

# FLIGHT JACKET

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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

August 26, 2011

## Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps visits Miramar

Sgt. Maj. Micheal P. Barrett, center kneeling, the sergeant major of the Marine Corps, poses for a group photo with Marines, who work at the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Installation Personnel Administration Center, during his first visit as the SMMC to MCAS Miramar Aug. 19. Barrett used his visit to introduce himself to all the IPAC Marines, and to take pictures with each Marine. Later the sergeant major attended the post and relief and retirement ceremony for Sgt. Maj. Don W. Gallagher, the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing sergeant major, who relinquished his post to Sgt. Maj. Anthony A. Spadaro. (Photo by Cpl. Alexandra M. Vazquez)



## Marine stays determined in the face of tragedy



Pfc. Max Pennington

SAN DIEGO, Calif.--Cpl. Thomas R. VanderLaan, a correctional specialist at the Naval Consolidated Brig and a Ceres, Calif., native, works out during physical therapy at the Veterans Affairs Spinal Cord Injury Center Aug. 22. **FOR FULL STORY, SEE PAGE 4**

## SNCOs prepare cultural skills for duty

### Sgt. Deanne Hurla

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

“The future security environment demands that Marines of every rank possess increased understanding of the cultures, history, geography and demographics of the areas in which they will operate,” said Gen. James Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps, in regard to the Foreign Area Officer/Regional Area Officer program.

Now, to supplement the FAO/RAO program, Marine staff noncommissioned officers are being called upon for the Foreign Area SNCO/Regional Area SNCO program.

The purpose of the program is to develop strategic cultural insights to help Marine Air Ground Task Force com-

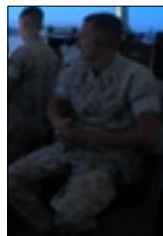
manders understand the complex human environment where Marines deploy. Regionally-focused FAOs clarify historical context, cultural significance, social perspectives and motivations of foreign societies and militaries.

FAS and RAS skills are force multipliers for commanders at the tactical level, explained Maj. Jonathan Brown, the International Affairs Program coordinator. They put Marines in the room with regionally-focused education, language and culture expertise to influence and guide the planning and execution of Marine operations overseas. Cultural expertise will enable the Marine Corps to function smarter versus harder when responding to contingencies, providing re-

**GO TO SNCO, PAGE 3**

MCAS Miramar  
Website

www.miramar.usmc.mil



### ATC ENSURES PILOTS, AIRCRAFT MAKE IT SAFELY HOME

Air traffic control Marines follow strict guidelines to see all pilots, crew and nearly a half billion dollars worth of equipment to the flight line safely. See page 2 for story and photos.



### COAST GUARD RECEIVES THANKS FROM MAJ. GEN. CONANT

Maj. Gen. Thomas L. Conant thanks the Coast Guard for their assistance with rescuing two Marine pilots. See page 3 for photo.

REACH US



EDITORIAL  
(858)-577-6000

## FLIGHT JACKET



**Maj. Gen.  
Thomas L. Conant**  
Commanding General  
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



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Commanding Officer  
MCAS Miramar

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The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office. Comments or questions should be directed to 858-577-6000.



*Sgt. W. Zach Griffith*

Sgt. Daniel Rocha, an air traffic controller with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, surveys the flight line here. The Marines who man the air traffic control tower are responsible for all the aircraft in the air space around Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, including civilian and law enforcement.

## Air Traffic Controller Marines keep pilots in line

**Sgt. W. Zach Griffith**  
COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

The cost of an F/A-18 Hornet can range in price from \$26 to \$50 million, an MV-22 Osprey: almost \$100 million.

That means, at any one time Cpl. Joseph Wentworth and his fellow air traffic controllers with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron can be responsible for nearly a half billion dollars and the lives of all pilots and flight crew queuing up to leave or land on the runway here.

"It's always there, in the back of your mind: the value of the equipment, or the individuals who are flying around," Wentworth said. "You try and put that stuff in the back of your head and execute the mission, which is getting these guys safely on deck."

Luckily for all, the Marines who man the tower are held to strict guidelines and have volumes of regulations and procedures to guide them in their daily operations, according to Sgt. Daniel Rocha, an air traffic controller with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron.

Going beyond written guidelines, the air traffic controller field has another tool which differs from many jobs in the Marine Corps. Rank is not the determining factor in responsibility; qualification and experience is the most important aspects, Rocha explained. Additionally, each Marine, has to start at the bottom at each new duty station they check into.

"If a lance corporal is qualified, a gunnery sergeant that comes in would have to fall underneath that lance corporal who would be the

instructor," Rocha said. "It's that lance corporal's qualification that allows him to instruct that gunnery sergeant. If he feels that something is wrong and needs to take proper actions, he would. That lance corporal is responsible for any mistakes the gunnery sergeant might make."

All the Marines are constantly training and learning, Wentworth affirmed. The more comfortable a controller is at his station, the less stress there will be.

"In any job, if you don't know what to do, it can be stressful," Wentworth said. "Our training is so strict and disciplined that you really keep your composure while on station. You can't let your stress level get that high."

If a situation does start to look like it could unravel, the Marines in the tower are constantly watching out for each other.

"It's a team concept, we have each other's backs," Wentworth said. "If something goes wrong we'll take care of it together."

Even with all the rules, the air traffic controllers of Miramar have to stay flexible and be ready to deal with new situations daily.

"You're never going to have a day that's the same as another," Wentworth said. "We have rules that are set forth to ensure standardization, but nothing is going to happen at the same time on the same day. Every day is a new day, and you never know what to expect."

Even with the unexpected expected daily, training and teamwork ensure things run smoothly on the flight line and in the skies above MCAS Miramar.

## Religious Services

*The Chaplain's Office, located in Building 5632 on Bauer Road, coordinates regularly scheduled services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities, call (858)-577-1333, or visit [www.miramar.usmc.mil](http://www.miramar.usmc.mil).*

### Sunday:

9 a.m. Protestant  
Worship Service

9:30 a.m. Protestant  
Children's Worship

11 a.m.  
Roman Catholic Mass

### Religious Education/Sunday:

9:30 – 10:45 a.m.  
Catholic CCD Children K-12

10 a.m. Protestant  
Adult Bible Study

### Weekday Worship Service:

Mon. – Fri. 11:30 a.m.  
Catholic Mass

Mon. 6:30 p.m. Contemporary  
Praise and Worship Service

Wed. 7 p.m. Baptist Service

### Study Groups:

Mon. 7 p.m.  
Night Bible Study,  
Classroom in the Chapel area

Tues. 6 a.m.  
Morning Prayer Service  
and Study Group

### Islamic Worship Service:

Fri. at noon.  
Located in the Chapel or visit  
[www.icsd.org](http://www.icsd.org)

### Jewish:

Jewish Outreach at  
(858) - 571 - 3444  
[www.jewishinsandiego.org](http://www.jewishinsandiego.org)

# 3rd MAW commander thanks Coast Guard after rescue



Sgt. Deanne Huria

COAST GUARD SECTOR SAN DIEGO, Calif. – Maj. Gen. Thomas L. Conant, the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing commanding general, talks with Coast Guard Cutter Edisto crew members at Coast Guard Sector San Diego Aug. 18. Conant visited the Coast Guardsmen to thank them for their assistance in rescuing two F/A-18 pilots in the early hours of Aug. 11. Coast Guard, Navy and 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing units all assisted in the search after communication with the aircrew was lost.

## SNCO,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

gional stability, security cooperation and disaster relief.

Marines rarely deploy to English-speaking countries or engage populations with familiar cultural backgrounds. They are increasingly serving alongside coalition partners from non-English speaking countries, and this trend will likely continue, according to Brown.

“Language, regional and cultural skills are enduring warfighting competencies that are critical to mission readiness in today’s dynamic global environment,” said Leon E. Panetta, the Secretary of Defense,

in a memorandum. “Our forces must have the ability to effectively communicate with and understand the cultures of coalition forces, international partners and local populations.”

Of the 202,000 Marines there are approximately 181,000 enlisted Marines. From these Marines 77 SNCOs have a regionally focused bachelors or masters degree, and 5,842 Marines, E-5 through E-8, are language qualified. However, there are only four Marines with both qualifications.

“Familiarity with foreign environments, languages, cultures, religious perspectives, history, politics and social issues are skill sets best learned deliberately

and not on the fly, or at the last minute,” Brown said. “These skills require an investment in education, so Marines can help commanders understand the context of their operational environment.”

These skills are amplified when Marines learn local languages, enabling them to positively impact the social atmosphere when encountering third country nationals and coalition partners. Finally, these skills require personal experience in a culture, to separate stereotypes, provide informed perspectives, and distinguish fact from fiction in written accounts overseas.

To provide tactical-level commanders with the information they need on specific

regions, SNCOs must have a regionally-focused undergraduate or graduate degree, a minimum required ability to learn languages and an enhanced understanding of culture through personal experience.

The program is now being prepared for a practical application test of 10 volunteer Marines. The test will consist of two volunteer candidates who require training in all the criteria areas. Six volunteer candidates who require training in two areas, and two volunteer candidates who require no training.

SNCOs who are interested in volunteering for the program should watch for the Marine Administrative message, which is expected to be published soon.

# Miramar's determination inspires Miramar

**Story and photo by  
Pfc. Max Pennington**

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Every day Marines immerse themselves in the Marine Corps core values- honor, courage and commitment. Marines are expected to overcome the obstacles of life whether it's in combat, a physical fitness test or a paralyzing neck injury.

Cpl. Thomas R. VanderLaan, a correctional specialist at the Naval Consolidated Brig here and a Ceres, Calif., native, broke his neck June 29, 2011, while tackling a weighted dummy during football practice, leaving him with nerve damage and the inability to walk.

VanderLaan's mother, Susan Wares, describes her son as a person who always works hard and does the best he can in everything.

Those traits helped lead VanderLaan in his decision to become a Marine.

"He joined the Marine Corps because he wanted to be the best of the best," said Wares.

VanderLaan's passion and positive attitude has carried with him through this trying time.

"Everything I have as far as being able to keep going, I've learned half of it's me and the other half of it's the Marine Corps," said VanderLaan.

VanderLaan's drive and determination has already enabled him to adapt to new things he has had to re-learn. From holding a toothbrush to regaining strength, he's taking it day-by-day to get back to the things he loves.

Master Sgt. Ross G. Blaine, the Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron communication chief and assistant head coach for the Miramar Falcons, said he knew the first time he met VanderLaan, while recruiting him for the team, that he is motivated and goal-oriented.

"He's one of those Marines that's intangible, you just can't describe him," said Blaine.

Although VanderLaan may not currently be working at the brig or playing on the field tackling opponents, he still contributes to the team.

"Spiritually on the field we're fighting for him, because we know we have a wounded warrior fighting for us," said Blaine. "His determination to walk again is surreal. He's one of the most inspirational Marines I have ever met."

Training extensive hours in everything from psychological therapy to physical therapy, VanderLaan keeps his motivation and determination to someday walk again.

"I've done enough research and realized that there's a chance to make a full recovery," said VanderLaan. "I'm not looking for a miracle to make it back to walking. I'm looking at a lot of strength, determination and pushing every single day. Once my feet hit the ground, I'm running and I'm not stopping."



SAN DIEGO, Calif.--Cpl. Thomas R. VanderLaan, a correctional specialist at the Naval Consolidated Brig and a Ceres, Calif., native, works out during physical therapy at the Veterans Affairs Spinal Cord Injury Center Aug. 22. VanderLaan is recovering from a broken C-5 vertebrae he suffered while tackling a weighted dummy during football practice with the Miramar "Falcons" June 29, 2011. The break in his neck left him with nerve damage and the inability to walk.

# Marines take Air Force Gunfighters on memorable flight

**Senior Airman Benjamin Sutton**  
366TH FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE, Idaho -- Marines from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., who have been on temporary duty assignment here, took approximately 240 Gunfighters on incentive flights in two MV-22 Ospreys Aug. 19.

The Marines are assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 166 and are conducting training exercises here from Aug. 9 to 25.

“The main purpose of this training was for our squadron to become full operations capable on the MV-22 so we can deploy,” explained Marine Staff Sgt. Travis C. Borkowski, a crew chief with VMM-166.

The MV-22 Osprey’s mission for the U.S. Marine Corps is the transportation of troops, equipment, and supplies from ships and land bases for combat assault and assault support. It has many unique capabilities such as both a vertical takeoff and landing, and short takeoff and landing. It is designed to combine the functionality of a conventional helicopter with the long-range, high-speed cruise performance of a turboprop aircraft.

“We are lucky to be here in an unfamiliar area and perform flight operations and maintenance while enjoying the Air Force hospitality,” said Borkowski. “Today has been extremely rewarding having the opportunity to fly the Gunfighters around.”

The Ospreys spent more than five hours flying the

Gunfighters around the local area for what is a rarely seen bird’s-eye-view for the majority of Airmen.

“A lot of Airmen, myself included, never get a chance to ride in the aircraft because of our career fields,” stated Senior Airman Michelle Brewer, 366th Fighter Wing knowledge operations manager. “The Osprey was very exciting to ride in and I was shocked by how crowded it was inside because it is such a large aircraft.”

Despite the size, according to the Boeing website, the MV-22 is twice as fast as a helicopter and has a much longer range resulting in greater mission versatility.

“Riding in the Osprey was awesome, if I could do it again right now I absolutely would,” said Staff Sgt. Samantha A. Safford, 366th Operations Support Squadron aviation resource manager. “The pressure from split second turning and twists really made me aware of how unique this aircraft is. This kind of inter-service training is great for both the Gunfighters and Marines.”

The Marines continually commented on the opportunities the MHAFB area had for them. For example, being able to coordinate training with Air Force Special Operations and working with Army AH-64 Apaches to conduct two joint training missions.

“The facilities and terrain available to us in the MHAFB area offers us very diverse training opportunities that are not readily available in the San Diego area,” said Marine Capt. Eric R. Mann, VMM-166 Adjutant. “The ranges available so close to Mountain Home enable us to quickly and efficiently conduct training that would be difficult to

get at Miramar, such as Ground Threat Reaction, Tail Gun, and Low Altitude Tactics. The Sawtooth Mountains have Forest Service grass air strips that we can use as landing zones to practice landing in mountainous terrain. We especially enjoy any opportunity to show people what we are capable of and how great a machine the VM-22 Osprey really is. MHAFB has been such an excellent host to us and we appreciate the opportunity to give back in any way we can.”



Airman 1st Class Heather Hayward

MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE, Idaho – U.S. Air Force personnel load onto an MV-22 Osprey aircraft assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 166 out of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., here Aug 18. The visiting Marine Corps Squadron offered incentive rides to familiarize Air Force personnel with the MV-22 Osprey aircraft.

# Black Knights steal show during Supercars race

**Cpl. Claudio Martinez**  
MCAS Iwakuni

TOWNSVILLE, Australia - As American and Australian military forces throughout Queensland, the Northern Territory, and neighboring naval areas prepared for Talisman Sabre 2011, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 Black Knights decided to thank the local people here for their hospitality during the Sucrogen Townsville 400 V-8 Supercars races hosted south of the Townsville Central Business District July 10.

This year’s Sucrogen Townsville 400 had 29 V-8 supercars racing through a 400-kilo-

meter circuit course and ran from July 8-10.

This marked the third year the races came to Townsville.

Four F/A-18 Hornets with VMFA-314 flew over the crowd of people in attendance after the last note of the Australian anthem played before the final race of the Townsville 400 kicked-off.

Maj. Brian Dennis, VMFA-314 operations officer, helped to coordinate the fly-over with the Townsville 400 operations manager.

“We heard about this race and we thought ‘hey, what a great opportunity for the Marine Corps and the Marine Fighter Attack Squadron to be involved with the community in this

race,’” said Dennis.

“We just knew there had to be a way we could work together, do something with (the races) and be involved with the people of Townsville,” he said.

Dennis said he believes the flyover could not have gone better and helped to strengthen ties with the community.

The people in the stands stood and cheered as the roaring Black Knight F/A-18s soared overhead drowning out the revving racecars below.

Adele Henrichs, Sucrogen Townsville 400 operations manager, said it is unusual for military fighter jets to put on a show the way the Marines did.

“To actually have the U.S. Marine Corps here is massive,” said Henrichs. “Everyone has been absolutely looking forward to it. It’s just great.”

Henrichs coordinated the flyover with the Black Knights and said she hopes to keep in touch with the Marines to do something similar in the future.

Several of the locals were equally appreciative of the flyover and thanked the Marines walking around the race grounds.

David Dollard, a local, was one of 150,000 people in attendance at the races.

Dollard said he has been an avid collector of U.S. Marine Corps memorabilia since he

was a child and appreciated their show during the races and their participation in the Talisman Sabre exercise.

“I love the fact that these guys are out here today doing what it is they are doing,” said Dollard. “I love the whole idea.”

Lt. Col. Brian Evans, VMFA-314 executive officer, was one of the pilots who flew over the crowd during the race.

Evans said he was surprised to see a swarm of people lined up at the fence gate by the Royal Australian Air Force Base flight line just to watch the F/A-18s take off. He said he believes the flyover would indirectly help build local support for Talisman Sabre.

“One of the goals and priorities of exercise Talisman Sabre is our exchange and relationship with the Aussies,” said Evans. “To actually provide a flyover for the local people to see the Americans are here and flying F/A-18s — it just fosters a good working relationship between the Marine Corps and the Aussies.”

Talisman Sabre is a biennial exercise designed to test and improve upon the Australian and American forces ability to conduct joint and combined task force operations. Although there are many facets to the exercise, the Black Knights’ portion in this training is scheduled to involve mainly close air support for the Australian forces on the ground.



Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 pilots pose for a picture with Sucrogen Townsville 400 V-8 Supercars race drivers July 9. (Photo courtesy of Townsville Bulletin, Scott Radford Chisholm)

## FRIDAY 26      SATURDAY 27      SUNDAY 28      MONDAY 29      TUESDAY 30      WEDNESDAY 31      THURSDAY 1

<p><b>Intramural Horseshoes Tournament Starts</b> 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. 858-577-1202</p> <p><b>Beer and Brats Night</b> 4 – 7 p.m. Officers' Club 858-577-4808</p> <p><b>Dusk to Dawn Outdoor Movie Night</b> 8:30 p.m. – Dusk 858-577-6171</p>	<p><b>FREE Texas Hold Em' Poker Tournament</b> 6 p.m. The Great Escape 858-577-6171</p> <p><b>MCCS Family Appreciation FREE Movie Day</b> 6:30 p.m. Theater 858-577-4143</p>	<p><b>MCAS Miramar Family Tennis Day</b> 1 – 3 p.m. O' Club Tennis Courts 858-577-1202</p> <p><b>MCCS FREE PRIZE GIVEAWAYS...</b> ITT/Travel Office: Medieval Times Gift Pack <i>Winner will be drawn on August 31 Stop in and fill out an entry form today!</i></p>	<p><b>Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon Meetings</b> 6:30 p.m. Counseling Center 858-577-6585</p> <p><b>SHOP MCX Summer Wrap-up</b> Aug. 31 - Sept. 5</p> <p><b>Glam-O-Rama Sale</b> Sept. 7 - 18</p> <p><b>Anniversary Sale</b> Sept. 7 - 20</p> <p><b>Toshiba Sale</b> Sept. 7 - 20</p> <p><b>Bath &amp; Body Works Semi-Annual Sale</b> Sept. 7 - 27</p>	<p><b>Drug Enforcement Administration Presentation</b> 858-577-1801</p> <p><b>S.D. Chargers Cheerleaders Autograph Signing</b> 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. MCX Main Store Uniform Center</p> <p><b>Recreational 6 vs. 6 Soccer League Starts</b> 858-577-1202</p> <p><b>Coconut Tango Tournament</b> 858-577-6171</p> <p><b>Recreational Evening Softball League Registration Deadline</b> 858-577-1202</p>	<p><b>*Military Appreciation with the S.D. Chargers</b> 9:45 a.m. – 12 p.m. Youth Sports Complex 858-577-6365</p> <p><b>CPR Certification Class</b> 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Fire Dept. Training Room 858-577-6195</p> <p><b>Wing Wednesday</b> 3 – 6 p.m. Rockers SNCO Club</p>	<p><b>*SMP Commissary Awareness Month "Basketball Madness" Competitions</b> 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. 858-577-6171</p> <p><b>Recreational Flag Football League Registration Deadline</b> 858-577-1202</p> 
<p><b>WEEKLY EVENTS...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports Complex Marine Teen training Tues. &amp; Sat. 858-577-4128/4129</li> <li>• Deployment support for preschoolers, elementary and teenagers Mon. through Wed. 858-577-4588</li> <li>• QOL Golf: Two Hours After Twilight free Golf for Active Duty 858-577-4155</li> </ul>						

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[www.mccsmiramar.com](http://www.mccsmiramar.com)

### MILITARY APPRECIATION WITH THE SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

Stop by the Youth Sports Complex on Wednesday, Aug. 31 from 9:45 – 11:45 a.m. and enjoy viewing a team practice with the San Diego Chargers. There will be autograph signing and photo opportunities. Bring your camera and show your Charger spirit. There will be food and drinks available at the Youth Sports Complex snack bar. Call 858-577-6365 for more information.

### SMP COMMISSARY AWARENESS MONTH "BASKETBALL MADNESS"

Stop by the commissary on Thursday, Sept. 1 from 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. for "Basketball Madness." This event is free to all single service members and geo-bachelors. There will be free food, drinks, prizes and challenging contests. Will your unit win? Call 858-577-6283/6171 for more information.



Get help paying for childcare  
Visit the National Association of Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies website at [www.naccrra.org](http://www.naccrra.org) to see information on eligibility for assistance to pay for and find childcare services. Contact 1-800-424-2246 for information.

#### ICE ready for use

The Interactive Customer Evaluation set up for Miramar is ready for use. ICE is an online version of the "Customer Suggestion Box." It collects feedback on services

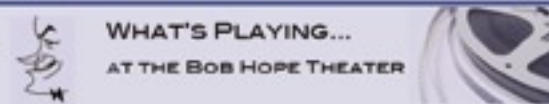
provided by installations throughout the Department of Defense. To submit a suggestion, visit the ICE website at <http://ice.disa.mil>.

**Important Phone Numbers**  
**Victim Advocacy 24-hour Hotline**  
**858-864-2815**

**Eagle Eyes**  
**877-356-EYES (3937)**

**Military One Source**  
**800-342-9647**

**D-Stress 24-hour Hotline**  
**877-476-7734**  
(All calls are strictly confidential)



**Fri. Aug 26:**  
Winnie the Pooh (G) 6:30 p.m.  
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2 (Not 3D) (PG-13) 9 p.m.

**Sat. Aug 27:**  
FREE Admission: Zookeeper (PG) 6:30 p.m.  
\*Larry Crowne (PG-13) 9 p.m.

**Sun. Aug 28:**  
\*Monte Carlo (PG) 1 p.m.  
\*Transformers: Dark of the Moon (Not 3D) (PG-13) 6:30 p.m.

**Wed. Aug 31:**  
Captain America (Not 3D) (PG-13) 6:30 p.m.

**Thurs. Sept 1:**  
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2 (Not 3D) (PG-13) 2 p.m.  
Winnie the Pooh (G) 6:30 p.m.

\*Indicates Last Showing