

# FLIGHT JACKET

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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

August 6, 2012

## East vs. West at Redbull Rivals Surf Competition



Graduates from both  
recruit training depots  
take to water for  
bragging rights





### Out of office onto beach; MWHS-3 holds family get-together

Marines and families went to the beach in an effort to raise morale, family togetherness and unit cohesion by spending the day playing games in an environment where rank was not an issue.

For full story, click [Click HERE for more photos](#)

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### Falcons keep spirits up after first game of season

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Falcons football team played their first game of the season at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, July 31.

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### Marines mentor Young Marines during Single Marine Program

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For full story, click [Click HERE for more photos](#)

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



Col. John P. Farnam  
Commanding Officer  
MCAS Miramar

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The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office. Comments or questions should be directed to 858-577-6000.



In addition to briefs on symptoms and side effects of illegal drug use, detectives displayed examples of drug paraphernalia during a drug awareness brief at the Bob Hope Theater aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 23. Marines learned what to look for if they suspect a fellow Marine is using illegal drugs.

# Marines learn from San Diego Police about drug awareness

Photos by Pfc. Raquel Barraza



Marines attend an illegal drug and awareness brief at the Bob Hope Theater aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 23. Marines learned about the effects and consequences of using illegal drugs with special emphasis on new drugs like spice.

## ON THE COVER:

Sgt. John Taylor, a logistics officer with Combat Logistics Battalion and West Palm Beach, Fla., native, rides a wave at the Redbull Rivals Surf Competition aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., July 28. Taylor was a part of the winning East Coast team. (Photo by Pfc. Raquel Barraza)



# Marines go net-to-net in shooting competition

Photos by Pfc. Raquel Barraza



Top: Cpl. Joseph Inguardsen, air traffic controller with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron and a Memphis, Tenn., native, grabs a basketball during a 3-point competition at the Semper Fit Center aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 26. Inguardsen was the winner of the competition making 10 out of 18 shots.

Right: Lance Cpl. Chad Jenson, a ground radio repairer with Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron 38 and a Redondo Beach, Calif., native, prepares to take the first shot of a 3-point competition at the Semper Fit Center aboard Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar, Calif., July 26. The competition is part of the 101 Days of Summer program, promoting health and summer-safety aboard MCAS Miramar.

Below: Lance Cpl. Jeffery Vongsa, a telephone systems and personal computer intermediate repairer with Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron 38, grabs a basketball for a 3-point competition at the Semper Fit Center aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 26. Marines competed to win points for their unit in the 101 Days of Summer event aboard MCAS Miramar.



# The Last A4: restored by Flying Leatherneck Aviation Museum

Video created by Flight Jacket



Before



After





Two Marines play a game of horseshoes during the annual Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 Breakers Beach Party aboard Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., July 27. Marines and families went to the beach in an effort to raise morale, family togetherness and unit cohesion in an environment where rank was not an issue.

# Out of office onto beach

## MWHS-3 holds annual family get-together

Story by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns



Marines and families gathered during the annual Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 Breakers Beach Party aboard Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., July 27. They enjoyed a free meal during the beach party where burgers, hot dogs, pulled pork and various other dishes were served for all to enjoy.

NAVAL AIR STATION NORTH ISLAND, Calif. – Marines with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 held their annual MWHS-3 Breakers Beach Party aboard Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., July 27.

Marines and families went to the beach to raise morale, family togetherness and unit cohesion by spending the day playing games in an environment where rank wasn't an issue.

"It seems to me there is a lot less stress," said Lance Cpl. Matt Parker, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist with MWHS-3 and a St. Louis native. "Everyone is out of uniform and having a good time just interacting with each other. This shows that everyone is a person too, not just a scary boss who needs to be feared. It's also less destructive than going out drinking."

Families of Marines, including those of Marines deployed, were invited to the beach gathering, which featured carnival games, a bounce house, barbeque and a dunk tank.

"It's a chance to get all of our families together to interact," said Don Wallace, the family readiness officer with MWHS-3 and a Lawton, Okla., native. "They have fun together, dunk the people they voted into the dunk tank, play games and eat good food. It gets the families out of the house and out to the beach."

According to Wallace, other than its holiday party held at Sea World, this yearly event is one of the largest event the unit holds and those who gathered really seemed to enjoy themselves.

For more information on next year's event contact Don Wallace at (858) 577-8364.



Lance Cpl. Marissa Heater, a Marine Air Ground Task Force planner with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 and a Mesa, Ariz., native, throws a carnival game bean bag during the annual MWHS-3 Breakers Beach Party aboard Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., July 27.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)



Sgt. Maj. Javier Esparza, the Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 sergeant major and a Detroit native, yells after being dunked in the dunk tank challenge during the annual MWHS-3 Breakers Beach Party aboard Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., July 27. Marines and families voted who they wanted to dunk. The list included the sergeant major, the commanding officer of the squadron and a corporal who was popular with his fellow Marines.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW VIDEO FROM EVENT](#)



# MCAS Miramar says goodbye, hello to commanding officers



Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns

Col. Frank A. Richie, commanding officer, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., relinquished command of the air station to Col. John P. Farnam during a change of command ceremony here July 25.

"I would like to thank my wife, family and more importantly, those stationed aboard MCAS Miramar for making my time here worthwhile," said Richie. "I always have this to say, 'these are my people.' Third Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar and people of San Diego, my wife and I will forever consider you our people. Semper Fidelis."

The former commanding officer also thanked his mentors and those who helped him along his journey to being the man and Marine he is today.

Richie took command of the air station on July 31, 2009, and among other things, has been a fixture in the air station's community involve-

ment. He will be moving to the Pentagon to work at Headquarters Marine Corps Aviation Department for the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Several hundred attended the ceremony, including the mayor of San Diego, Mayor Jerry Sanders, and the commanding general of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, Maj. Gen. Andrew W. O'Donnell Jr.

Farnam assumed the position of commanding officer of MCAS Miramar after serving as the Deputy Division Chief for Forces Division.

"I want to thank the Marine Corps for the opportunity to come here to Miramar and for the opportunity to lead these Marines because as a Marine officer there is no greater honor," said Farnam. "I don't make a lot of promises but I'll make you one and it is this, every day you will get my absolute and very best, of that I promise you."



*Col. John P. Farnam, left, the new commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, gives a speech at the change of command ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 25. Col. Frank A. Richie, right, the former commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., gives his farewell speech to Marines and attendees during a change of command ceremony held here July 25.*



*Below: Brig. Gen. Vincent Coglianesse, the commanding general of Marine Corps Installations West, gives a speech at the change of command ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 25.*



*Above: Marines with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron salute Col. John P. Farnam during the change of command ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 25.*



# Local SDSU graduate returns as Commanding Officer



Compiled by Flight Jacket Staff

With the sounds of helicopters taking off and jets patrolling the San Diego skies, Col. John P. Farnam took the helm as Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., commanding officer, July 25.

"I want to thank the Marine Corps for the opportunity to come here to Miramar and for the opportunity to lead these Marines because as a Marine officer there is no greater honor," said Farnam. "I don't make a lot of promises but I'll make you one, and it is this, every day you will get my absolute and very best, of that I promise you."

As MCAS Miramar's new base commanding officer, Farnam plans to create an environment that continues the success of the air station and expects the mission to come first.

"I understand the value of relationships and I understand how much better we all are when we're working together, and so we will keep that alive, we will keep that strong and we look forward to working and knowing all of you," said Farnam.

In a letter to the Marines, Farnam explained the focus and mission over the next three years.

"Our mission is to maintain and operate facilities, and provide services and material support to the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing and other tenant organizations," explained Farnam. "We will do that by keeping faith with our Corps Values and each other, supporting what is best for MCAS Miramar, and supporting the welfare of our Marines, sailors, civilians and their families."

[TO VIEW COL. FARNAM'S BIOGRAPHY CLICK HERE](#)



## Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron welcomes new commander



Lt. Col. Stephen M. Griffiths relinquished command of Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron to Lt. Col. Daniel J. Levasseur during a change of command ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Aug. 3.

Griffiths enlisted in the Marine Corps Delayed Entry Program in September 1986. He attended recruit training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego where he graduated Aug. 14, 1987. He was assigned to Beach and Port Operations Company, 4th Landing Support Battalion, 4th Marine Division in San Jose, Calif. That following summer he attended Basic Engineer Operators' course at Court House Bay, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., and was designated a basic heavy equipment operator.

While serving in the Marine Corps reserve, Griffiths graduated from the San Jose State University in August 1991 with a bachelors in aviation operations with concentration in maintenance management. He was commissioned through the Platoon Leaders Course and entered The Basic School in October 1991.

Griffiths reported to Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla., for Aviation Indoctrination in June 1992 and to NAS Whiting Field, Fla., for follow on flight training. Griffiths was designated a Naval aviator on March 4, 1994.

Griffiths was assigned to Marine Helicopter Training Squadron 204 MCAS New River, N.C., for CH-46E replacement aircrew training. He completed training in October 1994 and was assigned to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268 at MCAS Tustin, Calif. Griffiths completed two Western Pacific deployments during his tour with HMM-268.

He was assigned to HMM-164 at MCAS El Toro, Calif., in September of 1998 where he was the Director of Safety and Standardization as the squadron transitioned to the primary CH-46E training squadron, HMM(T)-164.

Griffiths was assigned to HMM-364 at MCAS Camp Pendleton, Calif., in November 2000. While assigned to HMM-364 he served as the assistant operations officer and Weapons and Tactics Instructor.

Griffiths was assigned to Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 at MCCDC Twentynine Palms, Calif., in August 2001. Griffiths deployed to support Operation Iraqi Freedom in January 2003 and returned in September 2003.

Griffiths returned to HMM-364 in March 2004 where he completed two OIF deployments.

In August of 2007, Griffiths was assigned to Headquarters United States European Command in Stuttgart, Germany. While assigned to EUCOM, he served as Contingency Airborne Command Post OIC, Procedures Chief for Nuclear Command and Control, and Branch Chief for EUCOM Nuclear Command and Control.

In June 2010, Griffiths assumed command of Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

His personal decorations include the Bronze Star, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with Strike Flight Numeral 13, Joint Achievement Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and the Selected Marine Corps Reserve Medal.

Levasseur graduated from Boston College with a bachelors in History and English. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in May 1995 through the Platoons Leaders Course Program.

Upon completion of The Basic School in May 1996, Levasseur reported to NAS Pensacola for Aviation Indoctrination and then to NAS Corpus Christi, Texas, for follow-on flight training. He was then assigned to NAS Whiting Field in February 1998 for advance helicopter training and designated a Naval aviator in August 1998.

Levasseur was assigned to HMT-204 at MCAS New River in September 1998 for CH-46E replacement aircrew training. In December 1998, he reported to HMM-163 at MCAS El Toro, and then transferred with the squadron to MCAS Miramar in May 1999. During his tour with HMM-163, he deployed with 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit from August 2001 to March 2002 and with 13th MEU from September 2003 to March 2004. While still attached to HMM-163, Levasseur also deployed with HMM-764 as an augment pilot from June to September 2004 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In October 2004, Levasseur was assigned to 1st Tank Battalion, 1st Marine Division in Twentynine Palms where he served as a forward air controller, battalion air officer and assistant operations officer.

Upon completion of his tour with 1st Tanks in November 2005, Levasseur was assigned to HMM-165 at MCAS Miramar. During his tour, he deployed with the 15th MEU to the Central Command area of responsibility in support of combat operations from September 2006 to May 2007 and again from May to November 2008.

In July 2009, Levasseur was selected to attend Intermediate Level School at the Naval War College in Newport, R.I., and graduated with distinction in June 2010.

Levasseur was then assigned to the Joint Unmanned Aircraft Systems Center of Excellence at Creech Air Force Base, Indian Springs, Nev., in July 2010. In January 2012, he was reassigned to the Joint Unmanned Aircraft Systems Digital Information Exchange Joint Test at Nellis AFB, Las Vegas and served as coordinator, Joint Warfighter Advisory Group.

Levasseur's personal decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with Strike Flight Numeral 7, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with three gold stars, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with one gold star.



# East vs. West at Redbull

## Rivals Surf Competition



Above: MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Sgt. John Wolfe, a Bell AH-1 Cobra helicopter instructor with the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Marine Detachment and a St. Augustine, Fla., native, rides a wave at the Redbull Rivals Surf Competition aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., July 28. The competition was between Marines who attended recruit training at the East Coast and West Coast recruit training depots.



Above and right: MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Petty Officer 2nd Class Randy Adalin, a hospital corpsman with 1st Medical Battalion and Kodiak, Ala., native, rides a wave at the Redbull Rivals Surf Competition aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., July 28. Nineteen Marines and Adalin competed for each other's surfboards and bragging rights for their respective recruit training depot.



### Story and Photos by Pfc. Raquel Barraza

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – West Coast and East Coast Marines always fight for bragging rights on which coast is better.

On July 28, 19 Marines and one sailor competed in the Redbull Rivals Surf Competition at Del Mar Beach aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Redbull sponsored the event for Marines who graduated from Marine Corps Recruit Depots San Diego and Parris Island, to compete on the water for the title of best coast for the year and also each other's surfboards.

This is the second annual surfing event Redbull has hosted and sponsored. Last year, the West Coast won the competition.

"We came out to redeem ourselves from last year," said Warrant Officer John Jencura, 1st Intelligence Battalion, Camp Pendleton and New Smyrna Beach, Fla., native. Jencura was the East Coast team captain.

Both teams had 10 members and surfed for 100 minutes. Surfers each rode three waves and were judged on their two best waves earning points for their respective team.

Winning the title and surf boards was not the only thing gained from this competition. All the surfers who competed agreed the competition was about camaraderie, good sportsmanship and fitness among Marines.

"Camaraderie and fitness go hand in hand for any Marine, and winning as a team really promotes both of those," said Jencura.

However, bragging rights were ultimately given to the East Coast team as the West Coast handed over their surf boards.

"It was awesome to win for the East Coast," said Sgt. John Taylor, a logistics officer with Combat Logistics Battalion, Camp Pendleton and West Palm Beach, Fla., native.

After the competition, the surfers stayed for the night surfing session where all the surfers enjoyed the waves and freestyle surfing.

Redbull intends to continue to offer the competition annually for Marines who are always ready for some friendly competition.

"I definitely want to do this again, so East Coast can keep the surfing title," said Taylor.

Until next year, it looks like East Coast will wear the title of "champions", and in this case, have the bragging rights of the best coast.

Right: MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Both the East Coast, white, and the West Coast, blue, teams gather before the Redbull Rivals Surf Competition at Del Mar Beach aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, July 28. All the surfers had to qualify to compete in the Redbull Competition.







## Season to start: Falcons prepare for flight

Story and Photos by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar's Falcons held a pep rally for the team and their supporters, July 30, to raise spirits before their first game of the season as they go on to defend the title of "Best of the West."

"I wish the game was today, that's how excited I am about this," said Sgt. Herman Dillard, a quarterback with the Falcons and a St. Louis native. "I have a feeling that we're going to win this game. I'm proud to be a part of this team."

Last year's season, for some of the Falcons, has not ended.

"We've been training since last season," said Cpl. Persons Griffith, a defensive captain with the Falcons and an Arlington, Texas, native. "We've been working out together, working on fund raisers and leadership on the team. So we really haven't stopped since last season."

During the rally the coaches announced the captains for the team. They selected Marines who showed willingness to put the team first in all aspects of what they do.

"Once a Falcon, always a Falcon," Just like coach says," said Griffith. "Hopefully we come away with the win and an idea of where else we can improve ourselves."

As the first game approaches, the Falcons and their dedicated team captains prepare with victory in mind.



Cpl. Wiley Flowers, a defensive captain with the Falcons and a Philadelphia native, fixes his newly acquired Falcon helmet after a pep rally aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 30. After the rally, Marines were given the gear they will wear to games as they defend the "Best of the West" title last year's team earned.



Col. John P. Farnam, the commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., joins the Miramar Falcons in the huddle during a pep rally aboard MCAS Miramar, July 30. The station commanding officer joined the Marines to show his support of the team.



Marines and sailors stationed with Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., celebrate at a pep rally aboard MCAS Miramar, July 30. The pep rally was held in preparation of the Miramar Falcon's first game of the season.

## Falcons keep spirits up after first game of season

Story and Photos by Pfc. Raquel Barraza



Players of the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Falcons football team stand on the sidelines during MCAS Miramar Falcons first game at the Paige Fieldhouse football field aboard Marine Corp Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., July 31. Players on the sidelines continued to cheer on and motivate all of the players who were playing. The MCAS Miramar Falcons played the 11th Marine Regiment Cannon Cockers with the final score Cannon Cockers 16, Falcons 14.

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Falcons football team played their first game of the season at the Paige Fieldhouse football field at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, July 31.

The Falcons played the 11th Marine Regiment Cannon Cockers and lost by two points with the final score of 16-14.

Even though it was a loss, the Falcons intend to make it their last.

"We want to win every game from here on out," said Sgt. Herman Dillard Jr., a quarterback with the Falcons and St. Louis native.

Falcons players know what they want from this season and plan to continue working hard to get to their goal.

"We're going to practice harder and harder every day," said Dillard. "Were coming back to be back-to-back champions."

Coaches could not agree more with the players on working hard to make sure this is a very successful season.

"We're going to defend our title. That's the ultimate goal of the season," said Master Sgt. Ross G. Blain, the head coach for the MCAS Falcon football team.

The team remains optimistic because they know it's only the beginning of the season, added Blain.

"It takes time to get the right chemistry between the players and that's what the first few games are about," said Blain.

As with any sport, the coaches know that the team needs to keep a positive attitude to keep the spirit and morale of the team up.

"Bottom line is we're not going to win every gun fight but as long as we keep the mental attitude to win and desire to be the best that's all I could ask for," said Blain. "Just as long as we stay together, motivate each other, learn from our mistakes and continue to play smart we will do great this season."

As the team packed up to head back to Miramar, there were only smiles on players' faces. All the players look forward to the next game this football season Aug. 7 at Camp Pendleton.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)



Cpl. Wiley Flowers, a free safety with the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Falcons, dodges a player from the 11th Marine Regiment Cannon Cockers after intercepting the ball during the Falcons' first game aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., July 31. The Falcons lost by two points with the final score of 16-14.



Players from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Falcons prepare to hike the ball during the first game of the season at Paige Fieldhouse football field aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., July 31. The Falcons played the 11th Marine Regiment Cannon Cockers with the final score, Cannon Cockers 16, Falcons 14.



# Marines mentor Young Marines during Single Marine Program event

Story and photos by Pfc. Melissa Eschenbrenner

The Single Marine Program hosted the annual Big Marine Little Marine event, aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 28.

Members of the Young Marine Program, a group of children ages seven to 16 who practice drill and physical training, visited Miramar for a fun-filled day interacting with the air station's Marines.

Each Marine volunteer was paired with a Young Marine and split into teams for obstacle courses, relay races and tournaments such as dodge ball and tug-of-war.

The event was created to foster morale and unity between Marines and aspiring Marines in the local community.

"I love volunteering and giving back to the community," said Cpl. Nicholas Burkhardt, an intelligence specialist with Marine Heavy

Helicopter Squadron 465, and a Boise, Idaho, native. "I've done a lot of volunteering but I love giving back to these kids."

After the morning events, Marines and children sat down for lunch together, giving children time to ask various questions about the Marine Corps way of life.

Before being awarded completion certificates, each of the children had an opportunity to throw water balloons at the participating Marines.

While for many Marines volunteering is an opportunity to give back to the community, for Young Marines it is an opportunity to learn what being a Marine is all about.

For more information on upcoming events please contact Johanna Jones at (858) 577-6283.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)



Marines and members of the Young Marine Program compete in tug-of-war during a Big Marine Little Marine event held by the Single Marine Program aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 28. Volunteers with the Single Marine Program were paired up with children age seven to 16 to complete competitions such as dodge ball and relay races.



Chow hall patrons including Col. John P. Farnam, right, the commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., wait for food during the Best of the West competition at Gonzales Hall aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 31. Last year Gonzales Hall won the Best of the West title.

# Gonzales Hall competes to be 'Best of the West' – again

Story and Photos by Pfc. Raquel Barraza

Gonzales Hall aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., competed in the Best of the West competition to keep the title as the best mess hall in the Western region, July 31.

The Marines of Gonzales Hall hope to make this the second year in a row they win the Best of the West competition.

"Yes we feel very confident [about winning]," said Lance Cpl. Jordan C. Cotterell, a food service technician with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron. "Everyone came in and did their jobs and made no mistakes."

A team of evaluators from the Maj. Gen. William Pendleton Thompson Hill Memorial Awards Program for Food Service Excellence came to judge the food and menus of Gonzales Hall. The Marines treated it as just another work day.

"We don't have to put on a show, we do the same thing every day," said Cotterell. "We do the same meal preparation and the same cleaning process every day. We are used to doing it the right way."

Mess hall Marines work long hours to make sure meals are ready for Marines when they arrive at the mess hall.

"Most people don't take our job seriously, but if you're not eating you can't succeed in anything, your body will fail on you," said Cotterell.

Gonzales Hall knows the importance of keeping the Marines well fed on the air station. Winning this competition for a second time in a row would prove that Miramar is not only getting what it needs, but getting the best for the Marines.

"We do everything by the book and don't take short cuts; it's a lot of hard work but definitely worth it if you want to be the best," said Lance Cpl. Brittany Brown, a food service technician with H&HS.

Miramar is proud to have the Marines of Gonzales Hall working to their full potential to ensure their mission is accomplished and hold on to the title of the Best of the West. Gonzales Hall will not know the results of the competition for multiple weeks.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)



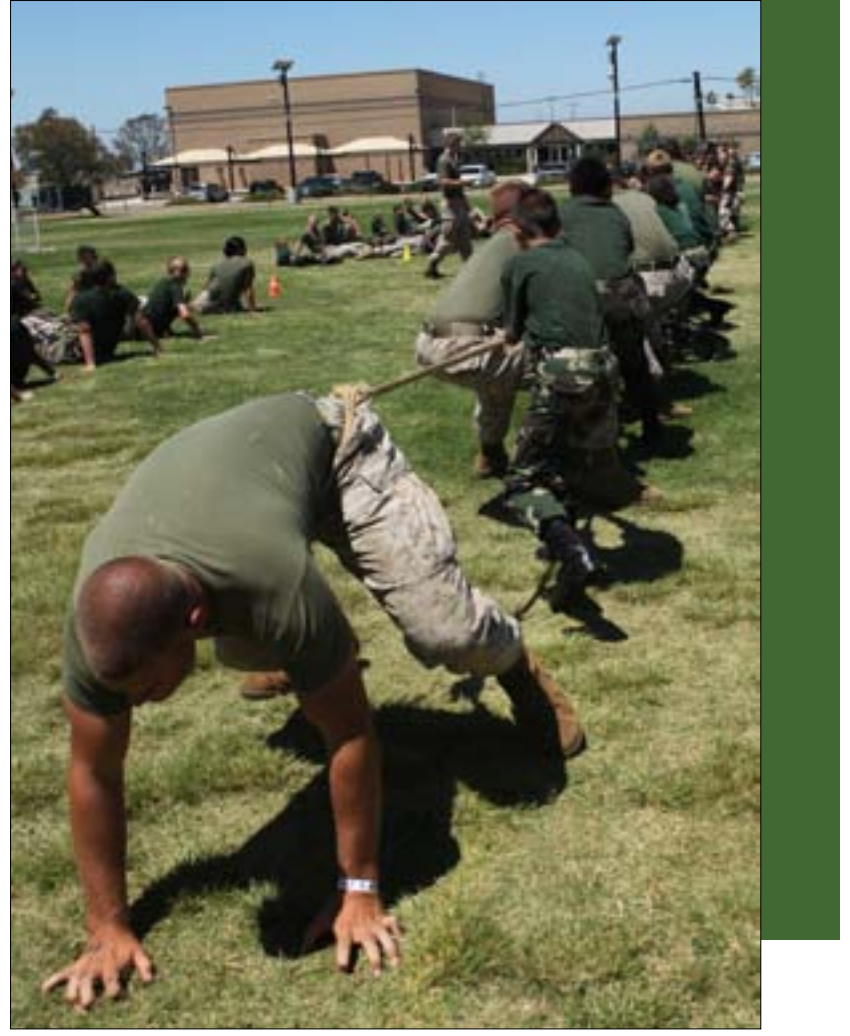
Sgt. Maj. Karyl J. Sisneros, the sergeant major of Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, admires an ice sculpture during the Best of the West competition at Gonzales Hall aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 31. Judges tasted various food samples. The winners of the competition will not be announced for several weeks.



Evaluators taste food during the Best of the West competition at Gonzales Hall aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 31. Gonzales Hall is defending its title of Best of the West.



Above: Cpl. Nicholas Burkhardt, an intelligence specialist with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465 and a Boise, Idaho, native, speaks to the Marines and Young Marines during the Big Marine Little Marine event aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 28. This is the second annual Big Marine Little Marine event held by the Single Marine Program, where a Marine volunteer is paired with a child from the Young Marine Program for various physical competitions.



Right: Marines and members of the Young Marine Program compete in tug-of-war during a Big Marine Little Marine event held by the Single Marine Program aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., July 28. This is the second annual Big Marine Little Marine event held by the Single Marine Program, where a Marine volunteer is paired with a child from the Young Marine Program for various physical competitions.



# Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101

## History:

Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 101 (VMFAT-101), the Sharpshooters were commissioned at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, Calif. Jan. 3, 1969, as part of Marine Combat Crew Readiness Training Group 10, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing. During the summer of 1970, VMFAT-101 moved to Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz. In July 1974 VMFAT-101 absorbed the assets of VMFAT-201 from MCAS Cherry Point, N.C. and became the largest fixed wing tactical jet squadron and the sole remaining F-4 training squadron in the Marine Corps. Sept. 29, 1987, VMFAT-101 returned to MCAS El Toro to prepare for duty as the third F/A-18 Fleet Replacement Squadron (FRS). March 31, 1988, MCCRTG-10 deactivated and VMFAT-101 joined Marine Aircraft Group 11. Jan. 10, 1990, VMFAT-101 accepted its first two seat F/A-18D Hornet and began training aircrew for the transition into the Hornet. Today, the Sharpshooters stand ready to meet the traditions of the past and the challenges of the future. The output of highly qualified aircrew, trained to fill the fleet squadrons, has continued for 20 years and will remain the focus for years to come.



## F/A-18:

Length: 56 ft  
Wingspan: 40 ft  
Height: approximately 15 ft.  
Maximum speed: Mach 1.5-1.8  
Rate of climb: 40,000 ft/min



## Honors:

1972 Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Aviation Safety Award for Excellence in aviation safety after compiling over 18,300 mishap free flight hours.  
1976 CNO Aviation Safety Award, as well as the Commanding General Fleet Marine Forces Pacific Aviation Safety Award in 1978 and 1979 while it amassed over 30,000 mishap-free flight hours.  
1983 earned the coveted Marine Corps Aviation Association Robert M. Hanson Award as the finest fighter squadron in Marine aviation.  
1989 the squadron entered its sixth year mishap/injury free.

COMMANDING OFFICER: LT. COL. BRODIE  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER: CMDR. GRINDLE  
SERGEANT MAJOR: SGT. MAJ. FLIEGEL





Col. John P. Farnam, the commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., and wife, Kathy Jean, speak to Semper Fit staff after a Semper Fit "That Guy" 5k fun run at the Miramar Sports Complex aboard MCAS Miramar, Aug. 1. The Farnams came to the event to show their support of the program and those participating by running alongside their fellow participants.



Sgt. LaTarsha Richardson, a budget analyst with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 and a Ft. Washington, Md., native, runs during Semper Fit "That Guy" 5k fun run at the Miramar Sports Complex aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Aug. 1. After the run, participants visited booths where they were given free "That Guy" shirts and other health-minded items.

# In step to step up: Marines, sailors fight substance abuse in military

Story and Photos by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns

Marines, sailors and families took part in the Semper Fit "That Guy" 5k fun run starting from the sports complex, down the Physical Fitness Test course and back aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Aug. 1.

The event is part of a summerlong effort to promote healthy living through unit competitions.

"It gives Marines better knowledge about appropriate use of alcohol," said Lance Cpl. Chad Jenson, a ground radio repair technician with Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron 38 and a Redondo Beach, Calif., native. "'That Guy' is the person in the group who is tripping over himself, does stupid things, gets laughed at and has to be babysat."

Marines have not forgotten the idea behind the program; in fact, some have seen the trademark 'Guy' at work, out in town and on weekends.

"It's a cool idea to get out of the shop and learn about these types of things," said Jenson. "There are times when I've seen other groups of people who dealt with a person like 'That Guy' and I just think to myself, 'Thank God I'm not with that guy because I don't want take care of him.'"

The program is for Marines of every rank. To prove this and show their support, Col. John P. Farnam, the commanding officer for the air station and his wife, Kathy Jean, joined the event and ran with the Marines.

One thought behind the program with those who set it up was to help educate service members on the benefits of appropriate alcohol use.

"The campaign uses humor to deliver a serious message and provides viral tools so you can be part of the effort to eradicate "That Guy," said Julie Carlson-Howard, a Semper Fit representative. "Staying healthy and keeping yourself 'in check' when drinking can still be fun and safe at the same time! Your mind, body and spirit will thank you for it!"

After completing the run participants received free "That Guy" shirts as well as other various items in support of drug awareness and improved fitness awareness.

[Click HERE for more photos](#)



Sgt. Heath Smith, a training noncommissioned officer with Marine Aviation Logistic Squadron 11 and Jersey City, N.J., native, laughs as a booth manager hands him free lip balm after a Semper Fit "That Guy" 5k fun run at the Miramar Sports Complex aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Aug. 1. The event is part of a summerlong effort to promote healthy living through unit competitions.

# Miramar Minute: Gonzales Hall competes for Best of the West

Video created by Flight Jacket Staff  
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