

THE CLUBS AT QUANTICO:

Providing World-Class Facilities and Service

The tri-club at MCB Quantico, Va., is one of only a few in the Marine Corps that houses three clubs — Officers', Staff NCO and Enlisted — all in one building, providing for all the needs of the base community, from special events and gatherings to Marine Corps functions and meetings. In addition, The Clubs at Quantico and Crossroads Events Center, which is the official name of the tri-club, opened up to the public in the summer of 2013, expanding an already strong relationship the base has with the surrounding civilian community.

"We are in a constant state of readiness at the club," said Gary Munyan, director of food and hospitality, Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS), MCB Quantico. "That means that we do a lot of high-profile events here at the club, so we are ready for events for the commandant on down to the private in the Marine Corps. And we try to give them the same respect, so that means that The Clubs at Quantico, since we are at the Crossroads of the Marine Corps, you never know who is going to be in our dining facility, and we always keep this in a high state of readiness."

The tri-club houses two dining facilities — an Officers' dining facility and an All-hands dining facility. "We have banquet rooms where we do our catered parties, and a couple of rooms that we use for VIPs," Munyan pointed out. "And there is a patio outside, as well as two gazebos and patios in back of the Staff NCO and Officers' clubs. The patio, which is adjacent to one of our ballrooms, is used for weddings and other events. We do a lot of

live entertainment out on the patios, as well as our summer and springtime functions out there. A lot of groups like to use the patio as an extension to the ballroom."

The club recently installed a state-of-the-art audio-visual system in the ballrooms. "This enables each ballroom to have its own AV package, which includes TV capability, the screen, the projector and XM radio in each room. We can do all four ballrooms or break it down and use it for one."

Because it is such a large facility, Munyan said that the full-service kitchen "is capable of doing two full-service menus at one time. We are always upgrading our foodser-



Military spouses share stories about their experiences at The Clubs at Quantico, at an event hosted by the Marine Corps Family Team Building program.
PHOTO BY AMEESHA FELTON

The Stafford County Chamber of Commerce attended a presentation by The Clubs at Quantico on Jan. 30, 2014, to tour the facility and sample the range of services provided. The public can now reserve the clubs directly, without a military contact.

PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. CAMERON STORM, USMC





Sgt. Shawn Litchfield, aircraft rescue firefighter, Marine Corps Air Facility, grabs two door-prize tickets during the Children Youth and Teen Program's Father and Daughter Dance at The Clubs at Quantico and Crossroads Events Center on Feb. 7, 2014.
 PHOTO BY CPL. ANTWAUN JEFFERSON, USMC

vice equipment, and make sure that we repair or replace furniture, fixtures and other amenities, when needed. So there is constant upkeep and maintenance that we go through in a high-volume kitchen. We keep tabs on our maintenance items, and when things need to be repaired, I try to budget out for those things for the next 3 to 5 years. If it meets the budget, I will go ahead and purchase it. If it is an essential piece of equipment that breaks down, we either get it fixed or replaced.”

Some new kitchen additions include two ovens from Alto-Shaam, Inc., a new fryer and a wood smoker.

“What is really popular right now is the BBQ aspect of the culinary world, so one of the things that we did was add a wood smoker in the kitchen, so that we can smoke our own meats,” Munyan explained. “It gives us this profile of hickory-smoked wood, and it really adds something to our offerings, because there is a big difference between smoked meats and non-smoked meats. So that has enabled us to meet the demand for that flavor profile, which is very popular now, and it has enhanced our catering package.”

The tri-club also added a new chef, and enhanced the catering menu to help meet the newest trends in the culinary world. “Every six months I take a look at the menu and the competition, especially now that we are involved with the civilian community, and that is a process that we do about every six months,” noted Munyan. “We just revamped the catering menu, and we added a BBQ package. We also try to offer more high-end items, as well as offer more reasonable items so we can meet a broader base of customer. Our menu runs the gamut, from simple entrees, to more complex culinary needs. We have really been able to handle any kind of clientele that comes in the club, and anything from weddings to Bar Mitzvahs.”

Décor is another major component of The Clubs at Quantico and Crossroads Events Center. “Our Officers’ Club is decorated like a classic Officers’ Club in the Marine Corps, with lots of Marine Corps’ memorabilia, including actual items

and some that are facsimiles from the Marine Corps Museum,” noted Munyan. “And each part of the club has its own theme, so the Staff NCO bar is a more traditional NCO Staff bar with memorabilia, and both the Staff NCO and Officers’ clubs have fireplaces that they utilize. The Enlisted Club is more of a contemporary space because we also utilize the club, when they are not using it, as part of our banquet space, so it actually becomes our fifth ballroom.”

For such a large facility and operation, training is ongoing, for both the front and back of the house. The back-of-the-house staff, which comprises the kitchen and all of the kitchen staff and food handlers, go yearly for a food-handling certification course, which takes them through everything from knife skills to more complex culinary topics. “There is a constant need for ongoing training, with new staff members joining the team, new menu items, etc. We can teach them about stocks and soups and dry-heat techniques — we are always teaching.”

Munyan explained that for the front-of-the-house employees, the main thing is customer service, so whether it is waitresses who work during the day or the culinary people who work at night for banquets, “it is all about service and taking care of our customer. At MCCS we call it World-Class Community Service, so that is what we are always striving for and that is our guests’ expectations.”

With state-of-the-art facilities and top-notch customer service, Munyan said The Clubs at Quantico has been able to easily transfer the same level of service to the civilian community. “Our military community is very demanding, and they expect World-Class Community Service, so it was not a jump to satisfy the civilian community. Although we have added a new wrinkle to the operation now that we are able to solicit business from the civilian sector, we have been quite successful with it so far, and eager to serve their needs.”

On the catering side, Munyan said that Quantico works closely with the two local chambers of commerce, Prince William and Fredericksburg. “Both have been very inviting to the club, and we have participated in chamber activities to

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help us spread the word. We have done two chamber events at the club this year, so it has been a partnership that we have built. The commander, Col. Maxwell, has been very supportive of these ventures, and he was at one of the events. It is outreach to the community and a partnership, so we want to be good partners and stewards of the funds.”

Clubs at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., and MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., have already made similar moves, and Munyan noted that at Quantico, the Medal of Honor Golf Course has been open to the public for a few years.

“We’re just trying to get the word out to the general public that they can come in and access the golf course,” said David Hansinger, general manager at the golf course. He said the course hasn’t yet worked with local chambers of commerce and that he was pleased Munyan is reaching out on behalf of both facilities.

Hansinger said the decision to open the course to the public was “pretty much financially driven. We’re trying to increase our numbers to be financially sustainable.”

Area residents now have the opportunity to play a traditional-style course they wouldn’t have had access to a few years ago, “a fun course, and it’s easy to walk,” he said.

“We’re pretty price-conscious and price within the market in the area,” he added.



Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James Amos leads Sgt. Iasia Brown in the oath of enlistment during her meritorious promotion ceremony at The Clubs at Quantico on Feb. 3, 2014. PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. CAMERON STORM

Hansinger and Munyan said they hope to create some synergy between the two facilities to draw customers from the surrounding communities.

“This is huge for us,” Munyan said. “But, of course, our main mission and function here is to take care of Marines and their families. We do professional military education here, wet downs [a ceremony for newly promoted officers], commander’s welcome aboard briefs, as well as a lot of the educational things and fellowship work, which is big here as well.”

Overall, these MCCS facilities are very important to morale, and improve the quality of life of Marines and their families, while contributing to overall readiness.

“We are a training base, the crossroads of the Marine Corps, so if you have been in the Marine Corps for any period of time, you will have done some time here; it is a very high-profile base, and we love it here,” noted Munyan. “We are able to meet the demand

because the commander has been fully supportive of MCCS and this club, and that is our job here at MCCS — to take care of Marines and their families. In addition, we want to be able to provide quality service and be here to take care of not only the military community, but the civilian community as well. And, of course, the security of this base is foremost.”

—MCH