

THE PROSPECTOR



Serving the Marine Corps since 1947
Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif.

Vol.2 No.16

Aug. 22, 2013



**How to get a 300 on
your next CFT**

Tips on achieving the perfect score

**Challenging for
Decades**

Multiple rumors ... which one
is true?

**Who has more confirmed
kills than Hathcock?**

Don't get in his crosshairs

2nd Annual ERD Golf Tournament

5 October 2013

Ashwood Golf Course, Apple Valley CA



\$55 per player

- 4 Man Team Scramble
- Prizes for Long Drive and Closest to the Pin
- Door prizes
- Taco Bar Provided
- Contact Isaac.m.luna@usmc.mil , Michael.luna@usmc.mil

On The Cover:

Front Cover:

Photo by Carlos Guerra

A Marine on Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., fires his M16 A4 service rifle during rifle qualifications, Aug. 15. The Marines were concluding the combat marksmanship portion of the qualifications.

Back Cover:

Photo by Pfc. Samuel Ranney

Challenge coins collected from active and retired service members on Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif. The challenge coin has represented esprit de corps and has been part of military tradition for decades.

THE PROSPECTOR

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Photo by Lance Cpl. Norman Eckles

Corporal Anthony Seirafi, a dog handler and police officer with Marine Corps Police Department on Marine Corps Logistics Base Bartow, Calif., pets his dog, Ricsi, after an accomplished training session at building 17D, Aug. 15. The training sessions help the K-9s act accordingly when chasing a suspect.

The editorial content of this magazine is prepared, edited and provided by the Public Affairs Office of Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, California. Mailing address: Commanding Officer, Attn: Public Affairs, Box 110130, Barstow, CA 92311-5050. The Public Affairs Office is located in Building 204. Phones: (760) 577-6430, 577-6450, 577-6451, FAX 577-6350, DSN prefix 282. This magazine is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of **THE PROSPECTOR** are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Marine Corps.

On the web

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Photo by Pfc. Garrett White

Don Sivadon, a heavy mobile equipment mechanic with Production Plant Barstow, Marine Depot Maintenance Command works on putting an M-88 back together after repairs are completed, Aug.15. PPB disassembles, repairs, and or rebuilds all types of military vehicles of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps.

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Photo by Pfc. Samuel Ranney

A bolt of lightning flashes over the hills of Barstow, Calif., Aug. 19, during a heavy rain storm that brought thunder, lightning and flash flooding. As a result of the storm, communities in Barstow were left without power and flooded streets.

News Briefs

Leave Share Program

The following is a comprehensive list of individuals currently affected by medical emergencies and in need of leave donations: **Alvin Blackford, Johnny Davis Jr., Roger Dull, Uriah Garcia, Lisa Lucero, Tulu Niusulu, and Lisa Wood.**

Anyone desiring to donate annual leave under the Leave Sharing Program may do so by obtaining a leave donor application form from the Human Resources Office. Ensure completed forms are turned into HRO as well. For more information, contact Josie Marquez at 760 - 577 - 6481.

Anticipated Vacancies

Trades Division- Machinist, WG-3414-10. Rigging worker, WG-5210-08. Welder, WG-3703-10. Heavy Mobile Equipment Repairer, WG-5803-08. HME Mechanic, WG-5803-10. ME Metal Mechanic, WG-3809-10. Painting worker, WG-4102-07. Painter, WG-4102-09. Electrical Equipment Repairer, WG-2854-10

4 Business Division- Production Controller Leader, GS-1152-11.

Look for announcements under the new link at <http://usajobs.gov>

Single Marine Program

August 24, the Single Marine Program is having a weekend trip to Surf City Huntington Beach, Calif. for more information or to pre-register for SMP trips, call the SMP coordinator at 760-577-5889

Marine Corps Family Team Building

Marine Corps Family Team Building is slated to hold Sewing and Craft Classes on August 26 and September 16 - 18, 23, and 30 from 8 a.m. to noon at the multipurpose room in building 375. For more information call MCFTB at 760-577-6675 or 760-755-6408.

The School Liaison Program

The School Liaison Program is

slated to hold a school supply give away Sept. 4 from 2 - 4 p.m. at the base Library for active duty service members and their family. For more information call the School Liaison Program Manager at 760-577-5854.

NMCRS Thrift Store

School is here and that means Back to School Sale at the Navy Marine Corps Relief Society Thrift Store! During August and September, all boys, girls, and junior clothes are 50 percent off, as well as school supplies for kids. Our Saturday Sale will be on Aug. 10 from 9a.m. to 1p.m., featuring 50 percent off all backpacks. **Volunteers are needed!** If interested, stop by or call the Thrift

Energy Tip:

Recycle old aluminum cans because tossing one can in the trash is the equivalent to filling the same can half full of gasoline and pouring it on

the ground.

MCLB Barstow students return to school

Story by
Pfc. Samuel Ranney
Combat Correspondent

For some military families, signing their young ones up for school and transporting them there and back poses a challenge; however, the School Liaison and Exceptional Family Member Program on Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., simplifies these issues.

“There are 116 schools in the High Desert,” said Deborah McGough, the School Liaison and Exceptional Family Member Program manager here. “These schools include nine private schools and 10 charter schools.”

McGough further explained although families may apply for their child to attend any school of their choice, Montara Elementary School is the designated kindergarten through sixth grade school for service members living on base. Barstow Junior High School and Barstow High School are the designated schools to attend. Transportation is provided to and from base for both schools. Those who live off base are designated to attend whatever school district they are zoned to attend.

The bus for Montara Elementary School picks students up at 7:51 a.m., at the Youth Activities Center, Clara McKinney Complex on base and they are dropped off after school at 3:22 p.m. Barstow Junior High School and High School students are picked up at 6:34 a.m., also at the youth center; they are dropped off at 2:41 p.m.

“The bus is available for all children of military and civilian employees who work on base,” added McGough.

Aside from the designated schools, tax payers who live in the district have first priority to attend schools. Families who choose to attend other schools have to be accepted and provide their own transportation

to and from school for their child, explained the Anchorage, Alaska, native.

For the families who use the designated schools and take the bus on base, Brian Korves, safety specialist here, has a few tips for kids to stay safe at the bus stop.

- Always walk on the sidewalks to the bus stop
- Wait for the bus in a safe place, do not play in the road
- Do not speak, or get in a car with any strangers
- Only get off the bus at your designated stop
- Keep aisles clear in the bus
- Do not horse play

For the safety of children and the convenience of parents here, the base family care branch offers before and after school care at the School Age Care located at the Clara McKinney Complex, Bldg. 63, explained Kristi Baker, assistant director of the Child Development Center. This provides a safe place where children can wait for their parents to get off of work.

“Care is offered at 5:45 a.m., until the bus comes to pick them up in front (of McKinney Youth Center),” Baker said. “After school care starts at 2 p.m., the children get dropped off depending on what time their school ends and are able to stay until 5:45 p.m.”

The youth center and the designated schools work together with scheduling, said McGough. If the school has an early release day, school age care will adjust their hours to accommodate the children.

The School Liaison Program and Exceptional Family Member Program works to address issues with registration, school transitions, academic success, local school policies, and also provides school supplies, concluded McGough. For more information, the MCLB Barstow School Liaison Program Resource Book is available at the base library.



Photo by Pfc. Garrett White

James Ervin, a program assistant with the School Age Care, ensures children of service members file onto a school bus destined to Montara Elementary School, Aug. 20. Students of the elementary school are picked up at the Youth Activities Center, Clara McKinney Complex on base at 7:51 a.m. and are dropped off after school at 3:22 p.m.

Barstow Marines train for CFT

Story and photo by
Pfc. Samuel Ranney
Combat Correspondent

Sweat is dripping from your face after sprinting 880 yards. Your arms are exhausted from lifting an ammunition can over your head multiple times. You are ready to collapse after low crawling, high crawling, and sprinting ... but you still have to fireman carry your comrade with enough time to simulate an ammo resupply run.

This is the Marine Corps Combat Fitness Test. From July 1 - Dec. 31, Marines are required to train for and complete their annual CFT.

The CFT is made up of three portions, explained Sgt. Elton Rogers, supply administrative chief on Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif.

The CFT consists of:

- Movement to contact (MTC)

A timed 880 yard sprint simulating the Marine moving toward the sound of enemy fire. The course tests Marines' endurance.

The maximum score for 17-26 year-old-males is 2:45

The maximum score for 17-26 year-old-females is 3:23

- Ammunition can lifts (AL)

Marines must lift a 30-pound ammo can overhead, until elbows lock out, as many times as possible in two minutes; each lift done in the allotted time earns the Marine a point.

The maximum score for 17-26 year-old-males is 91 lifts

The maximum score for 17-26 year-old-females is 60 lifts

- Maneuver under Fire (MUF)

A 300-yard shuttle run incorporating a variety of combat-related tasks; to include: crawls, carries, ammunition resupply runs, grenade throws and agility sprints.

- 25-yard sprint in a low and modified high-crawl

- Hauling a simulated casualty more than 75 yards while zigzagging through cones using two different carries: drag and fireman's carry

- Sprinting while carrying two 30-pound ammo cans more than 75 yards through the same cones

- Throwing a dummy hand grenade into a marked circle 22.5 yards away

- 3 pushups and a sprint carrying the ammo cans to the finish line.

The maximum score for 17-26 year-old-males is 2:14

The maximum score for 17-26 year-old-females is 3:01

Rogers has scored a perfect 300 on four different CFTs.

The best way to train for the CFT is to imitate it, explained Rogers.

"As soon as the PFT (physical fitness test) is over, I begin to train for the CFT with my Marines," said the Dallas native. "For regular (physical training) we do ammo can lifts, runs, and lift weights in the gym."

Aside from life-saving situations, being combat ready and doing well on the CFT helps Marines advance in their careers.

"I want my Marines to advance," Rogers said. "Part of the promotion criteria is doing well on the CFT and PFT, so I push them to their



Lance Corporal Jeffery Reick, supply clerk on Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., lifts an ammo can over his head, Aug. 19. Reick is preparing for the upcoming Combat Fitness Test.

limits."

For Marines who struggle, Rogers encourages them to know their weaknesses and to seek help and train with those who do well.

Luckily for the Marines on MCLB Barstow who do seek help, Shelley Lamey, the Semper Fit director on base, has plenty of experience with the CFT and offers Marines personalized training routines and diet plans.

Lamey has not only participated in the CFT, but helped create the CFT when it was in its testing stages at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. During her past eight years at MCLB Barstow, she has prepared the course multiple times and has trained numerous Marines to do well.

"The test is challenging, but training specifically for the CFT can make it very successful and injury free," Lamey explained. "Injury prevention, nutrition, flexibility, balance, speed, strength, and power are all incorporated into training programs."

"Physical fitness is important within the Marine Corps," stated Lamey. "It empowers the Marine. It makes a strong Corps, and it makes an invincible country."

Rogers encourages all Marines to train for the CFT and stay in peak physical condition. Marines never know when they are going to be deployed or put into combat environments. They never know when combat fitness could save their life, or the lives of their brothers and sisters to the left and right of them.

TAKING CARE OF THE FAMILIES THAT PROTECT US: MCLB BARSTOW CDC

**Story and photos by
Pfc. Garrett White
Combat Correspondent**

For military families, having a way to care for their children while they are at work is a priority.

Whether a single parent, or a married couple, some families require assistance finding someone that is reliable, dependable, and understands the military way of life. Sometimes finding the help they can trust is no easy task.

However, the Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., Child Development Center offers this much needed service parents working at MCLB Barstow, and for National Training Center Fort Irwin.

“We provide full-time (from 5:45 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.) care for infants (6 weeks) through pre-school (5 years),” said Stacey Korves, resources and references specialist at the CDC. “We also have what we call 30-hour contracts, where they (guardians) can pick and choose up to 30 hours a week (of care).”

The 30-hour contracts are only offered for children ages 2 through 4, but full time services are offered to children from

6 weeks to 5 years of age, she explained. “They can use it anytime and anyway they need to accommodate their schedule during the week,” added Kristi Baker, assistant director of the CDC.

The price for the CDC’s services vary based on the family’s income, said Baker.

The CDC also offers a pre-school program which is geared to prepare children for elementary school, explained Baker. The staff uses a curriculum in which children learn through active play.

According to Baker, daily activities include art, nap time, outside time, and water play during the summer. The CDC is also U.S. Department of Agriculture approved to provide breakfast, lunch, and a snack every day at no extra cost to the parents.

The CDC is also NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accredited, explained Baker.

To keep parents involved the CDC has a parent advisory committee that meets quarterly to keep parents involved and to receive their input and concerns on issues, or changes at the CDC, said Korves. The PAC brings their ideas to the director or Korves to try and implement the



Nolan Berberena, son of Sgt. Christina Berberena, a supply clerk with Fleet Support Division here, plays games at a carnival put on by the Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., Child Development Center staff, Aug. 15. The CDC here provides daycare services for MCLB Barstow and National Training Center Fort Irwin service members and civilian employees.

changes, or to voice any ideas they might have to improve the curriculum.

Additionally the CDC teachers and staff along with parent volunteers put on a carnival, said Anna Anaya, program technician at the CDC.

The CDC wanted to give the children time to spend with their parents, and the parents time to get to know the teachers, said Anaya.

“We (the CDC staff) enjoyed the time we spent with the parents,” said Anaya. “The children had fun.”

Any active-duty service member, or civilian contractor working on MCLB Barstow or National Training Center Fort Irwin can take advantage of the CDC’s services said Korves.

So for families struggling with balancing work while caring for their children, the CDC offers their services to help ease the burden.



Children, parents and guardians play games at a carnival put on by the Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., Child Development Center staff Aug. 15. The CDC here provides daycare services for MCLB Barstow and National Training Center Fort Irwin service members and civilian contractors.

CHALLENGE COINS ... WHERE'S YOURS?

Story and photos by
Pfc. Sanuel Ranney
Combat Correspondent

Military members around the world can be found with small, customized metal coins in their pockets, displayed on their desks or in their homes; what is the significance of these coins and why do some service members hold onto them so dearly?

The truth is ... there isn't one single reason. There are many different myths, legends and personal reasons as to why these coins are so important.

Patrick Wolcott, the mission assurance officer on Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., and retired Air Force chief master sergeant, has heard many of these stories. One popular story of the challenge coin dates back to the Army Air Corps during World War I. Legend has it that a prosperous lieutenant bought medallions dipped in bronze displaying the squadron's insignia to give to each member of his unit. After this, a pilot within the unit was shot down and captured by the Germans; they took every form of identification from him ... except a leather pouch carrying his unit's coin. The young pilot managed to escape during a firefight, then cross "no man's land" to reach a French outpost. The French, although in alliance with the Americans, did not believe that he was one and were prepared to execute him. The pilot showed the only form of identification on his person -- the challenge coin. Luckily for the American pilot, the French recognized the insignia on the coin and instead of executing him, served him wine. From then on, the unit made it a tradition to carry the coin on them at all times.

Another story Wolcott is familiar with occurred during World War II, overseas where American currency was banned at the time. The Japanese would immediately destroy any American currency they came across ... so, an underground Filipino unit used American silver dollars as a form of identification. If another member "challenged" their identity thinking they were Japanese spies, they would pull out their silver dollars to prove they belonged in the unit.

Aside from proving identity, Wolcott has heard of and even participated in challenge coin games. If members of a unit went out and someone slammed a challenge coin on the table, everyone would have to do the same. If someone did not have one on them, they would pay the check; however, if everyone had one, the challenger paid.

"It's a way to boost morale," Wolcott explained.

Wolcott believes this is where the name challenge coin originated from; if someone challenges your identity with a specific unit, you have the coin. If someone challenges your esprit de corps ... you have the coin.

Whether these stories are true or not is up for debate, but regardless the challenge coin has been part of military tradition for years, explained Raymond Aguilar, the safety officer on MCLB Barstow and retired Army master sergeant.

"For me, they are in recognition for doing something above and beyond," Aguilar said. "They're not presented to just anyone ... it's a limited few."

Aguilar and Wolcott both agree that challenge coins are a memorable and inexpensive way to recognize someone on the spot.

"Limited edition coins may cost more, but (challenge coins) are generally three to five dollars," Wolcott added.

Aguilar designed a coin to give out on



behalf of the base safety office.

"It's important to recognize people for doing right ... they will be more likely to do it again," Aguilar explained.

Wolcott and Aguilar both display numerous challenge coins in their offices, as do many other service members. Corporal Bryanna Kessler, a stableman on MCLB Barstow, for example, takes pride in a coin given to her during the 1st Marine Division's Bodfish campout.

"It was given to me by a retired Marine who was with 7th Marines, and the president of the campout committee," Kessler explained. "It's normally only given to Marines who deploy within 7th Marines; I am the first female to have received one."

No matter where challenge coins originated from, or whether they were given as part of membership within a unit or a form of recognition, challenge coins are important to their possessors. They are something that uphold military tradition, regardless of service or rank.



FUN, FOOD, HISTORY ... THE SANTA MONICA PIER

Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Norman Eckles
Combat Correspondent

Southern California is home to one of the most well known piers of all time that reaches 1,600 feet into the Pacific Ocean. With laughter of children and adults riding carnival rides, playing arcade and carnival games and a roller coaster the pier is a great way to spend an afternoon with family or friends.

The Santa Monica Pier opened for business on Sept. 9, 1909. The pier is coming up on its 104th anniversary.

The city of Santa Monica built the pier as a necessity to aid Santa Monica's sanitation needs. They built the pier with a sewage pipe going along the bottom of the pier; this allowed treated sewage to flow into the ocean, said Wayne Vonder-Mehden, a production coordinator for the Santa Monica Pier.

Today, the pier is used as an attraction for all ages where people can come to enjoy themselves. Adults and children alike can walk together and enjoy the whole day on the pier, Vonder-Mehden added.

"All of the games on the pier are fun and cheap," said Richard Mata, a frequent visitor of the pier. "It's cheap, yet fun at the same time and you are right on the beach. So, when you get tired of the pier you can go down to the ocean and go for a swim or vice versa."

The cost of the carnival games and rides are minimal. It also offers a full arcade where children and adults can go and play their favorite arcade games such as first-person shooting games, racing games, and tireless games such as air hockey, skee-ball, and basketball games. Going on rides and



Visitors from around California ride the only roller coaster over the ocean. The Pacific Park is the only amusement park, in Southern California, to be on a pier.

enjoying the sound of the waves crashing against the pier is the best part of coming to the pier. The atmosphere is great because you have the feel of an amusement park, but you have the scenery of the beach, expressed Mata.

However, for some the pier offers more than just a fun time.

"When I went to the Santa Monica Pier, I really enjoyed it ... it reminded me of home," said Lance Cpl. Jonathon Norita, a supply clerk on Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., and a Saipan native. "It was relaxing to be near the ocean and (listen to) the waves crashing against the pier."

The pier also offers fishing to the general public. Spectators have to bring their own fishing reel and bait.

"If you get hungry while being at the pier, you can go to any restaurant on it as well," said Mata.

Mata expressed there are only two downsides from going to the pier ... having to leave and having to find parking.

"Parking cost \$12 for the whole day, sunrise to sunset," Mata said. "This is a popular place to be on the weekends finding parking is quiet difficult; coming right in the morning is the best time to find parking."

With all the things to do in California, the Santa Monica Pier is an experience for the family or friends ... People should come and check it out if they have never seen or been here before, Mata concluded.



An over all photo of the Santa Monica Pier and the only amusement park to be build over the Pacific Ocean. Visitors from Southern California come to ride the only roller coaster on a pier.

CHUCK MAWHINNEY: MARINE CORPS' DEADLIEST SHOT

Story by
Pfc. Garrett White
Combat Correspondent

In the annals of Marine Corps history, the name typically associated with sniping is Gunnery Sgt. Carlos Hathcock, a Marine sniper during the Vietnam War; with 93 confirmed kills, one of the longest distance kills ever recorded, and a pioneer of the Marine's sniper training program, Hathcock easily earns his spot in Marine Corps history.

However, thanks to a book titled: "Dear Mom: A Sniper's Vietnam," released in 1991 by Marine sniper Joseph Ward, Marine sniper and Vietnam War veteran Charles B. "Chuck" Mawhinney was brought into the spotlight. In the book, Ward credited Mawhinney with 101 confirmed kills.

Military records show Mawhinney, an Oregon native, has 103 confirmed kills, and 216 probable kills during the Vietnam War; making him the deadliest sniper in Marine Corps history.

Mawhinney spent 16 months in Vietnam in 1968 and 1969, was said to have considered his job "the ultimate hunting trip." He said he wouldn't look his targets in the eyes he wouldn't think if they had a wife or kids when they were in his scope all that mattered was he had to kill them before they killed him.



Courtesy photo from Mawhinney's website

Chuck Mawhinney posing with a M40 rifle replica, the same type of rifle he used in Vietnam.

His rules of engagement were simple; if there was an armed enemy in his sights he was taking the shot.

To him, his job wasn't all about taking lives, it was about saving them. Every person he killed was not only one less person to kill a fellow Marine, but he was also sapping the enemies will to fight.

When training rookie snipers, he would make sure they understood that. Their job was to kill the enemy and missing a shot, or having second thoughts on taking the shot could get them or a fellow Marine killed.

Mawhinney even took issue when a platoon leader made a "kill board" turning his unit's job into a competition. Thinking this could cause some of the younger and overzealous Marines to take chances with their lives to get more kills thus putting their lives in danger, he took it up his chain of command to get the board taken down.

Keeping his fellow Marines safe was always at the forefront of his mind. So even when he was becoming disillusioned with America's presence in Vietnam, he extended his tour twice in order to keep his Marines safe.

One memory that sticks with Mawhinney the most is the "one that got away". Having just returned to Vietnam from leave, Mawhinney was getting his rifle back from the armorer, who assured him they didn't make any changes to his rifle. Trusting the armorer, Mawhinney went out with his sniper team to support an infantry squad that was in the field.

From a concealed location hundreds of yards away from where the engagement was expected to occur, his team was charged with picking off any stragglers or North Vietnamese Army or Viet Cong reinforcements attempting to join the fight or thinking the area was safe from the fight.

From about 300 yards away Mawhinney spotted an armed enemy combatant in a rice paddy dike. He took the shot and missed. As a routinely deadly shot at that range, Mawhinney knew someone at the armory had done something to his scope. He took several more shots while trying to compensate for his altered scope, but couldn't hit the target, and the man got away.

It's one of the few things that still bother him about Vietnam. Mawhinney wonders how many people that man could have killed, how many of his friends, of his fellow Marines. He will never truly know, but it haunts him to this day.

Initially upset that his privacy, and his past was brought out to the public, Mawhinney, now retired from a Forest Service's career in Oregon, has used his newfound fame to try and cast a better light on the snipers. He is in high demand among military and police marksman instructors for his knowledge and experiences as a sniper.

Mawhinney has been a guest of honor at various marksmanship competitions around the country attended by military personnel and police SWAT snipers. He is also the spokesman for Strider Knives, which produces a knife with his signature on the blade. One of these knives is presented to the top graduate of each USMC Scout Sniper School in Camp Pendleton, California.

Information for this story was gathered from a Los Angeles Times article <http://articles.latimes.com/print/2000/jan/22/news/mn-56566> published January 22, 2000, and Charles Mawhinney's personal webpage <http://www.chuckmawhinney.com/>.

Chaplain's Corner

By Lt. Benjamin Warner
Base Chaplain

Faith, sports, and priorities



If you read this article regularly, you know that I try to keep up with most of the major sports (I only care about hockey when the Blues make the play-offs, otherwise, I couldn't name more than five pro hockey players). Because of this, people often ask me about various happenings in the sports world, particularly when matters of faith are involved (anyone hear of this guy Tim Tebow? or Jeremy Lin?). Yesterday I saw a man take a pretty hard elbow in the head, and I'm not really sure whether it was intentional—actually, I'm pretty sure it was intentional, but I'm not sure the aiming was intentional. After seeing said elbow, I looked up the player who threw the elbow and found out that, like most people who are vilified, his career is more complex than “bad guy” or “good guy.” This caused me to reflect further—why do we care? Not “why do we care if someone gets concussed during a sporting event,” because that actually seems important.

No, I was asking myself why is it that sports have become so consuming for us that we analyze them to death. Why do we invest so much into a team of men playing a game (albeit professionally) that we allow our emotions to rise to a level where we are probably able to throw our own elbows around?

Before I answer that, I'll tell you about something else I read a couple of weeks ago. It's a letter Mike Matheny wrote. He's the current manager of my hometown St. Louis Cardinals. He wrote this letter when he was coaching his own children's little league baseball team. He begins by saying this: “I always said that the only team that I would coach would be a team of orphans, and now here we are. The reason for me saying this is that I have found the biggest problem with youth sports has been the parents.” This encompasses everything that I think is wrong with sports. To boil it down

to a simple form, sports cause us to worry about glory; be it glory for our town, for ourselves, or for our nation. Some of this glory seeking can be a healthy form of pride: you'll never find someone who thinks it's shameful to root for your country in the Olympics. Other times the glory seeking is obviously detrimental—like vicariously expecting your children to become stellar athletes to make up for your own shortcomings.

In this way, sports become a mirror for us. It allows us to reflect on what we actually find important in life—what our priorities have become. And, sometimes, we don't like what we see. Here's where sports bleed over into “real” life. When we don't like what we see, what are our options? One is to cover our eyes and pretend we don't actually see it. Or, to take it up a notch, to pretend we see something that is not actually there. Thus, we go from seeing dissatisfaction

with how our lives have turned out into a superficial belief that we are the greatest person in the world! To avoid this kind of delusion, we need to decide what our priorities are. Only then can we look in the mirror and decide to change what we don't like. When I consider my priorities, I think of what Jesus said in Matthew 6:33: But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Keeping that in mind, I can look at the rest of my life through the lens of different priorities. I don't have to measure myself based on an artificial measure—like did my team win the game. My teams, my sports abilities, can fall to their appropriate level of priority. Then I'm free to focus on the things that matter to me. Discover your own priorities and let the rest of life fall into place.

MARADMIN 387/13

Change 1 to FY13 and FY14 officer and FY13 enlisted voluntary separation pay program.

Members of the armed forces are required to have voluntary separation pay recouped when that member voluntarily performs active duty or full-time National Guard duty while serving in an active duty (AD), selected Marine Corps reserve (SMCR), or active reserve (AR) component for 180 consecutive

days or more.

Marines subject to recoupment of VSP shall have a scheduled monthly amount deducted from their basic pay until the VSP is paid back in full. Voluntary active duty periods less than 180 consecutive days, or involuntary recall/mobilization periods (even when the involuntary period is greater than 180 days), do not require VSP recoupment.

