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Hawaii Marine

‘Angry Birds’ fly in, ‘Band of Bruddahs’ fly out

Lt. Ross Thomas
Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light 37



Kristen Wong | Hawaii Marine

Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher Warren, Naval aircrewman, Detachment 4, Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light 37, drops his helmet and runs to greet his wife outside of Hangar 103, Thursday. Detachment 4 of HSL-37, the “Angry Birds,” returned from a six-month deployment, while Detachment 1 of HSL-37, the “Band of Bruddahs,” deployed Tuesday.

Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light 37 bid farewell to Detachment 1, the “Band of Bruddahs,” at Hangar 103 and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Tuesday. Two days later, the squadron welcomed home Detachment 4, the “Angry Birds,” from their six-month deployment, at Hangar 103.

The Band of Bruddahs are accompanying the sailors of USS Chaffee until June, followed by exercises in July.

The girlfriend of Petty Officer 3rd Class Nicholas Jones, Naval aircrewman, Det. 1, HSL-37, said the deployment was a surprise because he was not scheduled to deploy until March, but had to replace a sailor who was unable to go. She said she will be busy with an upcoming internship. In addition to working part time, she also plans to get into shape to go bike riding with her boyfriend upon his return.

“[I’m] looking forward to the food [of different cultures], and learning how different cultures operate,” said Lt. j.g. Paul Kraft, training officer for Det. 1.

While deployed, the Band of Bruddahs will provide air support for USS Chaffee, and “extended communications,” meaning they will act as communication liaisons between ships if needed.

The Angry Birds, consisting of several officers and more than a dozen enlisted members, departed on June 1 for a Western Pacific deployment aboard USS Chung Hoon to support operations in the Seventh Fleet area of responsibility.

Detachment 4 deployed under the leadership of Lt. Cmdr. Russell Paige, detachment officer in charge, and Senior Chief Petty Officer Joel Murphy, detachment lead chief petty officer of HSL 37.

The detachment executed more than 450 mishap-free flight hours and was an integral part of the Chung Hoon combat team.

The first half of Chung Hoon’s deployment consisted of Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training exercises with the Philippine and Singapore Navies and a Naval Engagement Activity with the Vietnamese Navy.

These exercises emphasized interoperability in surface warfare and undersea warfare competencies while the NEA focused on Search and Rescue and professional exchanges.

The second half of deployment focused primarily on presence operations in the South China Sea and Maritime Domain Awareness fisheries enforcement patrols in the South Pacific. MDA patrols were

See DEPLOYMENT, A-7

Echo Company ‘Outlaws’ sharpen battle skills

Lance Cpl. Jacob D. Barber
Combat Correspondent

MARINE CORPS TRAINING AREA BELLOWS — Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, underwent a 12-stage training cycle at the renovated Infantry Immersion Training Facility at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, Wednesday.

‘The Outlaws’ executed many different stages of training which included improvised explosive device detection, reaction to small arms fire, tactical questioning and cording searches. Throughout their training evolution all IIT sites were used along with sound and smell simulators and acting role players.

They’re learning how to work as a team,” said Lance Cpl. Frank Pliego, first squad leader, Weapons Platoon. “Every Marine in the squad has a different job and we want them to understand the difference between each of the jobs so they can be flexible when it comes down to actually executing a real mission.”

The Marines were evaluated after each event by platoon commanders, squad leaders and others including Ron Schaedel, a pre-deployment training program coordinator, who focused solely on passing his knowledge and experience to those training throughout the day. Working with all the squads, including Weapons Platoon, Schaedel walked through the procedures of clearing houses safely and effectively.

“For young leaders they did very well. They were very receptive and they weren’t afraid to ask questions,” Schaedel said. “It felt good that they wanted to soak up the knowledge simply because they don’t

See MOUT TOWN, A-7



Lance Cpl. Jacob D. Barber | Hawaii Marine

Marines with Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment push their way forward during an improvised explosive device patrol at the renovated Infantry Immersion Training Facility at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, Wednesday. All IIT sites were used along with sound, smell simulators and acting role players.

Home for Thanksgiving

Families welcome home remaining Lava Dogs and Kings of Battle

Navy Lt. Carl Rhoads, battalion chaplain, 1/3, greets his wife at Hangar 105, Nov. 24. The remainder of 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, and 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, returned from combat operations supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan on Thanksgiving Day. “We’ve been married for 18 years and seeing him get off the plane felt like being married for the first time,” Rhoads’ wife said. “[Life] was nerve-racking while he was gone, but looking forward to him coming home was the best part of the deployment.” Marines from Wounded Warrior Battalion East — Detachment Bethesda were also present at the homecoming to greet their friends as they walked off the plane.

Lance Cpl. James A. Sauter | Hawaii Marine





Breaking ground
523rd Engineer Company rebuilds gravel road at K-Bay Range
See **A-2**



Burning turkey
Fitness folks work off their Thanksgiving feasts at the Semper Fit Center.
See **B-4**

Saturday	Sunday
High — 78	High — 78
Low — 71	Low — 70

NEWS BRIEFS

Homecoming Night at Mokapu Mall

As a welcome home treat for Marines and sailors, Mokapu Mall is hosting a homecoming night, today from 4:30 to 8 p.m. The mall will have Pro Bowl ticket and prize-pack giveaways, samplings and more. The Marine Corps Exchange will also have coupons, prize drawings, discounts.

Beach walkers beware: Don't touch monk seals!

Critically endangered monk seals are hauling out on our base's beaches with greater frequency than ever. It is a federal offense and a violation of the base regulations and the Endangered Species Act to approach, disturb, harass or harm these individuals in any way. If a monk seal is seen on or near a beach, do not approach it. Stay at least 100 feet away and call the Military Police Department at 257-2123. For details email Diane Drigot at diane.drigot@usmc.mil.

Pro Bowl tickets on sale

Pro Bowl 2012 is coming to Aloha Stadium Jan. 29, 2012. Marine Corps Community Services' Information, Tickets and Tours office at Mokapu Mall and Camp H.M. Smith has a selection of sideline and end zone seat tickets available. For more information, call ITT at 254-7563 (Kaneohe Bay) or 477-5143 (Camp Smith).

Laulima CDC grand opening

The Laulima Child Development Center will hold its grand opening, Monday. The base community is invited to an open house tour with light refreshments from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call Janet Hooten at 257-7340.

MCB Hawaii tree lighting ceremony

MCB Hawaii will host the 2011 tree lighting ceremony on Sunday, at 5 p.m. at the Base Chapel. The event is open to all military and civilian personnel, their families and members of the local community.

'Iron Chef America' filming, audience needed

"Iron Chef America" will be filming on the marina side of Hangar 101 on Sunday and Monday. Those with base access and their families are invited to watch the taping from 9 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m. on both days. On Sunday, Iron Chefs will be partnered with a military chef counterpart, putting the Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Army head to head. On Monday, chefs will compete in a tailgate cook-off. Wear woodland utilities or your service's colors to support your culinary team. Do not wear attire that identifies a particular sports team or brand. Follow signs to parking. For details, call 1st Lt. Diann Olson at 257-8870.

Photocopying of U.S. government IDs prohibited

Personnel are reminded that the photocopying of U.S. Government Identification is a violation of Title 18, U.S. Code Part I, Chapter 33, Section 701 and punishable by both a fine and/or imprisonment. Many military members, family members and DoD employees are unaware of this law. Please pass to the lowest level and include in training for force protection, information security and OPSEC.

Important phone numbers

On-Base Emergencies	911
Military Police	257-7114
Child Protective Service	832-5300
Fraud, Waste, Abuse & EEO	257-8852
Pothole & Streetlight Repair	257-2380
Base Information	449-7110
MCB Hawaii Chaplain	257-3552
DEERS	257-2077

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MCB Hawaii first to roll with WeCar

Christine Cabalo
Photojournalist



Christine Cabalo | Hawaii Marine

One of several WeCar vehicles is parked at Mokapu Mall at Marine Corps Base Hawaii. Service members and their spouses 18 and older can rent out the vehicles for an hourly rate. Drivers do not have to pay for gas or other maintainence while using the WeCar vehicles. The base is the first location to use the cars in Hawaii.

Drivers needing a ride are now able to get behind the wheel of a loaner car for less with the WeCar Program.

The car share program started at Kaneohe Bay in October, with vehicles available in several areas including Mokapu Mall. The base is the first location in Hawaii to receive WeCar vehicles, but there are plans to bring the car share program to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam and Schofield Barracks.

"WeCar vehicles are conveniently located on base and provide automated, around-the-clock access to hourly, daily and overnight car rentals for active military personnel and spouses [who are 18 and older] who enroll as members," said John H. Foy, area sales manager, Enterprise Rent-A-Car. "The program provides a sustainable transportation alternative that gives members the benefits of a personal car while paying only when they use the vehicle."

The car share program is unique among other car rental agencies which do not loan their vehicles to drivers under 21.

WeCar can be cost-effective for people who need short-term use of a vehicle. Rates for vehicle checkout are also less than typical car rentals, and annual membership fees are waived for service members.

"[The best advantage] is the savings of being able to rent for blocks of hours versus entire days or weeks," said 2nd Lt. Jeremy Fisher, Platoon commander, Golf Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, and a

See CAR, A-7

Hawaii State Ballet donates toys in tutus



Cpl. Vanessa American Horse | Hawaii Marine

HONOLULU — Sgt. Brian M. Zygmant (left), paraloft noncommissioned officer in charge, 4th Force Reconnaissance Company, and Sgt. William D. Brandes, squad leader, Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, picked up a Toys for Tots donation from the Hawaii State Ballet, Tuesday. The ballet school collected donations from students and faculty and has a been a part of the Toys for Tots drive for the past three years. "This was a great was for the school to get involved in the community," said Carrie A. Siko, instructor and administrator, Hawaii State Ballet. "It got the kids to think about the less fortunate and Christmas time is the perfect time for them to think about others."

523rd Engineer Company rebuilds road for K-Bay Range

Kristen Wong
Photojournalist



Kristen Wong | Hawaii Marine

Army Pvt. Paul Blakeney, a heavy equipment operator for 523rd Eng. Co., 84th Eng. Bn. , shovels dirt and rocks for the retention pond at the Range Training Facility Kaneohe Bay, Monday.

A small group of soldiers from 523rd Engineer Company, 84th Engineer Battalion, 130th Engineer Brigade, made improvements to a 831-foot road at Kaneohe Bay Range Training Facility.

The soldiers, based out of Schofield Barracks, arrived at Marine Corps Base Hawaii on Oct. 17, and have been working on the road from Monday through Friday (except holidays), from as early as 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. They are scheduled to complete their project today.

The road which is used by explosive ordnance disposal technicians, will be newly rebuilt and will last for five years.

"We're more than happy to help," said Sgt. 1st Class Matt Lashley, horizontal construction platoon sergeant, 523rd Eng. Co., 84th Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde. "It's been a pleasure working with the Marines. They've treated us really well. [It's a] good collaboration between the services."

Master Sgt. John Martinez, the range chief for the K-Bay Range, said the road is now "100 times better" than it was before. Before the unit arrived, Martinez said the road was not drivable, and in serious need of repair.

"They're phenomenal," Martinez, of Brooklyn, N.Y., said of the soldiers. "I appreciate everything they do."

He described the project as a "win-win situation." By utilizing the soldiers instead of hiring a contractor, the soldiers get hands-on training and the Marines get their road.

"I think it builds a good rapport with each other in a garrison environment," said Army Sgt. Reynoldo Espinoza, squad leader, 523rd Eng. Co., 84th Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde. "For these guys it's a good learning experience."

Espinoza, of Twentynine Palms, Calif., said for more than half of the soldiers, this is their first project. Among the junior soldiers is Army Pfc. Deykes Lopez, a heavy equipment operator for 523rd Eng. Co., 84th Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde. Lopez, of Reno, Nev., said he was able to learn a great deal in addition to getting more "stick time," being able to operate the machinery.

Martinez said he also has future projects down the line that he plans to request the unit to do, to include the demolition range and some construction at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows.

AROUND THE CORPS

III MEF prepares to provide flood relief

Lance Cpl. Matheus J. Hernandez
Marine Corps Bases Japan

BANGKOK, Thailand — Service members assigned to the III Marine Expeditionary Force flood relief command element gathered for an initial meeting with senior leaders for an overview of what to expect during their flood relief operations with the Royal Thai Government Nov. 15.

Directed by the U.S. Pacific Command, III MEF deployed Marines and sailors to conduct flood relief assessment and to execute specific tasks associated with disaster mitigation — which may include providing follow-on service members and capabilities. The command element is responsible for providing the command and control of U.S. forces working with and assisting the Thai government.

"The relationship we have with the Thai government is extremely important," said Brig. Gen. Craig C. Crenshaw, commander, III MEF flood relief command element.

"We are here to assist, and we're going to assist, in any manner that is appropriate that the Thai government asks of us."

The initial brief allowed senior leaders to reiterate the mission and commander's intent.

"It's very important we establish who is who and what our big mission is," said Sgt. Maj. Lawrence P. Fineran, command element sergeant major. "We are here to assess what's going on and ensure we're ready when called upon for any follow-on missions."

During the overview, Crenshaw expressed to service members the importance of their role during the operation and explained how vital each skill set is.

"I believe we have all the right skill sets here to make this operation successful," said Crenshaw. "The challenge is being able to mold that together and put each individual in the right focus area."

A few of the command element's responsibilities are to conduct medical and engineering assessments and to assess flooded areas in coordination with the Royal Thai Government.

The command element is composed of joint U.S. forces in various fields of expertise to provide command and control of additional U.S. forces.

"At the end of this operation we're going to say that we were successful in assisting the Thai government," said Crenshaw.



Cpl. Robert J. Maurer | III Marine Expeditionary Force

DON MUENG AIRPORT, Thailand – Donated relief supplies are brought in at the Flood Relief Operations Center at the Don Mueng Airport the donation receiving point for flood relief operations in Bangkok Oct. 21.

Enjoying every minute of life: Marine beats cancer

Cpl. Katherine M. Solano
2nd Marine Logistics Group

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan — At 18 years young, many men are thinking about their first year of college, their high-school sweetheart, their favorite sports team or even their impending adulthood and the responsibilities that come with it. For many, the furthest thing from their mind is a cancer diagnosis – for Cpl. Daniel Botero, it was a reality.

The Colombia, South America, native decided that at 18, he was going to give back to the country that has, in his own words, given him hope and opportunities in life, by enlisting in the military. With a four-year sacrifice on his shoulders, Botero had already done more than the majority of his peers.

Fast forward through training and, just as he was about to begin his military occupational specialty classes to become a combat engineer, he was faced with a prospect that some adults cannot even fathom. He was diagnosed with cancer in February 2009.

Not only was he diagnosed with testicular cancer, but doctors told him it had spread. His liver, lungs and brain also had cancerous cells. A new Marine and a new adult, Botero now added new cancer patient to his life's resume, while putting his Marine Corps career on hold.

Bolero began an aggressive course of chemotherapy. The treatment left him weak, without hair and unable to do simple tasks without tremendous effort.

After his first surgery, both he and his doctors weren't sure if he would make it through a necessary second surgery. "I was so weak from the chemo, we didn't even know if I would survive the anesthesia," Botero said.

"I told them I needed a month to just rest, eat and try to gain some strength. My odds were still bad going into the second surgery."

In July 2009, doctors successfully completed his second surgery. Fourteen months later, his doctors told him his cancer was in remission.

Botero could begin his life as a Marine, a life that only a year ago held no guarantees. In less than two years, he had become a Marine, been diagnosed with cancer, had faced the very real possibility of dying before his 21st birthday, and now he is a cancer survivor.



Cpl. Katherine M. Solano | 2nd Marine Logistics Group

Cpl. Daniel Botero, a combat engineer with the Combat Logistics Battalion, 1 Embedded Partnering Team, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), completes ammunition can lifts on Camp Shorabak, Afghanistan, Nov. 16.

He jumped back into his Marine Corps training with zeal. With most of his family still living in South America, the cancer survivor admits that the Marine Corps had become his family.

"The Marine Corps was all I knew, so I just wanted to get back into it," Botero said. "I begged them to give me something to do while I was in treatment."

That's how he became heavily involved with the Wounded Warriors Battalion aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. While working with the Wounded Warriors, Botero developed an even more positive outlook while surrounded by those he came to consider as family.

The common bond that the Marines formed by enduring various injuries, diseases and treatments, is one he will cherish forever. "The whole thing was a good experience because I appreciate every little thing now," Botero began. "Instead of always being mad, we learned to be thankful. Everything is glorious."

When he left the Wounded Warriors Battalion and began his work as a combat engineer, he took what he learned with him on his deployment to Afghanistan with the Combat Logistics Battalion 1, Embedded Partnering Team, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward).

Botero's outlook on life has improved, but he says the biggest change came in his outlook on the Corps.

"It made me realize the Marine Corps is a path, not just a job," he stated.

His appreciation for the Marine Corps and life itself is evident as he discusses the harder days of treatment.

"Going through this changed my outlook on everything," Botero said. "I realize you have to enjoy every minute. A lot of people think of their future, but I believe in living your future as you're building it."

Marines hike 1,000 miles for wounded warriors

Lance Cpl. Daniel A. Wetzel
Headquarters Marine Corps

WASHINGTON — The Fortunate Sons, a group of Marines from North Carolina, hiked across the state's 1,000-mile Mountains-to-Sea Trail to raise awareness and support for wounded Marines.

The group set out from Great Smokey Mountains National Park along the Tennessee border Oct. 2 on a journey that would last 42 days. The Marines concluded their hike at Jockey's Ridge on the Outer Banks of North Carolina, where family, friends and supporters, including former Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. Carl Mundy, greeted them.

The Marines completed the task in pairs, hiking an average of 150 miles a week. The pairs "switched out" every Sunday for mission accomplishment.

"The switch-outs allowed the Marines to still fulfill duty assignments at the School of Infantry," said Capt. Mark A. Greenlief, commanding officer, Echo Company, Weapons Training Battalion East. "Our daily routine continued on as we pushed a class of Marines through the school and kept focus on the trail."

The farthest distance travelled was about 34 miles in one day and 180 miles in one week. When the hike began, they were met with 27-degree weather that put ice and snow on the trails.

"It was definitely an eye-opener for us," said Staff Sgt. Jeremiah B. Johnson, weapons platoon commander with E Co. "When we were no longer in the flat swamplands of Lejeune, we started to face the elements."

However, the cold weather wasn't enough to dampen their spirits.

"We were like spring chickens," Johnson said. "We were exited to get started; the weather had little effect on us because of our adrenaline and motivation to get on with the event."

Along the trail there were portions that were complete wilderness, Johnson said. They had to bring enough food and water for sustainment.

"We would wake up at first light, have breakfast, get as much water as we could then clean up camp and step off for the day," Greenlief said. "We'd stop for 10 minutes every three to four hours, eat a Power Bar, drink some water and then continue on."

The teams would usually stop just before dark to set up camp and plan for the next day's events. During the hike, the Marines mostly camped along the trail in tents.

"I slept under a bridge one night," Johnson said. "Churches also allowed us to sleep indoors."

Along with help from churches along the way, many people would invite the Marines into their homes and offer food and water, said Greenlief.

Despite the physical challenges on their bodies, a demanding trail and bad weather, the group finished their mission on schedule, Nov. 13.

"There was never a question of whether or not we were going to complete the hike," Greenlief said. "I knew it wasn't going to be an easy endeavor, but at the same time the cause and loyalty we had to each other made it a great experience."

Greenlief said the trail never had a negative impact on the hikers, as they were able to accomplish it and fulfill their regular duties.

"Individually, these Marines have been given the opportunity to push themselves past any physical limits they had, which has made them mentally and physically stronger and in turn increased their proficiency in their job," Greenlief said. "By far this is the toughest physical experience I've ever encountered."

Fortunate Sons hopes to do events like this annually, choosing different charities throughout the community.

"It's because of the personal experience we have that we decided to raise money for these hikes and donate to the Semper Fi Fund," Greenlief said. "We've all been affected by someone being injured."

Semper Fi Fund recently hit a landmark of $50 million in donations earlier this year and has been providing help to Marines and their families since 2004.

"Here we are, Marines giving back to Marines, but in a bigger sense we don't just want to give back to our own, we want to also focus on charities outside the Corps," Johnson said. "It's a bigger picture when a group of Marines give back to the community."

'WITH UNITY, THERE IS PROSPERITY'

Marine and Afghan leaders interact with citizens of southern Garmsir

Story and photos by Cpl. Reece Lodder
Regimental Combat Team 5

GARMSIR DISTRICT, Helmand province, Afghanistan — In the furthest reaches of Garmsir district, nearly 70 kilometers from the district center, a mixture of local elders and farmers sat quietly around a collection of ornately woven Afghan rugs, awaiting discussion with their district governor and Marine leaders.

Following their recent assumption of security responsibility in Garmsir, the leadership of 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment joined District Governor Mohammad Fahim to visit and interact with citizens throughout the district, Nov. 22 to 24.

Shuffling brightly-colored prayer beads through their fingers, local residents listened to Fahim's encouragement, intently processing the 25-year-old governor's words.

Though Fahim is headquartered within the Garmsir bazaar, far from many of the people he serves, he used the visit to ask for their help in continuing the development of the flourishing district. He encouraged the various tribes to unite, saying inter-tribal conflicts prevent further progress toward peace and stability throughout Garmsir.

"With unity, there is prosperity," Fahim said.

Looking toward the development of Afghanistan as a whole, he stressed the importance of the nation's school-aged youth.

"If the children don't get an education in our schools, we're destroying our foundation for the future," Fahim said.

He condemned the remnant of insurgent activity here, and explained that these efforts are working against Afghanistan's development.

"The schools are helping our children, and the bridges are helping our people, but the insurgents are burning them and calling it a holy war," Fahim said. "Fighting against your own government is not a holy war. It's ignorance. The government is working to better your lives, but the insurgents are working to destroy your future."

Fahim asked his older citizens to encourage young men to join the Afghan National Army and Police. He echoed the sentiments of local elders, saying this will provide families an additional income and support from familiar faces within the ANA and ANP in their communities.

"It's better for us to send our own people here for this training, so once they complete it, they can help us secure our own area," said Abdullah Khan, an elder with the Nurzai tribe.

Khan described the security progress he has witnessed in southern Garmsir, but said the Afghan Border Police needed to be augmented with ANA and ANP to further improve the security environment.

Major Niamatullah, District Chief of the ANP, told the crowd of local and Marine leaders he was encouraged by the progress made in Garmsir, but stressed the change wasn't complete. He pleaded for his people to invest their time in helping secure Afghanistan's future.

"The Marines aren't going to be able to stay forever," he told the crowd. "We are the sons of this country. We have to help our own land."

Between discussions of internal issues, Lt. Col. Matthew Palma, 3/3 commanding officer, applauded local citizens for their wisdom gained over years of experience. He asked them to pass on this knowledge and their faith to their children, whom he called "the future of Afghanistan."

Though he acknowledged the work left to be done during his battalion's time here, Palma echoed Fahim's confidence in the future of Garmsir.

"As a student of history, I can see your country is on the verge of a remarkable breakthrough," the Bristol, R.I., native said. "At this moment, it's always the hardest to push through and achieve your goals. By working with the government, ANA and ANP, you will find security. Good things will come — agriculture, education, infrastructure developments. But most importantly, you'll be able to live your lives apart from fear. Allowing the insurgents to take that away from you is unacceptable. All of Garmsir is stronger than the few insurgents that remain."

Though the Afghan government is concentrated in Kabul and at the numerous district centers around the country, this visit was an important step toward connecting southern Garmsir to its government.

"We're bringing governance to ungoverned places," Palma said. "Now, it's up to the Afghan people to work with their government to make the changes required to become free."



SAFAR BAZAAR, Helmand province, Afghanistan — Garmsir District Governor Mohammad Fahim (right) and Lt. Col. Matthew Palma, a Bristol, R.I. native and commanding officer of 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, walk back to Combat Outpost Rankel after examining the construction of the new district community center, Nov. 22. Following their recent assumption of security responsibility in Garmsir, the leadership of "America's Battalion" joined Fahim to visit and interact with citizens throughout the district, Nov. 22 to 24. During the visits, Fahim and the Marines discussed issues like tribal unity, education, insurgent activity and the continued development of the Afghan National Army and Police. "We're bringing governance to ungoverned places," Palma said. "Now, it's up to the Afghan people to work together with their government to make the changes required to become free."



MIAN POSHTAY, Helmand province, Afghanistan — Lance Cpl. Dominic Evola, a 29-year-old rifleman with Jump Platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, from Medford, N.J., greets an Afghan boy by "pounding fists" while traveling to a local residence for a shura, Nov. 22.



GARMSIR DISTRICT, Helmand province, Afghanistan — Cpl. Adam Schoeller, a helicopter crew chief with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 464, mans a machine gun from the ramp of a CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopter while transporting Marines from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, to Forward Operating Base Delhi, Nov. 23.



PATROL BASE TORBERT, Helmand province, Afghanistan — Marines with 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, and an interpreter sit across from Afghan elders during a jirga, the Pashto term for an assembly of tribal elders, Nov. 23.

Commandant of the Marine Corps visits frontline troops in Helmand province

1st Lt. Timothy Irish
Regimental Combat Team 8

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DELARAM II, Helmand province — The Commandant and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps visited nine forward operating bases and combat outposts spread across all of Helmand province, Afghanistan, in one day, Nov. 24.

Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James-Amos and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. Michael Barrett took time to address the Marines for Thanksgiving and to talk about the missions accomplished since their last visits in September.

"You're making a difference," said Amos, addressing the Marines at COP Alcatraz in Northern Helmand province. "We are going to walk out of here under a victory flag because of the progress you are making. The focus of the world has been on this area for so long and we are starting to see the progress we had hoped for when we began our mission in these areas."

Throughout the visit they answered questions from Marines about the future of the Corps. Topics ranged from budget cuts, the Corps' potential drawdown, uniform policy and the recent news of Marines serving overseas in Australia.

"It seems like the command is concerned and care enough to come down to talk to us," said Lance Cpl. David Filho, a Marine with 1st Battalion, 6th Marines at COP Alcatraz. "They get a chance to see how we operate and it shows that we are not forgotten," added the Colorado Springs, Colo. native.

Gen. John Allen, commanding general of International Security Assistance Force-Afghanistan, met up with the Commandant on Patrol Base Alcatraz early in the day. Allen is the top Marine officer in Afghanistan and the highest level commander in the country.

The units the Commandant and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps visited consisted of the bulk of the ground combat element for Regional Command Southwest. Their tour served many purposes in addition to the morale boost for frontline combat troops. As the service chief for the bulk of all the forces in the province, Amos is responsible to train, man and equip units prior to deploying.

Amos' stewardship as Commandant will be paramount in the coming years as more Marine units rotate home and fewer are sent to Afghanistan. Marines and units will need to readjust to "garrison life" and a slower deployment tempo but will also need to train and refit for potential deployments and training exercises to new locales.

One of his first stops in the morning was to Forward Operating Base Whitehouse and the Marines of 1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment in Northern Helmand province. The base itself and the battalion is in territory that was highly kinetic and owned by insurgents a little more than a month ago. The visit was the first chance Amos had to congratulate the Marines of 1/6 on the successful operation, known as Eastern Storm, to unseat the insurgency in this area. This area is one of the few in the entire province where new bases were recently constructed.

Later in the day he traveled south to Forward Operating Base Delhi in Garmsir District, where 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment handed over responsibility of their area of operations to 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Nov. 17. The transfer of authority was significant due to the positive trend caused by 1/3 and previous Marine battalions. The units had successfully transitioned or closed several bases in the area due to decreasing violence and increases in skill demonstrated from partnered Afghan National Security Force units.

At each stop the Commandant and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps had a chance to speak to the assembled Marines and answer questions. They also had the opportunity to present awards for valor to several Marines and sailors in the ground combat element, known as Task Force Leatherneck.

At the end of the day they stepped behind the serving line to dish out Thanksgiving dinner to Marines at Camp Dwyer, the headquarters for Regimental Combat Team 5 in charge of Southern Helmand province.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Andrew Miller | Regimental Combat Team 5



(Above) Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. James Amos, serves Thanksgiving supper to the Marines and sailors of Regimental Combat Team 5 during his visit to Helmand province, Nov. 24. (Below) Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. James Amos, and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Sgt. Maj. Michael Barrett, address the Marines and sailors of Regimental Combat Team 5 during their visit to Helmand province, Nov. 24.

from MOUT TOWN, A-1

want to be a casualty when they get in-country. We identified what they did wrong and they got beat up a little bit on that. We worked with them to find a solution and fix the problem, so that it won't happen again."

Squads not clearing houses were busy learning about IEDs and how to search and detect them. If a Marine was to step on one, it would trigger an explosion of powder, simulating what would really happen if one was to be activated.

The long dusty roads on the outskirts of the training site were perfect for patrols. Marines split onto each side of the road where they would scan and stand ready for enemy attacks carried out by the role players.

Another squad stood at a simulated vehicle checkpoint and was briefed on how to clear vehicles and personnel attempting to pass through. The Marines had to take the proper precautions to maintain safety.

After all squads in Echo Company completed the training evolution, they were replaced by Fox Company who would undergo the same training.

"This is the first time some of my guys have been here and we just want them to observe what they did wrong and what they're doing right," Pliego said. "This is so they can fix themselves and head in the right direction. We strive for mission accomplishment. This is something we all take seriously because it's going to help in the long run."

from CAR, A-2

WeCar program member.

When Fisher was stationed at K-Bay earlier this year, he and his spouse used the WeCar program as they waited for their personal vehicle to be shipped. He would use the car for daily errands or trips lasting less than a full day. Fisher said he hopes Marines and sailors learn about the program before they permanently change stations, so they can sign up sooner and take full advantage of the program's benefits.

"If we needed to complete essential errands outside of walking distance, WeCar was a great option because we could check it out at the top of the hour and return it at the bottom of the hour," he said. "If we had to do a one-day minimum [checkout] as with a traditional car rental, we would be stuck paying a daily rate even though we had only an hour of errands to run."

During the sign-up process to become a WeCar program member, Fisher and his spouse used a traditional car rental, but stopped when it became too expensive. After becoming a member, he continued to use the program because of the ease of reservations online and upkeep.

"After the online reservation is confirmed, you simply take your membership card and swipe it over the card reader in the windshield," he said. "The car unlocks automatically after the swipe. From there, keys to the ignition are in the glove compartment along with a gas card that is used for all gas purchases and is funded by WeCar, not the individual customer."

Once users are finished with the vehicle, they'll put the keys back into the glove compartment and swipe their membership cards again to officially check out.

Since the program started, Foy said he's seen many check out the car for Friday afternoons and has gained more program members. He said the company works to ensure all the clients can easily check in.

Each time he used a WeCar vehicle, Fisher said it handled well and was in nearly new condition. For the price, he said it was much more convenient than other alternatives.

"The hourly rental option is much more cost effective than a daily or weekly traditional car rental which, in Hawaii, is especially expensive," Fisher said. "The cars are easily accessible throughout the base and were hassle free to reserve and use once we were registered for the program."

For details about WeCar, call 1-877-599-3227.

from DEPLOYMENT, A-1

undertaken with the support of the U.S. Coast Guard and contributed to the enforcement of economic rights of the archipelago nations of Palau, Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Kiribati as well as territories of the U.S., Australia, and France.

The patrol resulted in the successful detection of multiple fishing vessels operating in violation of international law.

The Angry Birds also enjoyed numerous port calls on the deployment including stops in the Philippines and Tahiti. Additionally, the crew of USS Chung Hoon and Detachment 4 participated in numerous cultural exchanges fostering friendship and mutual respect with multiple nations.

The wife of Navy Lt. Patrick Henken, of Detachment 4, not only kept busy working and hanging out with friends, but also moved during the deployment and will be bringing her husband to their new home. Communication with her husband was much better than expected, through Skype and the occasional phone call.

Among the other families on the flightline, Lt. j.g. Timothy Bonham, a pilot for Detachment 4, surprised his girlfriend with a ring, and marriage proposal. With a bright smile on his face, Bonham, of Columbia, Mo., said he'd been waiting the entire deployment to propose.

"This one was definitely much harder," said the wife of Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher Warren, Naval aircrewman, HSL-37.

In addition to working, she spent time with friends and fellow squadron spouses during the deployment.

"Skype also helped me get through this deployment," she said.

A new generation of Marines



Master Sgt. Raymond Archibeque | Recruiting Station Orange, Pacific

A Marine from the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit speaks to guests at Kaneohe Bay Range Training Facility, Nov. 19. More than 70 Marine Corps applicants and "poolees" (applicants who have already enlisted in the Delayed Entry Program) spent the day at Marine Corps Base Hawaii. This visit is a quarterly statewide recruiting station function coordinated by Recruiting Station Orange County and Recruiting Sub-Stations Honolulu and Pearl City. The guests, ranging from age 17 to 26, received classes at the Boondocker training area on a variety of subjects including leadership and Marine Corps customs. The poolees also met members of the 11th MEU at the K-Bay Range, visited the Combat Convoy Simulator and took an Initial Strength Test. The purpose of the event is to "ensure the poolees who have enlisted are mentally and physically ready for recruit training," said Master Sgt. Raymond Archibeque, the Pacific recruiter instructor for Hawaii, Recruiting Station Orange, Pacific. The hope is "they continue to maintain a high state of motivation and morale and that they too continue to tell the Marine Corps story to their families and friends while generating quality referrals ... We continue to work with units on base around the various deployment schedules in order to provide Marines the opportunity to display Corps values to members of our community — especially those who are attempting to obtain the title 'Marine.'"

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Lance Cpl. James A. Sauter | Hawaii Marine

Ruth Zorgdrager, Army Her-icanes runningback, runs through the Sharks' defense during a female flag football semi-final game at Pop Warner Field, Sunday. "We could be doing better but we have a lot of new faces," Zorgdrager said. "The new players are not comfortable with the plays and our offense needs work."

Sharks *rock* Her-icanes

Lance Cpl. James A. Sauter
Combat Correspondent

Only the strongest and the most agile team would claim the title of Hawaii Female Flag Football League champions as the ladies battled on the gridiron during the league semi-finals at Pop Warner Field, Sunday.

The Navy Sharks and the Army Her-icanes went toe-to-toe to see who would compete against the Marine Corps War Dogs in the final game.

The Her-icanes started the first half with a run-heavy offense to try to wear the Sharks' defense down, but the Sharks forced a turnover, bringing the ball back to the Her-icanes' red zone. Ines Chandler, Sharks quarterback, gave the Sharks their first lead with a long touchdown pass.

"This game means a lot to this team," Chandler said. "We know we can beat anyone and everyone and overall we're doing pretty good."

By the middle of the first half, the Sharks took advantage of every mistake the Her-icanes made, pushing their lead to 20-0. The Her-icanes substituted quarterbacks in an effort to get back into the game. But after three short plays, the Her-icanes lost possession of the ball and went into halftime, down 28-0.

"We could be doing better but we have a lot of new faces," said Ruth Zorgdrager, Her-icanes runningback. "The new players aren't comfortable with the plays and our offense needs work."

The second half began with multiple penalties being called on both sides. False starts and illegal blockings halted both teams' momentum for either securing an easy victory or staying in the game. During a running drive down field into the Her-icanes' red zone, Chandler faked a handoff and used her own feet to find the end zone, bringing the Shark's advantage to an astonishing 34-0.

"Keep it up ladies," said Augustine Young, Sharks head coach. "Everyone, be prepared to keep making adjustments."

By the end of the second half, the Her-icanes managed to put up a touchdown but still failed to halt the Shark's offense during the fourth quarter.

The game ended 52-6, with the Sharks moving to the championship against their archrivals — the War Dogs.

The Army and the Air Force played an additional game the same day for the third place bracket and the Air Force won 40-25. The championship game will be played Sunday at 1 p.m. at Pop Warner Field.



Kristen Wong | Hawaii Marine

Sgt. Domingo Valdez, noncommissioned officer in charge of Headquarters Battalion S-3, trains in the afternoon, Nov. 29.

Are you ready for the PFT?

Kristen Wong
Photojournalist

The blazing sun beat down on Gunnery Sgt. Nathan Dreyer as he put on a black gas mask. Dressed in a T-shirt, shorts and sneakers, Dreyer, the operations chief for Headquarters Battalion, heaved a medicine ball up and over the backboard of the basketball hoop outside of Bldg. 4009.

As alternative rock screamed from the tiny speakers set up on the basketball court, Headquarters Battalion Marines spent another afternoon working to become stronger and faster, training for the upcoming physical fitness test in January.

The physical fitness test, or PFT, is a requirement for all Marines, and is scored between the months of January and June. In that time, Marines must pass the test within the appropriate score range for their age category, according to Marine Corps Order 6100.13. Dreyer said a Marine's PFT score is also taken into consideration for promotion.

The PFT consists of a set of pull-ups, crunches and a 3-mile run for the male Marines, and a flexed-arm hang, crunches and a 3-mile run for the female Marines. For males, each pull-up is worth five points, each crunch one point, and one point every 10 seconds for the run. The highest possible score a Marine can achieve is 300 points. Failure to pass the PFT will result in automatic enrollment in the Remedial Conditioning Program.

Sgt. Domingo Valdez, the noncommissioned officer in charge of Headquarters Battalion S-3, is one of the command physical training representatives, and helps supervise the remedial conditioning program.

He recommends what is known as "periodization." In other words, he suggests that "Marines start their workout regimens with lower intensity, and systematically work their way up."

Valdez, who on average earns a PFT score of 285, describes his regular regimen as "well-rounded," with both weight training and cardio.

Though Valdez said many Marines don't enjoy running, he encourages them to do so. For Valdez, the running portion of the PFT takes the longest to train for.

"You have to start somewhere," Valdez said. "Get out there and start doing the runs. From there you can start reaching your goal."

For Marines who may not know where to begin training for a good PFT score, Dreyer encourages them to see the S-3 office. Some Marines may initially run an early PFT with their unit without an official score, just to see where they stand.

"I've always taken them seriously," said Lt. Col. Heidi McKenna, base inspector, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, who has earned multiple perfect PFT scores. "It is hard when I'm training for Ironman [competitions]."

McKenna normally trains for Ironman competitions, which involves slow speed and endurance, rather than a PFT, which involves a different type of training; concentrating on one's fast twitch muscles and a faster speed.

Though McKenna said she has found that PFT's get more difficult as she grows older, she is determined to earn another 300 before she retires from the military.

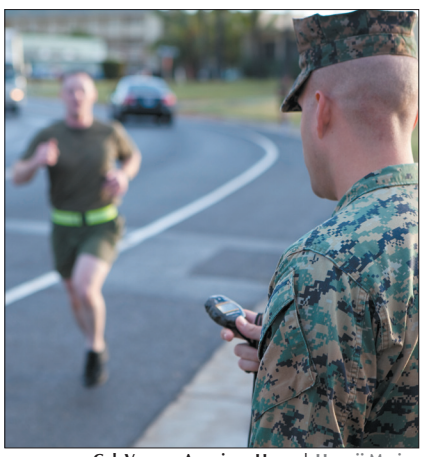
For the female Marines, McKenna recommends practicing the flexed-arm hang, work on their abdominals and run, either on the treadmill or the track.

"You have to put a little effort into it," McKenna said.

Another option is the Semper Fit Center.

Jon Shiota, the manager of Semper Fit, welcomes Marines wishing to work on improving their PFT score. However, he said it is important that Marines start preparing early. Marines can hurt their chances of success the longer they wait to prepare. Shiota recommends that Marines ideally come in three months before the PFT to train.

Shiota said "periodization" time normally takes from 4 to 6 weeks. Though some Marines may think they don't have the time to commit to a 6-week program, Shiota said if for example, they are already working out at least one hour daily, it's possible to tailor a new plan to take just as much time.



Cpl. Vanessa American Horse | Hawaii Marine

Staff Sgt. Mark A. American Horse, operations and training chief, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, monitors a physical fitness test run for 1/3 Marines during a PFT on base, Nov. 29.

But training for the PFT does not necessarily mean a strict regimen of daily pull-ups, crunches and running alone. Dreyer's office, for example, keeps in shape through what is known as "functional fitness." In functional fitness, the physical activity changes from day to day, whether it's running, swimming or jumping.

"I've been doing functional fitness for five years," Dreyer said. "I've never been bigger or stronger before."

Dreyer's office also came up with a "Death by Fives" routine, which consists of three rounds of five different stations, including 40-inch platform jumps, medicine ball throws, clapping pull-ups and flipping tires as heavy as 500 pounds or more.

Shiota recommends that workouts need to include not only cardiovascular activity, but also strength and flexibility training. Shiota and Valdez also stress that hydration is important.

"Strength training will give you the muscular strength to do pull-ups," Shiota said. "It will give you the muscular endurance and strength to accomplish the PFT."

In addition, there are ways to make workouts more challenging. For instance, Marines can practice pull-ups with heavy weights attached to their bodies.

"The whole idea of training for the PFT is you want to train under harsher conditions so that when you do the PFT it'll feel easier," Shiota said.

But another aspect of training for the PFT is resting. Shiota said the body needs to rest in between workouts, especially the day before the PFT. However, he said that each individual is different, and recovery time can vary depending on the person.

"Feed your body well [with] nutritious food, and [get a] good night's sleep," Shiota said.

He also recommends that Marines come to Semper Fit soon after the PFT with their current scores, so the center's fitness experts can offer advice on how to improve for the next PFT. But Valdez said ultimately staying fit should be a "lifestyle."

"You've got to be physically fit to be a Marine," Dreyer said.

‘Angry Birds’ makes for angry friends

Cpl. Vanessa American Horse
Combat Correspondent

We’ve all heard it, whether it’s in waiting rooms, long lines or in any situation where we’re forced to wait for longer than two minutes. No, not the sound of impatient, whiny children, but the squabbling chatter from someone playing “Angry Birds” on their cell phone.

This mindless game of flinging disgruntled fowl at poorly-constructed towers filled with gems and other farm animals caught on like wildfire, all the while further separating introverts from the rest of society.

As a writer and moderately social person, I gave up the repetitive bird slinging after a day for something that actually challenged my cerebral cortex — “Words with Friends,” a Scrabble knockoff.

Taking seven random letters and making them into words has not only increased my vocabulary, but it also gives me a chance to see how smart or ignorant my opponents are. Keep in mind the key word “opponents” because with WWF you play other people, not animated feathered friends. Unless you consider the birds your friends, but that’s another story.

“‘Angry Birds’ can mesmerize a person for hours without accomplishing anything productive.”

If you don’t know who plays WWF, then you can search for friends or play random opponents. Who knows, maybe you’ll meet your next fiancé like Chicago resident Megan Lawless who met her current beau, Jasper Jasperse from Holland, on WWF chat. Or maybe you’re into stalking and you can just freak out random opponents with Marine Corps slang. Whatever floats your boat.

Plus, who has time to play games on your cell phone besides children who convinced their parents it’s safe for them to handle a $200 cell phone while unsupervised and eating a popsicle? I like WWF because in the time it takes me to wait in line at the Marine Mart, I can play a word and not have to worry about my next move for a week if I don’t get back to the game.

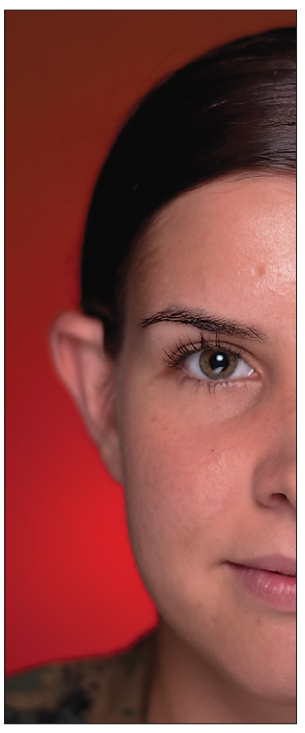
“Angry Birds” can mesmerize a person for hours without accomplishing anything productive. If I played WWF for an hour, I’d at least learn something about the English language and have a chance to score a ridiculous 175-point word to crush my opponent. I’ve seen grown men such as my compatriot, Sgt. Scott Whittington, try for hours to beat a level on “Angry Birds” and end up unsuccessful. Besides his pride, he also sacrifices being social with his coworkers at lunch where he could be a positive role model for his younger Marines.

“Angry Birds” will make for angry friends when you think about all the time you’ve wasted playing an anti-social application. The New York Times was even amazed that humans were collectively clocking “16 human-years of bird-throwing every hour.”

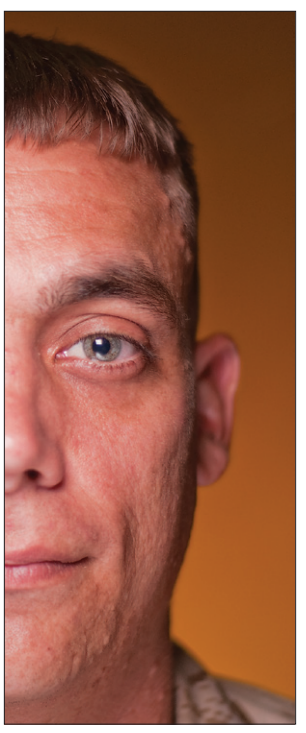
I’m not a gamer, and I’m impatient, so if I’m going to do something that passes the time, it might as well be educational, fun and more refined than launching cartoon creatures with a slingshot.

‘Angry Birds’ management: To sling or not to sling?

VS is a recurring column tackling debatable issues in the sports and entertainment world. Hawaii Marine readers can submit a subject for future columns by e-mailing their ideas to HawaiiMarineEditor@Gmail.com. If there’s a topic you would like to discuss/defend or if you think we missed the mark, let us know and you could see your “opinion,” regardless of how wrong it is, featured below. Suit up, ladies ... it’s game time.



AMERICAN HORSE



WHITTINGTON

‘Angry Birds’ break sticks and stones

Sgt. Scott Whittington
Combat Correspondent

I was one of the last people on Earth to get a Smart Phone. Darwinism will handle those who don’t have one yet. I’m glad I jumped on board because I discovered the most awesomest game ... wait, is that a word? Well it is now. When you play “Angry Birds” you’ll see what I mean.

Does any gadget game compare? I’ve heard people say “Words with Friends” topples the game’s awesomeness, but there’s a few problems with that. If you go to the application store on your iPhone or Droid you’ll see “Birds” in the number one spot, flying above “Words.”

I’ve never been so involved in a game before. It’s simple, elegant and just plain nasty all at the same time. “Words” is just a knock off of “Scrabble” — that dumb game your parents try to force on you on Family Game Night. Plus coming up with words is too easy for me and your opponent cheats on the various sites through a Google search. There’s no real challenge. The point of playing a versus game is seeing your opponent’s face when he or she is defeated or at least hearing their cries over your “Call of Duty” headset.

“To get good at ‘Angry Birds’ requires you to play it. To get good at ‘Words’ you have to read a dictionary. Which sounds more fun?”

I like my good ol’ fashioned “me versus the computer.” It challenges my problem-solving skills and I get to destroy things at the same time. For those of you who recently returned from under the rock, “Angry Birds” is a game where flightless, legless birds are shot through the air from a sling shot. Their targets are pigs who stole your eggs. Of course the pigs have wooden, stone and ice walls protecting them but some of the birds come with special powers. The pigs are relentless though and keep stealing your eggs even after you’ve defeated them.

“Angry Birds” entered society at just the right time. We needed something new to annihilate. We needed a new enemy to wipe out. Saddam is gone, Osama is gone now; why not monarchy-led green pigs wearing military helmets with sinister, taunting laughs.

Hundreds of levels have been created since its release in December 2009 on three different versions of the game — the original “Angry Birds,” “Angry Birds Seasons,” and the movie-based “Angry Birds Rio.” Millions of dollars have been generated from T-shirts, plush animals, toys, etc. How many levels does “Words with Friends” have? There’s just one boring redundant level. How many movies have been made inspired from that game? Any kind of collateral material sold in stores? That would be zero on both counts.

Finland may be hard to find on a map but they did give us Nokia phones and “Angry Birds.” To get good at the “Angry Birds” requires you to play it. To get good at “Words” you have to read a dictionary. Which sounds more fun?

SPOTLIGHT ON SPORTS

Sports and Health

Semper Fit Center and Base Pool holiday hours

Patrons are welcomed to workout on Christmas Day and Dec. 26 from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. The Base Pool will be open Christmas Eve from noon to 5 p.m., before closing Christmas Day and Dec. 26. For more information about upcoming holiday hours into 2012, go to http://www.mccshawaii.com/holidayhours.shtml.

Youth Winter Water Sports

Take the one-week “Introduction to Water Sports” class at the Base Marina. Children ages 8-18 can spend their holidays in the water. The class includes sailing, kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding and snorkeling. Sessions will occur from Dec. 19-23 or from Dec. 26-30. For more, call 254-7666.

Commander’s Cup Golf Classic

The Commander’s Cup Golf Classic will be held Dec. 16 at the Kaneohe Klipper Golf Course. The tournament is open to active duty service members, dependents and military civilians. Registration ends Dec. 12.

For more information and fees, call 254-2107 or stop by the ProShop.

Winter Break Kid Fit

The Semper Fit Center will be hosting Kid Fit, a program to keep children physically active while on their winter break from school, Dec. 19-23 and Dec. 27-30. There is a registration fee to participate. For more information and costs, call Semper Fit at 254-7597.

Semper Fit Juniors Program

Diving classes are available for children as old as 13. Sessions are held Wednesdays and Fridays in the afternoon. Learn how to dive off of the 1-meter and 3-meter spring boards at Marine Corps Base Hawaii’s main pool. Class fees include four sessions. For more information, call 754-4602.

Spring Board Diving Class

This program is held monthly, every second Thursday. Upon completion of the program’s Fitness Basics class, gym users ages 14-15 will be issued an individualized pass to use the center without an adult present. For details, call the Semper Fit Center at 254-7597.

High Intensity Tactical Training Center hours

Work out with TRX trainers, kettlebell weights, tethered medicine balls and more at the High Intensity Tactical Training Center at Building 1034. Marine units or groups may use the center on weekdays from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Personnel who wish to use the facility must request the key from the Satellite Fitness Center at Bldg. 1033 next door. A noncomissioned officer must be responsible for returning the key and cleanup of the center after use.

For more information, call Bldg. 1033 at 254-7594.

Special Olympics needs volunteers for Holiday Classic

Special Olympics Hawaii needs volunteers!

Nearly 800 athletes will compete in the annual Holiday Classic at MCB Hawaii and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Dec. 3-4. They still need 24 volunteers to serve as bowling officials at K-Bay Lanes that weekend to assist with scorekeeping, ensure athletes bowl in proper order and cheer them on from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Email volunteers@specialolympicshawaii.org for a volunteer application form or call Cindy Ujimori at 695-3527 for more information.

Female flag football league championship

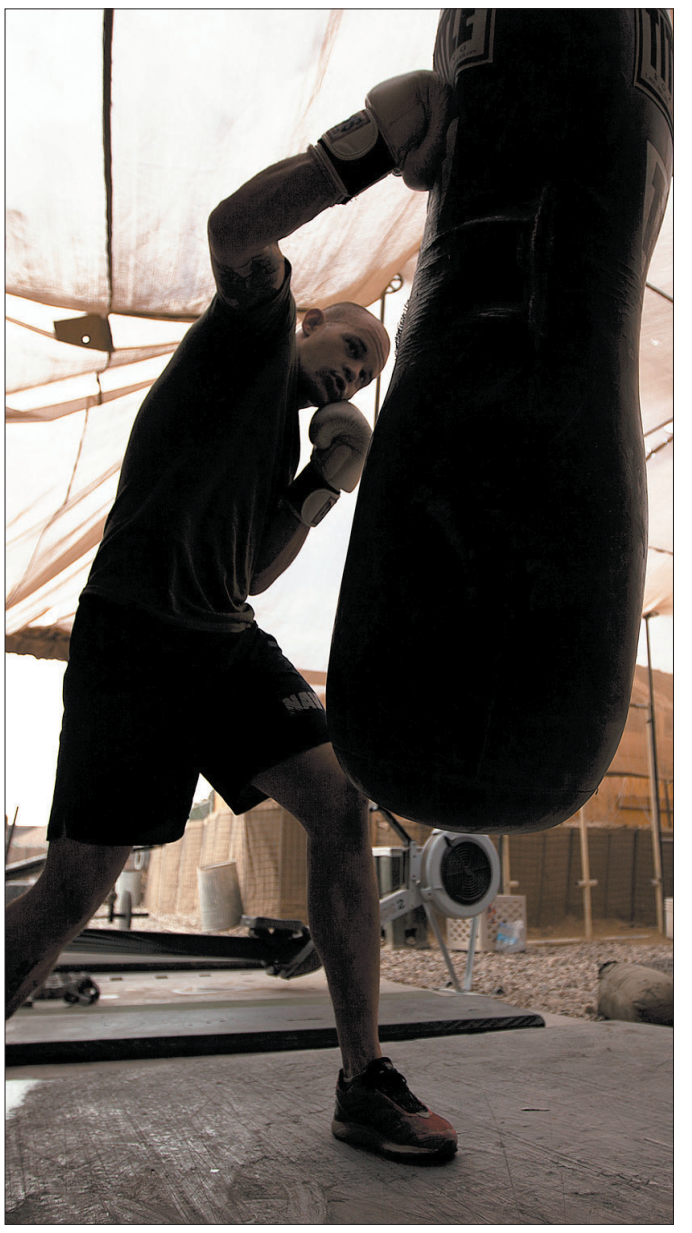
Navy Sharks
vs.
Marine Corps War Dogs

Sunday, 1 p.m.
at Pop Warner Field



Killing Time:

Fighting through the wringer

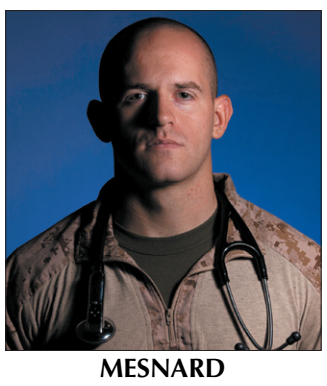


Story and photos by Cpl. Reece Lodder
Regimental Combat Team 5

GARMSIR DISTRICT, Helmand province, Afghanistan — Peering eerily through the scratched lenses of a menacing black and red mask, U.S. Navy Seaman Chris Mesnard's wild eyes rake his corner of the makeshift combat-zone gym.

The corpsman toils through a twisted concoction of conditioning exercises, forcing sweat to seep through his olive drab United States Marine Corps hoodie. With each set, his friendly disposition dissipates into an uncomfortable cycle of labored breathing, courtesy of the oxygen-restricting training mask enveloping his face.

Around him, gym mates stare at his strange get-up, but Mesnard doesn't notice. His consciousness has since evaporated from the makeshift gym. Instead, he's focused on the self-described "cheesy" image of a sparkling Ultimate Fighting Championship title belt.


MESNARD

The 22-year-old hospital corpsman from Omaha, Neb., and graduate of Bellevue East High School, is currently on his second deployment to Afghanistan with 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment.

On duty, Mesnard tends to sick and injured Marines at the battalion aid station, and helps a senior corpsman with administrative duties. In his down time, he trains to fight in mixed martial arts, breaking down his body to feed a four-year obsession with the sport.

"After winning my first fight in 2007, I knew I couldn't stop," Mesnard said, relishing memories of the 47-second victory. "I loved MMA before that, but at that moment, I knew it was something in my heart.

"I wake up thinking about it, and I fall asleep thinking about it," he continued. "Training to fight isn't only the best thing I can do in my down time here. It's the only thing I want to do."

When he's not taking care of 3/3 Marines and sailors, Mesnard shifts his focus to training. Inside the gym's dusty Hesco walls, he channels his energy into conditioning circuits, weight lifting and boxing. Here, he surrounds himself with the tools of his second trade — boxing gloves, chains, a sledgehammer, a truck tire and a makeshift medicine ball filled with sand and sealed with duct tape.

"All I need is a few pieces of equipment to use, and to break a sweat," he said. "I want to improve, so I consciously decide to train with every free minute I've got."

Mesnard calls the gym his home for nearly two hours a day. The humble surroundings are a far cry from his stateside facilities, but experience has taught him to make a little go a long way.

During his deployment to Helmand province's Nawa district last year, Mesnard served as the 'doc' for a squad of 12 Marines in 3/3's Kilo Company. For seven months, they forged an unbreakable bond, braving insurgent attacks, improvised explosive devices and the Afghan heat on daily, five to six-hour security patrols.

"Being a corpsman means a lot to me … it's been a humbling experience," Mesnard said. "We all moaned and complained, but no matter how much things sucked or how tired we were, I loved being miserable with my guys."

While operating in Nawa during July 2010, he lost a close friend from his platoon, Sgt. Joe Wrightsman. Mesnard also aided several other friends injured by IED attacks during the deployment.

The life lesson was hard to learn, but Mesnard has translated these experiences to better himself as a corpsman and a fighter.

"In preparation for an MMA fight, I train to have muscle memory," he said. "My adrenaline's jacked and my emotions are raging, but just like in combat, I set back on my training."

Switching billets from the corpsman of an oft-patrolling infantry squad to working at the battalion headquarters has been an adjustment to the grueling routine Mesnard grew to love, but it's provided him a more structured training schedule.

"This was a sacrifice between my military career and what I want to do in the future, but I made it because I love fighting so much," he said. "I can't replace the feeling I get when I compete."

The more regular schedule has also allowed Mesnard to better regulate his diet. He tries to eat a lot of vegetables and white meats like chicken and tuna, though he called his diet "restrained" and "random" in the deployed environment.

"Being out here restricts your diet," he said. "I have a sweet tooth, especially for cake. Cake deprivation helps me stay in my routine."

Though this deployment grind is one he enjoys and knows well, Mesnard is eager for the opportunity to train and fight full-time.

When his active duty service expires in two years, Mesnard plans to advance his skills kickboxing in Thailand for three months, and then return to Nebraska to link up with old teammates and UFC fighters Jake Ellenberger and Houston Alexander. His eventual goal is to fight at the professional level, a dream built off his success as the 2011 Hawaii Triple Crown middleweight jiu-jitsu champion, a title he earned in July.

For the time being, the corpsman has found satisfaction in conditioning exercises and a swaying black punching bag, hunkered in a dusty corner of a gym 7,100 miles from home.

"I have a passion for fighting, and it's a waste of my talent if I don't keep training while I'm deployed," he said. "This definitely isn't the ideal place to train, but I've learned to make the best with what I have."



Editor's Note: This is the third installment in a series on U.S. Marines and Navy corpsmen from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, based out of Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. After laboring through training in the California desert, they are now supporting Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Grueling days and the absence of home's amenities make their work exhausting and their down time precious. They labor with little and appreciate the simple. This is their deployment grind.



On duty, U.S. Navy Seaman Chris Mesnard, a 22-year-old corpsman with Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, from Omaha, Neb., tends to sick and injured Marines at the battalion aid station, and helps a senior corpsman with administrative duties. When he has down time, he trains in mixed martial arts with the goal of competing in the Ultimate Fighting Championship. "Training to fight isn't only the best thing I can do in my down time here," Mesnard said. "It's the only thing I want to do. This definitely isn't the ideal place to train, but I've learned to make the best with what I have. All I need is a few pieces of equipment to use and to break a sweat."

Semper Fit Center holds annual Turkey Burn-Off Aerobathon

Kristen Wong
Photojournalist



Kristen Wong | Hawaii Marine

Michelle Schiffl, group exercise instructor, leads the Cardio and Strength class during the Semper Fit Center's Turkey Burn-Off Aerobathon in the aerobics room, Nov. 25. Participants donated one unwrapped toy for the Toys for Tots campaign as admission to the aerobathon. Participants could not only get a workout, but healthy refreshments and door prizes as well.

While many headed for the mall for "Black Friday" shopping, others spent time at the Semper Fit Center to burn off the extra calories from Thanksgiving dinner.

Semper Fit held its annual Turkey Burn-Off Aerobathon, filled with nonstop aerobics classes for four hours, Nov. 25. To gain admission, participants were asked to bring a new, unwrapped toy for the Toys for Tots campaign. The gym collected a full box of toys that day during the event.

"It's been great," said Luz Gomez, of the event. "I love cycling and Zumba. It's great because you bring a toy for [Toys for Tots] and you get a great workout."

"[The Burn-Off] motivates you the day after Thanksgiving," said Beckie Page, the assistant manager at Semper Fit. "You can burn off your Thanksgiving feast and have fun, and it's all for a good cause."

Because the basketball court bleachers were being renovated at the time, the classes were held in the racquetball courts and the aerobics room.

The event kicked off with a warm up session, led by Honey Cushman, a Semper Fit group exercise instructor. Participants took on Zumba, pilates, Cardio and Strength, yoga, Gut Cut, cycling and Boot Camp.

During each class, participants were given a raffle ticket to win a door prize. The more classes they attended, the more chances they had to win items including semper fit coupon books, gift cards, water bottles and bags. "Instead of shopping [people] should work out," Cushman said. "Shopping [will] always [be] there."

Alex Blyakhor, who attended the event for the second year in a row, said it's fun to sample each of the classes.

Though some may consider working out the day after Thanksgiving to be somewhat of a chore, for Monica Pinion, it's a "daily part of my life." Pinion, who ran six miles on Thanksgiving Day, enjoys fitness, and particularly likes taking Gut Cut.

Gustavo Gomez and his daughter came out for their first aerobathon, Nov. 25. Gomez's daughter said she particularly enjoyed the Cardio and Strength class.

"I was able to feel my muscles working out," she said.

Kathleen Kujiraoka, of Honolulu, donated three toys for the event, including blocks, sea monkeys and coloring materials. She was one of the participants who stayed for the entire four hours of classes. The Semper Fit staff also provided participants with granola bars, bananas, raisins, water and Powerade as they switched rooms for the different classes.

"[The Burn-Off is] fun and it's [for] a good cause," she said.



ENERGY CORNER

Enjoy Christmas Lights and Save Energy!

Energy conservation is the responsibility of all of us, but it doesn't mean having a dark holiday season. By all means, enjoy your Christmas decorations, but be aware that the base has a Christmas lighting policy with specific guidelines. Please observe the following guidelines and help save energy. Outdoor decorative lighting must be removed by the Jan. 5. Lights can be operated only from 5:30 to 10 p.m. (extended to 1 a.m. on Christmas Day). Turn lights on only after the sun has set for optimum effect and increased savings. Use low wattage miniature lamp strings and other energy efficient lighting for all decorative lighting.

Here are some other tips to save energy but will still let us express holiday cheer and creativity. For the home, consider LED lights. Their cost has come down and they can last up to 10 times longer than traditional incandescent strands. LEDs can use up to 90 percent less energy than an incandescent bulb to produce the same amount of light. They are shatterproof, shock resistant, present no fire hazard and are safe to touch. Consider fiber optic decorations. Fiber optic trees and decorations are the ultimate in energy efficiency. In most cases, they use a single light bulb located in the base of the unit to light the entire decoration.

Four hours or less of daily use is best. Use a timer you set and forget. Vacationing? Unplug "phantom energy" users before you go. TVs, DVD players, computers, printers, radios and other electronics use energy even when they are not turned on. Be sensible and energy conscious, and enjoy your holidays.



Courtesy photo | City and County of Honolulu

Hawaii Marine
Lifestyles

December 2, 2011
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Counterclockwise from top to bottom; Toys for Tots Hawaii volunteers Staff Sgt. Andrea Creasy and Staff Sgt. Rafael Arriaga Jr., stand with Scott Takayama from the Honolulu Chinese Jaycees and Kathy Carreira from the Hawaii Kai Jaycees while gathering donations. The Jaycees are a civilian volunteer group, that help out with community events throughout year.

Staff Sgt. Andrea Creasy, administration specialist, Anti-Terrorism Battalion and Toys for Tots Hawaii volunteer, unpacks several toys into donation boxes at a carnival held after the Keiki Kalikimaka Parade Nov. 25.

Adults and children wave to the crowd from the Kamilonui Farmers Cooperative Christmas float during the parade. The cooperative was one of several Hawaii Kai organizations marching in the parade, including the Hawaii Kai Lions Club and the area's Department of Parks and Recreation.

Staff Sgt. Rafael Arriaga Jr., former Toys for Tots coordinator, 4th Force Reconnaissance Company, asks the crowd for donations during the Keiki Kalikimaka Parade held Nov. 25. Marine volunteers also collected new, unwrapped toys and monetary donations at the youth carnival after the parade.



Parading around helping Toys for Tots

Story and photos by
Christine Cabalo
Photojournalist

HONOLULU — Hawaii Kai community members filled the streets to celebrate the holidays and help Marines collect donations for Toys for Tots.

More than 1,000 people participated in the Keiki Kalikimaka Parade, starting at Kamiloiki Park, and marched a 1.8-mile route. Marines from 4th Force Reconnaissance Company and Anti-Terrorism Battalion collected donations from crowds along the parade route and at the youth carnival held at Koko Marina Shopping Center.

"It's great to support local families," said Staff Sgt. Andrea Creasy, administration specialist, Anti-Terrorism Battalion and Toys for Tots Hawaii volunteer. "Toys for Tots is such a good way of showing the Marine volunteer presence in the community and what we can do, in ways people may not expect."

Besides the Marines collecting toys and monetary donations, the parade featured several well-known community figures. Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle, Miss Hawaii and other district politicians waved to crowds. The parade also featured colorful floats from community groups including the area's Department of Parks and Recreation. Marching bands from Kaiser and McKinley high schools as well as several bagpipe musicians from the Celtic Pipes and Drums of Hawaii performed holiday tunes while marching down Lunalilo Home Road.

"It's a wonderful thing the Marines do to help children who otherwise would not have toys," said Dan Quinn, pipe major, Celtic Pipes and Drums of Hawaii.

Volunteers with the community outreach group Hawaii Kai Jaycees offered their aid as well. Those who volunteer always have fun at the parade and feel good helping local families, said Shaunte Oshiro, former chapter president, Hawaii Kai Jaycees.

"This is one of our annual projects we always participate in," she said. "We have one group walking in the parade and others helping Marines collect the toys in the center."

The parade was able to go on with help from the Hawaii Kai Chapter of the Lions Club, who marched in the parade and helped stage the carnival after the parade. Ken Nishibun, parade chair, Hawaii Kai Lions Club, said his group has overseen the event for more than ten years, but the parade has been a mainstay event for the community for more than 30 years.

"The Lions Club is one of the largest volunteer organizations in the world," said Ken Nishibun, parade chair, Hawaii Kai Lions Club. "We're committed to do volunteer work for the community, and we take care of people all around the world. We work with the Marines, and we want to help not just children but anyone less fortunate."

The group effort helped gather several donations but support is still needed in ensuring every child's request is filled, said Staff Sgt. Rafael Arriaga Jr., former Toys for Tots coordinator, 4th Force Reconnaissance Company.

"This year we really need toys for children who are newborns to 2 years old," he said. "We're also regularly short in donations for girls who are 11 and older. The hardest part for us is that we don't know what the girls may like, so we'll need help."







Pass In Review

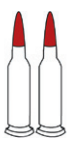
Your weekly guide to the best aspects of entertainment

Welcome to the Pass In Review, your number one source for cinema, music, videogame, book and product reviews. The Pass In Review crew consists of more than 10 critics, each with their own idea of what makes a movie, album, game, product or book great. So be sure to take advantage of the Better Know A Critic section, which spotlights this week's critics to better help you choose the critic with opinions most like your own. Using our breakthrough four-point scale system you can quickly decipher what is worth your time and what isn't, or read the full review for an in-depth analysis and explanation of the rating. The rating system uses ammunition and range terminology, so if you're not familiar, here's a quick breakdown of the ratings …

1/4 — No Impact, No Idea
Horrendous. Among the worst of the worst in its genre. Dedicating time to this is not only wasteful, but unforgivable. Avoid at all costs.



2/4 — High And To The Right
Mediocrity at its best. Lacks a few things that might have made it really good. A decent time waster, partake only if you have nothing better to do.



3/4 — On Target
Praiseworthy. A great endeavor, not quite an instant classic but still very entertaining. This is a sound investment of your time.



4/4 — Confirmed Kill
Genius. In the top 10 percent of its genre. This is the stuff legends are made of. Missing out on it would be a disservice to yourself.

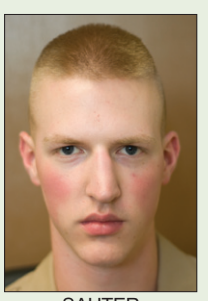


So, there you have it and we hope you enjoy our weekly reviews. Don't forget, The Hawaii Marine accepts submissions from its readers so if you consider yourself a film buff, music aficionado, gaming geek or bookworm feel free to submit your own reviews.

Better Know A Critic


WONG

Kristen Wong is a casual ghost enthusiast. She collects ghost stories from local author Glen Grant to author Hans Holzer. During her college years at DePauw University, she helped lead a ghost tour and explored several haunts of Greencastle, Ind. She currently enjoys many ghost-oriented TV shows.


SAUTER

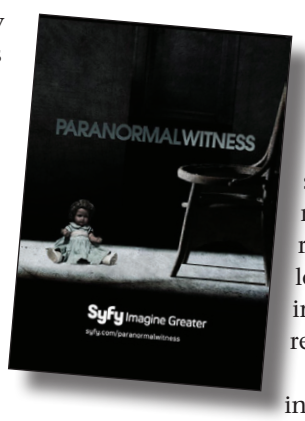
Lance Cpl. James A. Sauter believes a good movie begins with a good story. The story needs to be well balanced between the chemistry and variety of characters with an original plot or setting that keeps the reader or audience up on its toes.

'Paranormal Witness' evokes great emotion

Kristen Wong
Photojournalist

Friends hold each other in fear after furniture goes flying. An inmate makes it rain in jail. Unexplained things appear, then disappear, leaving people baffled. I laugh, I cry, and I empathize.

"Paranormal Witness" is a new television show on the SyFy channel. I've been addicted to and intrigued by many ghost stories, ever since my aunt bought me my first ghost story book as a child. I can't say I've watched them all, but I've watched plenty — "Ghost Adventures," "Ghost Hunters," "The Haunted," "A Haunting" … just to name a few. When I heard about "Paranormal Witness" I was eager to see what other stories I could devour.



There have only been about six episodes so far, and they haven't let me down. Each episode explores either one or two stories about real eyewitnesses and their experiences with the paranormal. It includes an interview with the eyewitness intertwined with a reenactment of the incident by actors. Sometimes there's even actual footage provided by the eyewitnesses.

I'm glad that they've branched out and included "bigfoot sightings" and UFOs, because not every paranormal story is a family terrorized by a haunted house. Sometimes the story is about one night. Other times it spans over several months. Sometimes it continues to the present day.

Many of the paranormal stories end with the affected people ending that chapter in their life, hoping it never happens again, or thinking of it every now and then as a distant, sad, or angry memory. I was surprised by an episode one family had been through some rough times with their haunted house, but continue to live there.

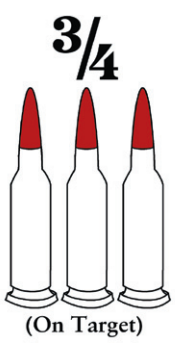
Unlike other documentaries of this kind, "Paranormal Witness" doesn't include a narrator in the beginning with a solemn voice of foreboding. The episodes merely included a few lines of type across the screen to give us the same feeling. I noticed that they also included the year that the incidents occur, as well as the general location. Some of the stories are very recent, which make me more curious to see if they have been reported somewhere, and inspires me to look them up. Also, the witnesses being interviewed speak more than the people re-enacting the incidents.

One episode in particular was creative in its presentation. It was the very first one of the series, about a little girl who has an invisible friend. Not an imaginary friend, an invisible one. The mother of this girl took her to a psychiatrist, and we see the inside of the doctor's office from behind the exam table where the little girl sits. We don't see her face, but we see her feet swinging, and we hear the doctor ask her questions about her new friend. The slow panning of camera and the very calm, quiet question and answer session evokes a very solemn mood.

Another episode about a violent, destructive poltergeist (an unknown entity which makes objects move) depicts a religious official stepping into the house of the tortured family. The camera almost literally comes right up to the faces of the girls in the house, as if the audience is in the pastor's shoes, assessing the situation. In this way the show involves the audience.

One thing I have to say that bothers me, though, is how very few times the re-enactors on the show will turn on lights. It's the same feeling I get when I watch an episode of the X-Files. Everything is so dark, I can barely see the action, and after I'm finished sometimes I feel so doomed and gloomy I need to watch something happy. I understand the need for the darkness because it evokes the mood. I understand depicting families walking down dark hallways in the middle of the night when they think they heard something. But now I've seen families making dinner in the dark, watching TV in the dark, sitting on the porch contemplating in the dark, and I think that's going a bit too far, isn't it? Since when do you make dinner in the kitchen without the light on? Or take a bath for that matter?

But overall, I look forward to each week and a new episode of "Paranormal Witness," and I plan to continue watching. Whether or not you believe in paranormal phenomena, it's something that just may prove interesting to watch.



(On Target)

Penguin musical doesn't fit the groove

Lance Cpl. James A. Sauter
Combat Correspondent

In all of cinema history, I don't think anyone predicted that one of the most fun and original comedic-musicals would come from singing and dancing penguins on the icy continent of Antarctica … and certainly not for a second time. "Happy Feet Two" is filled with more musical and dance numbers than the first, but seems to fall short of its slick forerunner.



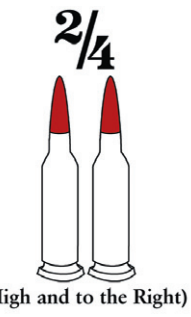
Picking up right after the original ended, Emperor Land is in full song and dance overdrive. Mumble (Elijah Wood) and his wife Gloria (Alecia Moore also known as Pink) have a son named Erik who is struggling to find his own voice and dance rhythm. Erik is enticed by his tenacious friends to run away and find his niche, which leads them to another penguin colony, reintroducing Ramon and Lovelace (both voiced by Robin Williams). Mumble finds them and on the journey back, they encounter many obstacles and cataclysmic changes that shape Erik and Mumble's view to each other as father and son.

There's not a big difference between this film and the last one as far as a new storyline or how the film was made. Both films have singing and dancing penguins, live-action shots with humans and computer animated penguins together. What's different is the amount of short and wide-angle shots that went into making this movie feel more like a musical instead of just a comedic animation. The choreography hasn't changed very much either, as the dancing was more of a digital animation breakthrough in the first film but not so much in the second.

The story is really nothing special either, as it's based on the hardship the father and son face individually and together. The film tackles several themes such as father/son bonding, excess vanity and finding your place amongst others, but "Happy Feet Two" seems to leave out the environmental conservation idea that gave the first movie its sentimental feeling in the wake of Steve Irwin's death.

Overall, the film doesn't have the same charm like the first one does. After awhile, the singing and dancing gets old and ridiculous. It seems that the power of dance can overcome anything, including freeing a colony of emperor penguins from an enclosed sinkhole of ice by causing a snow stairway. Too much is recycled from the first movie, especially Williams' wisecracks.

Honestly, the movie studio shouldn't have made this sequel since there's nothing different from "Happy Feet" to "Happy Feet Two." They should have taken the time to write a more original script. Parents and children will like this film if you just want to kill time and enjoy an hour and half of escapism.



(High and to the Right)

Movie Times

Prices: *All shows are $3.25 for adults and $2.25 for children. For ticket pricing, the Base Theater Box Office defines an adult as a patron 12 and older and defines a child as a patron from 6 to 11. Children 5 and younger are admitted free of charge. Parents must purchase tickets for R-rated movies in person at the box office for children 16 and younger. Patrons must present their military identification card when purchasing tickets. Call* ***254-7642*** *for recorded information.*



"The Big Year" PG13	Today | 7:15 p.m.
"The Thing" R	Today | 9:45 p.m.
"Footloose" PG13	Saturday | 7:15 p.m.
"Real Steal" PG13	Saturday | 9:45 p.m.
"The Big Year" PG13	Sunday | 2 p.m.
"Footloose" PG13	Sunday | 6:30 p.m.
"The Thing" R	Wednesday | 6:30 p.m.

Holiday bashing, turkey fun



Lance Cpl. James A. Sauter | Hawaii Marine

Pfc. Daniel Jessen, rifleman, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, devours a mouthful of pastry without using his hands in a pie-eating competition during the Single Marine and Sailor Program Turkey Bash at Kahuna Sports Bar and Grill on Marine Corps Base Hawaii Nov. 23. "We had two units who just came home and we wanted to give them something to enjoy for Thanksgiving," said Karley Peterson, coordinator, SMSP. "It's an opportunity for single Marines and sailors to get out and have a nice dinner." Kahuna's provided the Thanksgiving dinner, including turkey, stuffing and pie, while local band, "Island Storm," played classic rock favorites such as "Takin' Care of Business" and "Sweet Child O' Mine."



Christine Cabalo | Hawaii Marine

Aikahi giving thanks to MCBH

Aikahi Elementary School students wiggle with their hula hoops with help from volunteers from Patrol Squadron 4 during the school's annual Turkey Trot held Nov. 23. The volunteers set up several obstacle course stations and helped students along the way. The squadron's Skinny Dragons mascot also met students after they completed the course. Volunteers from 3rd Marine Regiment were at the Turkey Trot, painting student's faces with camouflage makeup.

BASE AND COMMUNITY EVENTS, VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Annual Kaneohe Christmas Parade
Saturday

Parade begins at the corner of Kamehameha Hwy and Haiku Road (Windward Mall) and ends at Castle High School on Kaneohe Bay Road. This is the largest community parade in Hawaii with participants from around the state.

Windward Choral Society fourth annual holiday concert
Dec. 9-10

On Friday, Dec. 9, at 7 p.m., artistic director Susan McCreary Duprey and the Windward Choral Society will perform "'Tis the Season," the fourth annual Holiday Concert at the Base Chapel. There will also be a second performance on Dec. 10, at 7 p.m., at the First Presbyterian Church at Koolau. This performance includes traditional Christmas carols, and various music from around the globe; including songs from Hawaii, Kenya and a Hebrew number for Chanukah.

Both concerts are free and the one at the Base Chapel is open to those with base access. The concert is dedicated to the deployed Marines and sailors of 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment and their families.

West Oahu Pearl Harbor honors KIA
Dec. 10

The National Park Service will present a wreath to honor the service members and civilians killed in West Oahu during the Dec. 7, 1941 attacks. The ceremony starts at 10:30 a.m. at Barbers Point, Kalaeloa Airport.

The ceremony includes a Marine Corps Honor Guard and the U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific Band.

Afterward, visitors will also have a chance to see historical display aircraft, meet with survivors of the attack and see the new high-definition release of "Tora! Tora! Tora!"

Among the honored guests include several attack survivors and veterans, including retired Marine John Hughes, a 92-year-old survivor and Marine Corps Air Station Ewa Field attack veteran. For more information, call 685-3045.

Kapolei Food and Craft Gift Fair
Dec. 10

Join in the fun at the Prince Kuhio Community Center to find unique handmade gifts, food and more. The fair also features children's entertainment and prizes. The fair starts at 9 a.m. Admission and parking is free. For more information, call 457-2703.

MOKAPU BRIEFS

Mokapu Gear Sale
Ongoing

Mokapu logo gear available for sale. Cash or checks should be made payable to Mokapu PTA. Order forms and samples are available to view in P-6. For details email PTAMokapu@gmail.com.

Family Craft Night
Today

Please join us for a fun-filled Family Craft Night tonight at 6 p.m. in the cafeteria. We will be making a large fabric banner, decorating holiday cards for our single Marines and sailors on base, writing wish lists for the holidays and creating ornaments to take home. We are also having a cookie exchange. To participate, please bring two dozen cookies (no nuts, please). You will go home with a wonderful assortment of cookies just in time for holiday guests!

Winter Wonderland
Dec. 2-9

Winter Wonderland "secret shopping" will be set up in P-6 (PCNC/Transition Portable) from Dec. 5 to 9. Hours will be 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 2 to 2:45 p.m. Students will be able to come in, shop and purchase small gifts for friends and friends. What a great way for your child to be able to surprise YOU with a gift this holiday! The Winter Wonderland will also be set up for shopping/preview at the Family Craft Night tonight and at the chorus production on Dec. 9 at 6:30 p.m. If you would like to volunteer to help, please e-mail the PTA at PTAMokapu@gmail.com, Subject line: Winter Wonderland Volunteer.

Toys for Tots Collection
Dec. 5-9

Please help us support the MCBH Toys for Tots program through your donation of a new, unwrapped toy for a child in need this holiday season. Donations will be collected in your child's classroom, and the classroom with the most donations will be recognized for their efforts. We will be presenting our Toys for Tots donations to the organization on Dec. 9, at the chorus production. If you also bring a new, unwrapped toy that night, you will be entered into a drawing for a $50 Maui Divers Gift Certificate, just in time for the holidays! Thank you for your participation.

Jingle Bell Jukebox
Dec. 9

Mokapu Elementary School is scheduled to present "Jingle Bell Jukebox," Dec. 9, at 7 p.m. in the school's cafeteria. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

Have you seen this bird?



The months of November and December make up the "annual shearwater fallout" season on base and around the islands.

Juvenile wedge-tailed shearwaters (seabirds) that are learning to fly often get disoriented by city lights, and fly inland instead of toward the sea.

Consequently they fall to ground and get injured or become vulnerable to predators or other hazards.

If found, please contact the Military Police Department at 257-2123.

Military Police will mobilize designated personnel who will take follow-on actions to rescue and safely re-release these birds to the wild or to rehab.