



# BARSTOW LOG



## Cake-cutting ceremony keeps tradition alive



Colonel Daniel P. Ermer, commanding officer of Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, hands the first piece of birthday cake to the 94-year-old retired Gunnery Sgt. John Harmon at the Veterans Home of Barstow cake cutting ceremony, Nov. 9.

## MCLB opens doors for retired community

By Lance Cpl. Dominic A. Smarra  
Combat Correspondent

When you think of an open house, you may think of an introduction to something new, such as the first time you go to school. It's not often an opportunity to come together with friends and brothers that have served beside you and share a bond that can never be lost.

More than 300 retired service members and spouses attended the 7th annual Retiree Open House aboard Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Nov. 15.

The open house was an introduction of many sorts; it not only introduced many of the services that were available to the retired military community aboard the base, but it also allowed the men and women to come together and reconnect with old friends, some of whom haven't seen each other in a long time.

"The military is a small community in the Barstow area, but it is a strong one," said Jennifer Silva, marketing director of Marine Corps Community Services aboard Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow. "We want to ensure that they understand what services we have available for them to utilize."

Vendors from the base, such as

**Story and Photo by**  
**Pfc. Victoria Fairchild**  
Combat Correspondent

Marines young and old commemorated the United States Marine Corps' 236th Birthday with a traditional cake-cutting ceremony at the Veterans Home

of Barstow, Nov. 9.

During the ceremony, more than 60 Marines and veterans celebrated the Corps' birthday with the reading of Gen. John A. Lejeune's birthday message, a message from the Commandant of the Marine Corps and a formal cake-cutting ceremony.

To honor the legacy of the Corps, the Marines continued with the traditional cake-cutting ceremony, in which the first piece of cake was given to the oldest and youngest Marines present, symbolizing the passage of knowledge and tradition

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Follow us on ...



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Marine Corps Birthday Ball



Statistics show that 50 percent of all holiday fires start in the kitchen. Don't let carelessness ruin your holiday. Thanksgiving is also known for being one of the busiest "traveled" holidays. Be a responsible driver by not driving while impaired or tired. Make sure children are buckled-up in the back seat. Drive defensively and be prepared for that unexpected weather by adjusting speed for conditions.

In an effort to ensure all citizens have a happy and safe turkey day, follow these kitchen safety tips:
-Make sure your cooking appliances are in good working order.
-Start your holiday cooking with a clean stove and oven.
Make sure any old grease or food spills are cleaned up to lessen the chance of a flare-up.

-Keep kitchen clutter and loose clothing away from stove burners.
-Turn pot handles in toward the rear of the stove, out of your child's reach. If the handles are allowed to stick out over the stove, they could be grabbed by a child, spilling their hot contents and causing burns.
-NEVER leave cooking food unattended.
-If the contents in a pot or

pan catch on fire, do not touch or try to move the pot or pan as you may spread the fire or burn yourself. Extinguish the flames with a metal lid or a larger pot.
-Never use water on a grease fire. Extinguish the flames with a metal lid or larger pot.
-Use potholders to prevent burns. If you are burned, do not use ice, butter or other substances on the burn. Ice can damage the skin, and butter or

other substances can trap the heat in. Instead, let the burn cool off under a steady stream of cool tap water and seek medical assistance if necessary.
-Keep holiday decorations away from heat sources such as stoves, candles or heaters.
-In the event of a fire or medical emergency, always call 911.
We hope you have a safe and happy holiday!

# Chaplain's Corner

## Inclusion, sports, and friendship

By Lt. Benjamin Warner  
Base Chaplain



Of all the investments I've made for my children over the last few years, none has been quite as valuable as buying them The Sandlot on DVD for something like five bucks. My son has told me daily that I play ball like a girl since first viewing this movie. If you've never seen it, it's basically a summer vacation/baseball movie where kids get into problematic situations: high jinks ensue. But, The Sandlot has survived as one of the greatest baseball movies ever... not because of big names or a big budget, but because it taps into something in who we are as people. I got to thinking about this after our most recent family viewing. What is it that draws me back to watching the same movie I saw with my best friend at the theater in 1993?

Any number of reasons could be given for why I watched this as a kid. It's got baseball and a giant killer beast of a dog. It's got kids loudly proclaiming swear words. It has one of the best gross-out scenes in any kid's movie. The reason I keep going back, I've discovered, is that this is a movie about being a good friend. It's a story where one kid refuses to give up on another despite the pressure from the rest of the group. This hits home for me, as the inclusion of "outsiders" is a very important part of my faith.

Ephesians chapter two details how we are "outsiders" with regard to God's promises. Then it details the work of God in the world to break down dividing walls, giving the opportunity to become a part of His people. It finishes with this

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### Chapel Services

Catholic Mass  
St. Joseph's Catholic Church  
505 E. Mt. View Barstow  
Sundays, 7:30 a.m. Misa En Espanol  
9:30 - 11:30 a.m. English

Protestant Services  
Sunday 9 a.m.  
Jewish Congregation  
Call 253-3532  
for more information

## Just doing my job...



Photo by Cpl. Thomas Bricker

Ron Hudson, a heavy mobile equipment mechanic with Cost Work Center 717 humvee repair, replaces the armor on a humvee, Nov. 9. Hudson has been working on humvees for roughly a year and spends his free time with his animals.

# Barstow Log

Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, California  
Colonel Daniel P. Ermer, Commanding Officer  
Sgt. Maj. Donovan White

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# News Briefs

### Aspiring Leadership Program

The Lejeune Leadership Institute (LLI) is soliciting Civilian Marine nominations for the Aspiring Leadership Program (ALP) 2012-1. Full time permanent status GS-4 through GS-6 grade level non-appropriated employees can prepare for positions of greater responsibility and career development.

The ALP is a two-month program structured around classroom learning and self-study assignments which allow participants to tailor the program to specifically fit their developmental needs.

Contact Chad Trusty, Employee Development Officer at 577-6298 or chad.trusty@usmc.mil for applications or any questions.

### Executive Leadership Program

The Lejeune Leadership Institute (LLI) is soliciting Civilian Marine nominations for participation in the Executive Leadership Program (ELP) 2013-1. This program is open to full time permanent status GS-11 through GS-13 grade level or equivalents to include non-appropriated employees.

The ELP seminars are tailored to the federal work environment and focus on leadership skills and experience to help participants move to higher levels of leadership responsibilities.

Contact Chad Trusty, Employee Development Officer, at chad.trusty@usmc.mil for applications or 577-6298 for any questions.

### Leave share requests

The following is a comprehensive list of individuals currently affected by medical emergencies and who are in need of your leave donations: Patricia Benavidez, Katrina Sanchez, Anthony Santillanes, Amanda Zamora, Barbara Holt, David Nieman, Daisy Morales, and Alma Rodriguez.

Anyone desiring to donate annual leave under the Leave Sharing Program may do so by obtaining a leave donor application form from the Human Resources Office. Ensure completed forms are turned into HRO as well. For more information, contact Michelle Eichler at 577-6915.

### Toys for Tots Tuesdays

Every Tuesday morning from 5:45 to 7:30, starting Nov. 15 and running through Dec. 20, Marine Corps Logistics Base Fire Department personnel will be collecting toys at the front gates of the Nebo facility and the Yermo Annex. Bring a new, UNWRAPPED toy and help more than ever in the High Desert! Many children face the prospect of finding nothing under the tree this year. Your donation of a new toy can bring a joyful Christmas to an underprivileged child.



### Going Green

You can Go Green in the office many ways. Use both sides of each sheet of paper to make copies. Use the back of paper for scratch paper and notes. When possible, use your printer's low-quality setting to save ink. Bookmark Web pages instead of printing them for research. Edit on screen, not on paper.

### Energy Tip

You can get federal tax credits for energy efficiency if you purchase a qualified energy-efficient product or renewable energy system for your home. While some energy efficiency tax credits are available through 2011, others are available through 2016. Go to www.energysavers.gov for details.

This is another Green Energy Tip from your MCLB Energy Team.

### Turkey Bowl!

Bowl three strikes in a row and win a free turkey, come bowl any day of the week, November 2nd -18th open bowling only, one turkey per customer. For more information, call 577-6264.

### November is American Diabetes Month

November is American Diabetes month, a time to communicate the seriousness of diabetes and the importance of prevention and control. For more information, call 577-6898.

### "Internet Safety: What Parents Should Know"

Wednesday, November 23rd at 10 a.m. in the HRO Classroom, bldg. 204. Our children are our nation's most valuable asset. Protecting our children against the fear of crime and preventing them from becoming victims of crime must be a national priority. This presentation will help you begin to understand the complexities of online child exploitation. For more information, call 577-6599.

### Welcome Home Heroes

Celebrate the return of your fellow Marines at a Welcome Home Celebration. Hosted by Marine Corps Family Team Building, the event will take place at the Major General James L. Day Conference Center, bldg. 38 on Thursday, December 1, from 1630-1800. Open to all MCLB patrons and their sponsored guests, light hors d'oeuvres will be served. For more information, contact Erin Swann at 577-6408.

### SMP BIG MARINE, little Marine Relay

Friday, December 2nd from 4:30pm-7:30pm at the Semper Fit Gym, bldg. 44. Join us for our 2nd annual BIG MARINE, little Marine Relays. Lots of competition with one youth and one Marine paired up to challenge all in relay type games. Sack race, spoon egg run and balloon head race. Lots of prizes and awards, come join the fun. For more information, call 577-5889.

### Base Christmas Party

Base Christmas Party, Thursday, December 15th, from 5-9 p.m. in the Major General James L. Day Conference Center, bldg. 38. Christmas crafts and puppet show for the kids will be in Santa's Candy land! (Tennis court area) Make sure your little ones bundle up. There will be Live Music, Dinner, Santa Claus, and Crafts. For more information, contact MCCS Marketing at 577-6968.

### MCCX

November is the month for giving and thanks. Bring in a canned or boxed item to donate and receive a small fountain drink. In addition, do not forget Black Friday, November 25th, Early Bird Specials and great discounts throughout the store.

### Burn Your Own Steak and Family Dining Nights

Effective Immediately, Burn Your Own Steak Night and Family Dining Nights return to the Major General James L. Day Conference Center and Sugar

Loaf Hill Bar. Burn Your Own Steak and Family Dining Nights start at 4:30 and run until 8pm. The Sugar Loaf Hill Bar will be open as well but only on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Burn Your Own Steak Night on Tuesdays- Pricing: Active Duty \$10.95 Civilian \$12.95 Family Dining on Thursdays-Pricing: Military \$6.50, Children ages 5-12 \$6.50, Civilian \$7.25, (children under five are free). For questions or comments, call 577-6296.

### Story Time

Its story time every Tuesday from 10:30 to 11:30. Come to the library, McTureous Hall, bldg. 218 for our weekly story time. We will have crafts, puppets, and great stories. For more information, contact the Library at 577-6395 or email at LibraryBarstow@usmc-mccs.org. Visit our website www.mccsbarstow.com/library

### Hobby Shop

November 20th is customer appreciation day at the Hobby Shop, bldg. 375. For our customers, free lift use in the auto shop, and in the wood/rock shop, November 28th is "Tool of the Month- dove tailed jig. Come learn about the different tools and their uses. For more information, call 577-6692.

### STAY IN THE LOOP!

Visit www.mccsbarstow.com or pick up a Quarterly Connection Magazine at any of your MCCS facilities.

# HIGH FECA COSTS CAUSE FOR CONCERN

Compiled by  
Barstow Log staff

"No one will legitimately argue (Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow) has not demonstrated mission success in the past. We should however, never forget there are countless others competing with us to do our jobs better in the future! We must therefore, take a hard look at how we are doing business today and have a critical eye on how we can make not only ourselves, but our customers more efficient and effective tomorrow." – Excerpt from the Commanding Officer's Forward to the Base Strategic Guidance.

What could you do with \$4.3 million? How about \$8.7 million? Think about that for a minute....

From a personal standpoint, that kind of money would allow most folks to live a luxurious lifestyle; big house, fancy cars and maybe a few trips to the Caribbean. Looking at it from a MCLB Barstow operational standpoint that

could account for a number of Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) or permanent positions, more equipment, supplies, training and TAD dollars, monetary awards, and the list goes on.

Those figures actually represent the amount of money MCLB Barstow has to repay the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation Program, which is comprised of four separate compensation programs. One is the Federal Employees Workers Compensation Act program, under which MCLBB falls.

The FECA program provides monetary wage-loss and medical compensation to civilian employees of the Federal Government injured at work and to other certain designated groups, as well as survivor benefits for a covered employee's employment-related death, according to the United States Department of Labor website.

The \$8.7 million represents the combined totals from Fiscal Year 2010 (\$4.3 million) and Fiscal Year 2011 (\$4.4 million) the military

community at Barstow as a whole has, or had, to repay from their annual budgets, which is not recouped through additional funding from the Department of Defense.

When looking at an employee being compensated for injuries obtained while on the job, also consider the time that employee has to take off to recover from his or her injury. That time away from the job is categorized as Lost Production Day Rate.

The Voluntary Protection Program is designed to reduce Lost Production Day Rate by putting safety in the employees' hands and have them look out for each other and remain vigilant

"The Barstow Marine base currently has the highest lost production day rate (158) of all Marine Corps installations and the highest rate of all but one DoD installation, resulting in the base being placed in the top two of the 40

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statement: *So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household* (Ephesians 2:19). Throughout my life, I've been on both ends of this dynamic. I've been part of a group of people, and I've been excluded from different groups. Sometimes I don't mind being excluded, because I didn't want to be part of that group anyway (and sometimes I wanted to take my ball and go home!). Other times, exclusion hurt.

This isn't a problem faced only by five-year-olds on the playground. We were created to live in relationship, both with God and each other.

When either of those relationships is forcibly withheld from us, it makes an emotional impact. We can cope with that impact in various ways, including rejecting our need for community. The outcome is still going to be the same: part of who we are will be lost to us. Granted, some people have greater need to be included than others. I know plenty of people who are content with a few close friends, and then I know some people who need to be surrounded by many.

The point of all this is to say no matter who you are, how can you be the person who includes someone else? What efforts can you make to reach out to someone who has been excluded, or someone

who is new to the area? We live in a military community—there's always someone new. Maybe it's with baseball (or sports in general) or any other shared interest. Whatever the case may be, reaching out to someone else will always be valuable, from age five to 95.



## Security tip of the week



### TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME

Here are some holiday crime prevention tips. Burglars prefer to enter through unlocked doors or windows, such as those left open to allow an extension cord to be run to the outside Christmas lights. Install an exterior outlet for your holiday lights. Cut the

release cord handle off your electric garage door openers. It's easy to push the top of your garage door in enough to put a wire hanger in and hook the release handle. By pulling on the handle, a burglar will override the screw or chain drive and be able to manually lift the overhead door. Once protected by the privacy of your garage, entry to the home is inevitable. When traveling, put your office address and cell phone numbers on your luggage tags instead of your home address. Remove all address information from your parked car at the airport. Also, do not program your home address into your GPS device as burglars can use this to get to your home. Instead, program the address of a business or gas station nearby. After the holidays, don't pile up empty gift boxes from your new computer, DVD player, or stereo receiver on the street for the garbage man. Break them down or cut them up to conceal the contents better.

ARTICLES SUBMITTED FOR PUBLISHING IN THE BARSTOW LOG MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE MCLB PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE (BUILDING 204) NO LATER THAN THE THURSDAY PRIOR TO THE DESIRED PUBLICATION DATE.

**Today in U.S.M.C. history**  
Nov. 17, 1918: The 4th Marine Brigade, as part of the 2nd Division, American Expeditionary Force, began its march to the Rhine River, passing through Belgium and Luxembourg, as part of the American forces occupying a defeated Germany in post-World War I Europe.

## Top's Picks

This is Week 11 and who would have thought that the San Francisco 49ers would be the second best team in the league behind Green Bay; that the Colts would be winless, and the Redskins would actually be as bad as they are. The Top is having a bad season as well, but nevertheless I'm still going to go with my gut and pick the Cowboys over the Skins (that was a painful pick), the Titans over the Falcons, and San Diego falling to the Bears. Crazy picks? Maybe, but then again this has been a crazy, unpredictable season so far. Wouldn't you say?

**Thursday Night**  
\*NY Jets @ Denver

**Sunday**  
Carolina @ Detroit\*  
\*Jacksonville @ Cleveland  
Tampa Bay @ Green Bay\*  
\*Dallas @ Washington  
\*Buffalo @ Miami  
\*Oakland @ Minnesota  
Cincinnati @ Baltimore\*  
\*Seattle @ St. Louis

Arizona @ San Francisco\*  
\*Tennessee @ Atlanta  
San Diego @ Chicago\*  
Philadelphia @ NY Giants\*

**Monday Night**  
Kansas City @ New England\*

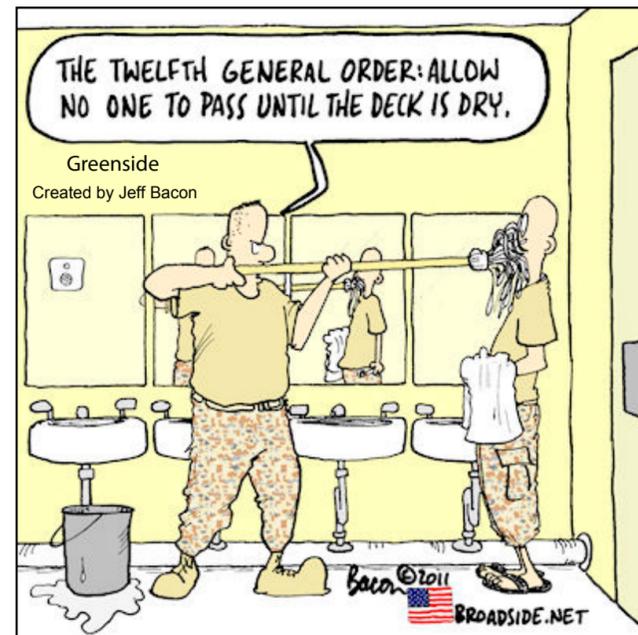
**Byes:**  
Texans, Colts, Saints, Steelers

Remember to drop your selections off at the Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 204 on Nebo, or submit by e-mail to BSTW\_PAO@usmc.mil, by close of business Friday. Good luck!



Photo By Cpl. Thomas A. Bricker

Marines with Headquarters Battalion, Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, participate in the traditional cake cutting ceremony in front of building 15, MCLB Barstow, Nov. 9. Marines and civilians with the base commemorated the 236th anniversary of the founding of the United States Marine Corps. They celebrated with the reading of Gen. John A. Lejeune's birthday message, a message from the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. James F. Amos and a formal cake-cutting ceremony.



Greenside  
Created by Jeff Bacon

Bacon ©2011  
BROADSIDE.NET

# MCLB celebrates 236th Marine Corps ball

Story by Sgt. Shannon E. McMillan  
Photos by Cpl. Thomas A. Bricker  
Combat Correspondents

**M**ARINE CORPS LOGISTICS BASE, Barstow – For the past 236 years, knowledge and traditions have been passed down from rank to rank to uphold the title of United States Marine and to continue the illustrious history of defending its nation ashore and at sea.

“Our rich heritage of selfless service and fidelity to nation and to one another lives on in all who currently wear the Eagle, Globe and Anchor – those who have answered the clarion call to duty with remarkable courage, dedication and unshakeable resolve that Marines are so well known for...” said Gen. James F. Amos, 35th Commandant of the Marine Corps, in his birthday message.

Marines and civilians affiliated with Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow commemorated the 236th anniversary of the founding of the United States Marine Corps, in Las Vegas, Nov. 12.

During the ceremony, more than 250 Marines, military spouses and civilians celebrated the birthday with a reading of Gen. John A. Lejeune’s birthday message, the viewing of a video message from the Commandant of the Marine Corps and a formal cake-cutting ceremony.

“As we celebrate our 236th birthday, let us look forward to future challenges – whatever they may be – and reaffirm our pledge to be America’s premier crisis response force; to be the first to fight... Always ready for the toughest and most challenging assignments... Happy 236th Birthday, Marines!” wrote Amos.

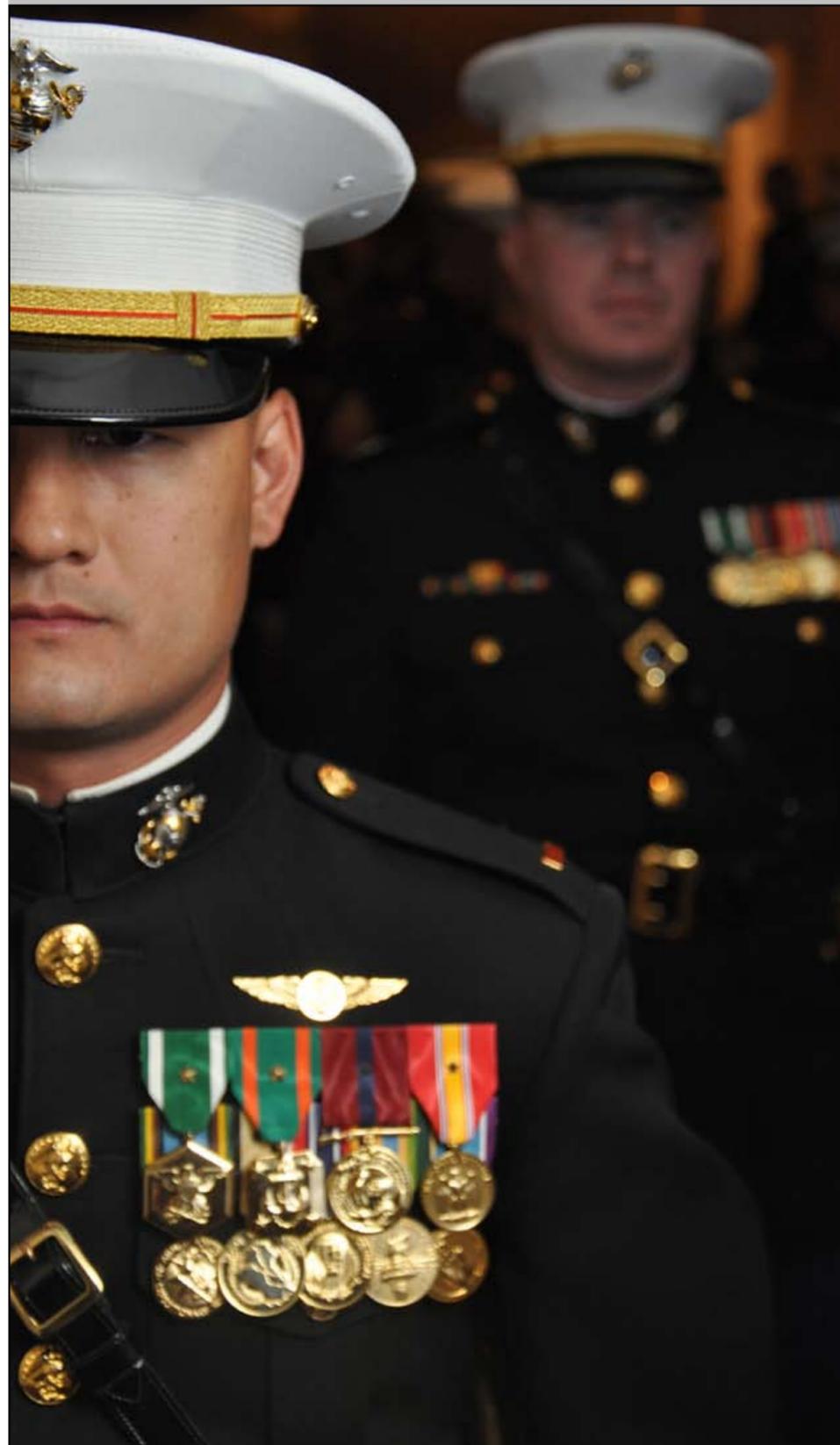
In keeping with tradition, Col. Daniel P. Ermer, base commanding officer, cut the first piece of cake and presented it to the guest of honor, retired Sgt. Maj. Frank E. Pulley. The Springfield, Tenn. native honorable served the Corps for 30 years.

The second piece of cake was given to the oldest and the youngest Marines present, symbolizing the passing of history and tradition from one generation to the next.

The oldest Marine present was Maj. J. Ed. Christiansen, who was born May 25, 1961, in Aberdeen, Idaho. He enlisted in the Marine Corps Sept. 11, 1986. Christiansen is currently assigned as the staff judge advocate aboard MCLB Barstow. The youngest Marine present was Lance Cpl. Johnathon Norita, born in 1992, in Saipan. Norita stepped on the yellow footprints in 2011, and is currently assigned as a supply clerk aboard MCLB Barstow.

Across the Corps, the Marine Corps Ball represents more than just an opportunity to get dressed up and spend a night out with friends and fellow co-workers; it’s a chance to share the camaraderie that comes with being a Marine, it’s to pay homage to those who have served before us and to uphold traditions.

To show honor and pride for the Corps, Marines of MCLB Barstow put hard work and dedication into preparing for the ball. A committee of Marines spent months of planning each detail of the event and the ceremonial detail spent hours practicing the intricate drill movements of the ceremony.



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Keoni Kim, executive officer of Headquarters Battalion, Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow stands at attention during the commemoration of the 236th Marine Corps Birthday Ball in Las Vegas, Nov. 12.



Marines with Headquarters Battalion, Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, escort a birthday cake at MCLB Barstow’s birthday ball in Las Vegas, Nov. 12. Service members and civilians with the base commemorated the 236th anniversary of the founding of the United States Marine Corps.



Colonel Daniel P. Ermer, Commanding Officer of Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, renders a salute during the MCLB Barstow birthday ball in Las Vegas, Nov. 12.

(Left photo) Colonel Daniel P. Ermer, Commanding Officer of Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, cuts the cake during the traditional cake-cutting ceremony during the MCLB Barstow birthday ball in Las Vegas, Nov. 12.

(Right photo) Marines with Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow dance during the MCLB Barstow birthday celebration in Las Vegas, Nov. 12.



**FECA** from page 4

Department of Defense installations with the highest lost production day rates,”

Rose Vickers, Injury Compensation Program Administrator, revealed.

Injuries in Fiscal Year 2011 have resulted in the loss of 2,794 production days worth about \$2 million.

“Why so high?” one might ask. Based on the type of duties performed here, (i.e. maintenance, supply and industrial-type duties,) injuries are bound to happen; back, leg, shoulder, even hand injuries that require taking time off from work to recover.

However, there are times when employees decide to take more time off than is necessary to recover from their injuries, which adds up to more lost production day rates for the command and more money being paid out in workers’ compensation.

Although difficult to prove, employees who take extra time off when they can return to work are technically receiving benefits for which they are not entitled, Vickers said.

“If guilty of filing a false claim, a person could face a \$10,000 fine and/or up to five years in prison. If found guilty of conspiracy to commit fraud, they could be looking at a \$10,000 fine and ten years in prison,” she added.

Any time employees apply for, or receive, FECA benefits to which they are not entitled, they may be abusing FECA. It may be because an employee doesn’t fully understand the law and its provisions, or because they believe that they are genuinely entitled to those benefits. When employees knowingly apply for FECA benefits they know they are not entitled to, they are committing fraud.

“The Marine Corps is looking very hard at FECA costs and are partnering with the Department of the Navy and (Naval Criminal Investigative Service) to investigate FECA fraud,” Col. Dan Ermer, commanding officer of MCLB Barstow said. “FECA fraud is real and the Department of the Navy is doing something about it.”

Keep in mind that the high FECA costs and LPDR here has the immediate attention of the base commanding officer, tenant organizations’

commanders or directors, and higher headquarters, and could potentially affect MCLB Barstow’s future. So what can employees do to lower the cost and the Lost Production Day Rate?

“Start by using good judgment and follow the safety rules and procedures while on the job,” said Ray Aguilar, Base Safety Officer. “If you do get hurt, return to work as soon as possible through light duty programs or other available means, but do not take advantage of the OWCP program by abusing this privilege.”

“It’s in everybody’s interest to be safer and to prevent injuries so we can become more efficient and effective in performing our mission and it helps us to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars,” Ermer emphasized. “The Marine Corps is known for getting the biggest bang for the dollar. If we can prove it to Congress, (it) puts us in a better position for the future.”

Barstow’s future is in its employees’ hands today and if it is to remain a key component in the warfighters’ efforts, its workforce must do better to keep it and themselves safe, secure and to always remember ‘Safety First’.

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Photo by Lance Cpl. Dominic A. Smarra

Carol Lockett, an employee with the Marine Corps Exchange aboard Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow explains details about upcoming sales to retired military members during the Retiree Open House, Nov. 15.

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Marine and Family Services, the Marine Corps Exchange and the staff judge advocate were on hand to explain what benefits they had to offer the retirees. Local community vendors were also available to provide their support and show what services were available to their neighbors as well.

“This is an event that the base receives a lot of support for,” Silva said. She further explained, there are services aboard the base that retirees have access to and many of them do not know about.

She added, the more information that can be distributed

to retirees in the community, the greater chance to make their lives easier. Instead of traveling to Fort Irwin for things that they may need, the retirees can easily travel right down the road.

“It is gratifying to know you’re doing something that can help change people’s lives,” Silva said. “We want to provide as much help to our community as we possibly can and make a difference.”

*For more on this story contact the author at dominic.smarra@usmc.mil*

**VETERANS** from page 1

from one generation to the next.

“I think it’s important that we keep this tradition going,” said Pfc. Diomar Guano, a postal clerk aboard Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow. “The retired Marines shouldn’t be forgotten, they deserve to be honored too.”

During the ceremony, MCLB Barstow’s commanding officer, Col. Daniel P. Ermer, cut the cake and handed it to the eldest Marine, for the first bite.

The oldest Marine present was retired Gunnery Sgt. John Harmon, born in 1917, in California, who began his enlistment in 1944. The youngest Marine present

was Lance Cpl. Johnathon Norita, born in 1992, in Saipan. Norita stepped on the yellow foot prints in 2011, and is currently assigned as a supply clerk aboard MCLB Barstow.

“I’ve been the oldest Marine for quite some time,” said Harmon, 94, who was a combat correspondent for more than 25 years of his honorable service.

Although the Marine Corps has changed slightly over the years, tradition is still important.

Participating in the cake cutting ceremony is something Harmon is used to, he said.

With more than 40 veterans attending the event, the room was filled with stories of memories of enlistment and tours in Vietnam, Korea and Europe. Among the

conversations, active duty Marines listened attentively as the veterans would explain their triumphs and failures of war.

Guano spoke with a retired Marine who served in World War II as a combat cameraman, and was one of the first Marines to take pictures of the USS America.

“It made me proud to know that I’m serving and I was able to participate in this,” said Guano, 21, a Chicago native. “They went through a lot when they were serving and it’s something that needs to be remembered.”

*For more on this story contact the author at victoria.fairchild@usmc.mil*