating in the squadron's transition from CH-46E to MV-22B. In November 2009, he deployed with VMM-261 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom under MAG-40 and 3rd MAW (Fwd) at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan.

Garcia then transferred to MAG-16 at MCAS Miramar in preparation to assume command of VMM-163. While at MAG-16, he served as the transition training unit officer in charge and as the MAG-16 MV-22B transition officer.

Garcia has more than 3,200 mishap free

flight hours and his personal decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross with Combat "V," Air Medal Strike/Flight with numeral 13 and the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal.



Lt. Col. Joseph Levreault



Lt. Col. Eric Garcia



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – A large crowd awaits the arrival of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 267 with signs and banners as music plays. The Stingers of HMLA-267 returned home after a seven-month deployment to Afghanistan with 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The Marines and sailors made a safe return here Nov. 23. (Photo by Pfc. Christopher D. Johns)

Stingers return home from Afghanistan

Story by Pfc. Christopher D. Johns

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Marines with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 267 "Stingers" returned home Nov. 23 after a seven-month deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Stingers logged more than 1,500 flight hours per month in support of 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), equating to more than half the flight hours logged for 2nd MAW (Fwd).

While on deployment, the Stingers generated more than 6,700 attack and utility helicopter missions, 294 named operations and general support missions resulting in 170 strikes and 171 enemies killed in action. The Stingers made accurate use of 1,986 two and three quarter inch rockets and 73 Hellfire missiles.

The Stingers took part in offensive air support, armed escort, airborne supporting arms coordination, resupply, interdiction and insertion and extraction of ground troops.

They provided VIP air lift support and aerial reconnaissance on multiple occasions for personnel such as Gen. James F. Amos, the commandant of the Marine Corps, Lt. Gen. Terry Robling, the deputy commandant for aviation in the Marine Corps, and Gen. John R. Allen, the commander of the International Security Assistance Force.

"The Marines were very excited and everything went as smooth as could be hoped for," said Maj. James J. Brown, the Stingers' executive officer.

After hard work and dedication to all the missions and operations the Stingers supported, their final mission lay just ahead of them- to come home and see their families.

Civil servants awarded for 40 years of service

Photos by Pfc. Christopher D. Johns



(Above) Col. Frank A. Richie, the commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., presents an award for more than 40 years of civil service with the Marine Corps to Mary Knotts, an administration assistant with Marine Corps Community Services, here Nov. 30.

(Left) Col. Frank A. Richie, the commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., presents an award for more than 40 years of civil service with the Marine Corps to Bob Stopp, the air station's athletic director, here Nov. 30.

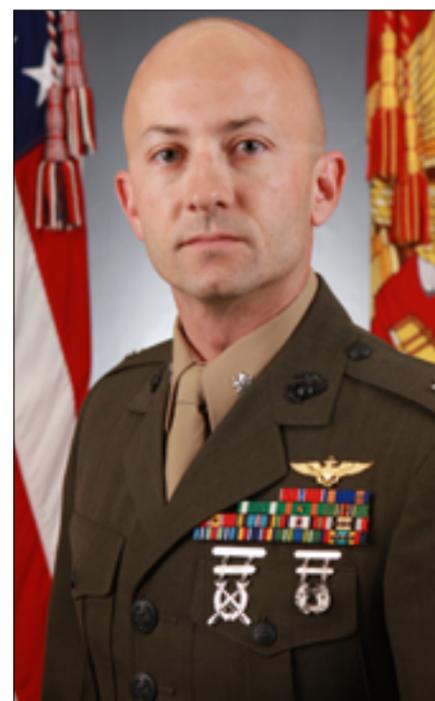


'Sharp Shooters' sight in with new commander

Compiled by The Flight Jacket Staff



Lt. Col. Joseph Sears



Lt. Col. Robert B. Brodie

Lt. Col. Joseph Sears will relinquish command of Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101 to Lt. Col. Robert B. Brodie in a change of command ceremony here Dec. 7 at 2 p.m. in front of Hangar 3.

Sears graduated from the University of Southern California in December 1991 with a degree in Business Marketing. Following graduation, he completed The Basic School in June 1992 and reported to Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., for flight training. He earned his wings in April 1995.

He then reported to Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, Calif., for training in the F/A-18 Fleet Replacement Squadron, VMFAT-101. After completing the FRS in April 1996 he was assigned to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 232, at NAS Miramar, Calif.

While attached to the "Red Devils" of VMFA-232, he completed a deployment to Iwakuni, Japan. While on deployment, the squadron sent detachments to Australia; Korea; Guam; Misawa, Japan and Okinawa, Japan.

From July 1999 to May 2000, Sears attended the Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School at Quantico, Va. Following graduation, he augmented to Officer Candidate School for three months. After his short OCS tour, he was assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron 125 in Leemoore, Calif., where he was an FRS instructor. During his tour, he led the West Coast F/A-18 Demonstration Team for two years providing Hornet demos for more than 24 air shows.

In August 2003, Sears was transferred to 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., in charge of Battle Staff Training. He was transferred to VMFA(AW)-242 at MCAS Miramar after 11 months. Sears deployed to Al Asad, Iraq, twice with the "Bats." During his tours he flew more than 300 combat missions in support of Marine and coalition ground forces.

Sears reported to Commander Naval Air Forces at Norfolk, Va., in August 2007 to serve as the CNAF F/A-18 Class Desk. During this two year tour, he was responsible for more than 1,000 F/A-18s in the Naval Inventory, including all models from A to G. He has more than 3,500 total hours in the F/A-18 and training aircraft with more than 800 hours in combat.

Brodie was commissioned via the Platoon Leaders Course in 1994 after graduating from The Citadel, The Military Institute of South Carolina, where he earned a degree in Military Affairs

and International Law. He was designated a naval aviator in October of 1998. He transferred to VFA-106, NAS Cecil, Fla., for conversion training in the F/A-18 Hornet.

In 1999, Brodie reported to the "Check-erboards" of VMFA-312, MCAS Beaufort, S.C., where he deployed as part of Carrier Air Wing Three, aboard the USS Harry S. Truman in support of Operation Southern Watch. Following deployment, he was transferred to VMFA(AW)-533.

In 2002, he transferred to Marine Corps Recruit Depot Paris Island, S.C., where he served as the Headquarter and Headquarters Support company commander for Weapons and Field Training Battalion.

In 2003, Brodie transferred back to VMFA-312, where he deployed as part of Carrier Air Wing One, aboard the USS Enterprise in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. He was designated a Wing Qualified landing signal officer. Brodie deployed with VMFA-312 to the Western Pacific in support of South Korean defense in 2004. He served two years as the pilot training officer of VMFA-312. During this tour, he graduated Navy Fighter Weapons School, TOPGUN, and Marine Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course.

In 2006, he transferred to 2nd Marine Regiment for service as the air officer and deployed as part of Regimental Combat Team Two in support of OIF. He served as the RCT-2 aero scout mission commander and augmented 4th Reconnaissance Battalion and Operational Detachment Alpha 542 as a forward air controller.

In 2008, Brodie again transferred to VMFA-312, where he deployed as part of Carrier Air Wing Three, aboard the USS Harry S. Truman in support of OEF and Operation New Dawn. He attended the Aircraft Maintenance Officer course at NAS Whiting, Milton, Fla., was designated an aircraft maintenance officer and served as the VMFA-312 AMO. He transferred to Marine Aircraft Group 31, MCAS Beaufort, to assume the director of safety and standardization.

In 2011, Brodie transferred to MAG-11, MCAS Miramar, to serve as a staff officer.

Brodie's personal awards include the Bronze Star, Strike Flight Air Medal with numeral 3, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with two gold stars.

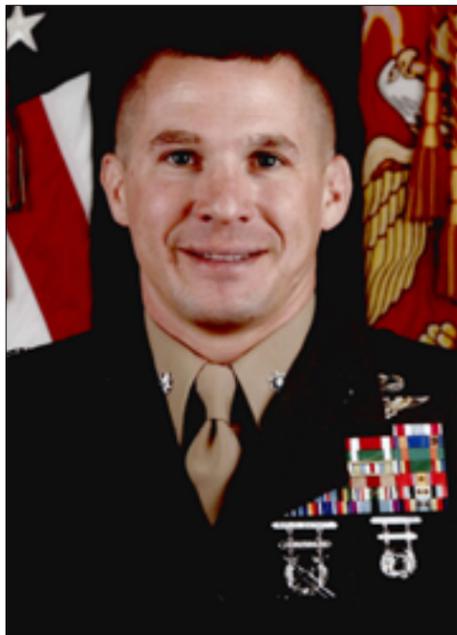
'Purple Foxes' welcome new commander

Compiled by The Flight Jacket Staff

Lt. Col. Edward Jeep relinquished command of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364 to Lt. Col. Ned Biehl during a change of command ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 2.



Lt. Col. Edward Jeep



Lt. Col. Ned Biehl

Jeep earned a bachelors degree from Miami University of Ohio in 1993. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in May 1993, and subsequently completed The Basic School in October 1994.

Jeep attended primary flight training at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas, and advanced flight training at NAS Pensacola, Fla., where he received his wings in December 1996. He trained in the CH-46E at Marine Corps Air Station New River, N.C., and upon completion was assigned to HMM-165 at MCAS El Toro, Calif., in 1997.

In December 1998, HMM-165 moved to MCAS Miramar and subsequently deployed with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit. During this period, Jeep participated in peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance missions in East Timor.

In 2000, Jeep assumed the duties of flightline officer and attended the Weapons and Tactics Instructor course. Shortly after Sept. 11, 2001, HMM-165 deployed with the 13th MEU in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Jeep was later the operations representative for a four aircraft detachment aboard the USS Ogden for split amphibious ready group operations in support of OEF.

In March 2002, Jeep was selected as an Olmsted Scholar and in July of that year he detached from Marine Aircraft Group 16 and reported into Defense Language Institute-East for language instruction. As an Olmsted Scholar, from January 2003 to July 2005, Jeep earned a masters degree in international relations from the Ortega y Gasset Institute in Madrid, Spain, and a diploma of advanced studies from the University of Granada, Spain.

In August 2005, Jeep reported into MAG-39 and joined HMM-268 as the operations officer and later assumed the duties of the squadron executive officer. While with HMM-268, he deployed in support of OIF 05-07.2 and OIF 06-08.1.

From June 2008 to February 2010, Jeep served aboard Headquarters Marine Corps as an analyst in the Commandant's Strategic Initiatives Group. In February 2010, Jeep reported to MAG-39 to begin refresher flight training.

Jeep has compiled approximately 3,000 mishap-free flight hours. His personal decorations include the Air Medal Strike/Flight with numeral 13 and the Navy and Marine Corps

Commendation Medal with two gold stars.

Biehl graduated from the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., with a bachelors degree in oceanography and received his commission as a second lieutenant in 1994. Upon graduation from The Basic School, he reported to NAS Pensacola, followed by NAS Corpus Christi and finally NAS Whiting Field in Milton, Fla., where he completed flight training and was designated a naval aviator in May 1997.

Biehl reported to Marine Medium Helicopter Training Squadron 204 aboard MCAS New River in June 1997 for initial training in the CH-46E Sea Knight. Upon completion of the FRS, he was reassigned to HMM-161 at MCAS El Toro. He accompanied the Greyhawks to MCAS Miramar in February 1999. Biehl's first deployment was with the 13th MEU (Special Operations Capable) on the USS Tarawa during which he participated in humanitarian assistance operations in East Timor and Operation Determined Response in support of the USS Cole recovery in Aden, Yemen. His second deployment was with the 15th MEU (SOC). On this deployment, he conducted combat operations in support of OIF.

Biehl reported to MAG-16 in November 2003. He served as the MAG-16 CH-46E weapons and tactics officer and deployed in OIF II. In August of 2004, Biehl reported for duty at Marine Helicopter Squadron 1 in Quantico, Va.

In October 2008, Biehl reported to MAG-39 and deployed to Iraq on a joint individual augment billet with Multinational Corps - Iraq as a senior future operations planner. Upon return, he assumed duties as the MAG-39 assistant operations officer. In February 2010, he reported for duty at HMM-268 as the squadron's executive officer and helped prepare the "Red Dragons" for their deployment with the 11th MEU; the first MEU deployment for MAG-39 in more than ten years. In February 2011, he transferred from HMM-268 to fulfill the duties as the MAG-39 Operations Officer.

Biehl has accumulated more than 3,100 mishap-free flight hours in naval aircraft. His personal decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with Strike/Flight numeral 3, the Navy Commendation Medal and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

CO takes last CH-46E flight for squadron

Story by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 flew its last flight of the CH-46E Sea Knight before re-designating as a Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron with MV-22B Ospreys, Nov. 30. HMM-163 was scheduled to re-designate as VMM-163 Dec. 2.

Marine Aircraft Group 16 was recently composed of one CH-46E squadron, four MV-22B Osprey squadrons, four CH-53E Super Stallion squadrons, a Personnel Support Detachment and a maintenance and logistics squadron. HMM-163 was the last CH-46E tenant squadron aboard MCAS Miramar, and is the fifth MV-22B Osprey squadron to join MAG-16.

The Osprey, compared to the Sea Knight, can carry three times the payload and travel twice as fast and five times farther.

"It's newer and extremely capable," said Lt. Col. Joseph Levreault, commanding officer of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 and a South Hadley, Mass., native.

Levreault took the CH-46E on its last flight.

"I've been flying out here since 1995 and I've always flown with MAG-

16," said Levreault. "It was nice. I did a lap around the old sites where I was trained."

Capt. Liam Flemming, a HMM-163 operations officer and a Queens, N.Y., native, said it was a good time to see Levreault's old stomping grounds and come back to Miramar to see some of his piloting skills.

The Sea Knight's first flight was in 1962 and has been an effective medium-lift tandem rotor transport helicopter with its primary function in assault support.

The United States Marine Corps began crew training for the Osprey in 2000, and fielded it in 2007. The Osprey is a multi-mission tilt-rotor aircraft with vertical takeoff and landing capabilities and short takeoff and landing capabilities.

Levreault's flight was the last "ooh-rah" flight for the squadron.

"It's nice to be the last one to say, 'I flew the last flight in the squadron,'" said Levreault. "It was just nice to close [flying the CH-46E] off here in Miramar."

Though the squadron is no longer home to the Sea Knight, the Marines of HMM-163 are awaiting the arrival of the Osprey to begin a new phase in the squadron's history.



Lt. Col. Joseph Levreault, the former commanding officer of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 and a South Hadley, Mass., native, lands a CH-46E Sea Knight after a ceremonial final flight from here Nov. 30. HMM-163 re-designated as a Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron with MV-22B Ospreys, Dec. 2. It is the final squadron aboard the air station to do so. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Rebecca Eller)

Awards banquet recognizes player prowess



Sgt. Dustin Ellison, right, the center and offensive tackle for the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Falcons and a Brevard, N.C., native, accepts the "Gung Ho" award on behalf of Cpl. Thomas Vanderlaan during a banquet held for the team at the Consolidated Bachelors Quarters here Dec. 3. Vanderlaan, a defensive end for the Falcons and a Hollister, Calif., native, was paralyzed during a football practice earlier in the season and is now regaining the use of his upper body. (Photo by Pfc. Christopher D. Johns)



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