

MCTSSA



OneSource Brief

Third/Fourth Quarter, 2013

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS AND FAMILIES OF THE MARINE CORPS TACTICAL SYSTEMS SUPPORT ACTIVITY

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- Promotions, Awards, & Decorations
- MCTSSA & AVTB Happenings
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Promotions



Corporal Carlos A. Avila



Corporal Jordan Rogers



Lance Corporal Jonathan M. Bui



Sergeant Wendell L. Matney, Jr.



Corporal Amber D. Swaner



Corporal Issac J. Hinsley



Sergeant Thomas F. Orlowski



Sergeant Chandler J. Canepa



Corporal Kevin J. Garvina, Jr.



Sergeant Frank I. Tartsah



Corporal Elijah R. Schellhardt



Sergeant Roger M. Benca



Sergeant Logan M. Swank



Sergeant Frieden A. Stone



—LANCE CORPORAL—

- Jonathan M. Bui

—LANCE CORPORAL TO CORPORAL—

- Carlos A. Avila
- Kevin J. Gravina Jr.
- Isaac J. Hinsley (Meritoriously)
- Jordan A. Rogers
- Elijah R. Schellhardt
- Amber D. Swaner

—CORPORAL TO SERGEANT—

- Joe A. Alaquinez
- Roger M. Benca
- Chandler J. Canepa
- Wendell L. Matney Jr.
- Thomas F. Orłowski
- Christopher A. Rosario
- Brody D. Sergent
- Frieden A. Stone
- Logan M. Swank
- Frank I. Tartsah
- Evan L. Watson

—STAFF SERGEANT—

- Daniel B. Shea Jr.

—GUNNERY SERGEANT—

- Jae H. Chae
- Brian M. Meyer
- Derek P. Morris

—CAPTAIN—

- Christopher P. Rork

—LIEUTENANT COLONEL—

- Tarrell D. Giersch



MCTSSA's Commanding Officer, Colonel C.B. Snyder joins Connie Arkwell for the pinning of Tarrell D. Giersch upon his promotion to Lieutenant Colonel.

Decorations

Meritorious Service Medal

Major Shane B. Jenson
Gunnery Sergeant Shawn Souders

Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal

Master Sergeant Paul Crosby
Chief Warrant Officer 2 Robert Davis
Captain Nathan Rasmussen

Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal

Corporal Landon Craig
Staff Sergeant Miguel Mercado
Sergeant Jeremy Neal
Sergeant Ryan Thomas



Colonel C.B. Snyder, MCTSSA's Commanding Officer, presents SSgt Miguel Mercado (left) and Corporal Landon Craig the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.



MCTSSA's Logistics Officer Captain Kanella Hatchett presents Sergeant Ryan Thomas the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

Awards & Commendations



Lance Corporal Roger Ortiz-Martinez is congratulated by Mr. Len Novak of First Command for his selection as the Marine of the Quarter for the 4th Quarter, FY 13. Also recognized was Corporal Cory Life from AVTB who was named NCO of the Quarter.

Meritorious Mast



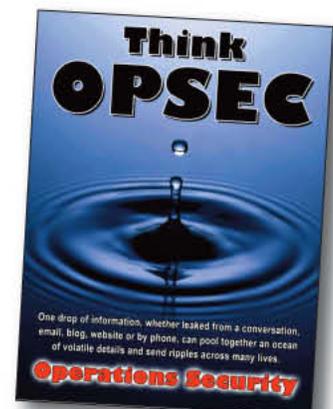
Corporal Brandon Kraft (TISG)



In San Diego's PETCO Park — prior to an exciting game where the New York Mets snapped a three-game skid to beat the San Diego Padres on August 15 — GySgt Derek P. Morris, a Cyber Security Chief at MCTSSA, re-enlists into the U.S. Marine Corps. Noting the special event, one of PETCO Park's massive digital displays in the field posted a "congratulations" and "thanks" message for SSgt Morris. Officiating the reenlistment is Major Henry Van Winkle, MCTSSA's Network Operations Center Branch Head.



Corporal Alonso Ramos (TISG)



Civilian Awards



It was a “two fer” for Jackie Lambert! MCTSSA’s Commanding Officer, Colonel Snyder congratulated her for achieving 30 years of Federal Service, 24 years of which were with MCTSSA in various positions. Additionally, she was one of seven MCTSSA employees to be recognized and received incentive awards for their work on Electronic Media Distribution.

Federal Length of Service Awards

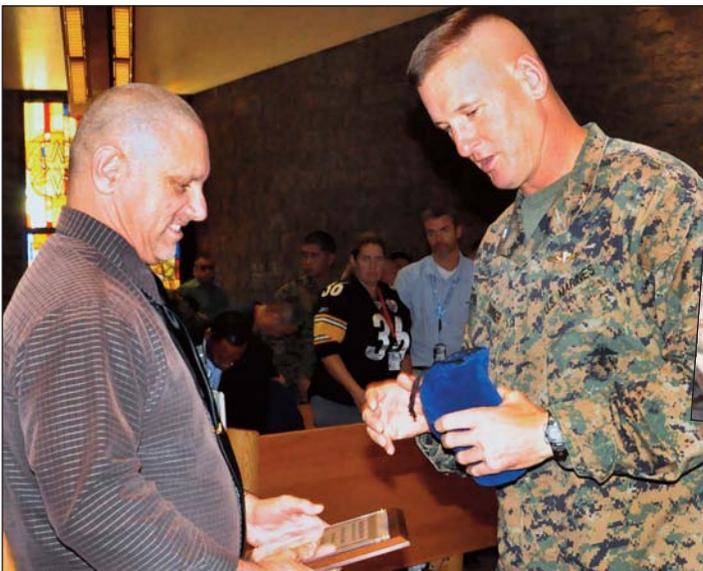
- Vicky Lawrence (35 years)
- Jackie Lambert (30 years)
- Kyle Miyoshi (20 years)
- Lawrence Denn (10 years)
- Richard Aranda (10 years)
- Daniel Ortiz (10 years)
- Michael Williams (5 years)



Kyle Miyoshi, receiving his 20-Year Federal Service Award

Incentive Awards

- Bryan Nguyen
- Jackie Lambert
- Robert Rubin
- Curt Selden
- Wil Santiago
- Andrew Sharp
- Rickey Graham



CIVILIANS OF THE QUARTER

MCTSSA’s Commanding Officer Colonel C.B. Snyder (left) presents Jay Chance from the Test & Certification Group the Activity’s Civilian of the Quarter Award for the 4th Quarter during an all hands meeting held at the chapel.

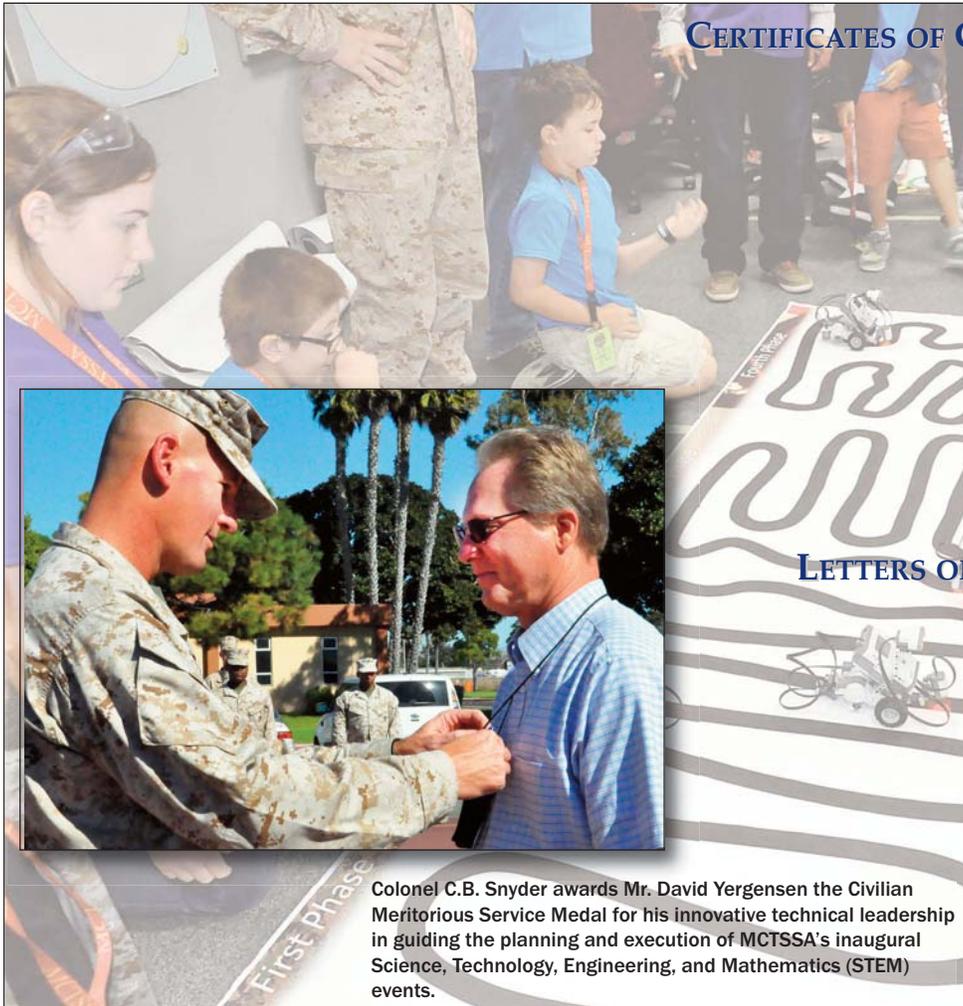
MCTSSA’s Executive Officer LtCol Michael Carter (top insert above) presented Curt Selden of the Technical Infrastructure and Services Group the Activity’s Civilian of the Quarter Award for the 3rd Quarter.

FAMILY READINESS OFFICER

LtCol Michael Carter:

michael.a.carter1@usmc.mil • (760) 725-2706

STEM Awards



CERTIFICATES OF COMMENDATION FOR STEM

James Baker
SSgt Jason Bollinger
Todd Bigalke
Thomas Crittenden
Bradley Detwiler
Richard Domondon
Matthew Kimbrell
Jeffery Nering
Shaun Monera
Mark Scheuffele
Gregory Smith

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION FOR STEM

Christine Nelson
Maria Hahn
Mike O'Neil
Julie Kozlowski
Paul Nyenhuis
Alisa Munden
Edi Radnoti
Kris Roxas
Cheryl Brennan
Sau-Ping George

Colonel C.B. Snyder awards Mr. David Yergensen the Civilian Meritorious Service Medal for his innovative technical leadership in guiding the planning and execution of MCTSSA's inaugural Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) events.

Stork Announcements



- LCpl Michael & Samantha Lopez, a boy, August 15, 2013
- Cpl Casey & Brianna Burkhardt, a girl, October 13, 2013
- Sgt Bilson & Jessica Wilson, a girl, October 21, 2013
- Sgt Galvin & Renee Jenkins, a boy, December 5, 2013
- SSgt Luis Herravaez & Mayra Herra-Guerero, a boy, December 21, 2013

One of the youngest attendees at this year's Family Fun Day was the 4-week-old daughter of Corporal Casey & Brianna Burkhardt.



Distinguished Guests and DAU Faculty Visit and Tour MCTSSA



Amphibious Vehicle Test Branch Director, LtCol Robert Bailey briefs Mr. Smerchansky on an array of testing activities at AVTB.



Meeting with MCTSSA's senior leadership, members of the Defense Acquisition University discuss means to collaborate on training opportunities to help MCTSSA professionals in support of our mission.

Recently, several distinguished visitors from around the Marine Corps were provided an opportunity to see first hand the ins and outs of the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity's capabilities, its labs, and testing enterprises.

General officers visiting MCTSSA included Major General Vincent R. Stewart, the commanding general of Marine Forces Cyber Command and Brigadier General John W. Bullard, Jr., Commanding General, MCI West. Also visiting the Activity was Mr. James Smerchansky, the Marine Corps Systems Command's Deputy Commander for Systems Engineering, Interoperability, Architectures, and Technology, as well as members of the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) who desired to learn more about the Activity, the support we provide to the Marine Corps, and to collaborate on training opportunities to further develop our acquisition professionals in support of our mission.

Following their tour of MCTSSA, the DAU visitors provided a two and half hour briefing to our acquisition professionals on Better Buying Power 2.0. Better Buying Power (BBP) is the implementation of best practices to strengthen the Defense Department's buying power, improve industry productivity, and provide an affordable, value-added military capability to the Warfighter. Better Buying Power 2.0 reflects the Department of Defense's commitment to continuous improvement. ■

Among the labs visited by BGen Bullard was MCTSSA's Satellite Communications Lab. Seen here, the General peers into the side of an Inflatable SATCOM Antenna.

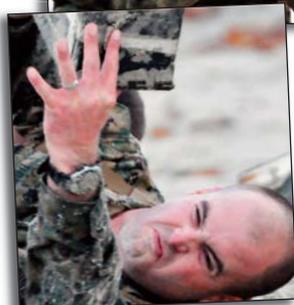


Accompanied by MCTSSA's CO, Colonel C.B. Snyder, Maj. Gen. Vincent R. Stewart, (left) the commanding general of Marine Forces Cyber Command talks with Brad Detwiler, while touring the Ground Combat Element Lab.



A bit tired and wet, the winning team for the Casualty Evacuation physical training exercise, which successfully completed the three-mile course in 48 minutes, 31 seconds. Team membership for each month's competition is done by luck of the draw the morning of the event.

*Just another day at the beach...
well, that is if you're a Marine at MCTSSA*





Every month, the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity holds a squad competition as part of its physical training program for all Marines.

In December, the competition focused on Casualty Evacuation (CASEVAC) and involved six teams of 12-13 Marines running a rigorous three-mile course divided into six stages, with each stage incorporating unique physical and basic skills academic challenges. The physical challenges included "Surf Line Dive Bomber" pushups within the ocean surf; a low beach crawl of 75 meters; first aid treatments for a simulated wound/open fracture, and the successful carrying of a litter patient, sandbags, and water and ammo cans through the course.





“Who didn’t have a ball at the Ball?”

With its great, traditional fanfare, Marines, civilian Marines, family and friends of MCTSSA,

AVTB, and MACCS-X joined together to celebrate the 238th Birthday of the Marine Corps at the Pala Casino Spa and Resort.

The event included dinner, dancing, souvenir pictures, the traditional cake cutting followed by remarks by the evening’s honored guest SgtMaj Ramona D. Cook, former Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton’s last Sergeant Major prior to its merging with Marine Corps Installations-West.



“Who didn’t have a ball at the Ball,” said SgtMaj Kenneth Warren. “It was a great time; great event. We have

already started planning for next year. If you have any insight, any ideas to make next year even better, send it to your Ball rep or straight to me, and we’ll make sure we have it for the after action report, so we do another great job next year.”

Definitely enjoyed by all, over 500 people attended this year’s Ball. ■



Colonel C.B. Snyder, MCTSSA's Commanding Officer, presents MCTSSA's Marine Ball Guest of Honor, SgtMaj Ramona Cook, with actual sand from the beaches of Iwo Jima.



Celebrating the cutting of the cake, Major Thomas Espinoza—the oldest Marines present at the Ball—shares a slice of cake with Lance Corporal Cody Dillinger—the youngest Marine present.



SIAT LAUNCHES NEW DT&E DIVISION

Colonel Christopher Snyder named Director

It all started a couple years ago when Mr. James Smerchansky, the Marine Corps Systems Command's Deputy Commander for Systems Engineering, Interoperability, Architectures, and Technology (DC SIAT) tasked MCTSSA to lead a Systems Command/PEO-Land Systems team chartered with developing a plan to create a Developmental Test & Evaluation (DT&E) organization and structure.

This effort was driven by the National Defense Authorization Act that required the Marine Corps and all the services to take action and better manage developmental test and evaluations for major acquisition programs.

Today, the result of that planning effort is now a reality. SIAT's new DT&E Division has been launched with MCTSSA's Commanding Officer, Colonel C.B. Snyder, wearing a "second hat," as the division's director. Functionally aligned under SIAT, the DT&E workforce resides at both MCSC in Quantico and MCTSSA at Camp Pendleton. The DT&E presence at MCTSSA is independent of the day-to-day operations of the Activity.

"We're here to provide value to the testing community"

"We're here to provide value to the testing community," says Dr. David Rathgeber, Director of DT&E Operations Section. "Our mission is to provide a variety of services that promote the application of rigorous and disciplined DT&E policy, planning, execution, analysis, and reporting, so as to reduce technical and programmatic risks throughout all acquisition life cycle phases including preparation for Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E)."

DT&E provides objective technical assessments about DT&E activities and functions for the entire Marine Corps that include:

- ✓ Providing an unambiguous, primary, consistent source for DT&E operating procedures

- ✓ Formalizing the development, growth, and improvement of the MCSC T&E workforce
- ✓ Promoting compliance with DT&E directives, instructions, and guidelines
- ✓ Maximizing return on United States Marine Corps investments in DT&E, such as people, capabilities, facilities
- ✓ Promoting Integrated Test and Evaluation
- ✓ Helping Program Managers minimize performance discrepancies between Developmental Test and Operational Test (OT) results
- ✓ Helping Program Managers improve readiness for operational test
- ✓ Helping Program Managers reduce programmatic risks to acceptable levels
- ✓ Informing decision-makers with objective data and facts



SIAT Deputy Commander, Mr. James Smerchansky and MCTSSA Commanding Officer, Colonel Christopher Snyder chatting with MCTSSA personnel during a meeting and brief within the Air Combat Element Lab.

DT&E will specifically focus its attention on these areas and work with the program managers.

"It is important that we be clear in our intent," says Rathgeber. "Our objective is to establish processes for the developmental testing activities that supports program managers in an enterprise-wide manner. We're here to provide value to the test and engineering community.

We're doing it through these various functions and through the lead testers that are embedded in the program offices."

Even though the SIAT's new DT&E Division is co-located at MCTSSA and several MCTSSA employees are now working for the Division, it won't change normal MCTSSA's operations.

"Will we be working with some of the people in this new division now co-located here?," MCTSSA's Commanding Officer Colonel C.B. Snyder rhetorically asked during a MCTSSA all-hands meeting. "Yes, but other than that it should be transparent, and it won't effect the rest of MCTSSA's operations." ■



MCTSSA Supports Combined Endeavor

Representative formations of 38 nations gathered at the Joint Multinational Training Command's Grafenwoehr Training Area in Germany at the end of last year to mark the start of the U.S. European Command's Exercise Combined Endeavor.

Among the 1,500 military and civilian personnel from the U.S., NATO and other Partnership for Peace nations participating in the exercises were Marines from the Marine Wing Communications Squadron 28 (MWCS-28) and 10th Marines, as well as five technical experts from the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity's Operating Forces Tactical Systems Support Center (OFTSSC), who were tasked with supporting the communications suites used by the MWCS-28 and 10th Marines.

For the Combined Endeavor exercise, command, control, communications and computers (C4) systems interoperability tests were repeatedly conducted among the participating countries and international organizations, covering everything from simple email and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) communication to a live fire exercise involving coordination between the United States, France, and Germany.

"MCTSSA fields a team of technical experts to support operations and exercises," says Monty Martinez, a government contractor and member of MCTSSA's OFTSSC support groups that travels with the Marines as they operate around the world. Along with active-duty Marines and civilian Marines, the OFTSSC teams—all experienced experts in field operations of involving both equipment and procedures—are available 24/7 to assist Marine operational forces.

"We are here to provide engineering, field operating procedure and help desk support to these guys," said Martinez speaking on the support he provided for to Marines at Combined Endeavor. "We are able to advise on gear rooming, verifying software baseline compatibility, and we also ran these guys through putting this whole thing together several times."

"Combined Endeavor is a unique opportunity to share best practices," says Captain Jessica Weinbrenner, MCTSSA's Operating Forces Deployed Support Branch Head. "It's an important undertaking because we may—at some time in the future—be working together in an actual, complex environment that requires the best practices and cooperation we have used and tested in these type of exercises." ■



U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Christopher Wallace of Marine Wing Communication Squadron 28 links up chat and e mail service through the operations trailer of capability set 3 as part of Combined Endeavor.

AVTB's Minh-Van Oyama Wins Lasswell Technical Excellence Award for Support to Fleet

The National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) has awarded its 2013 A. Bryan Lasswell In-Service Engineering Award for Fleet Support to Minh-Van Oyama, a test engineer working for the Marine Corps System Command's Amphibious Vehicle Test Branch (AVTB).

Exploring the frequency of component failures impacting Assault Amphibious Vehicle (AAV) operational mission failures, Ms. Oyama demonstrated that 71 percent of the failures were linked to four vehicle subsystems. By overlaying the frequency and type of component failures on overall system reliability, Ms. Oyama provided critical data to engineers and acquisition officials to support the decision-making process for future sustainment strategies that have the potential to improve readiness levels of the vehicle.



"Her work has the potential to benefit the Marine Corps for decades to come."

"Recognizing Ms. Oyama with the Lasswell Award is a tremendous honor and is well deserved," says LtCol Robert Bailey, AVTB's Director. "Her work has the potential to benefit the Marine Corps for decades to come. Her analysis can positively impact AAV sustainment decisions near and long term by maximizing the operational value of investment priorities made for the vehicle."

The NDIA award—which is given only to active duty military and civil service personnel and includes a trophy and check for \$1,000—is presented annually in honor of Marine Corps Major Red Lasswell who worked in obscurity in Pearl Harbor, decoding Japanese messages.

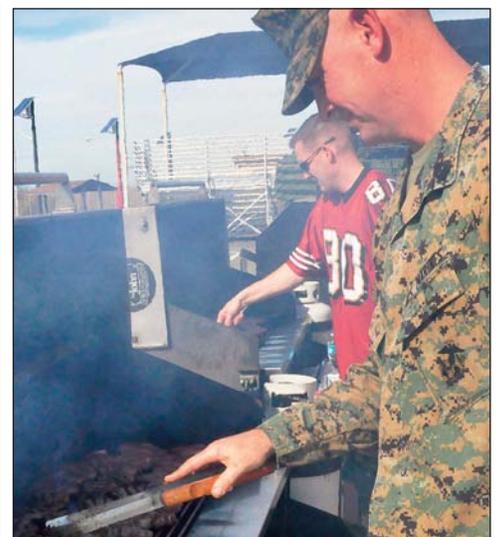
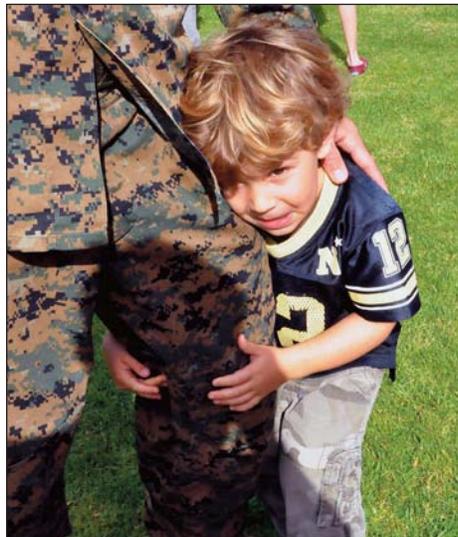
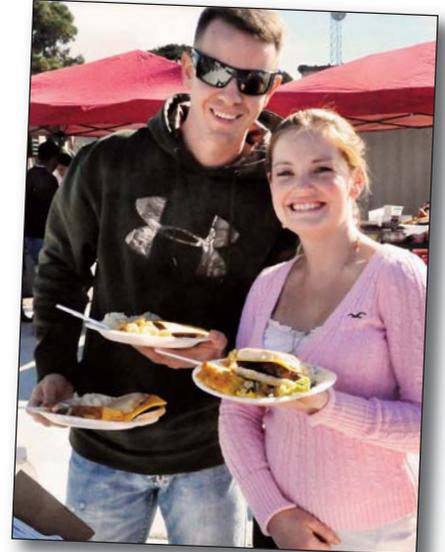
Having won the \$1,000 award, Oyama decided to share her award with her fellow AVTB teammates by underwriting a very successful Thanksgiving luncheon for branch personnel.

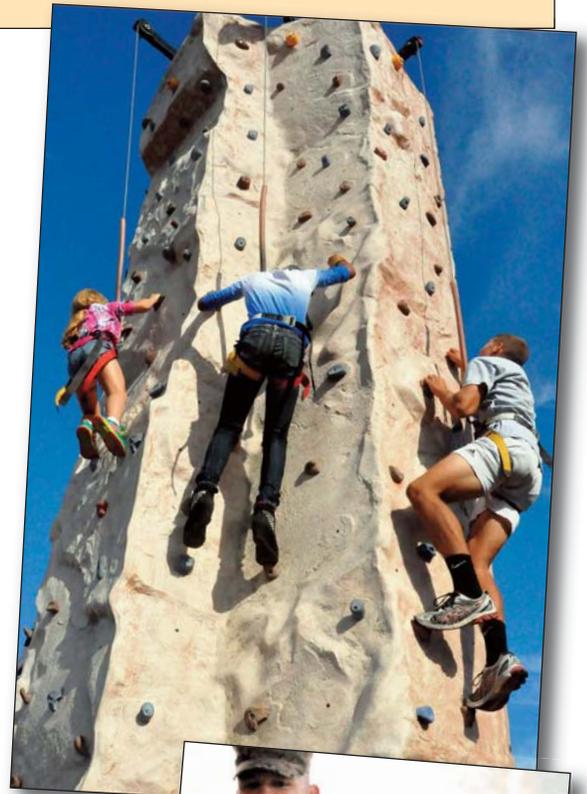
Oyama, whose family immigrated to the United States from Viet Nam when she was 12, attended San Diego State University, receiving a degree in electrical engineering. She has worked at AVTB for 14 years.

"It's great to have been recognized for hard work," she commented. "We have great leadership at AVTB." ■

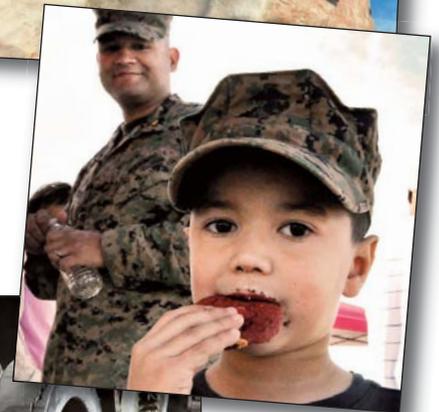
Family Fun Day 2013

Did you know that in addition to the pictures shown within this newsletter, numerous other shots of the Family Day and other MCTSSA events are posted on MCTSSA's Share Point site, under Public Affairs. The photography has been released, so MCTSSA personnel wishing to obtain copies of themselves, family or friends may contact the Activity's public affairs officer at wil.williams@usmc.mil.

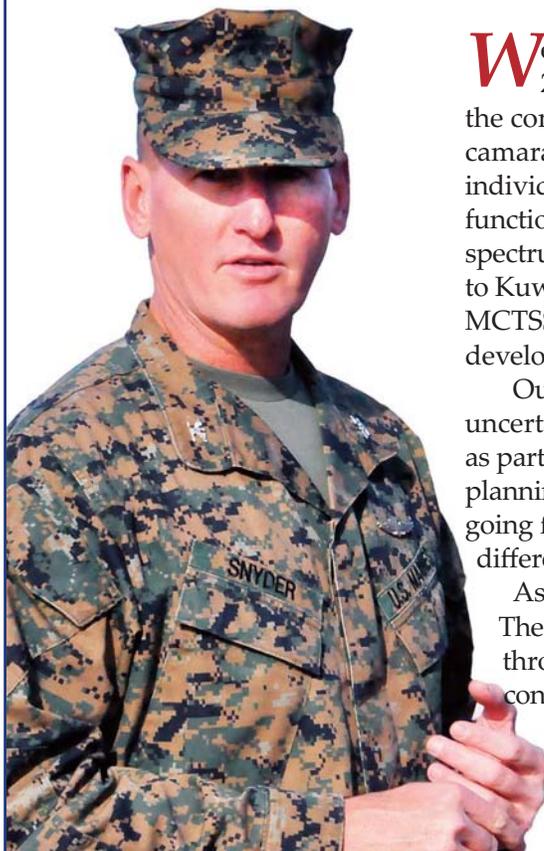




Drawing a huge crowd of over 500 people based on the number of lunches served this year's Family Fun Day was a "great success and went very well," says GySgt Adelita Valle, who spearheaded the event with the assistance of more than 35 Marines. In addition to the great food, face painting, an array of games, back massages, and Sumo wrestling which seemed to be enjoyed by the adults as much as the kids this year's event included live vocal entertainment by Sarah Lehman, the 15 year-old daughter of MCTSSA's personnel security specialist Brian Lehman. ■



Happy New Year MCTSSA!



We closed out 2013 on a high note and set the stage for an even better year in 2014. This newsletter really highlights a number of good news stories at the command; promotions, awards, new additions to families, team building, camaraderie, and just getting to know one another. Our success is the result of individual efforts, leadership, and skills that come together and create highly functional teams to get the mission accomplished. We continue to support the spectrum of Marine Corps operations, from having Marines forward deployed to Kuwait, embarked on the MEU's, or at local exercises here in Camp Pendleton. MCTSSA is also highly engaged daily providing engineering solutions and developing tests to field new systems for our Marines.

Our role is becoming increasingly more important during a time of uncertainty brought on by fiscal austerity and constrained resources. MCTSSA, as part of Marine Corps Systems Command, is implementing a new method of planning and executing our work for 2015/2016. There will be many challenges going forward, but this is an exciting opportunity to try new things and make a difference.

As always, taking care of our families is essential to our overall readiness. The Marine Corps provides a breadth of resources that can help you navigate through the challenges and opportunities in life. Please do not hesitate to contact the Family Readiness Officer with any questions.

Looking forward to working with you all this coming year and making MCTSSA a better command.

Semper Fi,
Col Chris Snyder

... and the winner is —Amphibious Vehicle Test Branch!

Amphibious Vehicle Test Branch won this year's Parade of Lights, sponsored by the Oceanside Yacht Club. The boat's dramatic light design was created by Crystal Ramus, wife of AVTB's GySgt Steven Ramus, while the ship was decorated by the Branch's Operations Section. AVTB's entry was joined by fishing boats, sail boats, yachts, kayaks and dinghies dressed up in holiday swag—all of which circled the Oceanside Harbor to enchant thousands of onlookers at the harbor, restaurants and along the beach.

