

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION

MIRAMAR, CALIF.

FLIGHT

JACKET



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, CALIF.

MARCH 2013



Last eight  
'Sea Knight'  
crew chiefs graduate





### 'Ridge Runners' and 'Red Lions' take to skies together in training

Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 163 and 363 worked side-by-side to perform division-form training and confined-area landings, Feb. 14.

Click to view full story

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### Miramar honors service of Tuskegee Airmen

Miramar commemorates the selfless service of the Tuskegee Airmen during a morning colors ceremony, Feb. 22 .

Click to view full story

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### ARFF turns up heat

Marines with Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting extinguished flames reaching 2,000 degrees during controlled burns training, Feb. 23.

Click to view full story

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## ON THE COVER:

A CH-46 Sea Knight with Marine Medium Helicopter Training Squadron 164 "Knight Riders," performs a pre-graduation flight just outside Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 20. For nearly 48 years, this aircraft commanded the skies according to Maj. Gen. Steven Busby, commanding general of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.



Maj. Gen.  
Steven W. Busby  
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.



## Making a change:

# Commanding officer's vision for MCAS Miramar

Video created by Cpl. Max Pennington



COL. JOHN FARNAM

Click to watch video





Julie Burks, Semper Fit dietitian and a San Diego native, prepares a healthy dessert during Julie's Supper Club at the High Intensity Interval Training conference room here, Feb. 20. Julie's Supper Club is a new healthy cooking class that teaches participants how to cut calories without sacrificing taste.

# Raising the Bar

## Dietitian gains new tool for trimming bodies

Story and photos by Cpl. Melissa Wenger

Two experienced health experts joined forces to provide 10 service members and their family members with nutritional guidance, healthy cooking recipes and a light dinner at the High Intensity Interval Training Center conference room here Feb. 20. Julie Burks, Semper Fit dietitian and a San Diego native, calls the new series of classes "Julie's Supper Club," thanks to a newly acquired tool.

Their brand new mobile cooking cart contains a convection oven, burning stove and warming tray.

"Before, I've only been able to do microwave cooking classes because we've had no facility for cooking," said Burks. "This allows us to do a little more in-depth cooking."

The cooking cart is a valuable tool that enables Burks to show the class exactly how to prepare and cook healthy foods.

"I think learning to eat correctly is really important to me, especially now that I'm trying to be more fit," said Edi Huerta, a class participant and a Houston native. "I'm doing all the good stuff; you know running, exercising, but I really need to learn how to eat as well."

Burks prepared a balanced meal to prove to attendees that they can make something simple and delicious without going hungry.

"We have an appetizer, an entrée and a dessert," said Burks. "Some of it will be prepared ahead of time, some of it we'll make right there and everybody gets to eat it."

After tasting what Burks prepared, many of the participants were surprised to learn that they didn't have to sacrifice taste to keep some calories off their plates.

"It had a really great flavor to it, it was light, it was good and you can tell it wasn't the quick, greasy food that you tend to lean toward," said Huerta.

The great taste Huerta refers to is one of Burks' priorities when it comes to getting people engaged in eating healthy.

"What I really want to do is show people that they can eat healthy food and have it taste good too," said Burks. "A lot of times, when people come to me for nutrition [advice], they think everything is going to have to taste bad."

Huerta was so enthusiastic about bringing this valuable information home that she brought someone from home along with her.

"Because I'm doing this, I want [my son] to benefit from it too," said Huerta. "When he's an adult, he can teach this to his family. It has to start somewhere."

Burks left class members with a free copy of the Semper Fit Cookbook, which contains all of the recipes that were sampled during the class. For more information about the next iteration of Julie's Supper Club, call (858) 577-7963.

"It doesn't take much to come in and listen and taste the food," said Huerta. "You're taking away something that's going to make you better." 🍴



▲ Tracy Turner (left), Marine spouse and a San Diego native, samples some food from the warming tray of a new convection cooking cart during Julie's Supper Club at the High Intensity Interval Training conference room here, Feb. 20. Julie's Supper Club is a new healthy cooking class that focuses on preparing healthy dishes that are also tasty.

▼ Julie Howard, Health Promotions director and a Celina, Ohio native, shows a class how to prepare roasted vegetables during Julie's Supper Club at the High Intensity Interval Training conference room here, Feb. 20. Howard, who assisted Julie Burks, Semper Fit dietitian and a San Diego native, began a new class using a mobile cooking cart, which allows them to employ a convection oven and single stovetop during instruction.



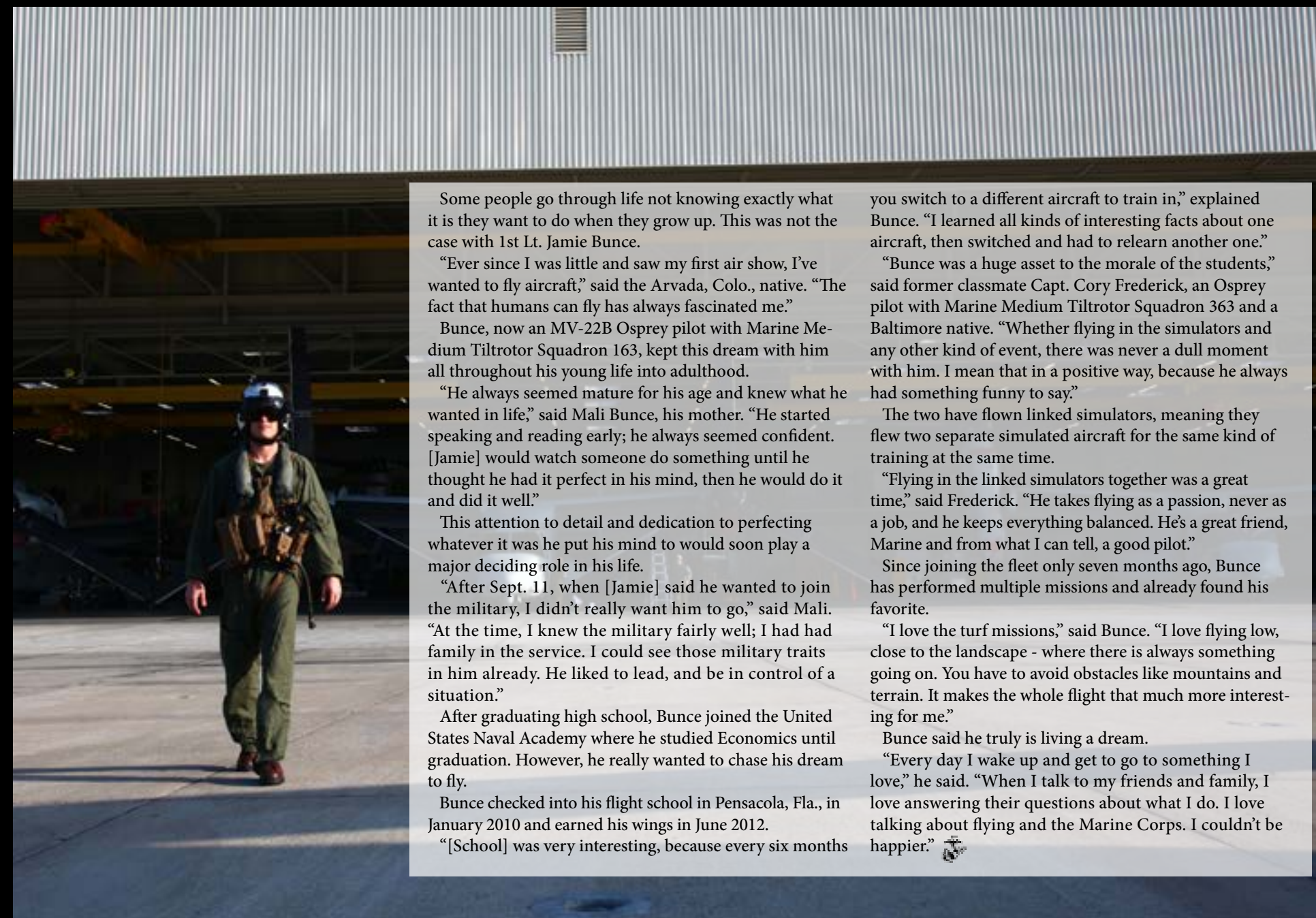




# BUNCE UPON A TIME

## THE STORY OF A PILOT'S DREAM COMES TRUE

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns



Some people go through life not knowing exactly what it is they want to do when they grow up. This was not the case with 1st Lt. Jamie Bunce.

“Ever since I was little and saw my first air show, I’ve wanted to fly aircraft,” said the Arvada, Colo., native. “The fact that humans can fly has always fascinated me.”

Bunce, now an MV-22B Osprey pilot with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 163, kept this dream with him all throughout his young life into adulthood.

“He always seemed mature for his age and knew what he wanted in life,” said Mali Bunce, his mother. “He started speaking and reading early; he always seemed confident. [Jamie] would watch someone do something until he thought he had it perfect in his mind, then he would do it and did it well.”

This attention to detail and dedication to perfecting whatever it was he put his mind to would soon play a major deciding role in his life.

“After Sept. 11, when [Jamie] said he wanted to join the military, I didn’t really want him to go,” said Mali. “At the time, I knew the military fairly well; I had had family in the service. I could see those military traits in him already. He liked to lead, and be in control of a situation.”

After graduating high school, Bunce joined the United States Naval Academy where he studied Economics until graduation. However, he really wanted to chase his dream to fly.

Bunce checked into his flight school in Pensacola, Fla., in January 2010 and earned his wings in June 2012.

“[School] was very interesting, because every six months

you switch to a different aircraft to train in,” explained Bunce. “I learned all kinds of interesting facts about one aircraft, then switched and had to relearn another one.”

“Bunce was a huge asset to the morale of the students,” said former classmate Capt. Cory Frederick, an Osprey pilot with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 363 and a Baltimore native. “Whether flying in the simulators and any other kind of event, there was never a dull moment with him. I mean that in a positive way, because he always had something funny to say.”

The two have flown linked simulators, meaning they flew two separate simulated aircraft for the same kind of training at the same time.

“Flying in the linked simulators together was a great time,” said Frederick. “He takes flying as a passion, never as a job, and he keeps everything balanced. He’s a great friend, Marine and from what I can tell, a good pilot.”

Since joining the fleet only seven months ago, Bunce has performed multiple missions and already found his favorite.

“I love the turf missions,” said Bunce. “I love flying low, close to the landscape - where there is always something going on. You have to avoid obstacles like mountains and terrain. It makes the whole flight that much more interesting for me.”

Bunce said he truly is living a dream.

“Every day I wake up and get to go to something I love,” he said. “When I talk to my friends and family, I love answering their questions about what I do. I love talking about flying and the Marine Corps. I couldn’t be happier.”



1st Lt. Jamie Bunce, an MV-22B Osprey pilot with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 163 and an Arvada, Colo., native, is living out his childhood dream to be a pilot. In his seven months at Miramar, Bunce has performed multiple missions ranging from confined aerial landings to low-altitude flying over mountainous terrain.





# PREPing couples for future

Story and photos by  
Lance Cpl. Raquel Barraza

With more than 50 percent of marriages ending in divorce in the country, the Marine Corps has committed itself to reducing that number within its ranks by requiring newly-weds and engaged couples to attend introduction marriage courses.

Aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, the Prevention Relationship Enhancement Program is designed to help couples move in the right direction.

The day-long course is based on hours of research and focuses on helping couples communicate with one another without fighting, explained Lt. Robert LeCompte, deputy command chaplain here and a Port St. Lucie, Fla., native.

“Communication is key in a relationship,” said Lance Cpl. John Cotto, an aviation technician with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 165 and a Springfield, Mass., native. “[This course] made it easier to refrain myself from talking over [my wife] and to listen to what she is trying to say.”

While the course focuses mainly on communication, it also addresses other aspects and challenges married couples face.

“It talks about keeping things fun, child care, differences in personalities in spouses and being aware of the pitfalls from your personal past,” said LeCompte.

The Base Chapel holds this course every first Thursday of the month. For more information or to sign up, contact the chapel at (858) 577-1333.



▲ A Prevention Relationship Enhancement Program participant manual lies on a table during a PREP class at the Base Chapel here, Feb. 7. Each participant during the class filled out the manual throughout the day and took it home to practice what they have learned.



▲ A military couple holds hands during a Prevention Relationship Enhancement Program, or PREP, class at the Base Chapel here Feb. 7. The class is designed to help couples keep their relationships fun while taking the big step into marriage.

▼ Lance Cpl. John Cotto, left, an aviation technician with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 165 and a Springfield, Mass., native, and Justina Cotto, his spouse, listen to a brief during a Prevention Relationship Enhancement Program class at the Base Chapel here, Feb. 7. During PREP, couples spend the day learning new communication techniques and ways to keep negativity out of their communications.



# Tales for Tails

exceptional family members read for exceptional pooches

Story and photos by  
Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns

Ever since her mother brought home the flyer a week before the event, Olivia Figueroa, a 7-year-old with the Exceptional Family Member Program, has been counting down the days and reminding her mother about the event every chance she got.

“This morning she was beside herself because this was the day she gets to come and read to the dogs,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Angelica Figueroa, Olivia’s mother and the depot ordnance officer with Headquarters and Service Battalion on Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. “To have an opportunity to do something like this despite all she’s gone through is just amazing. It makes me proud to be a part of the program.”

Little Olivia was born 13 weeks early, has chronic lung disease, and liver disease, and has been diagnosed with partial complex seizures making life a long, arduous journey for her, according to her mother.

Despite all the challenges she faces, Olivia refuses to let it get her down. She is polite, sweet and has a huge love for the written word. “Her first passion is reading,” said her mother, a Douglas, Ariz., native. “She’s been doing it since she was 4 years old. Her other passion is dogs, so this event has just been perfect for her.”

Volunteers with Independent Therapy Dogs, Inc.

brought dogs ranging in size to the library here for the ‘Ruff’ Readers program.

“We bring the dogs here for the kids to read to, because the kids need someone, or in this case, something, that will listen to them without correcting or reacting to them if they mess up a word or pronunciation,” said Mary Conklin, owner of a Corgi-Shiba Inu mix named Mai Tai and a Carlsbad, Calif., native. “Mai Tai likes curling up with the children and they love having her. (Mai Tai) is their size, so she doesn’t scare the kids, and she’s not too small so they can’t hurt her.”

The dogs interact with the children with wagging tails, and lolling tongues as the children read their books and



Olivia Figueroa, a 7-year-old with the Exceptional Family Member Program, poses with Squirt, a Pomeranian with Independent Therapy Dogs, Inc., at the library, Feb. 13. Children with exceptional needs read to these animals who do not judge them, and only listen with wagging tales and sloppy kisses.

share the pictures with the dogs.

“Reading to the dogs makes me feel happy,” said Olivia, “I like to read to them because they listen, and they give me kisses. I think they listen well to me. They’re pretty and I want to read to them a lot more, because I think (Muddy and Kira) like the pictures.”

While Olivia read to dogs of all shapes and sizes; her mother watched over her a few feet away with a smile on her face.

“Being a single mom is kind of hard,” said Figueroa. “Programs like this give (Olivia) something to look forward to instead of just following me around and doing chores. This is for her. She obviously enjoys it, and this is her big thing to do.”

A smiling mother, a reading daughter and one happy pooch like Mai Tai shows a program like Ruff Readers has helped at least one family have a brief reprieve from their day-to-day lives.





# Miramar firefighters train for summer brushfire season

Story and photos by  
**Cpl. Melissa Wenger**

The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Fire Department is preparing to tackle a common summertime foe: wildland fires. The firefighters of Engines 60 and 61 conducted wild-

land fire suppression training here Feb. 13.

According to Daniel Hernandez, assistant fire chief and proctor for this evaluation, this develops particularly important skill sets for Southern California firefighters.

"During just about every wildland fire I've ever been around, in one way or another we're using water tenders and engines for any type of fire suppression," said Hernandez.

Water tenders are portable containers used as temporary water sources, much like the way fire engines are employed. Both are crucial in battling wildland fires because they provide alternate and refillable sources of water.

"In California, you're not just a structural firefighter," said James

Stark, firefighter, who is training to be an operator for one of the water tender vehicles. "I know it's February, but the winter is the time when we need to sharpen our skills because in the summer, we don't have time to practice."

Stark is responsible for driving the water tender between engines and ensuring they are able to supply water to suppress the fire.

"It's important to be good and proficient at my job because people rely on us so you want to be good at it you don't want to be just okay," said Stark.

Supplying those water tenders is particularly crucial and a bit of a difficult task aboard MCAS Miramar.

"It's a very real scenario," said Hernandez. "We don't have very many hydrants out in east Miramar, so water supply is pretty scarce out there. If we had a large fire, we would have many water tenders out there to shuttle water and keep engines filled so we can actually use the hose lines to put out the fire."

Shaun Fick, firefighter, is training to be a certified fire officer. A firefighter in this position has the strategic and tactical responsibilities of overseeing ground operations and ensuring a constant flow of water.

"This training is going to make (me) a better firefighter with the ability to see the bigger picture," said Fick. "I'm not focused on one task; I have to be able to see all the tasks and be able to delegate and direct my subordinates to accomplish certain tasks in missions, i.e., put the fire out."

With limited fire hydrants aboard MCAS Miramar, Fick plays a pivotal role in supervising the use of water sources when battling a fire.

"The most important thing is resource management," said Fick. "That means being able to ensure all my resources are being used to their



▲ Alex Martinez (right), engineer, briefs Shaun Fick, fire officer trainee, on pump operations of Engine 61 during a fire suppression drill here, Feb. 13. Fick is participating in the training to earn fire officer one certification.

maximum capacity and basically that I don't run out of water and everything runs smoothly."

After the drill, Fick became a certified fire officer one and eligible to be promoted to engineer. All trainees completed the wildland fire suppression training evolution twice.

"Our main function is to protect lives and property," said Hernandez. "For any type of the wildland fires that actually come on the instillation, we're responsible and were the frontline to protect the base to mitigate the fires."

▼ Alex Ramos, probationary firefighter, is checking for a constant flow of water to his hose during a fire suppression drill here, Feb. 13. Ramos is acting as one of two nozzlemen during this training evolution.



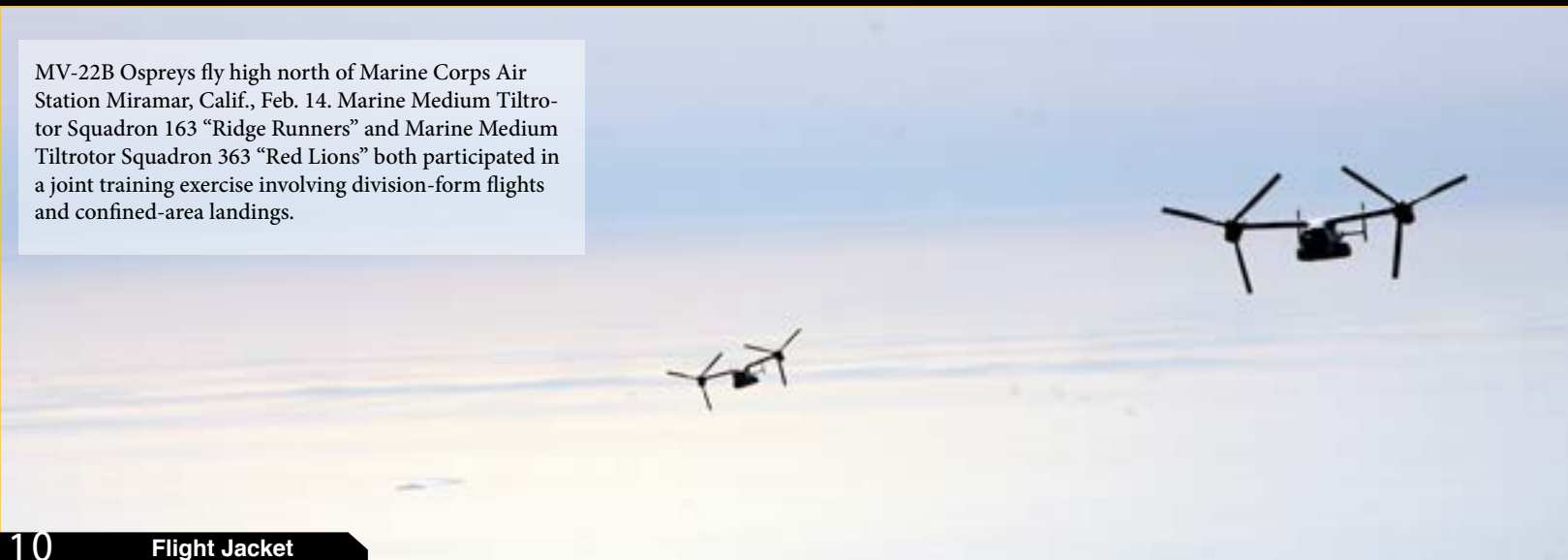




# DYNAMIC DUO

RIDGE RUNNERS AND RED LIONS TEAM UP FOR CO-OP FLIGHT

Story and photos by Cpl. Melissa Wenger



Pilots and crew chiefs with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadrons 163 “Ridge Runners” and 363 “Red Lions”, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, conducted division-form training followed by confined-area landings, Feb. 14.

The division-form flight consisted of four MV-22B Ospreys, one of which was designated the division lead. Of the four aircraft, the division lead served as the guide for the rest of the aircraft in the formation.

“This is the first time that I’ve flown with three other aircraft,” said 1st Lt. Jamie Bunce, a pilot with VMM-163, and an Arvada, Colo. native. “There’s a huge learning curve when you have to consider that you have four planes involved, and you need to use the airspace in a way that provides room for all of us to be able to do what we need to do and go where we need to go.”

According to Bunce, the Osprey gives the Marine Air Ground Task Force commander the flexibility of a helicopter as well as the speed of an airplane. The Osprey takes off vertically, allowing the aircraft to land and deploy closely together and without the use of a runway. Confined-area landings occur when multiple planes navigate into as small a landing zone as possible.

“This training basically simulates



1st Lt. Jamie Bunce, pilot with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 163, inspects his aircraft before a training flight on the flight line aboard, Feb. 14. Bunce pilots one of the four MV-22B Ospreys involved in this iteration of training.



MV-22B Ospreys perform a division-form flight north of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Feb. 14. The aircraft with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadrons 163 and 363 were enroute to performing confined-area landings.

what we would do in a combat situation,” said Bunce. “We can fit about 24 combat-loaded Marines on one plane... so if we had to take in more guys than could fit into one plane, we could take two or three or four planes as the mission may call to bring everyone in at once.”

Confined-area landings allow multiple aircraft to rapidly amass large groups of Marines into a small area, which is often the case in a deployed environment.

“We could’ve inserted just shy of a hundred Marines into an area literally 200 to 300 miles away from Miramar in less than an hour,” said Gunnery Sgt. Mark Mosholder, a crew chief with VMM-163 and a Chatsworth, Iowa native. “It’s something a battlefield commander might like to do in areas like Afghanistan or if we’re operating in Africa or anything like that.”

As Mosholder recalls, flying division-form flights and confined-area landings is typically how the Osprey is employed.

“I was with the first deployment of Ospreys into Iraq, and what we did today was on par with what we did in Iraq as far as inserting a company of

Marines into a town for a raid,” said Mosholder.

The collaboration between VMM-163 and VMM-363 was another aspect of the training that was similar to his experience in Iraq.

“The opportunity we had today in particular was important because we had two squadrons jointly training to-





OSPREY  
**FACTS**  
DATE DEPLOYED  
**2007**

PRIMARY  
FUNCTION:  
**MEDIUM  
LIFT  
ASSAULT  
SUPPORT**



CONTRACTOR:  
**BELL-BOEING**  
**TWO ROLLS-ROYCE**  
**LIBERTY AE1107C**  
**ENGINES, DELIVER-**  
**ING 12,400 SHAFT**  
**HORSEPOWER**

LENGTH  
**57 FEET  
3 INCHES**



WINGSPAN:  
**84.6 FEET WITH  
ROTORS TURNING**

**280**  
CRUISING AIRSPEED

CREW OF 3  
**PILOT  
COPILOT  
CREW CHIEF**

**860**  
NAUTICAL MILES



gether, so it brings those two units together as a cohesive unit,” said Mosholder. “That joint operation is something that we do a lot of in country.”

Flying in formation and performing confined-area landings also solidifies the relationship between crew chiefs and pilots. The pilots rely on them to be their eyes and ears, especially when multiple aircraft are flying together.

“We’re just depending on the crew chiefs to guide us to where we need to move the plane to get it down on the deck, so there’s definitely a lot of trust that’s required there and it’s something that builds over time,” said Bunce.

According to Bunce, this professional relationship is at the core of a successful flight.

“This [crew chief and pilot relationship] is one of the coolest things about working with assault aircraft,” said Bunce. “It takes all four of us to get to what the ultimate end state of what the mission is.”

All four Marines aboard each aircraft had something new to learn from this joint training effort, regardless of their prior experience.

“For me, [this training] is just a great opportunity to get reengaged with flying with four aircraft, which I haven’t done since flying in Iraq,” said Mosholder. “Today, I was flying with a brand new pilot so as a way for me to gain additional information to better train the newer pilots it’s a new experience too.”

This training on division-form flights and confined-area landings enable the squadrons to perform their primary mission: to be a transport element capable of inserting Marines and equipment under any condition.



MV-22B Ospreys take off from the flight line here, Feb. 14. The ensuing training flight involved Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadrons 163 and 363 flying division-form flights and confined-area landings.



An MV-22B Osprey with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 163 flies over mountainous terrain during division-form training and confined-area landings north of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Feb. 14. This training allows the squadron to work on flight requirements for getting combat-loaded Marines and handling equipment into small landing zones or difficult flight situations.

Gunnery Sgt. Mark Mosholder, a crew chief with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 163 and a Chatsworth, Iowa native, looks out the back of an MV-22B Osprey at the landscape north of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Feb. 14. Mosholder is one of two crew chiefs building a relationship with the two pilots aboard this Osprey during a training exercise.





# RACING TO REMEMBER MARINE CORPS HISTORY

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Melissa Eschenbrenner

SAN DIEGO – A Miramar helicopter squadron found a new way to train its leaders in an event that incorporates both physical and mental challenges.

The Marine Corps prides itself in its high quality leaders. To maintain such high quality, the Marine Corps provides a wide range of professional military education classes regularly. Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465 “Warhorse” found a new way to keep its Marines interested in learning.

Staff non-commissioned officers and officers with HMH-465 went to San Diego to hold a relay race and incorporate outstanding battles in Marine Corps history.

“We have been looking for a way for [staff non-commissioned officers] and officers to bond,” said Lt. Col. Lee A. Cracknell, the commanding officer of HMH-465. “So, we thought of this course and we incorporated the Marine Corps legacy in each of the check points.”

The Marines split into eight teams of about four people each. They were challenged with racing through a 6-mile course to multiple stations throughout downtown San Diego. Checkpoint challenges ranged from knowledge-based questions to mental and physical challenges. Among the favorites were a face-painting challenge and a push-up challenge, explained Cracknell.

This out-of-the-ordinary period of instruction served as a reminder for Marines to remember some important battles in Marine Corps history and help them to continue to uphold the legacy to the highest standard.

A team of Marines completes 90 four-count squats as a penalty for not completing a puzzle during a relay challenge in San Diego, Feb. 15.



A Marine plans the route to the next check-point during a relay race in San Diego, Feb. 15.



A team of Marines completes 90 four-count squats as a penalty for not completing a puzzle during a relay challenge in San Diego, Feb. 15.



▲ Marines cross the finish line in San Diego after completing a 6-mile relay race consisting of 10 checkpoints, Feb. 15. Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465 “Warhorse” held the race in downtown San Diego for staff non-commissioned officers and officers to compete and increase unit morale.



# THE FINAL 8 CH-46 CREW CHIEFS GRADUATE



Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – The last eight crew chiefs to earn their flight designations in the CH-46

Sea Knight graduated here, Feb. 20. Marines and families watched as four Sea Knights carrying these historical flight aids landed on the flight line and exited the aircraft to graduate and earn their wings.

“We are here to recognize the eight Marines standing before you for their great achievements as the last (Sea Knight) crew chiefs the Corps is going

Lance Cpl. Alex Sosa III, center, the CH-46 Sea Knight crew chief honor graduate with Marine Medium Helicopter Training Squadron 164 and a Richmond, Texas, native, poses with his mother and little sister in front of a Sea Knight on the flight line aboard Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 20. As the Sea Knight is phased out of the Marine Corps, Sosa and his peers were the last to be designated as CH-46 crew chiefs.



to train,” said Maj. Gen. Steven Busby, commanding general of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. “This day marks the end of an era in Marine Corps Aviation. This aircraft has been the main stay of the aerial support community for 48 years. Half the time Marine Corps aviation has been in existence, the Sea Knight has been taking the fight to the enemy.”

After several months at other job schools learning other skills, these eight Marines came to learn how to fly in Sea Knights at Marine Medium Helicopter Training Squadron 164

“Knight Riders.”

“The schooling was about 6 months long,” said Lance Cpl. Alex Sosa III, the CH-46 Sea Knight crew chief honor graduate with the Knight Riders and a Richmond, Texas native. “We learned all we had to, ensuring our aircraft stay in the sky – and how to properly assist the pilots with whatever it is they may need from us while we were here. It was a great experience.”

As the Sea Knight is phased out by the Marine Corps, the legacy it leaves behind is one of notable service above all else. Even Busby had experiences

and feelings to share about this momentous occasion in the history of Marine Corps aviation.

“This aircraft has been at the center of Marine Corps aviation since its arrival in 1964,” explained Busby. “I spent a few weeks working aboard these aircraft as the commander of the special purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force in Thailand and Indonesia after the tsunami hit in 2004. I remember flying over 120 miles of coast line in Indonesia with these ‘Battle Phrogs,’ and seeing the ferocity at which they attacked their mission of

delivering supplies and aid to the Indonesian people.”

As one of the members of the final class of CH-46 crew chiefs to graduate, Sosa has already described his own feeling.

“It feels like I’m a part of history now,” said Sosa. “To me, that’s a great thing because I love the Sea Knight community, I love flying, and I can’t wait to show what I can do as a crew chief.”

As these newly graduated crew chiefs travel to their first permanent duty stations, they said they will forever remember the day they took part in the Sea Knight legacy.



Two CH-46 Sea Knights fly over the ocean just outside Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 20. Inside the hulls of these aircraft, eight Marines took their last flight as students before graduating as Sea Knight crew chiefs later that day.





# Miramar military working dogs take over The Great Escape

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns

He assisted in the arrests of more than five people and more than 100 narcotic detections. He participated in more than 1,000 training sessions during his five-year duty here with the Provost Marshal's Office Kennel.

Meet Lutyo, a 7-year-old German Shepherd and a military working dog.

"[Lutyo is] great," said Cpl. Nicholas Aguirre, Lutyo's handler and a Banning, Calif., native. "He has a great drive and is one of the hardest hitting dogs at the kennel. I've been working with him for a month now, trying to build a good rapport, to show him that he can trust me, and so I can trust him."

With this kind of professional animal, good rapport can mean a world of difference – especially when the dog is as enthusiastic about his work as his handler.

"Lutyo is very strong, independent and he's one of our better dogs," said Officer Eric Vega, a handler with the PMO Kennel and an Anaheim, Calif., native. "Drugs or bombs, Lutyo is really confident of his abilities. He doesn't need constant reassurance from his handler like some other dogs do and that proves how confident he is."

In combination with Lutyo's hard working nose and Aguirre's know how, some problems just don't stand a chance. This duo's ability showed during a narcotic detection exercise at

The Great Escape, Feb. 13.

"It was no

surprise when Lutyo breezed through the problem we had for the dogs and handlers," said Vega. "He puts out 110 percent effort every single time, and so does Cpl. Aguirre."

During the training, Aguirre and Lutyo searched for the scents of drugs they would look for when called while on patrol. Training like this is necessary to keep dogs and handlers from losing their abilities, explained Vega.

Before the training even begins, handlers hide tins called aids containing the drugs in various places throughout the recreational center. Once hidden, the dogs and their handlers come in to solve this scent-finding puzzle.

The dog's specific job is to find the scent of the aid. To do this, the dog brackets back and forth along a field looking for the 'scent cone.'"

The aid is the tip of the scent cone, the scent flows outward in a cone-like shape, but as the scent gets further away from its origin it gets weaker. The closer the dogs get to the training aid, or narcotic, the stronger and more reliable the scent becomes, leading the dog to the aid.

Once the dog finds the scent at its strongest point, the dog receives a reward and the aids or narcotics are properly removed.

Sometimes, while performing these kinds of detections in the field, defense of their handlers becomes necessary. Either a suspect becomes violent to themselves, others or to the handlers while trying to escape, making aggression

▼ Cpl. Michael Davis, a military working dog handler with the Provost Marshal's Office Kennel and a Bonanza, Ore., native, takes a bite from Astor during aggression training at the PMO Kennel here, Feb. 13. Handlers like Davis allow dogs to bite them while practicing aggression training.

and bite training crucial in neutralizing the threat.

Aggression training is also performed on a regular basis, allowing dogs and handlers alike to keep themselves ready for missions ahead.

After training more, Aguirre and Lutyo will undergo certification tests to ensure they can search for drugs and criminals aboard the air station without the aid of another handler; and without being questioned if they are good enough.

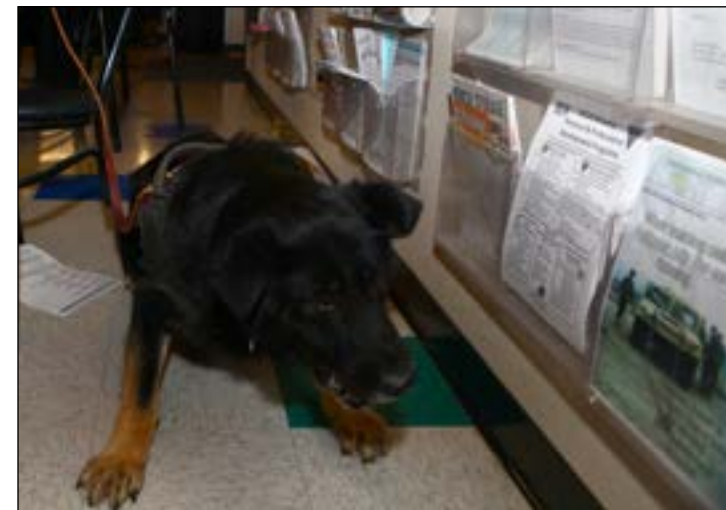
With both handler and dog's drive to be the best they can, MCAS Miramar should be in good hands – and paws. 🐾



▲ Officer Eric Vega, left, a military working dog handler with the Provost Marshal's Office Kennel and an Anaheim, Calif., native, runs from Cpl. Nicholas Aguirre, right, a handler with the kennel and a Banning, Calif., native, and his partner Lutyo, center, during a muzzled aggression demonstration at the PMO Kennel here, Feb. 13. According to Vega, Aguirre and Lutyo have been paired with each other for one month and already seem to be doing well together.

► Cpl. Nicholas Aguirre, a military working dog handler with the Provost Marshal's Office Kennel and a Banning, Calif., native, praises Lutyo, a military working dog, after finding a drug scent during narcotics training at The Great Escape here, Feb. 13.

▼ Lutyo, a military working dog with the Provost Marshal's Office Kennel, searches for narcotics at The Great Escape during narcotics training here, Feb. 13.



Lutyo, a military working dog with the Provost Marshal's Office Kennel, enjoys his toy after scenting a drug military working dog handlers planted as part of narcotics training at The Great Escape here, Feb. 13. After finding what he is searching for, Lutyo is rewarded by his handler with a toy and praise for finding planted drugs.







# Miramar pauses to acknowledge selfless service of Tuskegee Airmen

Story and photos by **Cpl. Melissa Wenger**

In 1941, the nation's first African-American military aviators began their journey in Tuskegee, Ala. More than 70 years later, Marines, sailors, veterans, and other supporters gathered at the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing headquarters building to recognize the contributions of the Tuskegee Airmen Feb. 22.

A morning colors ceremony punctuated by a live performance by the 3rd MAW Band began the day-long celebration of the Tuskegee Airmen's efforts.

"It's important to have these ceremonies to reflect back on our history and what people have done in the past to bring about positive change and to honor those who have come before us," said Sgt. Rousseau Saintilfort, reviewing officer for the morning colors ceremony and New York native. "It gives great

perspective on the future."

Like many other black service members, Saintilfort said he appreciates the Tuskegee Airmen, whose selfless service and perseverance paved the way for black military members.

"They put the hopes and dreams of the African-American people on their shoulders," he said. "I think the biggest reason they were able to succeed was the fact that they knew they weren't just doing it for themselves; they were doing it for an entire people."

While battling bigotry on the home front,

Saintilfort notes the Tuskegee Airmen still stood tall and served with distinction - a

quality he feels is shared by Marines.

"Dealing with what they felt back at home, with the racism and people doubting their abilities, they were basically fighting two wars and they overcame that and succeeded," he said. "As Marines, we adapt and overcome, and they did it under an enormous amount of pressure."

During the colors ceremony, two black Marines recited a brief narrative in the words of the first military aviators while wearing replicas of their

**"The biggest reason they were able to succeed was the fact that they knew they weren't just doing it for themselves; they were doing it for an entire people."**

**-Sgt. Rousseau Saintilfort**

historical uniform.

"I thought it was great," said retired Air Force Master Sgt. Nelson B. Robinson, a Tuskegee Airman who served 22 years. "It was nostalgic to me to think about being back in that outfit and the fact that we were being honored brought my attention to that."

The morning colors ceremony, while a very distinct honor, was only the beginning of the rest of the day's honors. U.S. Sen. Joel Anderson, California's 36th District, introduced another honor at a separate ceremony. A three-mile stretch of California's Interstate 15 is now known as the Tuskegee Airmen highway.

**-continued page 23-**



▲ Col. John Farnam, station commanding officer, says a few words about the Tuskegee Airmen during a remembrance ceremony at the Officers' Club here, Feb. 22. The ceremony preceded the unveiling of a new Interstate 15 sign renamed for the first African-American military aviators, the Tuskegee Airmen Highway.

◀ Retired Air Force Master Sgt. Nelson Robinson, a Tuskegee Airman, leads the crowd in a marching song during a remembrance ceremony at the Officers' Club here, Feb. 22. Following his song, the Tuskegee Airmen were honored with the renaming of a portion of Interstate 15, now the Tuskegee Airmen Highway.

▶ A Marine delivers a monologue while acting as one of the Tuskegee Airmen during a morning colors ceremony at the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing headquarters building here, Feb. 22.

▶▶ Marines and veterans, to include one of the Tuskegee Airmen, Nelson Robinson, pause to pay their respects during a morning colors ceremony at the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing headquarters building aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Feb. 22.







Some Tuskegee Airmen react to a new Interstate 15 sign dedicating a portion of the California highway to the Airmen in a ceremony at the Officers' Club here, Feb. 22. The unveiling followed a morning colors ceremony in honor of the first African-American military pilots.

#### -from page 21-

"The signs will serve as an everyday reminder of what these brave men did for our country," said Anderson. "I think that's going to be [their] legacy: more than what [they] did in battle, but focusing our younger generations on

understanding how far our country has come and how far it needs to go."

After unveiling the new highway sign, two Beechcraft T-34 Mentors and a World War II-era P-51 Mustang flew overhead as a final salute to the Tuskegee Airmen.

"I appreciate the opportunity to par-

ticipate in this recognition of our Black History Month and I appreciate being offered the invitation to come out and be with you all," said Robinson. "It's rewarding to see the changes that have taken place; it's great to see things as they are today and of course, that's the way they should be."

## Sergeant Takes charge of ceremony in new leadership initiative

video by Cpl. Max Pennington



[Click to watch video](#)



### LEADING FROM THE FRONT

MARINE NCO TAKES CHARGE

NAME: ROUSSEAU SAINTILFORT

RANK: SERGEANT

WHAT HE DID: LEAD MORNING COLORS CEREMONY FEB. 22. THE CEREMONY WAS DEDICATED TO THE AIRMEN OF THE 332ND FIGHTER GROUP AND THE 477TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP, ALSO KNOWN AS THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN. SAINTILFORT ORGANIZED THE CEREMONY AND WAS THE REVIEWING OFFICIAL.



**"THEY [TUSKEGEE AIRMEN] INSPIRED AND PAVED THE WAY FOR MORE MINORITIES TO BECOME AVIATORS."**

**-SGT. SAINTILFORT**

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### Planes of the Tuskegee Airmen

#### P-47 THUNDERBOLT



#### P-51D MUSTANG



#### B-25 MITCHELL



#### P-39 AIRACOBRA P-40 WARHAWK





Marines with Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting extinguish a fire during controlled burn exercises here, Feb. 23. Marines with ARFF use jet fuel to ignite a fire in a controlled setting to practice putting it out. The fires can reach more than 2,000 degrees.



# Burn Baby Burn

## ARFF firefighters take on inferno

Story and photos by **Lance Cpl. Melissa Eschenbrenner**

One hundred gallons of JP-8 jet fuel feeds a 2,000-degree inferno that has swallowed an old aircraft cabin as billowing, black smoke darkens the sky.

Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Marines gear-up to combat the flames

with their only comfort riding in the knowledge that this is a controlled-burn training exercise. It was an important experience for ARFF Marines here, Feb. 23, as they trained for the worst. “We don’t often see [fuel fires], so we

come out here to practice as much as possible,” said Lance Cpl. Sergio Guillen, a firefighter with ARFF, and a Carlsbad, N.M., native. “If we didn’t train, we would be incompetent if there was a fuel fire because fuel fires burn differently from other fires. They have a mind of their own so this training lets us perfect our technique and work with back-up men.”

ARFF trains with water instead of foam, which they would use in a real situation. Guillen said it is important to practice with water because it is harder to fight fire caused by fuel with water than foam. He also explained that using jet fuel for controlled burn exercises ensures that the teams can put out fires caused by many different types of sources.

The Marines use a two-person team consisting of a hand-line man and a back-up man. The hand-line man holds the nozzle of the hose to control the water and focuses on the fire directly in

front of the team, while the back-up man signals the hand-line man where to move to and ensures the team does not become surrounded by flames.

“The teamwork is extremely important,” said Staff Sgt. Justin Hansen, an ARFF section leader, and a Montegut, Mich., native. “You’re going in as a team. You have the hand-line man and the back-up man looking out for them and the teamwork that goes on behind the scenes, where the other Marines are pumping fuel and making sure there is water.”

As a team, ARFF can defeat fires of all types and help in other situations. They train to stay ready for any mishap that may occur here or up to 15 miles outside of the air station.

“You play how you practice,” said Guillen. “So we have to practice hard so when you have to use those skills you’re ready.”

► Gunnery Sgt. Thomas Dillon, a section leader with Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting, here, checks over another Marine’s gear before a controlled-burn exercise, Feb. 23. If gear is not properly sealed, Marines can get steam burns from the high temperatures.

▼ Marines with Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting extinguish a fire during controlled burn exercises here, Feb. 23. ARFF Marines use about 100 gallons of JP-8 jet fuel to ignite a fire that can reach more than 2,000 degrees.



An Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Marine guides his partner out of a pit after extinguishing a fire during a controlled burn exercise here, Feb. 23.





# STAFF NCO SHARPEN LEADERSHIP SKILLS AT STAFF SERGEANT SYMPOSIUM

Story and photo by Sgt. Steven Posy

More than 100 staff non-commissioned officers united to ensure that the next wave of future leaders will continue to uphold the history and traditions of the Marine Corps, during a three-day Staff Sergeant Symposium here Feb. 20-22.

The main elements of the symposium focused on committed and engaged leadership. all eyes fixated intensely at the front of a small auditorium as the words “Take back our Corps” rattled through the walls. “Take a stand, and do not let one of your Marines fall,” said Sgt. Maj. Anthony Spadaro, the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Sergeant Major. The message was simple and the intent was clear to every staff sergeant in the room, as the sergeant major delivered his powerful message. “Stay committed to our Corps and stay engaged with our Marines.” During the symposium, the staff sergeants discussed crucial topics such as professional development, mentorship, accountability and an institutional mindset. Various events supplemented the discussions, such as panels of selected NCOs, SNCOs and company grade officers, who challenged the staff sergeants to think of ways to enhance their leadership skills. “The NCO panel and SNCO panel were an eye-opener,” said Staff Sgt. Jason Dubios, a SN-COIC at Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352. “Hearing what the younger Marines and senior Marines expect from us, really put things into perspective.”

Another event, during the symposium, included a visit to Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego to witness a graduation of

new Marines. “We want them to look at these new Marines and think about what is going through their heads when they meet their SNCO for the first time.” Spadaro reminded the SNCOs, “They want to emulate you, they want to be you. There could be a future sergeant major or general in that

bunch. They are our future, and we are ultimately responsible for them.” The symposium concluded with closing thoughts from senior enlisted Marines who worked with the staff sergeants throughout the three days. By the end, the SNCOs left re-invigorated with a mindset to take action, strengthen the foundation of the Corps and continue its legacy.



Sgt. Maj. Anthony Spadaro, the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Sergeant Major, speaks to an auditorium of staff sergeants from 3rd MAW, during a Staff Sergeant Symposium here Feb. 22. More than 100 SNCOs took part in the three-day symposium and participated in various leadership-building events, including a visit to Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego.

# CMC HONORS 3RD MAW SERGEANT FOR HOSTING MORNING COLORS CEREMONY



Photo by Lance Cpl. Michelle Piehl

Gen. James F. Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps, presents Sgt. Rousseau Saintilfort, the awards non-commissioned officer in charge, Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, and a Brooklyn, N.Y., native, with a Commandant's challenge coin at the flight line here, March 1. The Commandant and Sgt. Maj. Micheal P. Barrett, Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps, right, congratulated Saintilfort for his efforts in arranging a morning colors ceremony, Feb. 22, aboard MCAS Miramar. The ceremony was the first monthly colors ceremony to feature a sergeant as the reviewing officer.

To submit a photo to The Flight Jacket, upload it to our Facebook page [HERE](#) or e-mail it [HERE](#).



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