

# BARSTOW LOG

SERVING A MARINE CORPS REINVENTION LAB

Vol. 4, No. 41

Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, California

August 24, 2000

## Family Pool Hours

11 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Sunday-Saturday  
Lap swim from  
11 a.m. - noon

## Don't be afraid to ask

Sergeant major makes gut check, admits even he doesn't know everything about the Corps.

[Page 2](#)

## Now that's a big engine

CWC 719 repairs the Paxman engine for the Coast Guard and the Navy.

[Page 7](#)

## Marines find they can win

Base soccer team finds they have what it takes to play with the big dogs.

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<http://www.usmc.mil>



<http://www.bam.usmc.mil>

## Conserving energy priority for all

By Cpl. Brian Davidson

BARSTOW LOG staff

Energy conservation has recently come into the spotlight here as the base and surrounding areas are experiencing the possibility of power blackout or brownout because of the increased demand on energy supplies that accompanies the summer season.

A blackout is when the electrical load exceeds Southern California Edison's capacity to produce energy and their system fails resulting in a total loss of power. Brownouts are used by SCE to curtail power use and avoid blackouts by turning the utilities to specific areas off for periods of time. This means they rotate the power feeding each area so no specific area is without power during the maximum demand on their system.

The base is classified as a mission essential facility, so a power loss here would be the last resort.

Still the need to conserve energy is paramount in light of recent current trends toward deregulation in the power industry. Deregulation has complicated supply and demand, not only here, but for all military installations, according to Larry Emmons, base energy manager.

The base's energy rates are capped at nine cents per kilowatt-hour. However, there may soon be a steep change in that rate, because SCE may be unable to support the command's need, according to Emmons. This could put the base at the mercy of the open market's high and fluctuating rates.

"Camp Pendleton is experiencing major problems with the amount of utility expenditures they now have to cope with because of deregulation. Their rates have more than doubled," said Emmons.

Last year the command spent \$2.8 million on electricity using 31 million kilowatt-hours at the capped rate.

"And we may be in a tough situation. Our rates could easily increase from the current capped cost of nine cents to as much as \$1 per kilowatt-hour if we have to go on the open market."

San Diego area residents, many of them Marines, are the first to see the difference in cost, and no one is smiling. Approximately 100,000 San Diego Gas and Electric Company customers could expect to see a total rate increase of up to \$400 million between June and November if legislative action does not ease

[See ENERGY Page 5](#)

## Focusing on Commissary benefits

By Cpl. Brian Davidson

BARSTOW LOG staff

MCLB Barstow's commissary is forming several groups of six to 12 people and searching them for solutions to make one of the best commissaries in the Defense Commissary Agency even better.

Many businesses in the service industry conduct similar focus groups when they want to know what their consumers are thinking, why they are thinking it, and how they can develop strategies to change their opinions in favor of their business.

Barstow's DeCA Commissary is seeking new ways to make the commissary benefit more appealing to younger service members.

The strategy is to conduct small focus groups with junior, married and single Marines on an ongoing basis.

"We are anxious for the input and feedback the younger Marines can offer us," said John Meugniot, Barstow store director. "Yes, we want to improve the benefit, but we need the service members to tell us what they want, and how we can make it more appealing to them."

According to Meugniot, the junior enlisted ranks are a major part of the Commissary's customer base but are less visible than one would expect.

[See BENEFITS Page 8](#)

## Energy-saving Tips

**T**he best method of dealing with this possible power shortage is to turn off any equipment, lights, and motors – especially air-conditioning units not being used for the immediate mission or task.

**T**urn off lights when leaving the room, even if it is only for 10 or 15 minutes and especially at the end of a shift.

**C**heck to see if the air-conditioning is set to 85 degrees when leaving. Set thermostat at 78 degrees; it is better to have some cooling than none.



Photo by LCpl. Cory Kelly

James Brandon, I&L painter adds the finishing touches to the pool deck.

## Family Pool now open

By LCpl. Cory Kelly

BARSTOW LOG staff

The days of wondering whether or not its 'enlisted day' or 'staff noncommissioned officer and officer day' at the Oasis Pool ended Saturday with the long awaited opening of the Family Pool.

After a plethora of problems, what started out as a renovation project for the bathhouse and the pool, ended as a brand new building.

"We had a shack to start with ... it was pretty run down. Not only did we renovate the bathhouse, but we put in a new heater system and a new filtering system for the pool. In essence, we completely refaced the entire thing. We've built it from the ground up," said Lt. j. g. Marc Bernath, deputy Resident Officer-in-Charge of Construction.

"When we started out, we were originally going

[See POOL Page 4](#)

# Never be afraid to ask for help

By SgtMaj. Robert W. Holub  
Marine Forces Pacific

CAMP H.M. SMITH, Hawaii – A few years ago I was in Washington listening to a brief from Headquarters Marine Corps when I realized I did not recognize several of the acronyms an officer was using during his presentation.

Now this should not have surprised me all that much. You know as well as I do, all of us in the military are really bad when it comes to using acronyms when we talk to each other. The chances of someone knowing what each and every one of them means is about as good as the Chicago Cubs' chances of winning the World Series this year – or any year for that matter – but that's another story. (Sorry, I always get this way about the

Cubs in August.) That being said, as a Marine sergeant major, I do pride myself in knowing a lot of them. And here I was – lost as a private aboard ship for the first time. In short, the main points of the presentation were passing me by because I was not familiar with the acronyms being used and my unwillingness to raise my hand and ask for help.

Why? Well, as I looked around the room, I had convinced myself that everyone else in the class understood everything that was being said. Believe me when I tell you I was really starting to feel uncomfortable, but my ego was getting in the way of me asking the instructor to explain some of the acronyms he was using. I thought everyone in the room knew exactly what was being said except me, and frankly that was beginning to tick me off. I was frustrated and getting mad. But still as mad as I was

getting, I still wouldn't ask for help because I was letting my ego get the best of me.

I had reached a point where I had two options: I could either pretend I understood everything being said and fake my way through the rest of the class, or I could put my ego aside, raise my hand, and tell the instructor I was lost and risk being laughed at.

Option one did not look particularly attractive to me. The Marine Corps was sending me to this class to learn something to hopefully help my Marines out, and not getting anything out of it would be a disservice. But option two still came at a cost – my ego. I had settled on option two, but I was having a hard time working up the courage to raise my hand. Finally, I couldn't stand it any longer, and I leaned over to the sergeant major sitting next to me and asked him if he understood what was being said. He looked at me, and said he didn't have a clue. Well, that did it, and I put my hand up in the air and told the officer I

See ASK Page 8

## The path in the garden

By Lt. Michael Michener  
Base Chaplain



The grass behind the chapel is a lush green. The trees are tall and full of shade. The oleander bushes are thick and covered with flowers. The cactus garden beside the chapel

is well manicured. I often say to people, "The chapel grounds is the best piece of real estate on the base." The grounds are intentionally well kept. It provides a relaxing respite in the midst of the desert. There is almost a spiritual quality to the green grass and abundant shade. Even the cactus garden was well thought out. Several years ago, someone lined out a path through the cactus with rocks on either side of the path. The path looks inviting as though it would be a nice place for a stroll. Unfortunately, there are many hidden dangers in the path. Over the years, some of the cactus have grown into the path. Some are quite small and very difficult to see.

My father-in-law recently came to visit. He and a friend responded to the quiet allure of that garden path. Sure enough, later that day, we were pulling cactus pricks out of his friend's foot. No one knew they were going into the garden to warn them of the dangers. I always encourage parents to keep their children out of the cactus garden for the same reason.

Life can often be like that cactus garden. Events occur that are frequently inviting. Some

are lured away from faithfulness by the outward attractiveness of another person. Others are enticed to a new job that offers more money. Many teenagers are persuaded to participate in gossip or the purchase of the latest clothing simply because they want to be part of the "in" or popular crowd. Around every corner, there appears to be a path that seems inviting. Not every path is wrong. Some of those paths are God's way of asking us to move beyond our comfort zones and learn to trust Him more. Other paths lead us down a trail of temporary excitement. Eventually, that excitement turns into tragedy. Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25 are duplicate warnings. *"There is a way (or path) that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death."* Some of the most inviting paths can lead to great destruction. It isn't always easy to tell which seemingly innocent path holds the most cactus thorns. I like to try to warn folks about the cactus garden. It protects them. Another Proverb says the same thing. *"The way of the fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice"* (Proverbs 12:15).

Be careful which path you choose. Some paths carry the weight of eternity. There are those who would have us believe that all paths lead to God. That kind of thinking would not be consistent with scripture. The apostle Matthew encourages, *"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it"* I hope each of you will choose your path carefully.

Blessings, Chaplain Michener

## Just doing my job ...



Photo by Cpl. Brian Davidson

Larry Emmons has been the Base Energy Manager for more than 14 years. Under his reign the base has received recognition from the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Navy concerning energy conservation. One can almost imagine the light bulb that Emmons is holding shining brightly as he hits upon another idea to save the base a few more cents' worth of electricity.

### Chapel Hours

Protestant Sun. 8:30 a.m.  
Catholic Mass Sun. 10:30 a.m.

**Confession services  
before Mass**

### Yermo Bible Study

Wednesday 11 - 11:30 a.m.  
At the Colonel's Workshop  
For more info call  
Don Brooks at 577-7165.



Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, California  
Colonel Mark A. Costa, Commanding Officer

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For information on advertising in BARSTOW LOG, contact Paul Kinison of Aerotech News, Lancaster, Calif., phone: (661) 945-5634.

# NEWS BRIEFS

"News Briefs" is designed to disseminate information to the MCLB Barstow community. Submissions should include a point of contact and phone number, and be received by noon, Friday for the next issue. Submit news briefs via e-mail to [daileyb@barstow.usmc.mil](mailto:daileyb@barstow.usmc.mil).

## Marine Corps Ball

Tickets for the 225th Marine Corps Birthday Ball are on sale now until October 15.

The Ball is taking place at the Primmadonna Resort and Hotel in Primm, Nevada. Cocktails are at 6 p.m. followed by the ceremony at 7 and dinner at 8. Colonel Mark A. Costa, base commander, is the featured speaker this year.

Prices this year are \$120 per couple with hotel room, \$85 per individual with hotel room, or \$40 per individual without hotel room. Hotel room packages include breakfast November 12. Ball tickets must be purchased by October 15, and Marine Corps Ball Committee personnel handle the reservations.

For more info, or to purchase tickets, contact one of the following:

Name	Phone
1stSgt. C.J. Allen III	577-6700
SSgt. J.L. Daly, Jr.	577-6062
SSgt. G.S. Duplechain	577-6708
SSgt. D.M. Knolle	577-7353

## Military Mixer

The Veterans Home of California - Barstow is holding the Military Mixer September 14 at 6:30 p.m.

MCLB Barstow, the Military Affairs Committee of the Barstow Area Chamber of Commerce, and the National Training at Fort Irwin have co-hosted the mixer for more than 10 years.

The Military Mixer presents the opportunity for all military ranks and civilians from all walks of life to get better acquainted in a friendly social setting.

Advance sale tickets are \$12 for officer, enlisted (E-6 and above), and civilians. Junior enlisted (E-1 through E-5) tickets are \$7. All other tickets, excluding "will call" are \$15 at the door.

Tickets may be purchased at:  
Veterans Home, 252-6288;  
Chamber of Commerce, 256-8617;  
Fort Irwin Public Affairs, 380-4511;

or MCLB Barstow Public Affairs, 577-6430. Arrange for "will call" tickets at 256-8617.

Meet new people, make new friends, strengthen community relationships - attend the Military Mixer, you'll be glad you did.

## Optometrist on base

The optometrist is on board the base Tuesday through Thursday.

Appointments are from 8 to 11:30 a.m. and from 1 to 3 p.m.

Active duty personnel call Mary Griffiths at 577-7656/7657 for appointments. Civilian supervisors must submit Safety Eyewear Request Form 10470/01 for their personnel to Mary at Bldg. 582 or FAX it to 577-7700.

## Street Fair

Tuesday is the Season Finale of the 2000 Route 66 Street Fair.

The fair is in Old Town Barstow, between Barstow Road and Second Avenue from 6-10 p.m.

Craft and produce vendors are scheduled. There's a bounce house, a swing ride, a kiddie train and pony rides for children, in addition to carnival games and a rock-climbing wall.

For more info call Susan Sorensen, Barstow Chamber of Commerce, 256-8617.

## Main Street USA Run

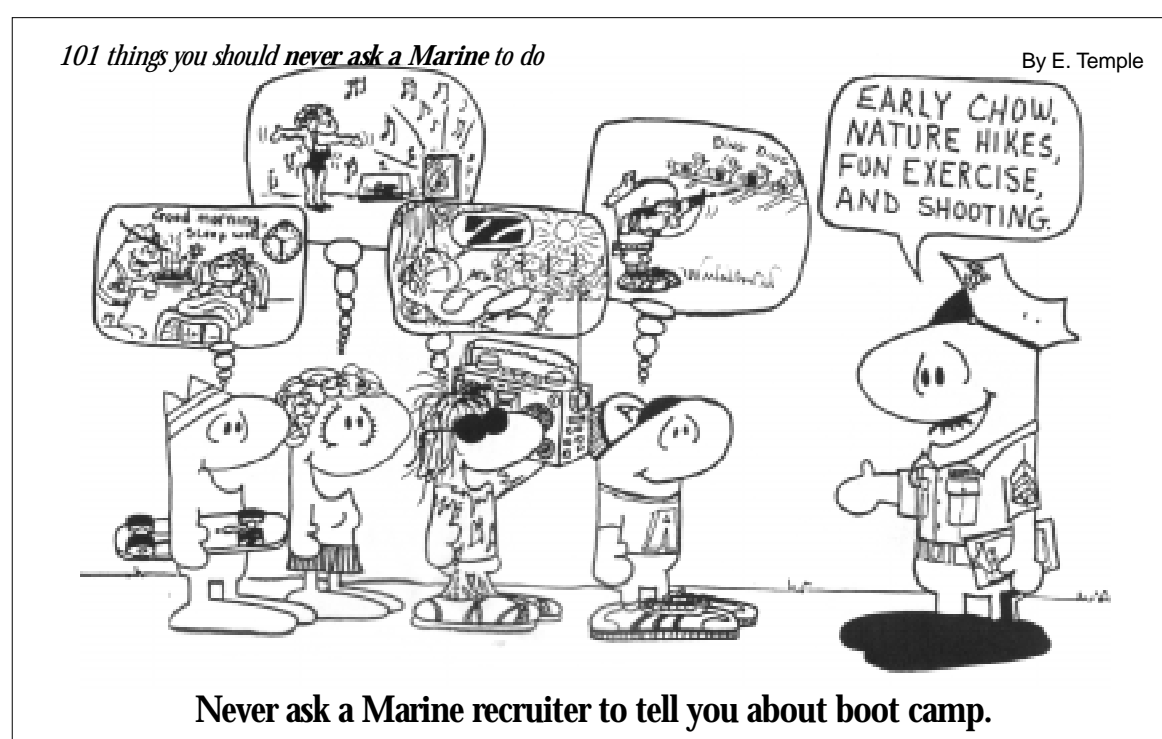
The 2nd Annual Main Street USA Run is scheduled for September 9 and 10 and benefits the Boys and Girls Club of Barstow and other local charities.

This year's run features a Saturday Poker Run, Main Street Cruise, and a concert in the Robert A. Sessions Memorial Sportspark by Papa Doo Run Run.

The Car Show is Sunday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and features pre-1974 cars, trucks, Harley Davidson motorcycles and Volkswagens.

More than 300 classic cars are ex-

pected to be on Main Street Barstow - Route 66.



Never ask a Marine recruiter to tell you about boot camp.

pected to be on Main Street Barstow - Route 66.

For info call Wayne Soppeland, 256-5760; Lee Folden, 253-5585; or Dennis Jones, 252-0150.

## Tom Peters

The Civilian Leadership Development Program is sponsoring a trip to see Management Consultant Tom Peters at the San Diego Concourse September 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

This workshop is for managers, supervisors, enrolled CLD participants and their mentors. Government transportation is provided, or attendees may use personal transportation at their own expense.

To reserve a seat, e-mail Lynda Kay, base quality adviser, at [kayl@barstow.usmc.mil](mailto:kayl@barstow.usmc.mil) or call her at 577-6168.

## Kids Care Fair

The Barstow Community Hospital is conducting the fourth Kids Care fair for the Barstow Area. It

will be at the Barstow Mall Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Kids Care Fair provides a wide variety of free immunizations for infants and children to protect against diseases including diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, meningitis, Hepatitis A and B, measles, mumps and rubella. The free immunizations, provided by San Bernardino County Department of Public Health, will be administered to children from two months old to teens 18 years of age. Parents should bring shot records if they have them; professional screeners will be on hand to identify needed shots.

Additionally, free screenings for height/weight, blood pressure, vision, dental, oxygen level, scoliosis and nutrition are available. Staff will record the screening results for examination by a health care professional who will then provide the parents with a referral for a follow-up if the results fall out of the normal range.

For more info call John Rader, Barstow Community Hospital, at 957-3340 or 256-1761.

## Mavericks Baseball

The Civilian Welfare Recreation Association trip to see the Mavericks take on the Lancaster Jethawks Saturday at 7 p.m. is cancelled.

The Hard Ball cafe overbooked for the event and the CWRA was unable to obtain tickets for the event.

Everyone is still encouraged to attend the game. Box seat tickets are \$6, and regular seats are \$4.

## New Parent Support Program

There are two different support programs on base - one for the Marine Corps and one for the Army.

The Marine New Parent Support Program for mothers meets every

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 9 a.m. outside the McKinney Center. Join them for an exercise walk, then have a discussion about nutrition, parenting and other needs.

Call 577-6332/6533 for more info.

Fort Irwin hosts Playmorning Monday from 10-11:30 a.m. at the McKinney Center.

All parents with children under age six are welcome to attend.

For more info call Sandra Casey at 380-4021 or 256-5751.

## 3rd MARDIV Reunion

The 3d Marine Division Association is holding its 46th annual family reunion at the Doubletree Hotel in Virginia Beach, Va., September 13-17.

Anyone who served in, was attached to, or served in support of the 3d MARDIV at anytime since it was formed September 16, 1942, is eligible and invited to attend.

For membership/reunion info call Bill Ervin, (303) 494-7752, or SgtMaj. Bill Krueger, USMC (Ret.) at (703) 451-3844.

## Holiday Closures

The Commissary is closed September 5 to observe Labor Day. It reopens September 6.

Battalion Headquarters at Building 302 will close September 1 at noon until September 5 at noon. The Identification Card Section will close at 3:30 pm. on September 1 and reopen at regular hours September 5.

The rear gate at the Nebo Annex will close at noon on September 1 and reopen at noon on September 5.

The Vehicle Pass and Registration Office will close at noon on September 1 and reopen at noon on September 5.

## JOB WATCH

Ann No.	Title/Series/Grade	Open	Close	1st Cutoff	Location
DEA-342-00	Animal Caretaker (MVO) WG-5048-06	08-09-00	09-06-00	08-23-00	MCLB Barstow
OTR-105-00	Tire Repairer (Heavy) WG-5801-06 (TempNTE one year)	08-07-00	08-28-00	08-21-00	MCLB Barstow
OTR-107-00	Computer Specialist GS-0334-09 (Temp NTE one year)	08-09-00	09-06-00	08-23-00	MCLB Barstow

Applicants interested in announcements beginning with DEA or OTR should submit their resume to:

**Human Resources Service Center, Southwest**  
ATTN: Code 522 (announcement number)  
525 B Street, Suite 600  
San Diego, CA 92101-4418

For more information concerning public job announcements visit the Self-Service, Bldg. 37, Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. or call the Human Resources Office 24-hour employment information line at 577-6919.

If you have Internet access, browse to <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>.

For information regarding Open Continuous Merit Promotion announcements point your browser to <http://www.donhr.navy.mil>.

### POOL from Page 1

to go down to the studs on the [bathhouse], but we soon found out that the original building had no footer. And because of the strict earthquake codes in California we were not able to just put it back the way it was. We had to put in new footings. After that we knew we were getting into a lot more than we had planned to."

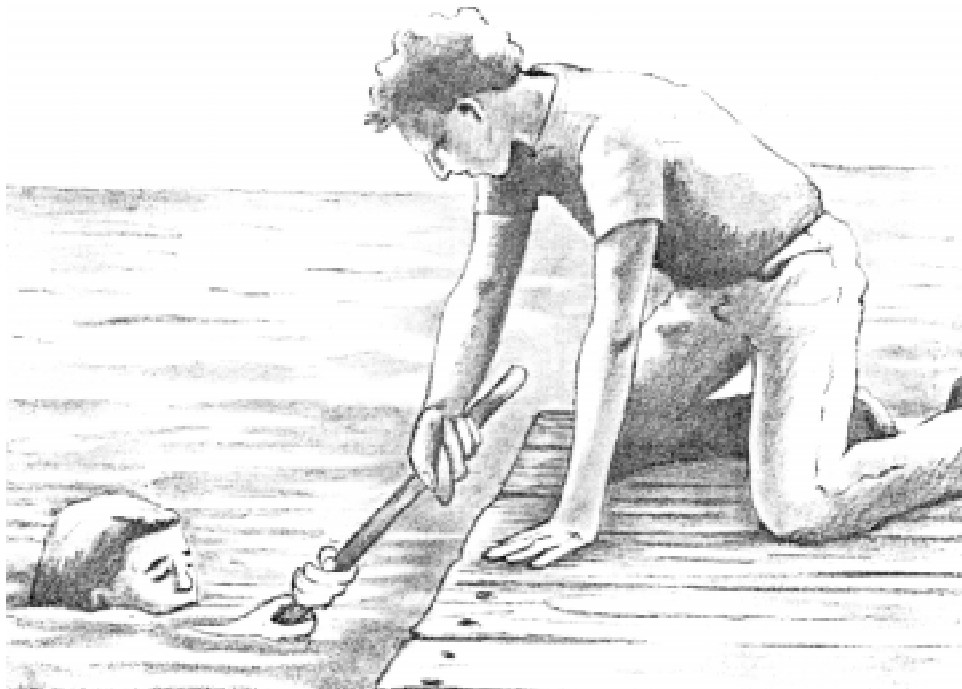
"We ran into a lot of problems, from asbestos to lead to an eight foot block of concrete in the way – just about everything and anything you can think of," he said.

The job was contracted out Nov 30, 1999, but because of problems with funding and building materials the building process didn't start until more than four months ago, Bernath said.

"This office has worked hard to keep the changes and delays to a minimum. Unfortunately, due to funding constraints and the severity of [the problems with construction] there was no way to get around all of them before the start of the summer season."

"The completed product took a little more than two months longer and cost about \$50,000 more than expected. Originally, the project completion date was June 12, but after all the unforeseen problems with the renovation/construction that date was changed to August 18. The final contract cost of the project was almost \$374,000.

"What we have is a real quality product. Its completion isn't as timely as we would have liked it ... but it is definitely an improvement for [service members] here. The Marines and Sailors on the base will have a quality facility for years to come," Bernath said.



## *Panicking swimmers danger to self, rescuer*

The scenario is all too common. A swimmer gets overwhelmed by waves, realizes he or she is in danger of drowning, gets another swimmer to come to the rescue but pulls the rescuer under as well. Both people often end up drowning. Those who panic in the water may get so desperate they may not even realize they are holding someone else under water. To avoid such a tragedy, follow these guidelines when trying to rescue a panicking swimmer.

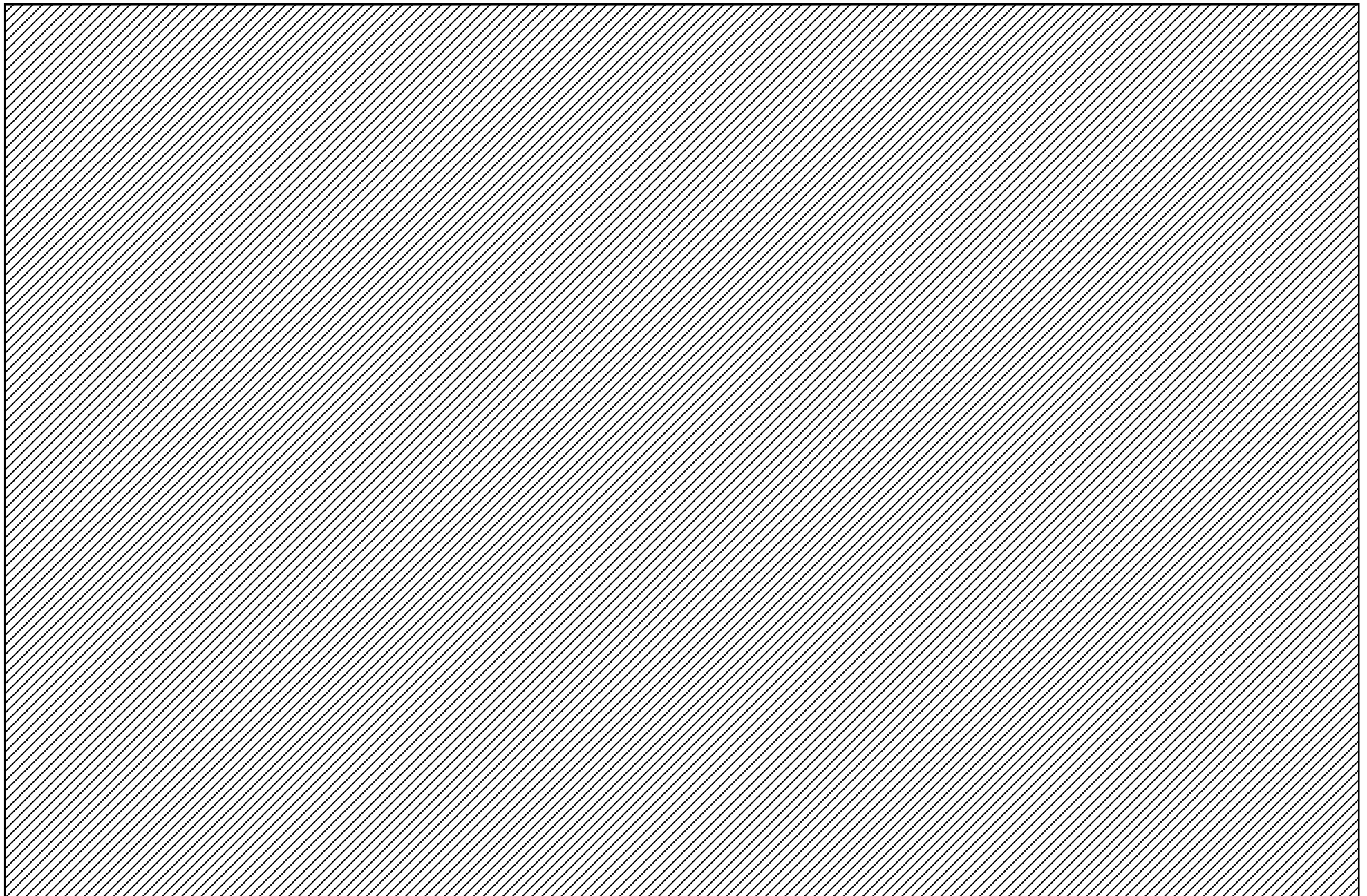
### **Stay clear of a panicking swimmer**

If you can possibly rescue someone without going in the water yourself, try that first. Throw a life ring or extend a pole from shore, from a pier or from the side of a boat. If no flotation device, buoyant item or pole is available, guide your rowboat, canoe or raft to the drowning victim, taking care not to let your craft capsize when the person grabs on to it. If you do swim to the person and the person tries to grab you,

switch immediately to a backstroke to stay out of reach. Bring a flotation device, such as a preserver ring, with you to offer to the panicking swimmer. From a safe distance extend one side of the device. If nothing buoyant is available, throw one end of a towel, shirt or rope and tell the person to hold onto the other end so you can tow the victim to shore. If the person uses the cloth or rope to pull him- or herself to you, let go of your end and swim clear of the person.

### **When you have to make contact with the victim**

If you're a trained lifesaver, try to approach a panicking swimmer from behind. Pull his or her head close to yours with one hand around the chin, keeping the face upward and gripping the person's shoulder with your elbow. (In rough water, wrap your arm around the person's chest.) You may also have to use your other arm at first. Talk to the person to calm him or her down. Once you start moving, straighten out your towing arm, don't stop talking and make sure the person's face is always out of the water. If a panicking swimmer grabs you, break free by pushing the person away with a free foot and your arms. If you are grasped from behind, grab the wrist of the person's uppermost arm and pull it down. At the same time, push the person's elbow up over your head with your other hand. If you can't break free, take a deep breath and try to swim downward until the person lets go. Resurface away from the panicking swimmer and, again, try to grab him or her from behind.



# Phone call may resolve TRICARE billing issues

By **Gerry J. Gilmore**  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — TRICARE beneficiaries are now just a phone call away from accessing help to resolve creditors' concerns over late or unpaid medical care bills.

While service members, retirees and family members consider the TRICARE health care system a valued benefit, they don't like threatening calls and letters from collection agencies harassing them over unpaid medical bills.

"These problems tend to occur when physicians are impatient for payment, as they have a right to be. (However,) the burden of dealing with this system, of any system, should not fall on the individual (service member)," said Bernard D. Rostker, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, in a recent interview with the American Forces Information Service.

Service members and other TRICARE beneficiaries raised the bill-collector issue at the Military Family Forum May 31 at the Pentagon, Rostker said. He responded June 27 with a memorandum directing the services' health affairs organizations to establish the Debt Collection Assistance Officer program within 30 days.

Implemented July 26, this new program formally established DCAOs as local points of contact that service members and other eligible TRICARE beneficiaries, stateside and overseas, may use to resolve medical bill payment issues.

The new DCAO system, Rostker said, creates a formal method for beneficiaries "to gain help in dealing with

what admittedly is, as is every health maintenance organization, a bureaucratic process."

He said there could be resolutions where beneficiaries owe money, "in which case we're prepared to work with him or her to find out how we can be most helpful in resolving that issue." He also noted "situations where the bill is misplaced ... we can work with the doctor or credit organization to resolve that."

The main thing, Rostker said, "is we don't want our people to feel they've been isolated. This is a part of the system and we want to be able to help them if and when this kind of situation occurs."

He said he has received varying feedback regarding the prevalence of conflicts involving TRICARE bill payment. "I've asked some people, and one of the services (said) they thought this happens a couple of hundred times a year, and other people think it occurs a couple of hundred times a month."

"We will know better how often this occurs by how people use this service," he said.

Before the DCAO program was implemented, DoD resolved dunning letters and bad credit reports involving TRICARE payments on an ad hoc basis, Rostker said. Besides this method not working very well, it left no central registry to track the resolution of late or unpaid TRICARE payments, he said.

"Now, it will come to our attention because we've taken on the responsibility of being the agent for our service

[See TRICARE Page 12](#)

## ASMC Luncheon

The Association of Military Comptrollers luncheon is scheduled for September 14 at the Oasis Club.

Frank Acari from the ASMC National Headquarters is slated as the guest speaker. He will talk about financial issues and the Certified Defense Financial Manager Program.

Lunch is a choice of Prime Rib, mashed potatoes and gravy or Chef Salad. There will be coffee or tea to drink.

The luncheon costs \$6, and advance paid reservations are required by September 11. Contact the following personnel for tickets:

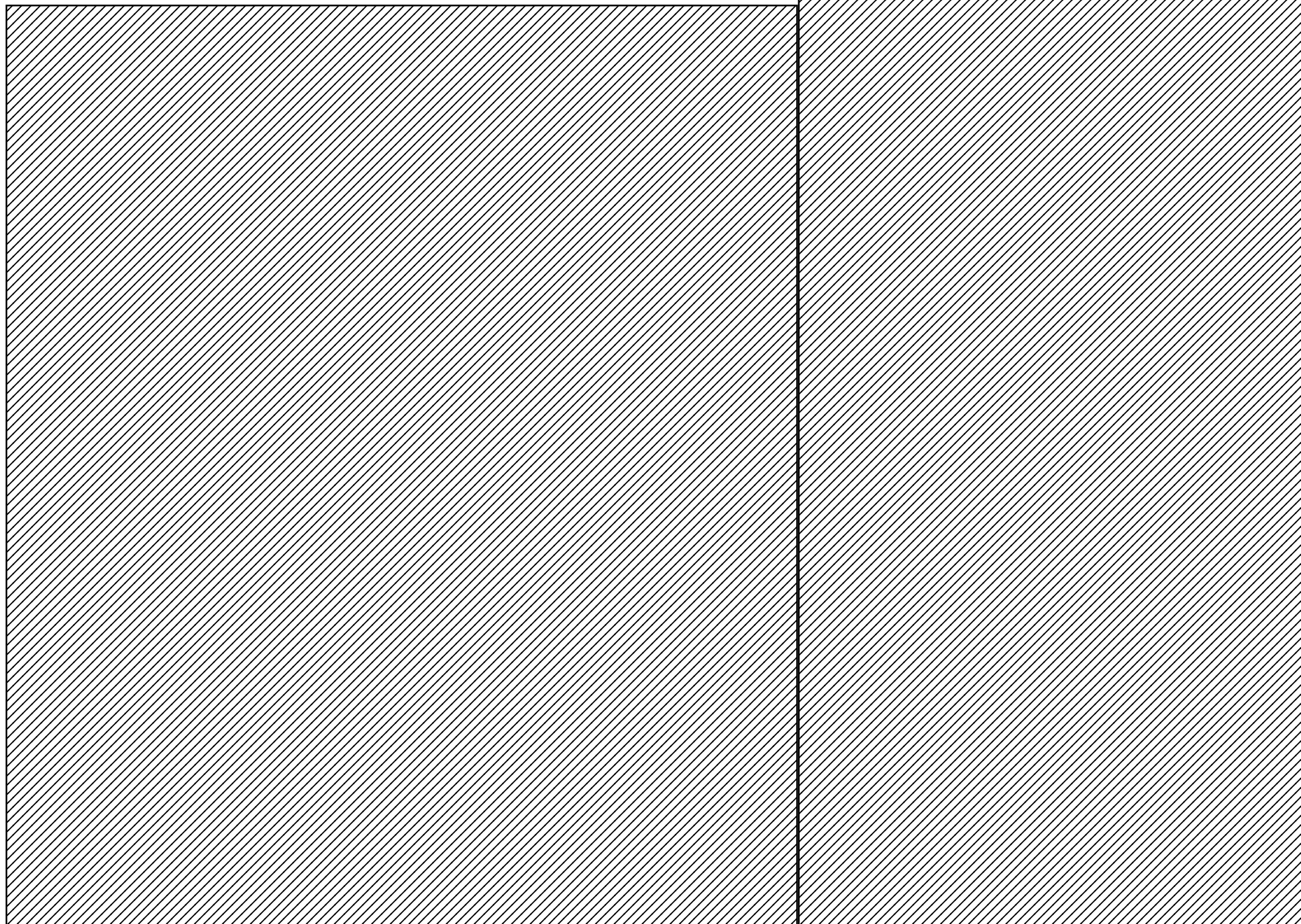
Connie Lewellyn	577-6596	Lou Ann Presley	577-6636
Randy Meyer	577-6366	Billie Reed	577-7875
Sophia Cisnero	577-6140	1stLt. John Norris	577-6726

## ENERGY from Page 1

the skyrocketing rates, according to a report in the San Bernardino Sun.

"[The base] has an Emergency Contingency Plan to shed power to various areas," said Emmons. "Thus, we can control what power to shed that will assist SCE and keep them from experiencing a blackout and keep the facility from losing all power. But, conservation is the key to preventing the need to shed power."

"The load shed here is the Commanding Officer' decision based on critical operations. However, a much easier method is for you to take the initiative to shed power. You control the switch for your lights and most generally your equipment."



# PERSONAL SERVICES BULLETIN

Marine Corps Community Services – Personal Services Division

## PSD BRIEFS

### Hiring Conferences

National hiring conferences are great places for separating junior military officers and enlisted technicians to find a job. Conferences are for electronics, electrical, and mechanical technicians. Contact Leo Dumo at 577-6265 for list of conferences, cities and dates.

### Child Development Center - Kindergarten Readiness Class

The CDC is accepting enrollment for the Kindergarten Readiness Class beginning September 5. Children must be 4 years old or turn 4 no later than December 1 to enroll in this class. Space is limited so call the CDC at 577-6287 to reserve your child's space.

The Child Development Center (CDC) offers full day, part day and hourly care for children age 6 weeks through 12 years. Emphasis is placed on developmentally appropriate activities designed to develop positive self-concept, stimulate creativity, encourage curiosity, promote physical development, and develop both communication and basic learning skills.

## Education: Marines and lifelong learning

By Rich Johnston  
Base Education Officer

Great incentives are available to personnel interested in furthering their education or studies in any area. Many people sit around wondering what there is to do in Barstow. In the realm of continuing an education there is much to do.

The excitement of the night life calls to some, and they will spend their time and money chasing after the fun and good times. For others, the solitude of the barracks and the mindless drone of the television is the norm for the next two years. Still others will spend time and money getting out of Barstow to Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Big Bear, San Diego or Riverside/San Bernardino. Upon return to the base, the thrill is gone and an emptiness sets in. Something is needed to replace that feeling.

Seekers of different experiences who want something more substantial and lasting are encouraged to try the Lifelong Learning approach. The Base Education Office offers alternatives that lead to a more satisfying and lasting accomplishment.

The Marine Corps pays 75 percent of a Marine's tuition to a school of the Marine's choice. This means a course at Barstow College only costs \$8.75 after the Marine Corps chips in the 75 percent tuition.

This gives a person someplace to go two nights a week for 18 weeks.

If a student has a computer, and it is connected to the Internet, then they can take some of the online courses that Barstow College offers.

Park University offers five different degree programs on base. Total cost after tuition assistance is \$88.50 – less than a weekend in Las Vegas. Park also offers online courses and Degree Programs. Earn something to take home and show Mom.

Many other schools and vocational programs are available and are covered under tuition assistance. Some areas of interest include gunsmithing, private investigator, motorcycle repair, accounting and computer repair. These are home study courses.

Testing is also available for college credit. The College Level Examination Program and Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support program have more than 60 tests to get college credit. It is possible to complete an entire two-year degree by testing. These tests are free and – depending on familiarity with the subject – take less than two hours.

For more information regarding these programs or continuing your education call the Base Education Officer at 577-6118 or stop by the Education Office at Building 302.

## Montgomery GI Bill goes unused by half who 'buy'

Half of service members pay for then walk away from benefits package.

By Gerry J. Gilmore  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Can you imagine turning down \$20,000 in education benefits – especially if you paid for it in advance with cold cash and sweat equity?

Half of all service members eligible for Montgomery GI Bill benefits regularly do just that, according to Department of Veterans Affairs officials. Service members qualify for the Montgomery GI Bill benefits by contributing a non-refundable \$100 per month throughout their first year of active service and successfully completing an active-duty "hitch."

Walking away from the benefit is a waste of great investment, VA officials said. At the current \$536 monthly benefit for 36 months of full-time schooling, the MGIB pays \$16 for every \$1 members must invest, Dennis Douglas, VA deputy director for education services told the American Forces Information Service.

He and other VA officials stressed

MGIB benefits do not have to be paid back, unlike student loans.

Recent changes to the Montgomery GI Bill make it even better, said VA spokesman Terry Jemison. The program, he said, now pays the cost of some preparatory courses for college and graduate school entrance exams. Also, eligibility has been expanded to some officer training school graduates and surviving spouses.

Proposals now under consideration before Congress would increase monthly payments, he added.

The education benefit provides many military men and women with education opportunities that otherwise might not be available, according to Jemison.

"We owe them, I believe," Douglass said. "It really is an opportunity for us to honor them for what they did for this nation."

The VA maintains a site at <http://www.gibill.va.gov> which has detailed information, application forms and FAQs about the MGIB, earlier GI bills and other VA educational programs.

## Domestic violence: Destroying the ties that bind

Submitted by Alicia deGriffith  
Family Advocacy Program Manager

In a national survey of more than 6,000 American families, 50 percent of the men who frequently assaulted their wives also frequently abused their children.

Child abuse is 15 times more likely to occur in families where domestic violence is present.

Men who have witnessed their parents' domestic violence are three times more likely to abuse their own wives than children of non-violent parents, with the sons of the most violent parents being 1,000 times more likely to become wife beaters.

Children who witness violence at home display emotional and behavioral disturbances as diverse as withdrawal, low self-esteem, nightmares, self-blame and aggression against peers, family members and property.

A comparison of delinquent and nondelinquent youth found that a history of family violence or abuse is the most significant difference between the two groups.

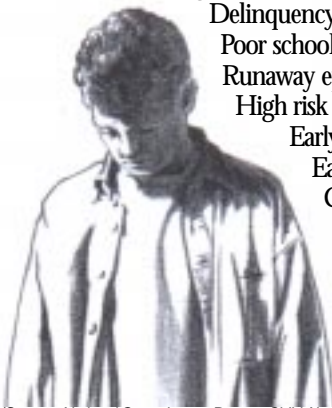
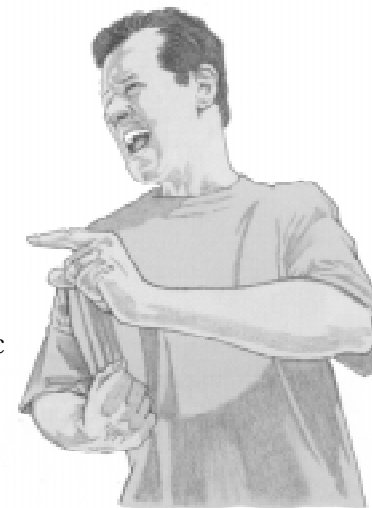
More than 3 million children are at risk of exposure to parental violence each year.

### What effects does battering have on children?

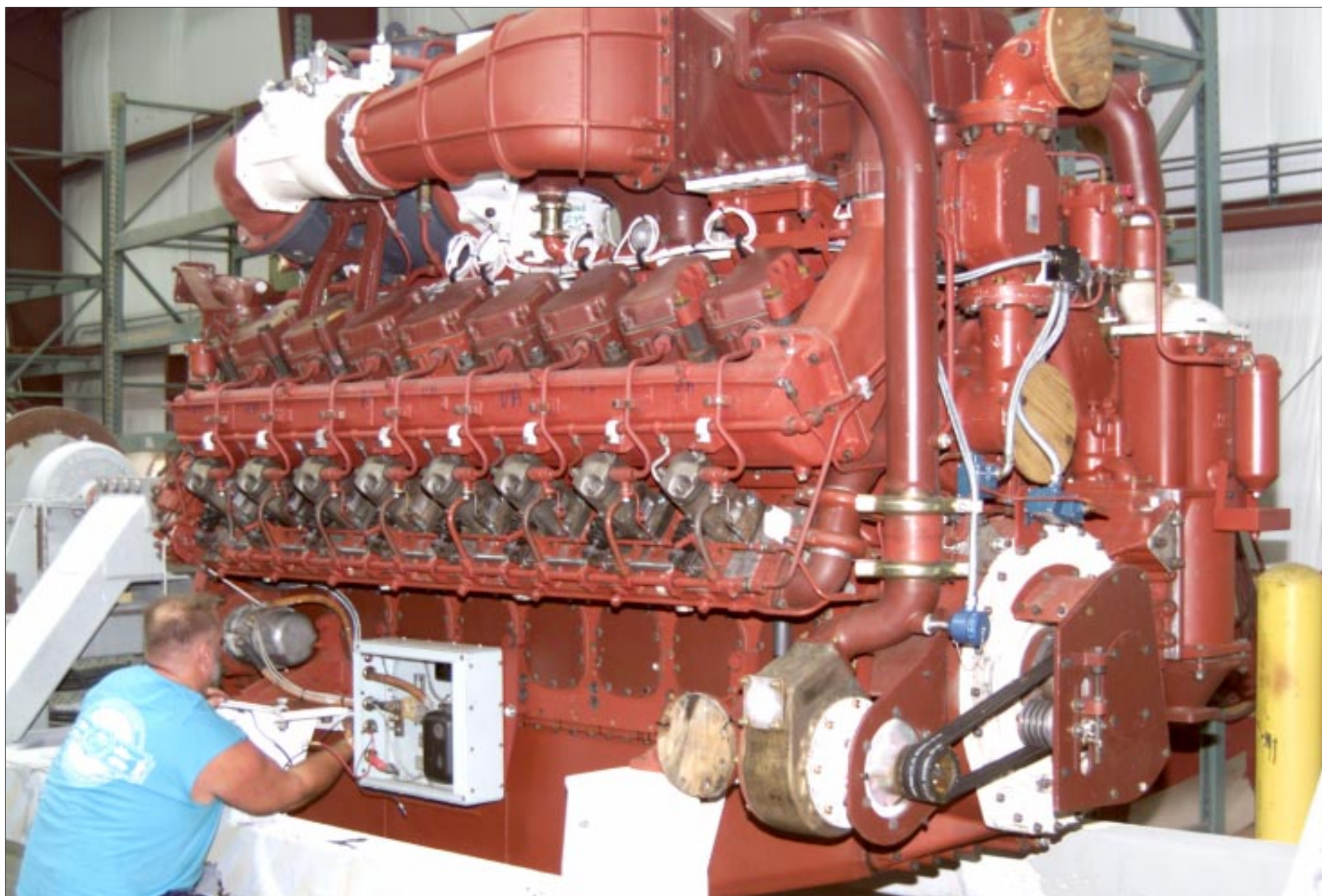
Inability to experience a "normal" childhood and adolescence  
Danger and violence seem "normal" thus affecting their values

Delinquency  
Poor school adjustment  
Runaway episodes  
High risk of early alcohol and/or drug abuse

Early marriage  
Early pregnancy  
Continuation of violence into adult relationships  
Recurring thoughts of homicide towards the batterer  
Feelings of needing to protect the batterer  
Feelings of shame  
Nightmares  
Early learning of denial as a coping mechanism  
Taking on roles inappropriate to age and maturity level  
High risk for child abuse and child sexual assault



(Source: National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse)



Robert Schneider is dwarfed by a Paxman engine he is fine-tuning before sending it on to diagnostic testing.

# BIG RED ENGINES

Story and photos by Cpl. Brian Davidson

BARSTOW LOG staff

The word "engine" takes on a whole new meaning in Cost Work Center 719.

There are engines ... and there are really big engines. The heavy mobile equipment mechanics in CWC 719 repair the really big engines - Paxman boat engines rated as powerful as 4,000 horsepower.

The Navy and the Coast Guard rely on the skill and abilities of the mechanics to fix the Paxman 16RP200M engines used to power



Just one of the two starters on the Paxman compares in size to an automobile engine.

Coast Guard cutters and the Navy coastal patrol boats.

Only nine years old, the cost work center has cut its teeth and is holding its own, but may soon be experiencing welcomed growing pains resulting from high-quality products and customer satisfaction levels, according to Robert Schneider, heavy mobile equipment mechanic.

"We have a 1,000-hour or one-year warranty on our work. In our nine years of operating we have made six repair calls to the fleet. Of those repair calls only one of them was due to our craftsmanship," he remarked. "All of the others were more or less courtesy calls due to the type of gaskets and sealing combinations used on the engines."

The Paxman manufacturers are still researching sealing gaskets and adhesives capable of handling stress from the engine.

"We recently made a repair call to Little Creek, Va., to repair an engine with the same problem. Our craftsmanship is solid. We've got a good track record," said Schneider.

"On a 9,000-hour, top-end overhaul we try to do a 60-day turnaround. We could have the

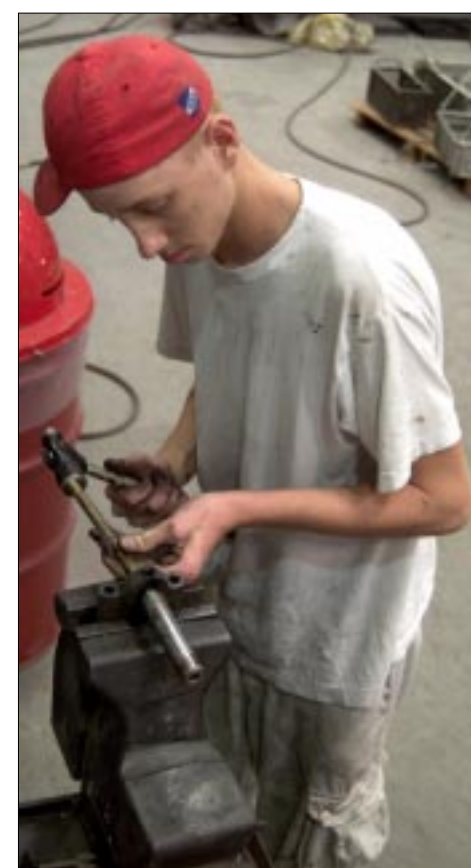
labor done in a lot less time, but we often have to wait for parts."

Each Paxman engine the cost work center rebuilds or repairs undergoes a week of diagnostic testing before being returned to the fleet.

"When they were initially devising a way to test the engine repairs they were going to get contractors to come in and build systems to do it, then they looked into having personnel from China Lake come up. But our engineers stepped in and said, 'if they can do it we can do it,' and as a result [MCLB] has the only machine in the United States capable of testing this unit. It's the only one capable of doing a complete diagnostic on an engine up to 4,000 horsepower," said Paul Dees, heavy mobile equipment mechanic.

About 75 percent of the work done at CWC 719 is for the Navy and the remainder is for the Coast Guard.

Most of the mechanics have a solid background in repairing big engines. Dees maintained the engines for nuclear submarines before he came to work in CWC 719, while others have worked on locomotive, aircraft and power plant engines. Similar experience is a



The youngest member of the team, Shaun Eube, 19, disassembles pistons. Eube, who now has nine months of hands-on training, said he is very fortunate to learn from such skilled mechanics.

See **ENGINE** Page 8

# Camp Lejeune conducts health survey

From MARADMIN 394/00  
Headquarters Marine Corps

If you lived – or know of someone who lived – at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune between 1968 and 1985, the Marines want to hear from you.

A public health service agency, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, is conducting a health survey about children who were born or conceived while their families lived in Camp Lejeune base housing anytime between 1968 and 1985. The Marine Corps fully supports ATSDR in this effort.

The survey focuses on compounds which are often used in dry cleaning or degreasers that may have existed in the Camp Lejeune water distribution system between 1968 and 1985.

All wells found to contain these substances were closed in 1985.

The survey attempts to gather data for use in a scientific research study about the effects these sub-

stances may have on children when exposed before birth. The survey will hopefully enhance understanding about the effects of exposure of these substances on children.

If you or someone you know was pregnant or lived aboard Camp Lejeune between 1968 and 1985, you are encouraged to participate in the survey whether or not your child has exhibited any adverse health symptoms.

To participate, call the National Opinion Research Center at 1-800-639-4270. NORC is conducting the survey on behalf of the ATSDR.

For more information about the survey call ATSDR at 1-888-42-ATSDR, extension 5132. The point of contact at Headquarters Marine Corps is Kelly Dreyer at (703) 695-8302. The Department of Navy liaison at ATSDR is Andrea Lunsford at (757) 462-5554.

Additional info can be found on the Internet at [http://www.lejeune.usmc.mil/water/water\\_survey.htm](http://www.lejeune.usmc.mil/water/water_survey.htm).

## BENEFITS from Page 1

Lance Cpl. Jeremy Wellington, travel clerk, agreed with Meugniot stating, "A lot of Marines shop else where, and fail to take advantage of the quality and savings the commissary offers."

"How can we get them into the store to shop and realize the great benefit it affords them?" is the question the focus groups are being created to answer noted Meugniot.

"I know a lot of people go out into town and shop [elsewhere], because there is the misconception that it is faster, cheaper, easier. Well... it's usually not much faster and definitely not cheaper," said Meugniot.

The newly appointed store director doesn't have the benefit of shopping at the commissary himself and is reminded of the difference in pricing each day at work.

"If you have children, you are well aware that cereal prices are \$2 to \$3 cheaper here everyday. It's a great deal and the price difference is the same with most of the other products in the store. That's

why the focus groups are so important," he said. "They'll help us get the service members to shop here, making use of the great benefits we have."

Some Marines, like LCpl. Ernest Jones, master fields diary clerk, did not realize the importance of their input.

"In the past, I never really said anything about the things I think could be different at the Commissary because I didn't think the managers there would pay very much attention to what a private first class or lance corporal has to say," said Jones.

But, that couldn't be farther from the truth according to Meugniot, who noted, "Their input is sorely lacking. We would like some help from them. We want to make things better."

"Over the next month or so we will try to get focus groups underway and we would like anyone who is interested take part."

Participation in the focus groups is not limited to junior enlisted Marines. Anyone eligible for commissary benefits is invited.

For information about upcoming focus groups visit the Commissary or call 577-6438.

## ASK from Page 2

was lost, and the whole class broke up laughing. Now I really felt self-conscious until I realized the reason everyone was laughing was because just about everyone else was as lost as I was, but all of us were just too hung up on our own egos to admit it.

What's the point to this little trip down memory lane? Well my point is simply to remind you that everyone needs some help from time to time but sometimes, because of egos, we fail to ask for that help.

All of us from time to time are going to be faced with situations we need help with. For some, it might be acronyms with which they are unfamiliar. For others, it might be more serious such as problems with alcohol, drugs or personal relationships with spouses or children. And, yes, sometimes we are going to need to ask for someone else's help. If you need to do so, never feel you are less than a man or a woman Marine or Sailor because, believe me, all of us need help at some time in our lives.

Maybe that help can come in the form of a friend or shipmate with whom you just need to blow off some steam or as advice from your platoon sergeant or officer-in-charge might do the trick. Others might need to seek the aid of a trained professional.

In any case, asking and getting help for your problems is far better than pretending they don't exist at all.

In my case, I was afraid to ask a question because I did not want my peers to think any less of me. In someone else's case it might be a fear that they cannot handle a given situation or crisis.

Asking for help is never a sign of weakness that you are not a good Marine, Sailor, husband, wife or leader. It just means you need a helping hand.

Believe it or not, those people you ask for help will not think any less of

you and might even be flattered that you would come to them and ask their opinions or to clarify something for you.

If you do run into the occasional methead who laughs at you for asking for help, consider the source and move on – his or her opinion of you should not concern you anyhow.

Never let your ego get in the way of asking for help. It's not worth it. Ask questions when you don't understand something.

Ask for help when you need it, and you will find yourself in much better shape in both your career and in your personal life. All you have to do is raise your hand and ask for help. You never have to go it alone.

## ENGINE from Page 7

prerequisite for mechanics in the shop.

"In the beginning, a field representative came in from the Paxman manufacturer and gave us six weeks of training, and then we attended a Navy and Coast guard school in Yorktown, Va.," said Dees. "Later, some of us went to the Paxman Factory where they are constructed in Colchester, England, for a month for more training."

Being the best at what they do is bringing the work section into the spotlight.

We've even repaired engines that our competitors said couldn't be fixed," said Dees. "That's a major

plus for us. These engines are rated at more than \$1 million each.

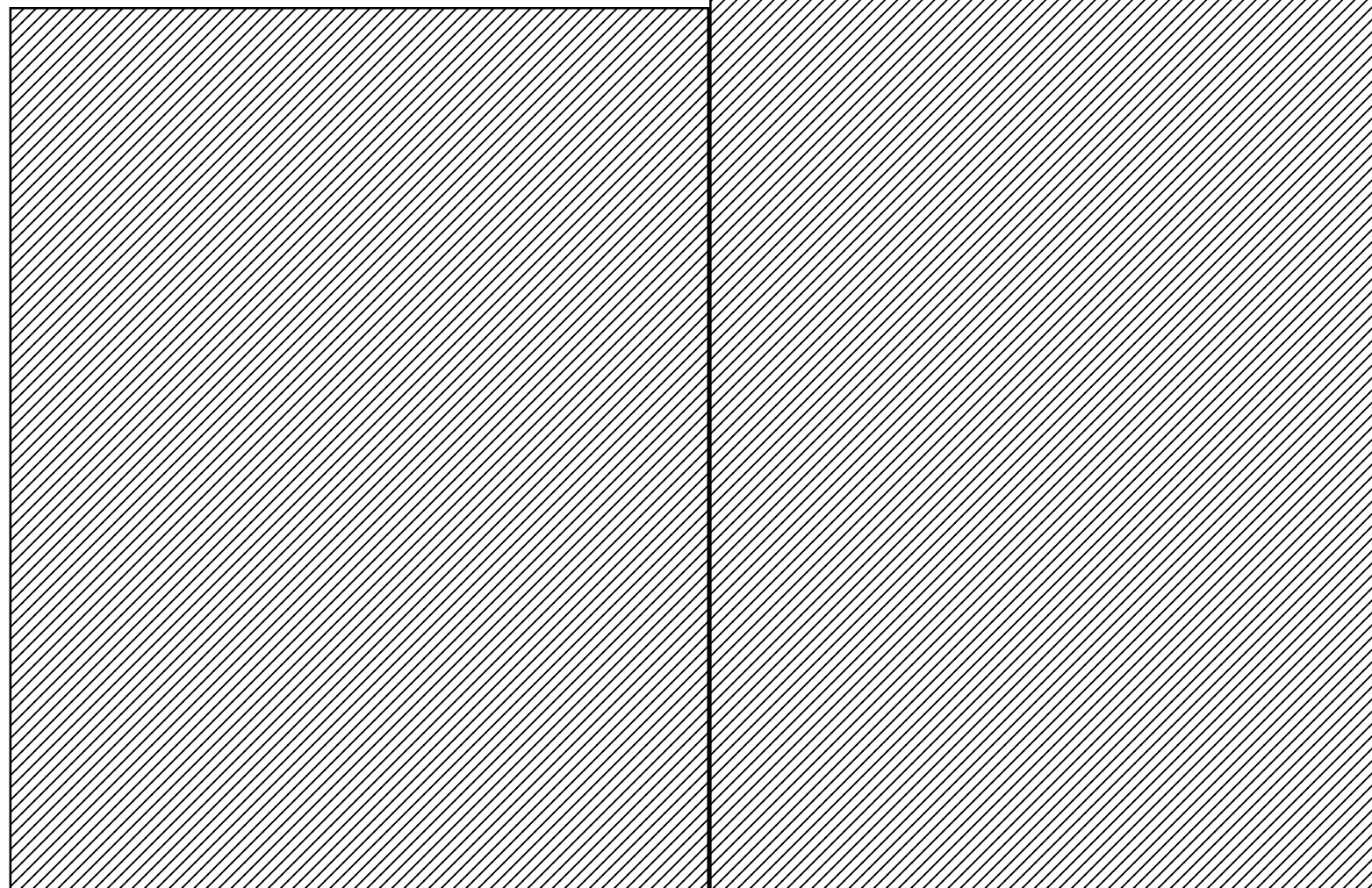
"The work [CWC 719] does for the Navy and the Coast Guard speaks very highly of the versatility of Maintenance Center Barstow," said Col. Ervin Rivers, maintenance center commander. "The shop represents \$5 million in revenue, making it one of our largest single sources of revenue."

This even out-distances the income from work completed for the National Training Center at Fort

Irwin.

The maintenance center is always seeking to forge stronger alliances with its customers. At publication, perspective customers from Maryland were visiting the cost work center to explore the possibility of enlisting its assistance in maintaining and repairing engines for their minesweepers and buoytenders.

Dees suggested, "if all goes well CWC 719 could very easily bloom into one of the biggest things this place has ever seen."







**By Jim Gaines**

**MCCS Publicity**

**August Sale has eight days left**

Only eight days left in the August Sale at the Base Exchange. Shop and save with the many bargains while the sale lasts.

Save on TVs, boom boxes, stereos, speakers and compact disc changers.

Save more with discounts on clothing, outdoor grills, perfume and many other items.

The Exchange/7-Day Store is open Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Call 256-8974 for more details.

**Lunch menu for this week**

This week's lunch menu at the Family Restaurant & Cactus Cafe:

**Today** - Pot roast.

**Friday** - Hoki fish.

**Monday** - Mexican fajitas.

**Tuesday** - Pepper steak.

**Wednesday** - Chicken Cordon Bleu.

**Thursday** - Baked ham.

All above meals served with coffee, tea or soft drink.

Lunch is served Monday through Friday at the Family Restaurant from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Lunch is served Monday through Friday at the Cactus Cafe from 11:30 a.m. to noon. Price is \$3 military; \$4.50 civilian.

The Family Restaurant also offers a la carte and sub sandwich menus for lunch.

The Cactus Cafe offers limited a la carte and sub sandwich menus for lunch.

For more details on either the Family Restaurant or the Cactus Cafe Lunch menus call 577-6428.

**Family Restaurant full service**

The Family Restaurant offers breakfast, lunch and dinner service with fol-

lowing weekly schedule:

**Weekdays**

Breakfast is served from 5:30 to 7:30 a.m. Price: \$1.50 military; \$3 civilian.

Lunch is served from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Price: \$3 military; \$4.50 civilian.

Dinner is served from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Price: \$3 military; \$4.50 civilian.

**Weekends and Holidays**

Menu service for breakfast, lunch and dinner: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Price varies per menu selection.

**Family Night Dinner menu**

**Tonight** - Southern Night.

**Next week** - Prime Rib Dinner.

Family Night dinners are served Thursday evenings from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Family Restaurant

Prices: (military & civilian) \$4.50 adults, \$2.50 children (5 to 11 years), children 4 years and under are free.

Everyone is welcome, bring the whole family and enjoy a delicious dinner at an affordable price.

**Tip to Tijuana**

ITT's trip to Tijuana, Mexico, is coming up September 23. A few seats are still available. Call today to reserve your seat.

ITT has other summer fun tickets available including water park tickets. Tickets are available for Wet n' Wild, Hurricane Harbor and Raging Waters.

The water parks are closing for the

season in September, so if you want to get that last wet fling in before summer ends then do it now. Call ITT today.

ITT is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Closed Saturday and Sunday. Call 577-6541.

Tickets are also available after ITT closes. Purchase or pick up ITT tickets at the Bowling Center from 4 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday through Friday, and from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Call the Bowling Center at 577-6264.

**MCCS phone numbers**

MCCS has received requests for a listing of phone numbers for various facilities. These phone numbers are also listed on the back of the monthly MCCS Events Guide.

**MCCS Administration**

Administrative Office 577-6733  
Publicity 577-6848

**MCFTB/Semper Fit**

Administrative Office 577-6971  
Gym/Fitness Center 577-6898

**Personal Services**

Administrative Office 577-6533  
CDC 577-6287  
YAC 577-6499  
Library 577-6395  
Education Office 577-6118

**Business Operations**

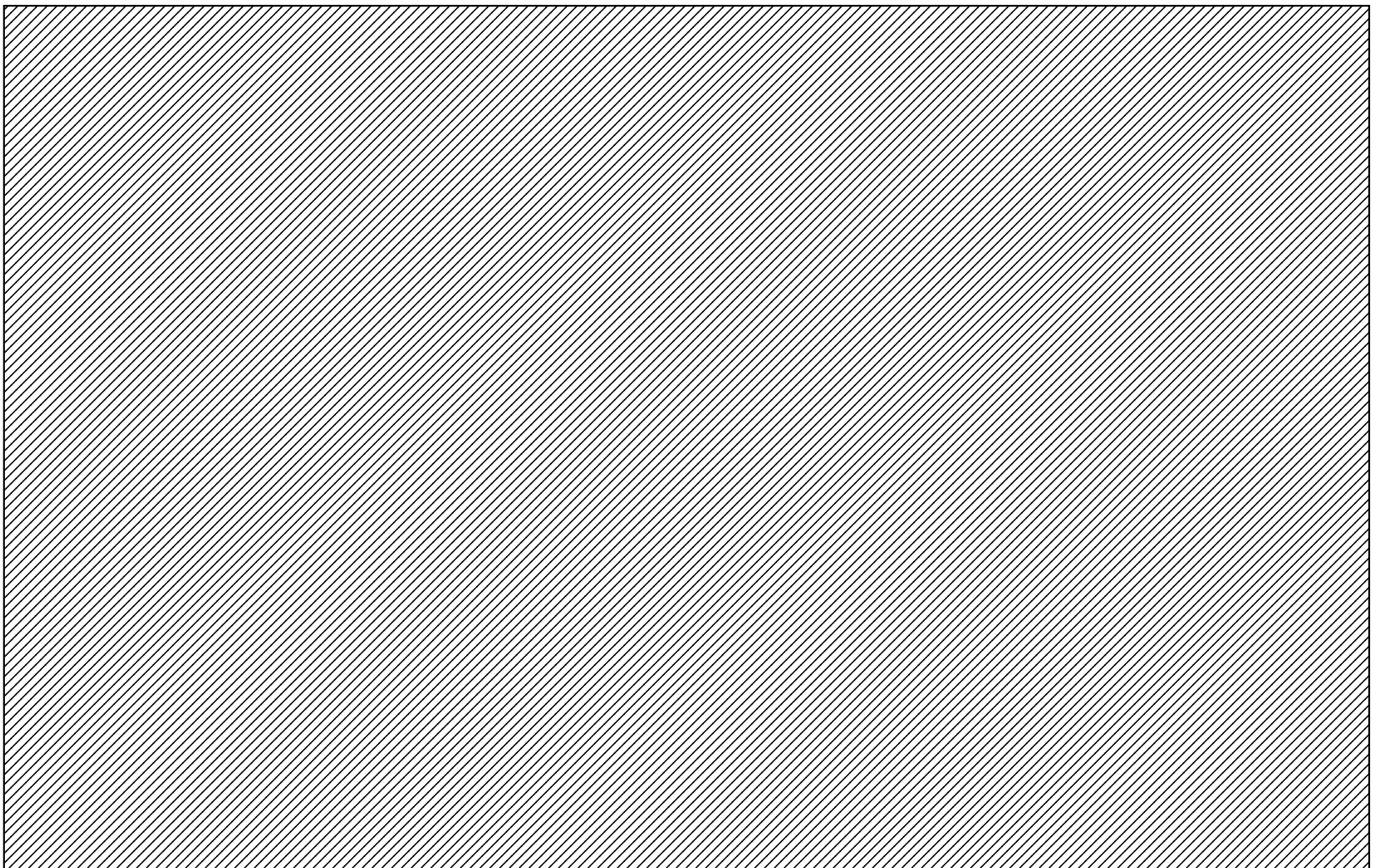
Administrative Office 577-6896  
Main Exchange/7-Day store/Gas Station 256-8974  
Yermo Exchange 577-7092  
Barber Shop 577-6688  
Family Restaurant 577-6428  
Cactus Cafe 577-7501  
Oasis Club 577-6432  
NCO/Enlisted Club 577-6495  
ITT 577-6541  
Golf Course 577-6431  
Bowling Center 577-6264  
Auto Hobby Shop 577-6441  
Ceramic Hobby Shop 577-6228  
Wood/Rock Shop 577-6692

**Swimming pools**

The Family Swimming Pool hours for Monday through Friday are: 11 a.m. to noon - lap swim, noon to 7 p.m. - open swim. The hours for Saturday, Sunday and holidays are: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. - Open swimming. The Family Swimming Pool is open to E-5 and below, their families, retirees and the Veterans Home.

The Oasis Club Swimming Pool is open to officers and SNCOs, their family members, retirees who are Oasis Club members and the Veterans Home.

For more information call Semper Fit at 577-6971.



# SPORTS

## Barstow soccer team scores... twice

By LCpl. Cory Kelly

BARSTOW LOG staff

There aren't enough words to describe how the seemingly insignificant attack Barstow's soccer team led against the 3rd Light Armor Reconnaissance August 17 was not at all insignificant – at least not to the rabid dogs of Barstow's team.

Once again taking their frustrations down to Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twenty-nine Palms, Calif., Barstow's team did more than end a five-year slump; they established themselves as players in the world of aggressive sports.

Barstow didn't win the game against 3rd LAR that night (actually they lost by seven points). What they did do, is prove they could win.

Kyran Ramcharan hammered Barstow's first goal 14 minutes into the game, showing off some fancy footwork and blasting one right down the center. The team's morale skyrocketed as Barstow's rabid dogs foamed with delight at the sight of Ramcharan's feat.

Shortly after that a different kind of feeling became apparent to Barstow's team members – they needed to tighten their defense if they were going to keep up with 3rd LAR's hardcore killers. Third LAR's Javier Jimenez evened up the scoreboard 20 minutes in, slipping a ball past Barstow's goalkeeper.

Four minutes later, 3rd LAR's Adam Saucedo set the pace for his team sending one through Barstow's net at top speed. Richard Streeter followed Saucedo by busting open the 'can' on Barstow's own as he found his way to the net through a jumble of crazed defenders.

With five minutes left on the clock, Streeter returned and closed

the first half, sending one flying into the top right-hand corner of the Barstow net.

After a well-deserved, 10-minute rest, Barstow's 10 team members – one man shy of a full field – took up their positions and began, again, to fight for the win.

For the rest of the game Barstow's counterparts linked together like a 15-year-old Honda with about 300 miles on it. Sure, they were tired, thirsty and almost inevitably beaten.

Yeah, they were in dire need of a tune up and missing a few of the parts they came with ... but they were still fighting to survive.

Ten minutes in to the second half, 3rd LAR's Serguey Lauchnikov booted one through Barstow's defense. Shortly thereafter Saucedo slammed his second goal of the game marking the board 6-1 in 3rd LAR's favor.

With almost 20 minutes left in the game, 3rd LAR's Lauchnikov sailed one high and tight past Barstow's keeper for his second and final goal of the day.

Just as Barstow's trained killers thought their first glimpse of the light at the end of the tunnel was just that – a glimpse – something remarkable happened. After a throw

in at the 16-minute mark, Edward Torres, Barstow's forward covering the left flank, sent a crooked hook of a ball through 3rd LAR's net from the corner-kick box.

The madness that persisted after this amazing display was exactly as said ... madness (Torres running around the field with his jersey over his face as nine other Barstow Marines hooted and hollered in obvious disbelief).

Unfortunately, it only lasted a short while.

Third LAR's Chris Easter showed Barstow's team they warmed up a little late in the game by breezing the ball through Barstow's nets. Then, with six minutes left on the clock, Streeter pulled a hat trick out of his bag for the last goal of the game.

Although 3rd LAR was victorious, 9-2, over Barstow, everyone on and around the field noticed Barstow had a victory of their own.

Making not one, but both of their first two goals in the last five years in one game is a precedent they will hopefully top quickly.

Even though Barstow's team made their goal and filled their quota to get the funding for the regional matches, it is highly doubtful they will get to go, according to John Ross



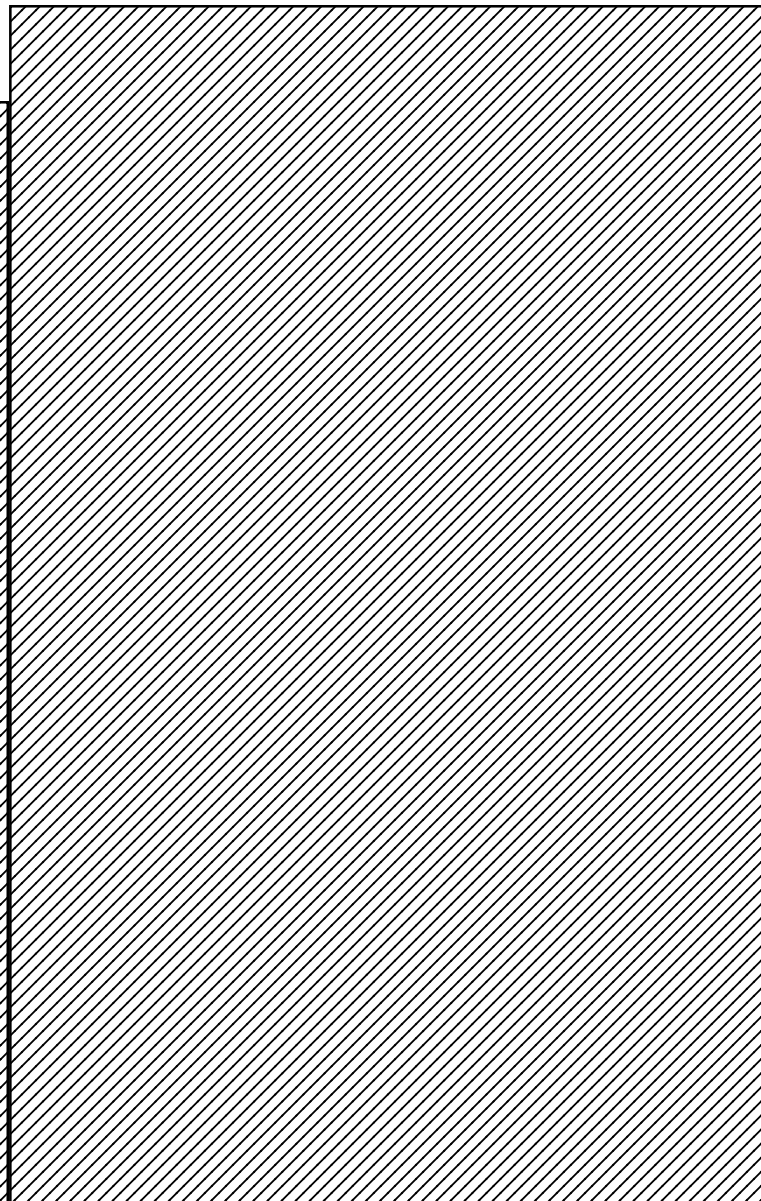
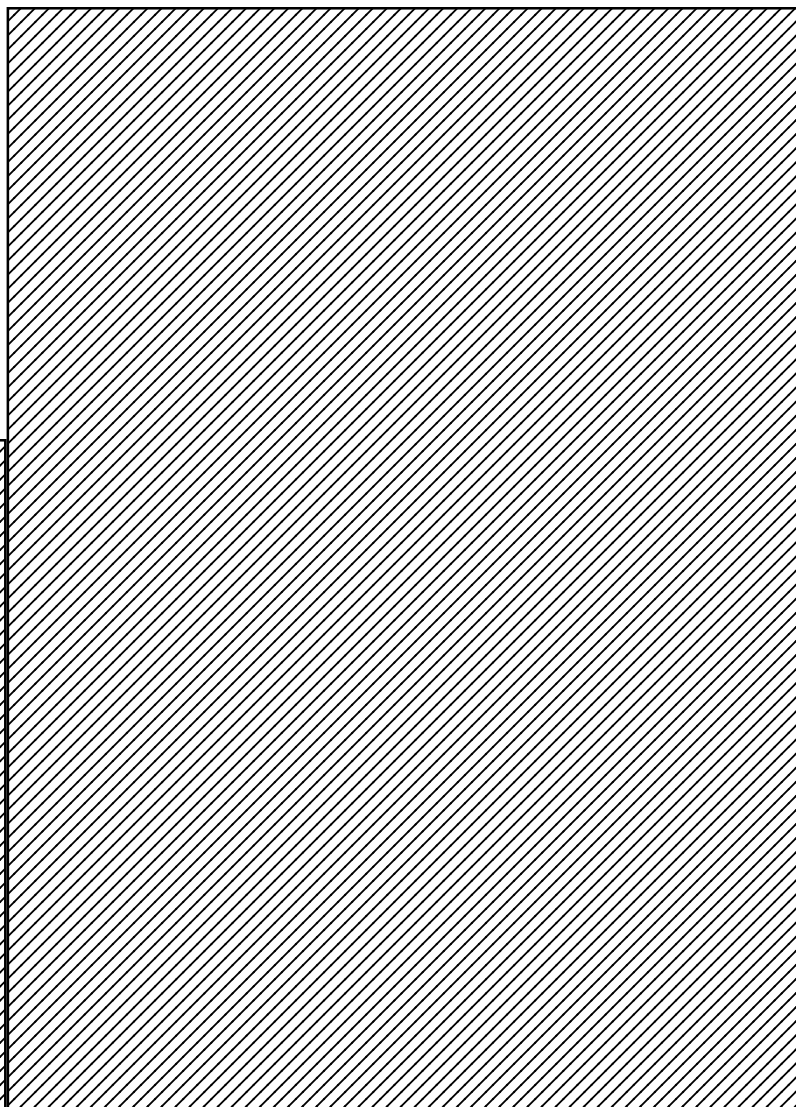
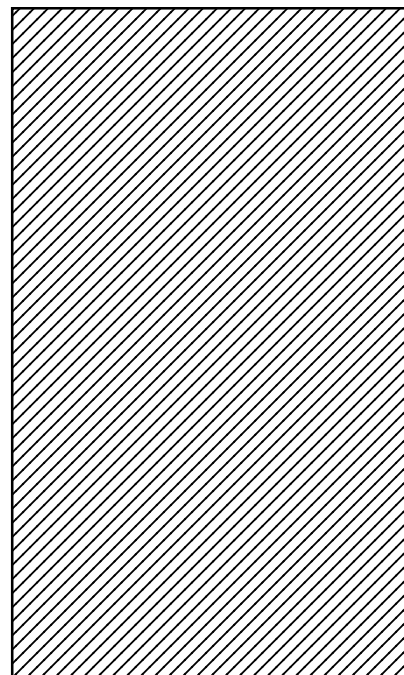
Photo by LCpl. Cory Kelly

Barstow's Edward Torres gives 3rd LAR's Serguey Lauchnikov a run for his money.

III, Barstow's soccer team coach. "We played hard and we have been improving a lot, but I just don't think we are going to get the funding to go to San Diego for the regionals."

Still, Barstow's coach isn't the only one noticing the team's improvement.

"Speaking as a ref and a coach ... This is the best I've ever seen Barstow play. I really think Barstow could have won the game," said John Bass, referee, putting the whole game into perspective. "[Third LAR] just had more players and didn't run out of gas."



Please submit all Trader Ads to [daileyb@barstow.usmc.mil](mailto:daileyb@barstow.usmc.mil).

**1993 FORD ESCORT:** Automatic, A/C, AM/FM cassette, good condition, \$1,500. Call 253-9162.

**1995 KIT ROAD RANGER:** 5<sup>th</sup> wheel, 20 ft, super slide, awning, electric jacks, two-door refrig/freezer, microwave, ducted A/C, floor ducted heating, other extras. Blue Book is \$13,250-16, 625. Call 256-3489.

**CAMPER SHELL:** For long-bed, small truck, \$50; carpet kit, \$75; both for \$100. Good condition. Call 252-3011. Lv msg.

**FOR SALE:** Electric mobility 3 wheeled scooter, Rascal model 200, never used, asking \$1,200, price negotiable. Call 256-6117.

**FURNITURE:** Sofa/Love seat set, good condition, \$250. Call 243-1392.

**FURNITURE:** German blonde wood, bedroom set, twin bed headboard w/ linen storage cabinet, curio cabinet, closet and desk. Bed and headboard 9' long, 6.5' tall, \$750. Call 254-3731.

**FURNITURE:** Queen-size bed frame, head and foot board, \$100; glass table and four chairs, \$100; two solid oak easy chairs, \$50 each. Call 252-7789.

**MISCELLANEOUS:** 6' work bench, steel and wood, \$100; microwave oven, \$50; mirror, \$10. Call 252-7789.

**MISCELLANEOUS:** Grass trimmer, cordless, battery chargeable, \$30; calculator, new, 8-digit, 4"x4", \$5; pet carrier, kennel 21" long, 16" high, \$15. Call 242-8839.

**CAR POOL:** Driver wanted for established car pool, Mon-Fri 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Meet at new Victorville Transportation Center on D Street. Call 951-2060 to sign up.

**THANK YOU:** Abilio G. Baca was a Civil Service employee for 40 years, and passed away July 19. To all of those who know Mr. "B" he will truly be missed. Thank you for the support, prayers, cards and flowers during our loss. The Baca family; Sabra, Ricky, Ronnie, Tanny and Congressmen Joe Baca.

### TRICARE from Page 5

members in trying to resolve these situations," he said.

TRICARE beneficiaries who've received dunning letters or bad credit reports can now just phone the designated debt collection assistance officer, who will coordinate a review/research process.

DCAO Program Manager Marcia Bonifas said the beneficiary provides the assistance officer with documentation – collection agency letters, bills and contractors' explanations of medical benefits. The DCAO in turn sends the information to the contractor's bill processing or collections unit, she said.

"The debt collection assistance officer will ask the collection agency to hold up further work until the research is done, and that will be done in less than 30 days," Bonifas said. "We cannot force them to hold up, but we can ask for their cooperation."

Bonifas said the DCAO receives the completed research information and then notifies the beneficiary in writing.

Contractors will research claims less than six years old, Bonifas said, but they won't have any documentation for claims older than that. These older claims will be researched by a special TRICARE Management Activity claims evaluation office in Aurora, Colo., she said.

Although DCAOs can help beneficiaries to research and resolve TRICARE payment problems and related credit reports, they cannot provide legal advice or repair bad credit ratings, she said.

TRICARE beneficiaries can click a hyperlink button on the DCAO information Web site, <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/dcao>, to identify their local assistance officers, stateside and overseas, Bonifas said. In a month or two, active duty service members will see the phone number for their local DCAO on their leave and earnings

statements, she added.

In addition, beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinators at all military hospitals and clinics and at TRICARE lead agent offices can provide assistance for all other TRICARE issues, such as claims, explanation of benefits and enrollment procedures, Bonifas said.

BCACs are listed on the Web at [http://www.tricare.osd.mil/tricare/beneficiary/bcac\\_dir.htm](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/tricare/beneficiary/bcac_dir.htm).

Rostker called the DCAO program a timely response to important service member concerns. "We believe the program is in place, we have training manuals, people in place (who are) responsible by name,

Rostker said. "We're looking forward to gaining feedback from our service members, their beneficiaries and families to make sure this program is the help we designed it to be."

For more information about TRICARE, call 1-800-242-6788 or visit their Web site at <http://www.tricare.osd.mil>.

