

3RD MARINE AIRCRAFT WING

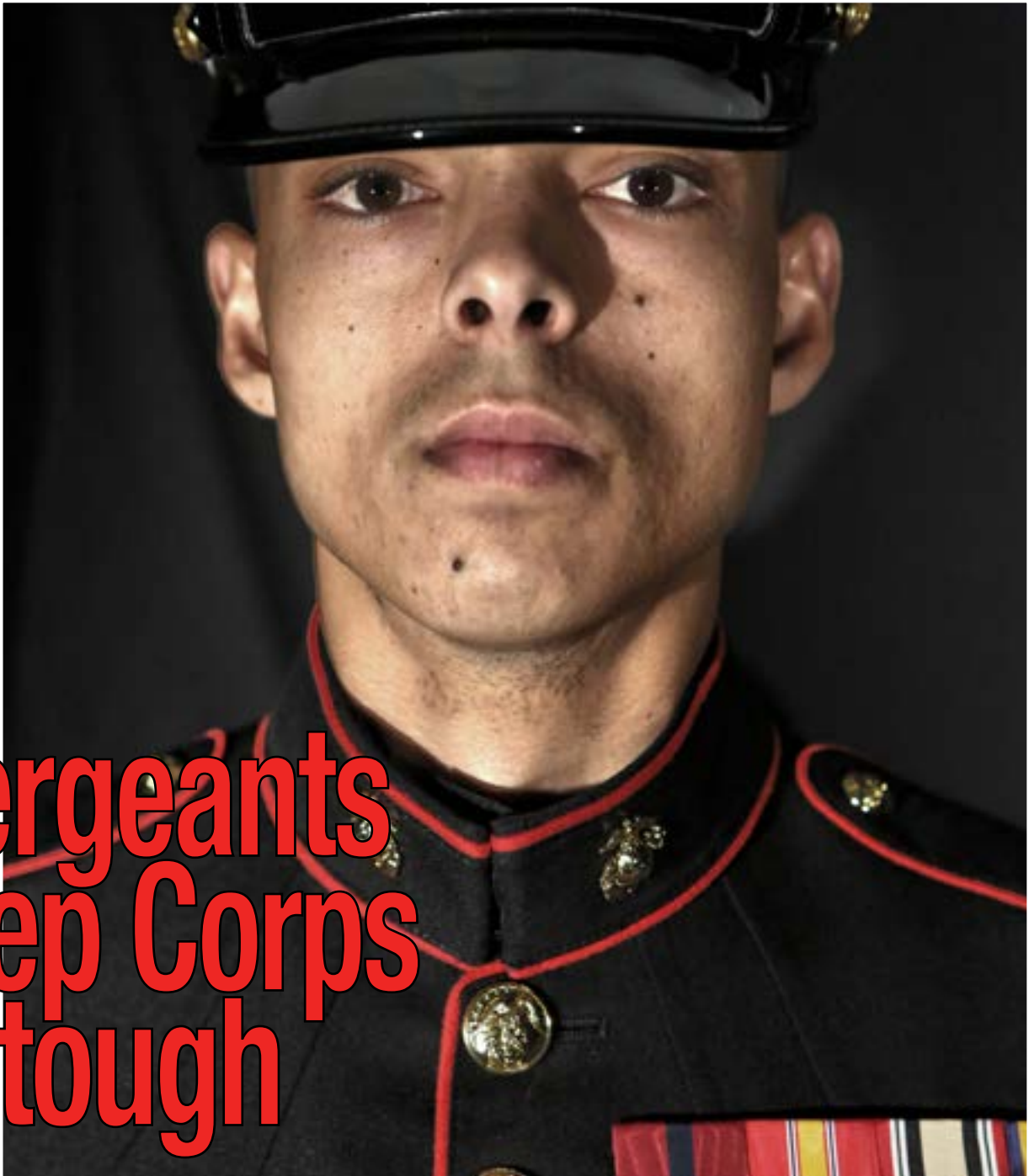
MCAS MIRAMAR



# FLIGHT JACKET

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, CALIF.

MAY 2013



Sergeants  
keep Corps  
tough

3rd MAW Marines awarded for heroic actions



James, 7, left, Diego, 8, right, and Lance Cpl. Randy Dixon, center, a volunteer from Marine Aircraft Logistics Squadron 16 and a Calhoun, Ga., native, pose for a photo during a Single Marine Program fitness challenge at the Kumeyaay elementary school in San Diego, April 19.

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## ON THE COVER:

Sgt. Daniel L. Asuncion, an aviation ordnance technician with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 and a Guam native, poses for a photo in his Dress Blue A uniform aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 11. (Photo by Sgt. Isaac Lamberth.)



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Commanding General  
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

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## FOLLOW US ON:



Stay up-to-date with the latest news happening at Miramar and with 3rd MAW.

Lance Cpl. Brittane Woodard, an administrative specialist, joined other Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron Marines to clean up the physical fitness test route aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 22. (Photo by Cpl. Melissa Wenger.)



RETURN TO TOP

Flight Jacket

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# 'I have to shoot back'

## 3rd MAW Marine receives Purple Heart



Story by Lance Cpl. Raquel Barraza

Between the swirling dust and debris, and the thunder of the twin rotors, quick MV-22 Osprey landings in Afghanistan are tricky. They are even trickier when the enemy adds bullets to the mix.

"I felt like someone hit me with a two-by-four," said Cpl. Benjamin Hockett, a crew chief with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 161 and a Lander, Wyo., native.

Hockett was manning the gun on the back of his Osprey, providing protection for the Australian troops he and the rest of the aircrew were pulling out of the Afghan desert.

A 7.62mm round ripped into his right arm, nearly taking it off completely. Even though he was injured, Hockett's only reaction was to try to return fire.

"[An insurgent] is shooting at us," said Hockett. "I have to shoot back at him."

In the chaos of the flight, Hockett didn't realize that his arm was stuck to his back, held there only by the remaining skin.

"I tried to shoot back, but I couldn't find my arm," said Hockett.

Troops aboard the flight returned fire.

With flights going in and out of "hot" areas, insurgent fire is likely to occur, explained Hockett.

"You can't let it stop you from doing your job," said Hockett. "You just make peace with that before you take off."

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◀ Cpl. Benjamin Hockett, a crew chief with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 161 and a Lander, Wyo., native, displays his stitches at Naval Medical Center San Diego Sept. 11. Hockett was shot by a 7.62mm round during a deployment to Afghanistan and now has a ten inch rod in his arm. (Photo provided by Cpl. Benjamin Hockett.)

► Due to his injury during the line of duty, Cpl. Benjamin Hockett, a crew chief with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 161 and a Lander, Wyo., native, was awarded the Purple Heart. While on deployment to Afghanistan, Hockett was shot in his right arm.





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Hockett was taken to Germany for his injury, and then sent back to the United States to Naval Medical Center San Diego.

"I didn't want to leave," said Hockett "I wanted to stay in Afghanistan. You don't want to leave your guys behind."

Hockett's fellow Marines were not surprised he did not want to leave after the incident.

That is how every Marine should feel; like they cannot leave their men, explained Sgt. Steven Ingel, a crew chief with VMM-161 and a Kennewick, Wa., native.

"You hear about people being hurt, but when it happened to

Hockett, it was a more personal hit to the unit," said Ingel, who has known Hockett since 2010.

Rachel Hockett, his wife and a Sacramento, Calif., native, explained that through everything, Hockett's only concern was getting back to his Marines.

"It was so weird," said Rachel. "He would be going into surgery and all he would say is 'I need to get back.'"

Due to all the reconstructive surgery, he did not go back to Afghanistan. However, there was a silver lining.

"I was home to see my son's birth, so that worked out well," said Hockett jokingly.

That same month, Hockett received a Purple Heart for his injury.

"He wears that award for all [of his Marines], because he knows it wasn't just him out there," said Rachel. "But he is a hero to me and will be a hero to his son when he is old enough to know what his daddy did as a Marine."

Hockett rejoined VMM-161 when they returned from deployment in February and finally got his wish to be back with all his Marines.



◀ Cpl. Benjamin Hockett, a crew chief with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 161 and a Lander, Wyo., native, stands in front of an MV-22B Osprey on the flight line aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 16. On deployment, Hockett was shot while conducting an extraction of troops in an Osprey. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Raquel Barraza.)

▶ Cpl. Benjamin Hockett, right, a crew chief with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 161 and a Lander, Wyo., native, is awarded a Purple Heart for his arm injury aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Nov. 16. (Photo provided by Cpl. Benjamin Hockett.)





# 3rd MAW leader earns Bronze ★ Star

**Story and photos by  
Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns**

**M**arines from the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing gathered for an award ceremony where Maj. Gen. Steven Busby, 3rd MAW commanding general, awarded a Bronze Star medal to Gunnery Sgt. Kevin Anderson, the special security communications team chief with 4th Special Security Communications Team, Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3, aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 11.

Anderson, a Puyallup, Wash., native, earned the award for providing village stability operations while serving under Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command in Afghanistan, from Nov. 2010 to June 2011.

“What my team did was provide intelligence to support all of the infantry Marines in the area,” said Anderson. “We would receive intelligence such as the size of the opposing forces, their capabilities and locations then send it to our troops, so they could fight back accordingly with every advantage we could provide.”

When Anderson first arrived, he was challenged with the task of operating with a dysfunctional targeting effort. Within 30 days, he increased the targeting effort deck efficiency by 400 percent. Additionally, within two

months he retrained and refocused the signal team, resulting in more relevant information reports within the battle space.

“There was a great deal of ground work laid down, but what [the team] really needed was refinement,” said Anderson. “Once I got there, I did my best to just hit the ground running and all you can do is work. That’s the kind of environment I like. It makes the time fly. So, when I finished one task I moved on to the next. We were continually able to find ways to improve the intelligence picture we received by about 400 percent. There’s no way to really quantify how many lives we might have saved, military and local both.”

While serving in Afghanistan, Anderson also took part in a Quick Reaction Force which responded to a distress call from a pinned down unit with an injured Marine.

“We rolled out as the QRF with five intelligence Marines and one generator mechanic in two vehicles,” said Anderson. “On our way to the site where they were, my vehicle got stuck in an irrigation ditch and was close to rolling. We were basically sitting ducks.”

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Anderson described the force being fired upon by multiple weapon platforms including, AK-47s, PKMs and possible DShK 12.7 heavy machine gun fire, while mortar rounds and rocket propelled grenades continuously exploded around them for more than seven hours.

While all of this happened, Anderson knew he was in trouble if his vehicle was hit for one reason — his vehicle held all of the extra ammunition they were taking to the pinned down unit.

“[The situation] got pretty hairy pretty quick,” explained Anderson. “If they were to hit something on my vehicle, it would have been a fairly large explosion. I was really questioning if I was going to make it.”

In order to get away, Anderson’s force had to call in aerial support crew which dropped a 500 pound bomb 200 meters from their position, allowing the Marines to slip away in the confusion.

## Bronze Star Awarded to 3rd MAW Marine - Video

Video by Cpl. Kevin Crist



▲ Click to watch

▼ Maj. Gen. Steven Busby, left, commanding general of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, congratulates Gunnery Sgt. Kevin Anderson, right, the special security communications team chief with 4th Special Security Communications Team, Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3, and a Puyallup, Wash., native, for being awarded the Bronze Star Medal during an award ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 11.



Although his family might not get to know all of what Anderson does, and has done in service to his country, they are still more than happy he came home safely.

“I feel really proud to support my husband,” Brandi Anderson, the 19-year veteran’s wife. “Watching him being acknowledged for the great work

that he is doing is amazing. He is a huge part of our family and when he’s gone there’s something missing. Until he comes home we aren’t whole. I’m proud of him and I love him.”

Home safe and sound, Anderson continues to provide Marines the intelligence they need to succeed in their daily duties.



# CO's "Tell Me A Story" encourages military children to read

Story and photos by

Guest writer : Lauren Wahl, military child age 10.

**A**ctive-duty military families aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., participated in a patriotic family event starting "The Month of the Military Child," April 2, 2013.

The "Tell Me a Story" event featured Col. John Farnam, the commanding officer of MCAS Miramar, reading "How to Bake an American Pie" by Karma Wilson.

Laurie Lowry, a Nashville, Tenn., native, brought her children to the event, because she thought it would be a fun experience and her children love to read.

"It was awesome, my kids loved it," said Lowry, about the book reading.

The event included crafts, the read-aloud and a family activity. The event encouraged military families to read more because of the challenges these families face.

"Your home is a very comforting place," said Farnam. "When you have to pick up and move all the time, it can be pretty tough. You work hard and deserve our help."

He also noted that literacy is a very important part of life.

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Wyatt, 3, and Col. John Farnam, commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., pose for a photo in the MCAS Miramar Children's Library, April 2. The "Tell Me a Story" event was part of the "Month of the Military Child."



◀ Col. John Farnam, commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., and his wife, KathyJean Farnam, read “How to Bake an American Pie” by Karma Wilson to military families in the MCAS Miramar Children’s Library, April 2.

▶ Hundreds of books line the shelves of the station library aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 2. “Tell Me a Story” was the kick-off event for the “Month of the Military Child.”



◀ Col. John Farnam, commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., and his wife, KathyJean Farnam, read “How to Bake an American Pie” by Karma Wilson to military families in the MCAS Miramar Children’s Library, April 2.

▶ In honor of Month of the Military Child, the station library hosted “Tell Me a Story.” This event featured Col. John Farnam, the commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., and his wife reading the story “How to Bake an American Pie” to a group of military children



# MCAS Miramar celebrates Month of the Military Child - Video

Video by Cpl. Kevin Crist



▲ Click to watch

**-continued from page 12-**

“When I was in elementary school, I didn’t read as much as I should have. I was playing sports and running around,” remembered Farnam.

Farnam’s wife inspired him to start reading, and they passed the love of reading on to their son.

Multiple other events celebrating “The Month of the Military Child” are planned until the end of April. Events are scheduled to include a book signing, paintball, movies, a family fun day, as well as many

more exciting activities.

For more information, visit [www.mccsmiramar.com](http://www.mccsmiramar.com) or call 858-577-6365. 🇺🇸

**Meet the author**  
*Lauren Wahl, 10*





Three stripes up,  
Crossed rifles in the center  
Sergeants keep Corps tough

## Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns

**A**lthough every rank in the Marine Corps is vital to mission accomplishment, one rank in particular plays the largest role in the development of Marines junior to them and building future leaders – the sergeant.

Many traits must be cultivated to embody what it means to be a sergeant.

“The rank insignia itself does not cause a Marine to become a sergeant,” said Gunnery Sgt. Adam Davison, a faculty advisor with sergeants course aboard Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., and a Bremerton, Wash., native. “The state of mind and the actions that come from the individual Marine is what defines them as a sergeant. A sergeant is reliable, responsible, dedicated and knowledgeable. It is a unique rank in which you are no longer a junior Marine nor are you a senior Marine. The sergeant will know his Marines more in depth than the staff

noncommissioned officer or officer within a unit and is capable of identifying and correcting deficiencies and strengths. In my belief, the sergeants of the Marine Corps are the driving effort in each and every success we as a Marine Corps have had.”

The sergeant holds the power to directly train and work with the Marines. These leaders are charged with the personal and professional development of each Marine under their supervision.

“As a sergeant, it’s my duty to know my Marines and how best to train them,” said Sgt. Daniel Asuncion, an aviation ordnance technician with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 and a Guam native. “It’s my privilege to lead and learn about my Marines in every way possible, their hobbies, likes, dislikes and even where they go after they finish working for the day. If I know a certain Marine doesn’t like to be talked to a certain way or learns differently from the other Marines, I can tailor the training so they learn the most they can.”



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Asuncion leads 14 Marines in his work place alone, but as a sergeant, he has the potential to affect many more. He mentors, leads, works and trains with his subordinates. He leads his men by example and through his own experiences.

"I was in their shoes once," said Asuncion. "I was a private first class and a lance corporal at one time, so I've been where they are now and have gone through some of the things they have. I was married once as well so I can relate to both my single and married Marines to give them any advice or guidance they might need. All of these things I have been through make me a better leader and mentor for my Marines."

SNCOs may have worn the same ranks as their junior Marines at one point, but a gap still exists between their time as junior Marines and the newest generation. This is where the sergeant comes to play as the generational link, not too old, but not too new – experienced and fresh.

"As a gunnery sergeant I try to be approachable, but at the same time the Marines won't come and talk to me, they go to the sergeants," said Gunnery Sgt. David Norris, the squadron gunnery sergeant with MALS-11 and a Springfield, Ohio native. "In a way, the sergeant is the first line of defense for the junior Marines. They work with them every day, they train with them and they may even be in some of the same places after they finish working. They can be the first person to see something and stop it or correct it for that Marine and by extension, me."

To Norris, a Marine since 1997, a great sergeant is not just one who can put a tight uniform on in the morning, run a perfect physical fitness test, or invest all their time in themselves.

"A great sergeant is a well rounded [NCO]," said Norris. "A great sergeant is one who makes themselves better through making their Marines better. Advice I could give on how to be a great sergeant would be to take the Marines to work out with you. Show them what you're doing because obviously it's working. Endeavor to know your Marines and be able to teach them and talk to them in the most effective way possible. Don't just be the sergeant who can be a junior Marine's best ally but his worst enemy when the time comes, because the Marines will see that and appreciate you for it."

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▲ Sgt. Daniel Asuncion, right, a Guam native, provides guidance to Lance Cpl. Dustin Kohut, left, a Los Angeles native, both aviation ordnance technicians with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadrons 11, aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., March 8.



▼ Sgt. Dustin Conrady, a crew supervisor for communications and navigation with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 and an Enid, Okla., native, gives a class to his crew aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., March 8.





▲ Sgt. Leah Stewart, a training noncommissioned officer with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 and a Louisville, Ky., native, spoke during a 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing morning colors aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., March. 18.



▲ Sgt. Daniel Asuncion, left, a Guam native, teaches a class to junior Marines with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadrons 11, aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., March 8.



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Not only do these sergeants of Marines work with the junior Marines at a personal level, they hold billets where they can be responsible for hundreds of Marines' welfare and future.

"As a training representative for the avionics division with the squadron I have about 200 Marines I look out for administratively and when they need training," said Sgt. Leah Stewart, the training noncommissioned officer for MALS-11 avionics division and a La Grange, Ky., native. "I handle monthly maintenance plans, file reports and then take care of Marine training and occupational training as well.

Both the junior Marines and her superiors look to Stewart to ensure the 200 Marines whose careers are in her hands are secure on her end, according to Stewart.

Having a sergeant as this link is crucial, explained Stewart

"If there is someone there, like a sergeant, to stand in the gap between these two entities, to express what needs done for both sides the mission is accomplished," said Stewart. "The junior Marines feel comfortable speaking to me about their needs and the senior Marines respect my opinion and have faith in me to get the job done, and done right."

When acting as this link, sergeants must take the orders of the officers and higher enlisted and make them understandable and accomplishable for junior Marines.

In order to accomplish these missions, Stewart must interact with higher ranking Marines and officers.

"Every day I work with a gunnery sergeant, master sergeant, master gunnery sergeant, a captain and a chief warrant officer 2," said Stewart. "Every day I have to talk to them to have Marines checked in and out, and to have paperwork signed for the Marines to be taken care of. Speaking from experience, a lot of junior Marines aren't comfortable speaking to a captain. They get too nervous and wouldn't be able to accomplish the mission if they couldn't get over their fear. It's easiest if they have someone more experienced and confident as that link between the junior and senior Marines."

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“The sergeants take the commander’s intent; break it down into manageable tasks for the Marines and get the job done,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kevin Champaigne, the assistant avionics officer with the logistics squadron and a Mobile, Ala., native. “It’s like they take the fire hose of knowledge and tasking that we give to them and filter it into a manageable fountain. Without sergeants we don’t have the capability to take intent, put it into action, enforce it and ultimately be successful.”

As a former sergeant, Champaigne knows how crucial these leaders of Marines can be.

“At The Basic School of-  
ficers have sergeants there teaching them and with them in the field,” said Champaign. “I think most junior officers learn that the sergeant is the last subject matter expert that hasn’t become an administrator yet, they’re out there with the Marines ensuring they are doing what they are supposed to. They help ensure the Marines don’t forget what the mission is or forget what it means to be a Marine. Without a sergeant, the job might still be completed, but I don’t know that if the ser-

geants were gone that it would be done smoothly or that our personalities as Marines would be fostered the way that it has been and the way that it will continue to be, because we have them.”

The spectrum of those affected by sergeants ranges from private to general. These dedicated Marines continue to foster what it means to be a Marine while passing their knowledge and experience to the newest generation of Marines in their beloved Marine Corps.

“More than anything my sergeant has been there for me whenever I needed him,” said Lance Cpl. Chad Zibilich, an aviation electronics technician with the logistics squadron and a New Orleans native.

“Whether it was Marine Corps or work related, even personally he either had the answers already or did everything in his power to find one for me. I’ve learned more from my sergeants than I have from anyone else.”

No longer a junior, not quite a senior, but in the center where they are needed most; sergeants have the power to mold and shape the Marine Corps in ways only they can.



# MCAS Miramar takes stand against mark on Corps’ pride

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns

Some might think sexual assault can only happen to someone else; they would be wrong. Sexual assault can happen to anyone, including service members, at any time, for any number of reasons.

As an effort to fight against the black mark it has made on the Marine Corps’ reputation, April was designated Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The month is dedicated to helping educate commands, Marines and families and to embolden them to take a stand.

“Let me be clear on how I view [sexual assault] and where I stand,” said Gen. James F. Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps. “Sexual assault is an ugly mark on our proud reputation. It goes against everything we claim to be as Marines and is a crime. This crime is not only completely incompatible with our core values of honor, courage and commitment, it is an affront to the basic American principles we so bravely defend.”

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► Sexual assault awareness billboards and banners are displayed across Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif. April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

In accordance with the commandant's objective, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar is actively educating its Marines and sailors to recognize and prevent sexual assault.

"Times are changing," said Col. John Farnam, MCAS Miramar commanding officer. "We are passing this knowledge to our Marines so they can make those good decisions and watch over each other as well."

Part of passing on this knowledge falls to the uniformed victim advocates. A UVA's job is to give victims of sexual assault options for treatment and advice when they need it. They can be the rock victims need in a dire situation.

"During this month, and all year really, we want to encourage those who have been sexually assaulted to come forward so we can ensure that Marine gets the help they need," said Gunnery Sgt. Sandra Lerma, a

UVA and inbound staff noncommissioned officer in charge with the Joint Reception Center and a Harlingen, Texas, native. "We offer medical treatment, counseling, and visits with the chaplain with a constant support system if they ever need to talk."

UVAs provide these services anytime an assault is brought to their attention. Unfortunately, out of possibly dozens of cases that occur, few step forward to receive the care they need.

"I personally want to know that the Marines who come to me for help get the care they need," said Lerma. "When I do my work as a UVA, I think what if that was my brother or sister, wouldn't I want them to get help? Would I want help if someone hurt me like that? Those questions help me to do what I know I must to get them feeling normal again." Only a handful of Marines have come to Lerma for assistance after being sexually assaulted, but she still keeps in contact with all of them, providing all the support she can.

The commandant reported that in 2011, 333 Marines came forward to report sexual assaults, providing only a glimpse into the under-reported crime. Amos then offered a solution to the problem.

"Our greatest weapon in the battle

against sexual assault has been and will continue to be decisive and engaged leadership," said Amos. "Leaders at every level are responsible in creating an environment and command climate in which every Marine is treated with dignity and respect. I need [the individual Marine's] help in building and maintaining the conviction to fight sexual assault, stamp out harassment and indifference."

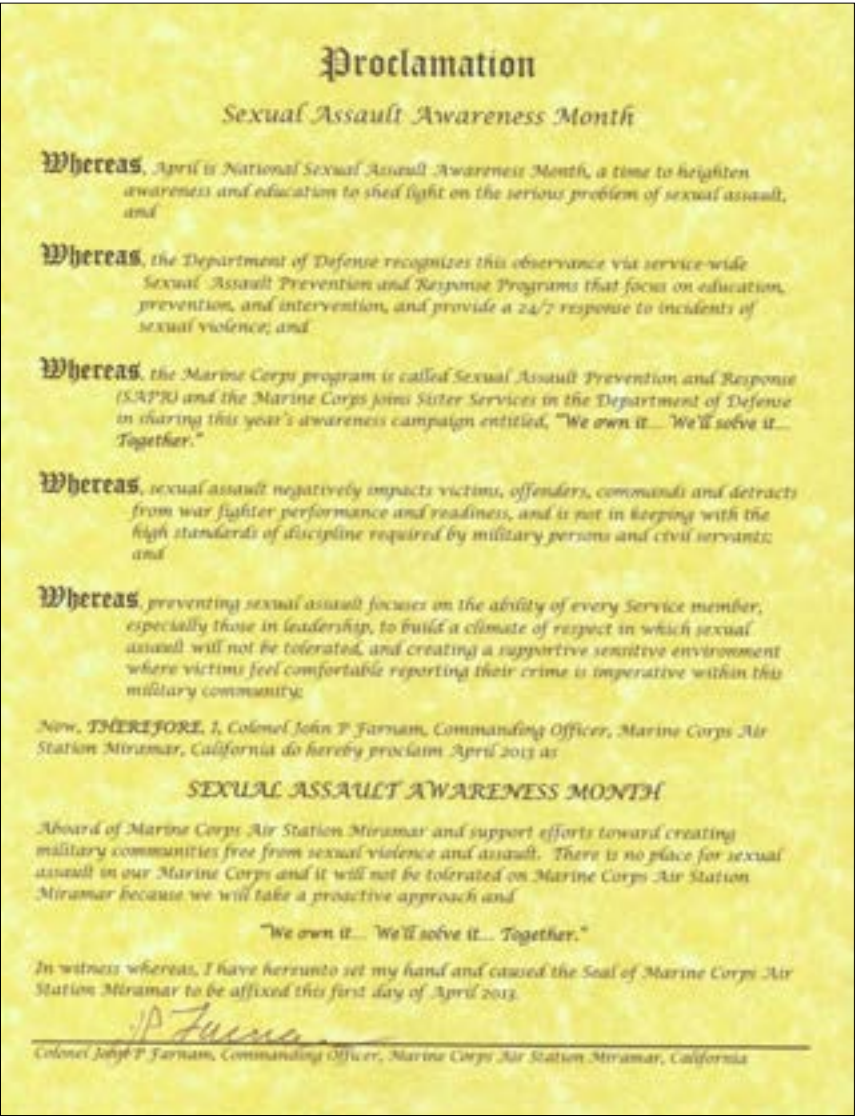
As senior Marine Corps leadership calls their Marines to arms against sexual assault, MCAS Miramar stands with them in fighting back by providing every chance for education on sexual assault and demanding Miramar Marines do the right thing and stand against this heinous crime.

"It takes a lot of moral courage to step in when you think someone might be sexually assaulted," explained Farnam. "It takes courage, but you just can't miss when you're protecting your Marines, and that's what we need – for Marines to look out for each other."

▲ Sgt. Maj. Anthony Spadaro, sergeant major of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, signs his boot print during a sexual assault awareness event aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 22. Third Marine Aircraft Wing leadership joined together to trace their boot prints on a banner to symbolize stomping out sexual assault.



► The Sexual Assault Awareness Month Proclamation, signed by Col. John Farnam, commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., aboard MCAS Miramar, Calif., April 16. It reads, "We own it ... We'll solve it ... Together," symbolizing the need for the entire air station to take a stand and fight back against what Gen. James Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps, calls a black mark on the Marine Corps' pride.



# Global reach, local action

## Miramar does its part to live green

Story and photos  
by Cpl. Melissa Wenger



▲ A California bobcat was on display during the Living Green Expo aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18. The bobcat is one of the local endangered species, and Environmental Management Systems used this display to inform attendees about other local endangered species and ways to protect their existence.

The residents aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., were the guests of a special event to promote environmental friendliness April 18.

The Living Green Expo was part of Lincoln Military Housing's series of biannual community expos.

Representatives from the Miramar Environmental Management System were there to give those residing in base housing a reason to go green.

"The quota set forth by the Headquarters of the Marine Corps is that

every person inside the fence line has a general environmental awareness," said Lt. j.g. Robert Delgado, MCAS Miramar environmental operations officer and a Lakeland, Fla. native. "From an event like this, what people are taking away is the fact that the Marine Corps, as well as the Department of Defense, cares about the environment ... and we're here to make sure the current resources that Marines have to operate and train in now are available in the future."

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► Keith Spencer, an environmental engineer, advises family members who reside in base housing on how to live a “greener” lifestyle during the Living Green Expo aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif. April 18. Environmental Management Systems representatives informed attendees as to how they can contribute to protecting the environment.



►► Lincoln Military Housing gave out badges to promote environmentally friendly living during the Living Green Expo aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18. The Living Green Team is a base-wide incentive program where members pledge to make an effort to recycle, conserve energy and preserve natural resources in any way they can.

▼ Herb Baylon, a supervisory environmental engineer, provides information to family members who reside in base housing during the Living Green Expo aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18. The expo aimed to urge those living on base to follow a “greener” lifestyle.



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The free informational fair was committed to urging the instillation’s community to take action against resource misuse, environmental degradation and other environmental issues while sponsors provided some extra incentives to get into the green lifestyle.

“Vendors have brought all sorts of resources regarding recycling,” said Jessica Marbut, senior community services coordinator and a Fort Worth, Texas native. “They’ve brought recycling games so that kids are actually learning how to recycle. [Attendees] are also getting a lot of reusable containers, bags, cups and other things they can use, so that they’re not creating a lot of waste in housing.”

Lincoln Military Housing representatives also had a chance to reintroduce a program that will begin to affect housing residents in the near future.

“They’re learning about a new Resident Energy Conservation Program that is going to be rolling out next

year,” said Marbut. “Some residents just aren’t aware of their energy use. With the REC Program, they’re going to start getting some mock billing. They’re going to be able to see their energy use, so it makes them more aware of what they are wasting. Once they move out of housing, they need to be able to control energy uses in their own environment.”

The station’s commanding officer, Col. John Farnam, has issued an environmental policy statement that outlines several missions, stating that it is critical to “preserve, protect, and enhance the quality of our land, air and water resources.”

Service members, civilian employees and family members, as part of the base community, have the opportunity to make an impact by making less of an impact on the environment.

Visit [www.MiramarEMS.com](http://www.MiramarEMS.com) to learn more about protecting the station’s resources and the individual contributions that can be made to environmental preservation.



# Distracted driving **KILLS**

## Keep your eyes, mind on the road

Story and photos by Cpl. Melissa Wenger

Taking a bite, sending a text, changing the radio station. These are things we do every day, but they're also things that no one should do while driving.

The National Safety Council has designated April as Distracted Driving Awareness Month across the country.

Distracted driving can be described as any action that requires cognitive, visual, and manual involvement while on the road. Some actions, such as texting, require all three functions and prove to be formidable attention drainers.

"If you think about it, you're more likely to get into a collision if you're not looking at the road than you are if you're looking at the road," said Staff Sgt. Jared Riske, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar provost marshal's office traffic division chief and a Concord, Mich., native. "If you're looking at a text message, you're not looking at the road."

In his two years aboard the station, Riske has seen an increase in cell phone use while driving that parallels the prevalence of a now common electronic item.

"As new technology comes out and people buy more of it, it's definitely something that you see

constantly now," he said. "It was distracting enough to be holding a phone to your ear carrying on a conversation while you're driving down the road ... but now the focus has gone from just your mind being distracted to your eyes being completely off the road looking at the display on your smartphone."

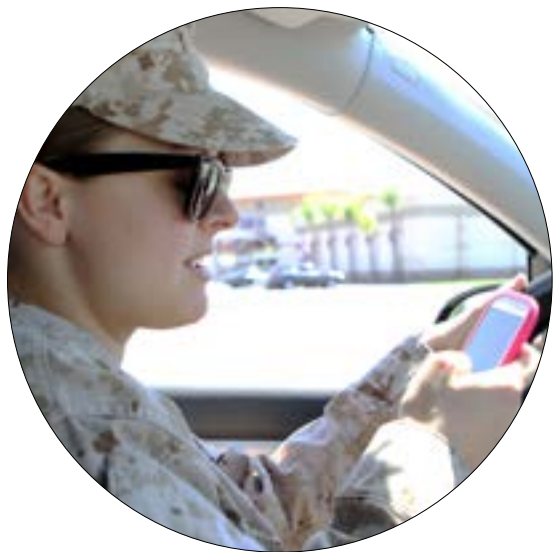
Riske has a viable suggestion for promoting focused driving amongst peers.

"Make a commitment to not being distracted," he said.

"Influence others to be responsible by letting others know that you're being responsible and setting a voice-

mail up to read, 'my phone's turned off because I'm driving right now, so please leave me a message and I'll call you back when I get to where I'm going.'"

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## Texting

Text messaging requires visual, manual and cognitive attention from the driver. It is by far the most alarming distraction and puts the vehicle at 23 times more risk of an accident than focused driving, according to the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute.

## Eating/Drinking

A Marine demonstrates multiple distractions while driving. According to the official U.S. government website for distracted driving awareness, [www.Distracted.gov](http://www.Distracted.gov), “18 percent of injury crashes in 2010 were reported as distraction-affected crashes.”



## Applying makeup

According to a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study, applying makeup while operating a vehicle, reading, cell phone use and looking at an object or event outside of the vehicle are the principle actions that cause distracted driving and lead to vehicle accidents.

## Adjusting audio

According to Staff Sgt. Jared Riske, the Provost Marshal's Office traffic division chief, “just in the seconds it takes you to move from one station to another or search for a station, you can travel as far as three to four football fields without even looking at the road.”



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Distracted driving is not limited to cell phone use, although it is its most popular manifestation. Some other actions that divert a driver's attention include consuming food, reading and even adjusting the radio, which is cited as “auxiliary equipment use” on the California driver's license test and counts as an automatic failure.

“Just in the seconds it takes you to move from one station to another or search for a station, you can travel as far as three to four football fields without even looking at the road before you look up,” said Riske. “If a kid had jumped out or a car had stopped in front of them, they're going to completely miss it.”

Riske explained that the leadership is on board with distracted driving prevention, and Marines should follow suit.

“I know how the station's (commanding officer) feels about it. It's a risk that is not acceptable,” he said. “You shouldn't even be considering texting and driving or having access to your phone while driving and he would much rather you not answer a phone call from your supervisor for ten minutes than to be in an accident.”

San Diego's rush hour traffic seems to resemble a never ending sea of brake lights, but that's still no excuse to whip out a phone or chow down on a meal at the wheel.

“They think it's acceptable because they're at a complete stop and their foot is on the brake so they can do whatever they want in the vehicle, such as texting or taking a phone call,” said Sgt. Phillip Jaimes, patrolman and a San Antonio native. “That's still the same thing, because if your foot slips off the brake and you rear-end the guy in front of you, you're still at fault.”

The station's PMO remains vigilant and takes its responsibility to keep drivers safe very seriously.

“The provost marshal's authority is in accordance with the station order P55.10B, which assimilates all of the California vehicle codes,” said Riske. “Anything that's a violation of state law or a violation of the base general's policy is a violation that we enforce.”

And according to California's vehicle code, a driver can be cited for engaging in “any activities” that distracts the driver and cause them to have a “wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property.” The law is purposefully worded in a broad tone, and is like the Article 134 of vehicle law.

For more information about distracted driving and tips on how to prevent it, visit the official U.S. government website for distracted driving awareness, [www.Distracted.gov](http://www.Distracted.gov).



# Third MAW morning colors thanks *Padres* for support

Story and photos by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot

Marines from 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing celebrated the raising of the morning colors with swinging style aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18.

This month's ceremony honored the San Diego Padres for their years of military support.

Trevor Hoffman, former Padres pitcher and seven-time All Star, was on hand to witness the ceremony.

"It's an honor to stand in front of you today to recognize the great work you do in our community, the great work you do on the base, around the world and around the country," said Hoffman.

Hoffman, whose family includes Iwo Jima and Vietnam veterans, expressed his gratitude to the service men and women, but the Marines, sailors and veterans present were equally excited to meet a baseball hero.

In 1996, the Padres became the first national sports team to salute the military with discounted tickets, flag unfurling and special uniforms designed to look like military uniforms.

Sgt. Jeremy Winkfield, the ceremony's reviewing officer and Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, native, explained that baseball and the Marine Corps go hand in hand.

"As much as baseball is an American game and its greatest pastime, that is the Marine Corps to America," said Winkfield. "We are America's Marine Corps, and being her 9-1-1 force is our greatest pastime."

Winkfield competed for the opportunity to plan and execute the large event as part of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing commanding general's Committed and Engaged Leadership Initiative. The program is designed to empower non-commissioned officers with leadership experience.

Following the ceremony, Hoffman signed autographs and took photos with eager fans. He did not leave until he had greeted everyone who wanted to see him.

The Padres have military salute games scheduled throughout the season, and will honor the Marine Corps during their May 19 game against the Washington Nationals.



▲ Trevor Hoffman, former San Diego Padres pitcher and soon-to-be Baseball Hall of Fame inductee, observes a morning colors ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18. Hoffman's father fought on Iwo Jima and his father-in-law is a Vietnam War veteran.



▲ Trevor Hoffman, former San Diego Padres pitcher and soon-to-be Baseball Hall of Fame inductee, signs a baseball after a morning colors ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18. Third MAW thanked the Padres for their years of military support.

Marines with 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing raise the colors during a morning ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18. Third MAW welcomed former San Diego Padres pitcher Trevor Hoffman and thanked the team for their military support.

- imagery continued page 35-



◀ Sgt. Jeremy Winkfield, the ceremony reviewing officer and Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, native, gives his remarks during the morning colors ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18. Each month, a different sergeant will plan and execute the large ceremony as part of the 3rd MAW commanding general's Committed and Engaged Leadership Initiative.

▶ Trevor Hoffman, former San Diego Padres pitcher and soon-to-be Baseball Hall of Fame inductee, greets a retiree after a morning colors ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18. Hoffman comes from a long line of service members.



## San Diego Padres morning colors ceremony-Video

Video by Cpl. Kevin Crist and Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns



▲ Click to watch

Marines with 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing salute the colors aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18. Each month, the station celebrates the colors with a different theme.



Marines and Sailors of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 participate in a morning run on the new running trail aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 24. The station's safety department warns runners to take extra precautions when crossing the busy intersection along the trail at Miramar Way and Schilt Avenue.



# Heads up: Miramar running trail crosses risky intersection

Story and photos  
by Cpl. Melissa Wenger



► The four-way stop where Miramar Way intersects Schilt Avenue can be a difficult part of the new running trail for runners aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., to maneuver. The new running trail along Miramar Way meets this particular intersection, which is frequently trafficked during the same morning hours when runners tend to use the trail.



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A four-way stop sign, misplaced shrubbery and a crosswalk that is 15 to 20 feet behind the intersection all spell trouble for runners on Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

The new running trail along Miramar Way keeps runners off the streets and sidewalks and at a generally safe distance from traffic. However, where the trail crosses Schilt Avenue at Miramar Way, it can pose a serious obstacle for runners. During peak hours, the intersection can become quite congested.

"[Traffic] starts going right around 6 a.m.," said Lt. Col. James Traver, MCAS Miramar director of safety and standardization and a Poughkeepsie, N.Y., native. "When do people run on base? About 6:30 to 7:30 a.m., so that's the area we're really concerned about."

Runners need to be on high alert when approaching the crosswalk in order to mitigate that danger.

"For sure, the runners have to stop as they get ready to cross that intersection because the cars that are on Miramar Way are focused on that intersection since it's a four-way stop," said Traver. "The intersection itself is complex enough without runners being there, so we need the runners to be responsible too. The runners have to assume that the cars don't see you and by the time they do see you, they're not going to be able to stop before the intersection."

The station safety department has already removed a large sign that was obstructing the view of drivers turning onto Schilt Avenue, but according to Traver, the other factors limiting visibility won't be as simple.

"We'll talk about some of the options that can address the hazards additionally, such as removing those bushes, but that's going to take a little time," he said. "The sign is already gone because that was an easy fix, but the bushes getting dug up or if we're going to move where the actual intersection occurs, that's going to take a little bit of time."

Members of the station community can call Station Safety at 858-577-1360 with any suggestions for how to make the Schilt Avenue and Miramar Way intersection a safer one. In the meantime, runners must be diligent.

"The design of the intersection, the frequency of traffic...and some of the obstacles around it, make that one just above and beyond where we think is a perfectly safe threshold," said Traver. "If they see this, they'll hopefully go, 'I know that intersection is coming up, so I'm going to take an extra [minute], look left and look right before I go ahead and cross that intersection because I know there's a lot of hazards associated with it.'"





# Challenge Accepted

## Marines, sailors hold PE fitness challenge

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns

The audience watched with eyes wide as they stepped silently onto the pavement. The smooth movements of the group moving as one left viewers awestruck, until the silence was broken by furious applause and cheering from children, parents and teachers with Kumeyaay Elementary School in San Diego, April 19. The Marines and sailors had landed.

The mission: to challenge the student body to push themselves during physical education class. The tools they used to accomplish this task were an obstacle course, rope, baseball bats, a parachute, wooden eggs and spoons.

"I like the Marines coming out here to play with us," said Diego Franco, an 8-year-old second grader with the school. "Marines are really fun to play with and my dad was a Marine. The Marines coming here to help us is important because I feel safe with them."

Franco also explained that he had fun during the obstacle course the Ma-

rines set up for the students.

The volunteers yelled, hooted and hollered for the kids to move faster and push themselves harder, all while trying to find the best way to get through to the kids.

"It was an experience for the most part," said Cpl. Andre Fradiue, a volunteer from Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron 38 and a Palmdale, Calif., native. "You had to change the way you acted for different age groups. For the younger children, you had to explain each station more thoroughly, where with the older ones, you do an exercise once and they have it. The younger kids would get excited over the slightest thing while the older ones required a little more enthusiasm from the Marines to push themselves."

Fradiue is not a first-timer himself. He served as the secretary for Single Marine Program while in Okinawa, Japan, where they would volunteer with the local children as well.

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Lance Cpl. Orlando Cruz, a volunteer from Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 and an Austin, Texas, native, announces tug-of-war winners during a Single Marine Program fitness challenge at Kumeyaay Elementary School in San Diego, April 19.

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While working with the children, Fradiue noticed something about the children interacting with the volunteers and about himself.

“The kids were really excited to see [us] out there with them,” said Fradiue. “At the same time, it made me feel good, because I feel like I was able to impact the kids’ lives and futures.”

When classes finished and the Marines went home, some felt closer to not only the community, but to each other as well.

“I feel like whenever I volunteer, it’s like a butterfly effect,” said Fradiue. “I

could have an effect on so many possible outcomes and lives, just from volunteering to play with kids during school. I like making a difference.”

A Marine-sized difference was made that day for the children, teachers and parents.

“I think [the fitness challenge] is really fun and I want the Marines to come back,” said Franco. “I want to follow in my dad and Chesty [Puller’s] footsteps and become a Marine.”

For information on volunteering with the MCAS Miramar SMP contact the SMP at (858) 577-6399.



▲ Cpl. Andre Fradiue, right, a Palmdale, Calif., native, and Pfc. Madison Hopkins, left, an Orange, Calif., native, both volunteers from Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron 38, teach students how to dance the Macarena at lunch during a Single Marine Program fitness challenge at Kumeyaay Elementary School in San Diego, April 19.

► Cpl. Andre Fradiue, a volunteer from Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron 38 and a Palmdale, Calif., native, performs push-ups with students during a Single Marine Program fitness challenge at Kumeyaay Elementary School in San Diego, April 19.



# *MCAS Miramar, 3rd MAW take a step in the right direction*

**Story and photos by  
Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns**

The crowd began to move forward, slowly at first but picked up to a steady pace within moments; the 4th Annual Sexual Assault Awareness Month Walk had begun.

The procession met to show support for spreading awareness about sexual assault, an issue Gen. James Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps, called a “black mark” on the Marine Corps’ illustrious reputation.

Even San Diego officials came out to show their support for sexual assault awareness. Mayor Bob Filner, mayor of the city of San Diego, declared April 26 Military Sexual Assault Awareness Day for San Diego, giving the signed proclamation to Col. John Farnam, commanding officer of MCAS Miramar, and the military as a whole.

Under Farnam’s direction, Marines across the air station stepped up to the plate to educate others when Amos called to his leadership to take a stand against this heinous crime.

“Most Marines, 99.9 percent at least, are good people and are willing to help those in need,” said Farnam. “We’ve done as the commandant asked, we hold annual trainings and seminars to educate our Marines, but we still look to do more. I think that a little education goes a long way; I want to teach my Marines what they need to do the right thing.”

**-continued page 47-**



# Sexual Assault Awareness Month walk - Video

Video by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns



▲ Click to watch

► Julia Kamp, an intern with behavioral health at Marine Corps Community Services, holds a sign above her head during the 4th Annual Sexual Assault Awareness Month Walk aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 26. Members of the Miramar community gathered aboard the air station to show support for victims of sexual assault and to raise awareness.



▲ Julia Kamp, left, an intern with behavioral health at Marine Corps Community Services, and Mary Bradford, right, director of MCCS for Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., pose for a photo before the 4th Annual Sexual Assault Awareness Month Walk aboard the air station, April 26.



▲ Previous page: Marines stroll the streets during the 4th annual Sexual Assault Awareness Month Walk aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 26.

► Col. John Farnam, left, the commanding officer of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, poses for a photo with San Diego Mayor, Bob Filner, center, and Tara Jones, right, the guest of honor and founder of the National Women Veterans Association of America, before the 4th Annual Sexual Assault Awareness Month Walk aboard MCAS Miramar, Calif., April 26. Before the ceremony began, Mayor Filner proclaimed the day shall forever be marked as Sexual Assault Awareness Day in the city of San Diego.



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Walkers proudly put one foot in front of the other under the banner of this year’s Sexual Assault Awareness Month theme, “We own it ... We’ll solve it ... Together.”

“This is a wonderful event,” said Deborah Williams, a walker who served 33 years in the United States Air Force and a Milwaukee native. “When I was serving we didn’t have the support from the higher ups like we do today. We didn’t have walks, runs or as much aid for victims as we do today and it’s heartening to see this kind of support.”

After starting at The Great Escape, the crowd walked to the Parade Deck, where Farnam, guest speakers and survivors of sexual assault spoke about their experiences with sexual assault in the military.

One such speaker was Tara Jones, president and founder of the National Women Veterans Association


of America. Jones is also a survivor of military sexual assault after having served in the United States Navy for 6 years.

“Survivors, like myself, can suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder almost as easily as those serving on the front lines [of combat],” said Jones. “It’s a great day when people are encouraging victims to come out of the darkness and that they have support.”

If you see or suspect sexual assault, it is your responsibility to stop it and report it. Remember: we are all in this together, and if everyone does their part, sexual assault won’t stand a chance.

For more information or to report sexual assault please contact your unit Uniformed Victim Advocate or the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response helpline at 858-864-2815.





Marines with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron participate in a beautification project in honor of Earth Day at the physical fitness test route aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 22. The Marines are personifying this year's Earth Day theme, "global reach, local action."

# MCAS Miramar celebrates Earth Day

Story and photos by Cpl. Melissa Wenger

**M**arine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., joined the rest of the nation in celebrating Earth Day, April 22. This year's theme, "Global Reach, Local Action" emphasizes how individual contributions can make an impact on a greater scale.

The commemorative holiday which has been celebrated on American soil for more than 40 years has sparked environmental awareness efforts across the base. Marines and members of the community here have joined the fight for a cleaner air, land and sea.

Earth Day inspired cleanup efforts both on and off the installation. While the Marines of Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron were sprucing up Miramar's physical fitness test route, those of Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 took on Kearny Villa Road just outside of the base.

"It's a time to renew and it's a great opportunity to get the Marines out here and cleaning up the areas that we don't walk across on a daily basis," said Lt. Col. Tom Kerley, the environmental management director and an Odessa, Texas native. "It kind of allows everyone to reset and really think about where we are with our en-

vironmental program."

The day also gave the station's recycling center a chance to make the community aware of its capabilities with a free e-waste and used oil recycling event.

"Electronic waste has been one of the big issues on the base," said Lt. j.g. Robert Delgado, the MCAS Miramar environmental operations officer and a Lakeland, Fla. native. "I want to alert people not to throw it in the dumpsters and to take it to the designated places where they're permitted to dispose of them."

What environmental protection on MCAS Miramar boils down to is something that everyone can understand: saving money.

"By taking care of the base, we preserve it for training for years and years to come," said Kerley. "That's a huge impact to the mission. Those taxpayer dollars can add up to ridiculous amounts of money in fines, if you don't comply with environmental codes. We'd end up paying money towards fines instead of taking that money and spending it on the war fighter in order to train him to go to combat."

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▲ Marines with Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 walk along Kearny Villa Road, picking up trash in honor of Earth Day just outside of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 22. (Photo by Lance Cpl. Christopher Johns.)

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All of MCAS Miramar’s Earth Day events recognized the station’s goal of preserving the land each and every day of the year.

“We are huge stewards of the environment,” said Kerley. “We want to see Miramar be around not only for the next ten years, but the next hundred years or next thousand years and hopefully as long as our nation is around. We think of every day as Earth Day around Miramar, but this [day is] just a little bit more celebratory of the fact.”

Lance Cpl. Noel Lucas, a recycling center worker and a Lakewood, Wash., native, sums up Earth Day with a message to inspire others to take local action with a global reach.

“You’re hurting your children. You’re hurting future Marines. At the basic level, you’re hurting Mother Earth. Waste not, want not. We only have one planet, so why not take care of it now?”



# Wives fly, shoot, fight like Marines

Story and photos by  
Lance Cpl. Melissa Eschenbrenner



▲ Drill instructors give a speech to Marine Aircraft Group 16 wives during a Jane Wayne Day event aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 13. The spouses also rode in 7-ton trucks, learned Marine Corps martial arts moves and shot simulated weapons.

## MCAS Miramar celebrates Earth Day - Video

Video by Cpl. Melissa Wenger



▲ Click to watch

Flying, shooting and Marine Corps Martial Arts are among some the many things spouses hear about when their Marines come home each night but, twice a year they get to experience the excitement for themselves.

The spouses of Marines with Marine Aircraft Group 16 took part in Jane Wayne Day aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 13.

Spouses were given Jane Wayne Day t-shirts and bandanas, and split into three platoons to learn drill movements, experience drill instructors and learn basic skills Marines are required to know.

“In order to know your spouse, you have to know what they do at work,” said Vina Combellick, wife of a pilot with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462. “It’s important to know how hard they work and what they have to do day in and day out.”

The spouses shot simulated M-16A4 service rifles and M9 service pistols at the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer. They also flew MV-22B Osprey simulators with the aid of a pilot.



► Vina Combellick, wife of a pilot with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462, left, shoots an M-16A4 service rifle during a Jane Wayne Day event aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 13. Jane Wayne day teaches Marine Corps spouses some aspects of what their Marines do each day.


◄ Keiko Wray, a wife of a Marine with Marine Aircraft Group 16, shoots an M9 service pistol at the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer during a Jane Wayne Day event aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 13. Jane Wayne day provides military spouses with a small glimpse of what it means to be a Marine.

Volunteers from other squadrons and their Family readiness officers were key in making the event run smoothly. Some of the more daring participants suited up in a bite-proof suit to be apprehended by a working dog during a dog demonstration. This was a first for Jane Wayne Day events. Wives also learned basic self-defense techniques from Marine Corps Martial Arts Program.

“It went great,” said Kelli Richardson, the FRO with MAG-16. “We had some great wives came out. They got to experience many different things that their husbands do every day.”

Marine platoon sergeants, drill instructors and MCMAP instructors explained what it means to be a Marine, using stories of Medal of Honor recipients and boot camp experiences.

Marines work hard and look out for one another because of the pride they carry, explained Combellick.

It is not always easy to be a wife of a Marine. Jane Wayne Day may help spouses appreciate and understand what their husbands do while giving them an opportunity to get out of the house and have fun, explained Richardson. 



## MAG-16 wives meet Marine Corps lifestyle - Video

Video by Lance Cpl. Raquel Barraza



▲ Click to watch



# Logistics Marines share the wealth

**Story and photos by Cpl. Lisa Tourtelot**

One squadron stood out from the rest this year with their outstanding donations to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

The Marines and sailors of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11 donated more than \$17,000 to the group, and there are still donations rolling in.

The number marks a nearly 150 percent increase in donations from the previous year.

2nd Lt. Jacob Cools, the officer-in-charge of the consumables management division of MALS-11 and a Portland, Ore., native, orchestrated the fund drive late last March.

Cools offered nearly 40 briefs throughout a single day to ensure that every Marine and sailor in the squadron had the opportunity to donate.

"I think that the Marines here are extremely generous," said Cools. "I'm glad

to be a part of a command that is able to foster that generosity. I feel humbled by it."

Cools explained that he believes the proximity of the relief society to the Marines and sailors encourages more donations.

"MALS-11 has received a lot of funds from the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. People can look at their shops and see people who have been helped out," said Cools. "Officers and enlisted alike, it's an organization that you can see the fruits from. You're helping people right here; you're helping people in San Diego."

Donations, grants and interest-free loans to active-duty service members compose 48 percent of all Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society contributions.

For more information on donating to the society, visit [www.nmcars.org](http://www.nmcars.org).



# Aviator of the Year to 3rd MAW pilot

Story by Lance Cpl. Raquel Barraza

With loud blasts and flames engulfing the flight line, Maj. Robert Weingart, a pilot with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469 and a Franklin, Conn., native, jumped in his AH-1W Cobra and took flight to protect his fellow Marines on the ground.

On Sep. 14, 2012, Camp Bastion, Afghanistan was attacked by insurgents on the east side near the Marine hangars.

During the firefight, Weingart tried to eliminate the insurgents from the air but smoke caused limited visibility, and he needed a way to be sure he was getting the “bad guys.”

“I asked if [the Marines on the ground] could concentrate their automatic weapons’ fire on the point of origin, so I could [identify] it and get maneuvered to where we could engage it for them,” said Weingart.

Down on the flight line, Marines from throughout the squadron ran to aircraft to retrieve ammunition and weapons to show Weingart where the insurgents were attacking from.

“They saw where the friendly vehicle was engaging at the [enemy], and then they started opening up with the [M240 machine gun] from the vicinity of our compound,” said Weingart. “The combination of seeing the rounds from the vehicles and seeing our Marines from the North East that gave us a pretty good pin point location of where the bad guys were.”

► Maj. Robert Weingart, center, a pilot with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469 and a Franklin, Conn., native stands with Lt. Gen. John Toolan, left, the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force commanding general, and Maj. Gen. Steven Busby, right, commanding general of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, at the Marine Corps Aviation Association dinner to honor 3rd MAW award nominees and winners aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18.



## 3rd MAW Pilot receives Aviator of the Year -Video

Video by Cpl. Kevin Crist



▲ Click to watch

Weingart knew that he had to be sure before he could take any shots.

“It’s one thing to shoot the bad guys and miss; another thing entirely to shoot [at] the bad guys, miss and hit the [Marines] you’re trying to help,” said Weingart. “That’s the absolute worst outcome.”


For his brave actions on that day and his work as the aircraft maintenance officer with HMLA-469, Weingart was awarded the Alfred A. Cunningham aviator of the year award.

This award represents an aviator and all their actions throughout the year, explained Maj. Gen. Steven Busby, the commanding general of the 3rd Marine Aircraft wing.

Even with this award being a great achievement to most, Weingart sees his actions as anything but heroic.

“He is probably one of the most humble individuals you’re ever going to meet but he is a dynamic leader of Marines,” said Busby.

Weingart received his award at the Marine Corps Aviation Association dinner to honor 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing award nominees and winners at the officers’ club aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 18.

The leadership Weingart displayed shows dedication to his fellow warriors and he is a leader Marines can epitomize. 

# Word on the street

Marines answer the questions you want to know. This month's question is:

"If you could have any entertainer perform at Miramar, who would it be?"



Name: Lance Cpl. Jesus Naffarrette Unit: VMM-163  
"Avenge Sevenfold. I am really into rock and they're awesome."

Name: Cpl. Nicolas Wood Unit: HMH-462  
"Big & Rich concert would be pretty cool. They would be great in concert."

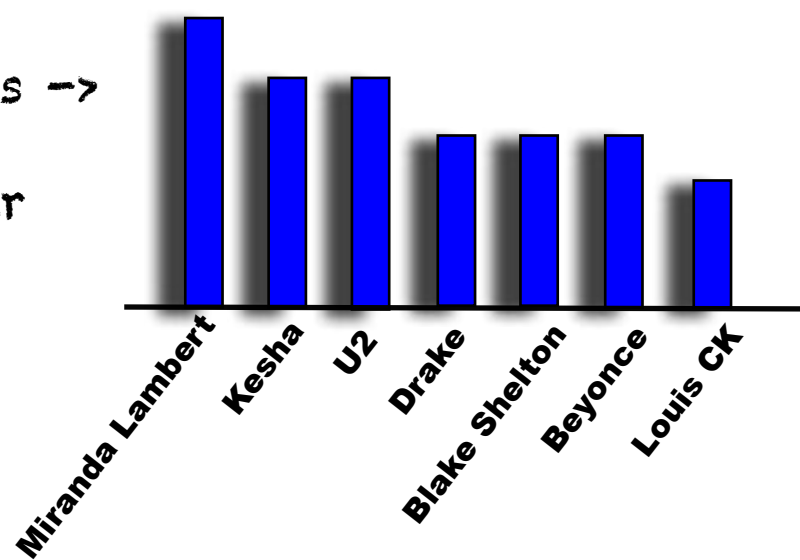


Name: Pfc. Shane Crew Unit: HMH-462  
"Toby Keith or Kenny Chesney because I really like country music, it reminds me of home and just makes you feel good."

Check out the online results ->

It's not too late to cast your vote! Visit our facebook to make your voice heard.

[www.facebook.com/MCMCASMiramarand3rdMAW](http://www.facebook.com/MCMCASMiramarand3rdMAW)



# A Devil Dog's best friend

Video by Cpl. Max Pennington



Click to watch

## IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

- \* Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 462 prepares for deployment with an integrated training exercise
- \* MCAS Miramar celebrates Asian-American history Month
- \* MCAS Miramar hosts the All-Marine and Navy volleyball teams



Give your input on the Flight Jacket. Click the image above, and tell us what you want to see in the next edition.

