

JULY 2015

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

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By Mary D. Karcher

He was a two-tour Vietnam CH-46 helo pilot who went on to fly a desk for 27 years as branch head for Manpower Management Records and Performance Branch, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps. Chances are he's handled your record as well as the records of those with whom you have served. Your records have been in good hands.

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COVER: LCpl Victor Castillo-Garcia, foreground, field radio operator with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force—Crisis Response-Africa, provides security for an MV-22B Osprey at a landing zone in Sierra del Retin, Spain, May 4, 2015. Marines are training at home and abroad in every clime and place and conducting a humanitarian mission in Nepal. Photo by Sgt Paul Peterson. Copies of the cover may be obtained by sending \$2 (for mailing costs) to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134-0775.

Sound Off

Edited by R. R. Keene

Have a question or feel like sounding off? Address your letter to: Sound Off Editor, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or send an e-mail to: r.keene@mca-marines.org. Due to the heavy volume, we cannot answer every letter received. Do not send original photographs, as we cannot guarantee their return. All letters must be signed, and e-mails must contain complete names and postal mailing addresses. Anonymous letters will not be published.—Sound Off Ed.

Letter of the Month

(*Leatherneck will pay \$25 for a "Sound Off Letter of the Month" submitted by an MCA&F member or provide a one-year courtesy subscription to a non-member whose letter is selected.*)

I'm floating today on a boat with another Marine, beers in our hands and fishing rods waiting, and we're telling stories. Or, more like I'm telling stories, and my friend is listening politely and smiling at all the right places. Because he is an active-duty Marine and I am one who retired before he was born, he gives me respect. He can't know it's the other way around for me; that I admire and respect his age of Marines more than I can tell him.

The Marines of my day, just a few years after the end of World War II, were good. They were led by combat-tested noncommissioned officers and officers who were bloodied in the Pacific Island campaigns. They taught us pimply-faced, candy-fed, undisciplined and ungrounded young men how to fight and win and to stay alive. They passed on marksmanship abilities, a smattering of hand-to-hand combat, and drilled into our heads how fortunate we were to be called Marines. They insisted the man next to us was our brother, and they said it until we believed it.

When they gave us the eagle, globe and anchor to wear, we knew the history and traditions and we vowed to never sully or dishonor our beloved Corps.

We fought soon after training—going to Korea and doing our duty. Some of us experienced the cold and misery of the Chosin Reservoir while fighting overwhelming numbers of Chinese. We relied on our rifles and light machine guns, our mortars, grenades and artillery, and we prayed for the sun so our close-support aircraft could save our bacon. We survived that, and then along came Vietnam. It was the same kind of equipment and fighting, but with a different foe. So, my generation of Marines has that to brag about.

Today's Marines, however, are without doubt the best this Corps has ever produced. They are in better physical condition, are better trained and using better

equipment and weapons than we had. They do the same things we did, but now they physically carry a huge load on their backs while doing it. They have the same fierceness that marked Marines of all generations, but they are smarter, have better communications, are more military in bearing and conduct, and the destruction they can rain down on an enemy is fearsome and awesome compared to Marines of my time.

I wonder if I would have made the cut if I had joined today instead of in 1948. Could I have measured up to what the Corps is now producing? I'm happy I'll never know those answers.

This Marine Corps of mine has shed its skin many times over the ages, and each time a new Corps has emerged. The one I see today, exemplified by the young career Marine sharing his boat and a beer with me now, makes me swell with pride and honor. Proud that I am a part of the legacy that can produce such men; honored that I will forever be a member of this always improving fraternity of fighting men—this Corps of Marines.

GySgt John R. Boring, USMC (Ret)
1948-68
Phoenix

"I Pledge Allegiance"

Please be aware that today respect for our flag and country is not what it was when I was growing up in New York City. In the late 1940s and 1950s we had parades to celebrate or commemorate past wars and holidays and of patriotic Americans. Today the flag is disrespected on campuses and streets.

As a child, my parents would take me to a wide avenue and watch the bands, drum and bugle corps, majorettes, schools, military groups, etc., pass in review. Thousands would line up to see a parade in Brooklyn and in every major city of the great United States.

Today, adults as well as teenagers, gang bangers, ne'er-do-wells and unpatriotic people wear hats at dinner in the presence of older adults, wear caps during the Pledge of Allegiance and talk back to parents as

well as elders and even talk back to our police forces as well. And now, they shoot policemen who try to maintain the peace on our streets.

Where is our patriotism? I am patriotic and so are my fellow Marines as well as other armed services, but the younger people are not as they were when I was growing up. I respected authority and listened to my elders. If you are respectful of others, then you respect ideals and you are, I hope, an American.

I want every young person to learn and grow up to be a good citizen. I do not have answers—and I am just one person, who is 70 and opinionated, but I have to say my piece if I see something that bothers me. How many people feel that we are not what we were 50 years ago?

Cpl Bruce Bender
Vietnam-era veteran
Bayside, N.Y.

"Men Such as These at the Helm"

When I flipped to page 15 in the May issue of *Leatherneck* and my eyes locked on the photo of General John F. Kelly, my mind was transported back 12 years to a dusty place in Iraq just outside the town of Basra near the Iranian border. I was with "India" Company, 3d Battalion, 23d Marine Regiment. I was told that I would need to pick up a couple officers who were going to speak to our company. I don't remember who the other officer was, but the one who sat directly behind me introduced himself as Brigadier General John Kelly. He asked my name and where I was from, and since I was a reservist, he asked if I was in college back home.

I told him I was a history major, and immediately the discussion turned serious. He wanted to know the emphasis of my degree, to which I responded, "Civil War."

He then went on to ask me what I believed was the most important battle of the war and then he followed with the one that he saw as the key. Since our answers did not align, I was able to debate him (as much as a lance corporal can debate a brigadier general) on the reasons that my battle was more significant than his. It was

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President/CEO, Marine Corps Association & Foundation
MajGen Edward G. Usher III, USMC (Ret)

Vice President/COO, Marine Corps Association & Foundation
Col Daniel P. O'Brien, USMC (Ret)

Publisher

Col John A. Keenan, USMC (Ret)

Editor

Col Mary H. Reinwald, USMC (Ret)

Deputy Editor

Nancy Lee White Hoffman

Associate Editor

MGSgt Renaldo R. Keene, USMC (Ret)

Copy Editor

Nancy S. Lichtman

Contributing Editor

CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret)

Staff Writer

Sara W. Bock

Editorial/Production Coordinator

Patricia Everett

Art Director

Jason Monroe

Advertising Director

G. Scott Dinkel

(718) 715-1361

EDITORIAL OFFICES

Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134

Phone: (703) 640-6161, Ext. 115

Toll-Free: (800) 336-0291

Fax: (703) 640-0823

E-mail: leatherneck@mca-marines.org

Web page: www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck

TELEPHONE EXTENSIONS

Editorial Offices: 115 • Business Office: 121

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E-mail: mca@mca-marines.org

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an interesting exchange, and I was amazed at how open he was to my opinions. We did not get to finish the debate as we arrived back at where our company was located. I was impressed with him despite the brevity of our conversation.

Roughly two months later, I was told to go pick up some officers again. When BGen Kelly got in the humvee beside me, there was no way I thought he'd remember me. I was taken aback as he began the conversation with, "I believe when we left off we were discussing..." It was so humbling to me to think that this man, a brigadier general no less, remembered our conversation. It was inspiring to know that men such as these were at the helm of our Corps.

I was proud then, and over a decade later as I teach my students about our Marines on Guadalcanal, the Chosin Reservoir and Khe Sanh, I'm proud that I get to also speak of the bravery of our men, my brothers, at places like Sangin, Nasiriyah, Ramadi, Fallujah and even small, no-name streets, in Wasit province, Iraq, and know that I had a small part in the history of our Corps. Likewise, I'm just as proud to teach them about the men who lead Marines such as Lieutenant General Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, General James N. Mattis, Gen Joseph F. Dunford Jr. and Gen John Kelly and will continue to do so.

Lance Fetters
USMCR, 2000-08
Russellville, Ark.

A Loving Wife and *Leatherneck*: What More Can a Marine Ask?

"You reading THAT magazine again!" says my Okinawan-born wife as she enters the room. It is not a complaint, or a jab, but simply an observation. She doesn't understand, but she understands her husband of almost 40 years well enough to know that this is one area not to tease or make light of.

She sees the tear tracks down each cheek, and she has heard me blow my nose more than a few times in the last hour. Stories of courage, sacrifice, heroism, compassion and pride always do this to me. I am unashamed of these emotions.

I look up to see her smile. I know that I am a lucky man to have both a loving wife and our beloved Corps.

1stLt R. Jerry Lutz
USMCR, 1971-74
Warrensburg, Ill.

You Can't Get MCA&F Challenge Coins Anymore, Well, Maybe One

I have been reading *Leatherneck* magazine for more years than I can remember. On several occasions in the "Sound Off" section the response from the editor has

been, "We are sending you an MCA&F Challenge Coin." I began collecting challenge coins several months ago, most of which are USMC coins. I have looked at *The MARINE Shop* online, but have not been able to find one. Is it possible to purchase one of these MCA&F coins, or can you tell me how to obtain one? Any information you can provide would be appreciated.

CWO-4 Joe D. Smith, USMC (Ret)
Aliquippa, Pa.

• *Sorry, Joe, we don't have MCA&F Challenge Coins for sale anymore. However, I looked in my footlocker and came across an extra one which I am sending to you because you asked and because there are no more.—Sound Off Ed.*

Credit Must Go Where Credit Is Due

When I flunked out of college in 1966 because I was a s---bird, I asked my father, who was a World War II Army Air Corps pilot, what he thought of the Marines. He said, "If you go in a good person, you will come out a better person."

He was right. I served in the Marine Corps Reserve for six years and it changed my life: I earned a law school degree, and I became a judge. I am not bragging, I am only giving the Corps credit for instilling discipline, respect for authority, a strong work ethic, leadership skills and a task-oriented "I can do it" attitude. That training has held up for these 49 years.

I have a question. At various functions veterans are asked to stand up for recognition. I am reluctant to do so out of respect for the Marines who were active, not reservists. What is the protocol in those situations?

Thank you, Marine Corps, for all you have done for me.

Sgt Thomas L. Doherty
USMCR, 1966-72
DeKalb, Ill.

• *Stand up, Sgt Doherty. You are as much a veteran as anyone else who has worn the uniform of our nation's Armed Forces. And thank you for your service.—Sound Off Ed.*

Pistols and the Medal of Honor

In the May issue of *Leatherneck*, there is a picture of Marines firing M1911 pistols. Are these pistols general issue now or only to special units? Also, years ago I recall hearing about a Marine in Vietnam who was awarded a Medal of Honor for killing several enemy with his 1911 pistol. Is this a factual account?

Cpl Roger F. Anderson
Vietnam veteran
Douglas, Ga.

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According to Barrett Tillman, writing for American Rifleman, there were several Medal of Honor pistol actions in Vietnam performed by leathernecks. "The most notable occurred in July 1966 when [Staff Sergeant] John J. McGinty of the [Third] Marine Division single-handedly re-established contact with a missing squad, saw North Vietnamese flanking the squad, and killed five NVA with his Colt."—Sound Off Ed.

What Became of Flame Tank 211252 That Served in RVN in 1965?

The reply of Sergeant John Wear concerning the March photo of an M67A2 tank caused me to take a second look at it. When I checked the serial numbers of the tanks in my section, I knew that I had been on its last mission in Vietnam. Sgt Dave Nicodemus was the commander, Lance Corporal Bill Parks was the gunner, and I was driving.

A large antitank mine went off in the right rear of our vehicle less than a half mile from Hill 55. Nicodemus was knocked unconscious, and two riflemen from 1st Battalion, 26th Marine Regiment were blown off the vehicle. I was hit by a sandbag that was on the cupola. Despite a cracked engine block, we were able to reassemble the track and put in enough

oil to get back to Company B. With a new pack installed, we drove it to 3d Tank Bn Headquarters for repair. Despite a lot of work, we could not correctly repair it, as the hull had been warped, and it was then taken out of service. That was the end of 211252, also designated F-32.

I served with Co B, 3d Tanks from November 1966 until May 1967 when the remainder of our section was assigned to Co C, on Operation Hickory. I was commanding F-31 at that time, but it eventually was withdrawn to Okinawa, leaving us with just F-33 (211227). At the end of my tour, I was reunited with Sgt Nicodemus when he commanded the M48 section, and I had the M67 section in Headquarters and Service Co.

Cpl Brian Fieldhouse
3d Tanks, RVN
Fort Worth, Texas

About That Landing at Chu Lai: One More Time

I just got my *Leatherneck* [May issue] and read the letter from Charles Kurtz. He is correct [in stating 1st Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment relieved 3/3 in the defensive perimeter at Chu Lai because that's what they were going to do anyway, so, 1/7 came in later on], and the book "U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Landing and the Buildup, 1965" by Jack Shulimson and Major Charles M. Johnson, USMC is wrong. Lieutenant Colonel Charles Bodley was the commander of 3/7, the Reserve battalion for the operation which came ashore on the afternoon of Aug. 18; 1/7 joined the fight later.

LtCol Otto J. Lehrack, USMC (Ret)
Asheville, N.C.

• *LtCol Lehrack is the duty expert. He wrote "The First Battle: Operation Starlite and the Beginning of the Blood Debt in Vietnam" and several other books and is the author of this month's story on Vietnam.—Sound Off Ed.*

Dagger Thrust, Vietnam 1965 Yes, We Remember

Why doesn't the Marine Corps want to talk about the Dagger Thrust raids off Vietnam in the fall of 1965? I read the March issue of *Leatherneck* and was struck by the absence of those from the "Corps Album" section.

It is as if the Corps and maybe government don't want to talk about the five amphibious assaults we made up and down the coast of Vietnam. Was the Corps embarrassed by our operations? Or, for history's sake, no one wants to admit that there were more Marines in country than was being reported?

[continued on page 62]



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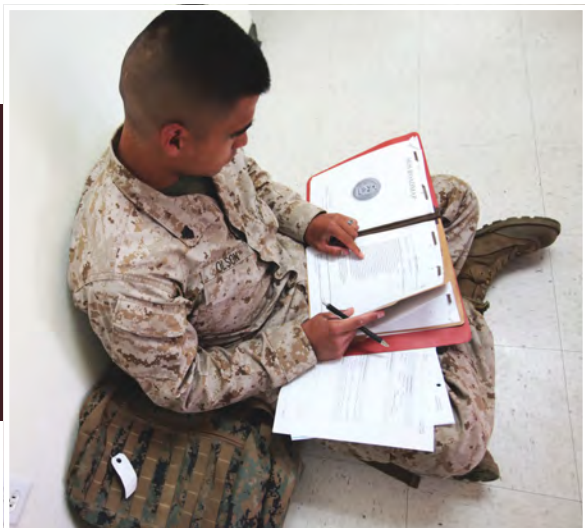
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Enlisted Professional Military Education

Continuing Changes Are Educating Force of the Future



Above left: Sgt Christopher C. Olson, a student in Class 4-12, Sergeants Course, Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy Camp Pendleton, Calif., prepares a counseling sheet May 29, 2012. (Photo by Sgt Christopher O'Quin, USMC)



Above right: Sgt Michael T. Carradine, a student with 1st Platoon, Class 4-12, Sergeants Course, Staff Noncommissioned Officer Academy Camp Pendleton, disassembles an M249 light machine gun during the course's culminating event June 6, 2012. (Photo by Sgt Christopher O'Quin, USMC)

By CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret)

In October, significant changes in the way that Marines from lance corporal to corporal are being mentored for future leadership will take effect, and a year later, sergeants and staff sergeants will be under additional new prerequisites.

The changes involve requirements for specific enlisted professional military education (EPME) but will ultimately determine if Marines are considered qualified for promotion to the next grade.

The modifications were specified last October in Marine Administrative Message 521/14 announcing updates to the EPME continuum and its associated relationship to enlisted promotion requirements.

"There are some big, sweeping changes identified in this MARADMIN that will take place over the next few years that Marines must pay attention to because it will affect their careers," said retired Marine Master Sergeant James Cohn, the dean of academics at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps' EPME branch.

The PME promotion requirements include:

- Effective Oct. 1, 2015, all lance corporals must complete the MarineNet "Leading Marines Course," also known as EPME3000AA, and complete a command-sponsored Lance Corporals Leadership and Ethics Seminar.

- Effective Oct. 1, 2015, all corporals must complete MarineNet Distance Education "Corporals Course," also known as EPME4000AA, and then complete a command-sponsored Corporals Course.

- Effective Oct. 1, 2016, all sergeants must complete MarineNet Distance Education "Sergeants Course," also known as EPME5000AA, and then complete the resident Sergeants Course at a staff noncommissioned officer academy.

- Effective Oct. 1, 2016, all staff ser-

Marines will be handling multiple tasks in chaotic environments calling for judgment and critical decision making far beyond what might previously have been expected at the lower enlisted ranks.

geants must complete MarineNet Distance Education "Career Course," also known as EPME6000AA, and then complete the resident Career Course at a staff noncommissioned officer academy or the Career Course Seminar Distance Education Program.

"The most visible change you will see next year is that the academic schedules at the SNCO academies will be very different," Cohn explained. "We've worked

very hard to create additional seats at the Sergeants Course to accommodate everyone. In FY14, the six SNCO academies each conducted six Sergeants Courses annually. In FY15, that number rose to eight. In FY16, it will increase to 15 Sergeants Courses at the four large academies (nine at the two small academies). In order to do that, we streamlined our schedule, and the Career Course faculty and Advanced Course faculty will also be teaching Sergeants Courses."

Soon after message 521/14's release, the 17th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Sergeant Major Micheal P. Barrett, punctuated the relevance of its content in a December 2014 message to all enlisted Marines.

"Let me summarize the nearly 2,200 words that are contained in this 8 page effort," he wrote. "Lance Corporals, Corporals, Sergeants and Staff Sergeants are now all required to complete resident or blended seminar education [tied to promotion ... if you do not attend, you will not get promoted]."

His words appeared on the Corps' official website (www.marines.mil) under the headline, "World's Not Getting Any Nicer ... Critical Thinkers Needed!" Barrett reasoned that these aren't radical changes, rather that Marines "are evolving and getting ready to meet the next set of challenges that await us. ... We are investing in our most precious asset—the



Corporals Leadership Class 274-12 practices "draw sword" during an introduction to sword manual, Aug. 17, 2012, at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C.

CPL SANTIAGO G. COLON JR., USMC

character, strength, intellect and skill of the individual Marine.”

One of the challenges SgtMaj Barrett may have been addressing is end strength. The Corps has been officially directed to reach an end strength of 182,000 by fiscal year 2017, which starts Oct. 1, 2016. There has been scuttlebutt indicating it could go lower than that.

Taking a pragmatic view, the Sergeant Major wrote that changes are occurring

“because the world is not getting any nicer,” and predicted that Marines will be handling multiple tasks in chaotic environments calling for judgment and critical decision making far beyond what might previously have been expected at the lower enlisted ranks.

He listed some of the challenges impacting Marines and the world today including drugs, alcohol, domestic violence, criminal mischief, sexual misconduct, opera-

tional stress, force preservation and hazing. Collectively, he characterizes these as poor life choices and usually all preventable. Over the past few years, the Corps has experienced negative incidents that fall into those categories.

However, Cohn emphasized that the courses are not in response to specific incidents, but that they will address those societal ills. The additional requirements will mean that more Marines will take part in the training and that “they will have to reflect on how they can prevent those incidents and properly and professionally address them should they occur,” said Cohn.

So while the changes will have an impact on promotions or re-enlistment, the overarching purpose is to teach problem analysis decision making, consisting of prevention/mitigation, identification, intervention, reintegration and maintenance. “If this sounds foreign to you, the new [lance corporal] ethics-leadership seminar will grow you,” wrote SgtMaj Barrett,

GySgt John Finney, reconnaissance platoon SNCO in charge, Battalion Landing Team 1st Bn, Sixth Marine Regiment, 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit, speaks to the Marines of Corporals Course 030-14 during the course’s mess night aboard USS Mesa Verde (LPD-19), April 29, 2014.



CPL MANUEL A. ESTRADA, USMC



LPL CORY D. POLOM, USMC

SgtMaj Timothy King, Marine Air Control Group 28, leads Corporals Course Class 13-1 in a motivational run Jan. 31, 2013, at MCAS Cherry Point. “The best part about this class is these instructors, who are guiding the future of our Marine Corps,” said King.

speaking directly to junior Marines.

“When we were tasked to create this, we were asked to find a seat for every Marine, so we matched the promotion rate for corporals, sergeants, staff sergeants and gunnery sergeants to ensure that every Marine has the opportunity to meet the requirement,” Cohn said. “It is intended to improve Marines, not weed them out. As long as they meet requirements, they can all compete on the same level.”

Cohn cautioned that the problem is attendance, getting Marines to the courses. For example, as of May 1 only about 75 percent of the Sergeants Course seats were filled. When a seat is not filled, it means that somewhere out there Marines are putting their careers at risk because they have not met the basic requirements for promotion.

“Each Marine and their leaders need to make sure they are finding opportunities for PME,” noted Cohn. “It’s in the Marines’ best interests to attend as early as possible because we do anticipate that the closer we get to the 1 October ’16 requirement to complete the resident Sergeants Course, that competition for those seats is going to accelerate dramatically.”

Cohn noted that some senior enlisted leaders are hesitant to send their staff sergeants to the Career Course Seminar because they don’t think they will be as competitive as those who attend the resident course. “While their intentions are

good, we won’t get the number of Marines educated that we desire prior to the FY17 Gunnery Sergeant Promotion Board if that attitude prevails,” he said, emphasizing that for purposes of promotion, both the resident and seminar are considered equivalent. He estimated that about 60 percent of staff sergeants will attend a resident course and 40 percent will attend the seminar.

Barrett further delineated other present and future challenges, citing instability

“The three-block war is
nothing new, but we have to
educate NCOs to understand
which block they are in
and how to respond to it.”

—GySgt Benjamin Causey,
faculty development manager
at EPME

in the Middle East, threats from extremists, strained relations and increasing confrontational regions, Ebola in Africa and even U.S. border security. He noted that this uncertainty will call for Marines to have “cognitive abilities to contain a crisis, plug a gap, hold the line (de-escalate a volatile situation without firing a shot) or save a life.”

His analysis does not come without precedent in the Corps’ not-so-distant history.

In 1999, the 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Charles C. Krulak, presciently advanced the concept of “The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three-Block War” that parallels the 17th Sergeant Major’s message.

Gen Krulak set the stage with a hypothetical crisis (but based on true stories) in a fictional central-African nation and a squad of Marines charged with protecting international aid workers at a food distribution point. The squad leader, a corporal, would find himself as the senior Marine facing multiple tactical and ethical decisions as the operational situation changed.

The general predicted that the Three-Block War as described in this “Operation Absolute Agility” represented the likely battlefield of the 21st century. “It also represents, in graphic detail, the enormous responsibilities and pressures which will be placed on our young Marine leaders,” the general wrote.

The Three-Block War epitomizes the likely scenario where Marines are “confronted by the entire spectrum of tactical challenges in the span of a few hours and within the space of three contiguous city blocks,” Gen Krulak wrote in the January 1999 issue of *Marines Magazine*. He used the experience of U.S. forces in Somalia during Operation Restore Hope in 1993 to punctuate his point. In a radius of three city blocks, Marines can find themselves in high-tempo, fluidly changing actions involving humanitarian assistance, peace-keeping and traditional warfighting, all merging in murky gray areas where junior Marines may be called upon to make major decisions on the spot.

Gen Krulak noted, “Today’s Marines will often operate far ‘from the flagpole’ without the direct supervision of senior leadership. And ... will be asked to deal with a bewildering array of challenges and threats.”

To attain the goal of developing the “strategic corporal,” the general cited a primary requirement of enlisting people with the mettle and character to be Marines. Second in importance was an institutional commitment to lifelong professional development. “Our Formal Schools, unit training and education programs, and individual efforts at professional education build on the solid foundation laid at recruit training and sustain the growth of technical and tactical proficiency and mental and physical toughness,” he wrote.

“Like warfare, EPME is continually evolving,” Cohn said, noting how Gen Krulak’s vision has manifested itself in



CPL. SANTIAGO G. COLON JR., USMC

Sgt Stephen W. Ford, an instructor for Cherry Point Corporals Leadership Course, inspects a student's guidon Aug. 17, 2012.

the course curricula, which also seek to meet the themes contained in the current Commandant's planning guidance to innovate, adapt and win. "As part of the Curriculum Content Review Board process, we visit with graduates, senior enlisted Marines, officers and our faculty to conduct research on ways we can improve our curriculum. Our pending change is fine-tuning the relationship between distance and resident PME to get the best out of both programs."

"This is the next step in developing that strategic corporal General Krulak introduced to us and is the recognition of the complex operating environment of the 21st century," explained retired Lieutenant Colonel Tim Devlin, head of the EPME Distance Education Branch at the College of Distance Education and Training. "In the Marine Corps we say that we train for known threats but educate for unknown threats. The complexity of the 21st century has raised the importance of education for our enlisted Marines. Our leaders have recognized that training is important, and we continue doing that, but it is also

important to educate."
 "The three-block war is nothing new, but we have to educate NCOs to understand which block they are in and how to respond to it," explained Gunnery Sergeant Benjamin Causey, faculty development manager at EPME. He emphasized that the planning guidance of the current Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen

Joseph F. Dunford Jr., affirms his commitment to operate in a decentralized manner. "Enlisted PME is working to uphold our end of that commitment by ensuring that enlisted leaders have the decision-making skills to do so. Hopefully, the education we give them provides the tools they'll need to make those decisions. What we are trying to do with the MarineNet courses



CPL. SANTIAGO G. COLON JR., USMC

Sgt Michael A. Blaul, an instructor for Cherry Point Corporals Leadership Course, conducts a uniform inspection Aug. 13, 2012.



GYSGT FRANCISCO J. GUTIERREZ, USMC

Cpl Nicholas R. Czerniak, left, a motor vehicle operator with the 24th MEU, receives a Corporals Course graduation certificate and “Gung Ho” award from GySgt Christopher J. Heater, chief instructor, aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Iwo Jima (LHD-7), Jan. 22, 2015.

is to prepare students before they get to the resident courses, so when they get there, they are ready to participate in the more immersive learning environment.”

One of the inherent advantages of resident courses is the face-to-face interaction among students and between students and instructors, where more learning takes place outside the traditional lecture environment. “The resident courses bring Marines from across the various occupational specialties, so they are learning from each other as well as faculty advisers,” said GySgt Causey. “We try as much as possible to get them out of large classrooms with one instructor lecturing with a Power-Point and into smaller breakout rooms where they are led by faculty advisers who are skilled in guiding their conversations so they can meet the outcomes and they are learning from each other.”

Another advantage to resident courses

is that students can experience the stress of being the Marine making a critical decision in a learning environment where a mistake is instructive and not destructive. “We take sergeants out at the end of the

Another advantage to resident courses is that students can experience the stress of being the Marine making a critical decision in a learning environment where a mistake is instructive and not destructive.

course for the Small Unit Leader Exercise and put them into positions where they have to make decisions as they might have to operationally and tactically,” said Causey. “Many of them have never been

put in that position, and they respond with confusion at first because they are being asked to come up with their own answer and not just a book answer.”

Confirming the gunny’s observation, Devlin noted, “In all the courses we are more and more trying to focus on small-group discussions and more scenario-based problem solving, tactical decision games and putting students into a scenario where they have to make a decision, then have the group discuss it. At first they are hesitant making those decisions, but by the end of the course, you see growth in their ability to feel comfortable making decisions. We want to make sure that when Marines give up precious time for resident instruction that it is effective in keeping them ready, relevant and focused on combat.”

Punctuating the need to find time for PME, SgtMaj Barrett concluded his letter by saying, “If you think education [resident EPME] is time-consuming—try ignorance!”

Editor’s note: The author, CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret), was a combat correspondent as an enlisted Marine and later a public affairs officer. He retired from active duty in 1996 and now operates his own writing-based business, RGCommunications, and is a freelance photojournalist.



SGT JUSTIN HAZARD, USMC

Marines and one sailor with the 22d MEU aboard USS Bataan (LHD-5) gather with their instructors after graduating from the Corporals Course, April 23, 2014.

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“For Outstanding Leadership”

Leftwich Trophy Winner Exemplifies the Marine Corps Ethos



Maj Daniel E. Grainger was presented the Leftwich Trophy at MCA&F's Ground Awards Dinner on May 14, 2015. From the left: MajGen Edward Usher, USMC (Ret), the president and CEO of MCA&F; LtGen Ronald Bailey, Deputy Commandant, Plans, Policies & Operations; Gen Joseph Dunford, CMC; Maj Grainger; and MajGen Brian Beaudreault, Commanding General, Second Marine Division, gather for the award presentation.

By Roxanne Baker

The ability to lead is synonymous with being a Marine. The discipline, initiative and decisiveness expected of Marines in every grade and specialty defines the character of the Marine Corps and sets it apart. To recognize the best examples of leadership in the Corps today, the Marine Corps and the Marine Corps Association & Foundation together award the annual Leftwich Trophy for Outstanding Leadership.

The award is named in honor of Navy Cross and Silver Star recipient Lieutenant Colonel William G. Leftwich Jr., who was killed in action in 1970 while on his second combat tour in Vietnam. LtCol Leftwich, the commanding officer of 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, First Marine



COURTESY OF MAJ DANIEL E. GRAINGER, USMC

Division (Reinforced), was serving as senior officer on an emergency extraction of one of his reconnaissance teams in enemy-infested territory when the helicopter he was on crashed.

Major Daniel E. Grainger was awarded the Leftwich Trophy at the MCA&F's 12th Annual Ground Awards Dinner, May 14, in Arlington, Va. The 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Joseph F. Dunford Jr., was the guest speaker and presented the award to Grainger. LtCol Paul Merida, who nominated Maj Grainger for the award, said Grainger “embodies all the qualities that great commanders possess, a tremendous command presence, a leadership style that draws Marines to him and a real top-notch work ethic. He’s the best rifle company commander I’ve ever seen in 20 years.”

Grainger enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1994. Following acceptance into the Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program in 2001, he attended the University of Maryland. After earning



COURTESY OF MAJ DANIEL E. GRAINGER, USMC

his bachelor's degree, he was commissioned in 2004 and became an infantry officer. He deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and then became an instructor at The Basic School, Quantico, Va.

After graduating with honors from Expeditionary Warfare School in 2012, he served as the CO of Company B, 1st Bn, Sixth Marine Regiment until 2014. He was nominated for the Leftwich Trophy based on his exemplary leadership as a company commander during the battalion's deployment with the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit in 2014 in support of U.S. Central Command.

The company conducted bilateral work with the Spanish and Portuguese and sustainment training in Djibouti and Oman while also preparing for a crisis response mission in Libya. The threat from the Islamic State intensified in the late summer of 2014, and "Bravo" Co was called to reinforce the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq, during Operation Inherent Resolve. ISIS had been displacing the Yazidis ethnic group and threatened to attack the U.S. Embassy compound.

"The Marine Corps has a long-standing and proud tradition of supporting the Department of State and the embassies," Grainger said.

Bravo Co stood post, conducted security patrols and rehearsed inoperability with the Department of State security forces. "We brought a punch and a robust conventional infantry force," Grainger said. "We extended the reach and scope of the defensive effort there in Baghdad."

As the company commander, Grainger expertly prepared his company for the mission so the Marines could enforce security from the moment they arrived.

Above: After successfully ensuring the security of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad during Operation Inherent Resolve, Co B stopped in Kuwait before transiting back to USS Bataan (LHD-5).

Below: Maj Grainger credits the Marines of Co B, especially the leadership team, for the company's success during the deployment. Pictured from the left: Maj Grainger, 1stSgt Jon Pratt, Capt Shane Phillips and GySgt Sam Burgos.



COURTESY OF MAJ DANIEL E. GRAINGER, USMC

Not only did they safeguard the embassy, LtCol Merida said, but they also established overall security plans for when they were relieved.

Grainger said he is proud of the Marines' full-force effort while in Baghdad and appreciative of the battalion leadership while deployed. Although the Leftwich Trophy is an individual award, it recognizes the dedication of all the Marines in Bravo Co, he added.

"The Marine Corps is a team game, and nobody does anything by themselves," Grainger said. "I was fortunate to be

surrounded by phenomenal Marines at every level in the battalion. [The award] is recognition for the service, sacrifice and hard work of the Marines in Bravo Company that I was fortunate enough to lead."

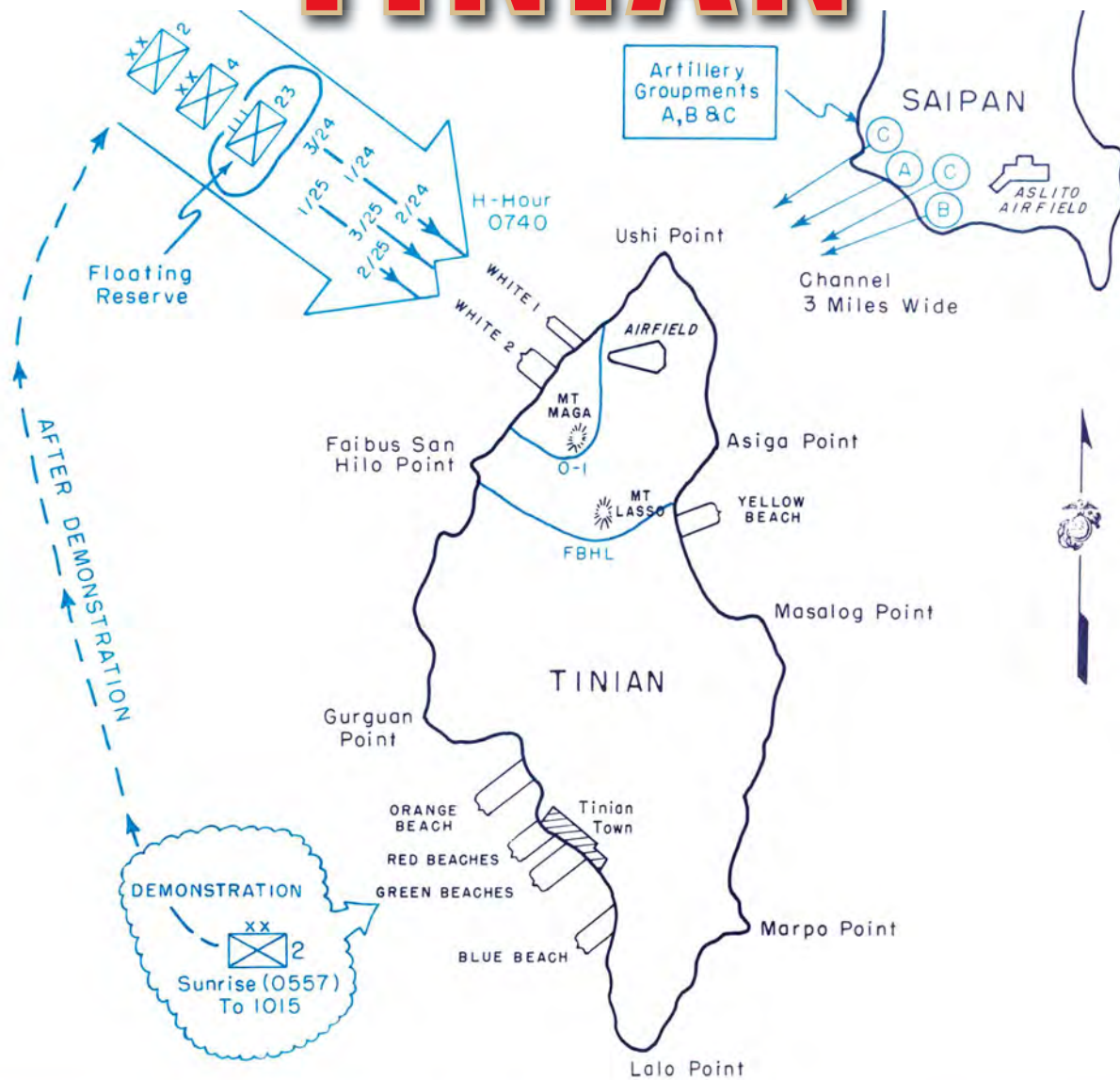
Author's bio: Roxanne Baker is a writer and media coordinator for MCA&F.

Editor's note: For other awards presented at the MCA&F Ground Awards Dinner, see page 65.

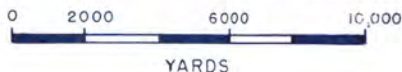


AMPHIBIOUS RECONNAISSANCE BATTALION AT

TINIAN



PLANS FOR LANDING



USMC MAP

By Dick Camp

Background

With the capture of Saipan well underway, Lieutenant General Holland M. “Howlin’ Mad” Smith, Commander Expeditionary Force Troops, turned his attention to the next objective—the island of Tinian, clearly visible 3 miles off Saipan’s

southwest coast. Garrisoned by 9,000 Japanese, Tinian was destined to become, according to Smith, “the most perfect amphibious operation of the Pacific War.” However, the operation was not without controversy. A long and fractious argument broke out among the senior leaders concerning which landing beaches should be used.

The Elephants Roar

Vice Admiral Richmond Kelly “Terrible” Turner, Joint Expeditionary Force commander, favored landing beach Yellow along the northeast coast. LtGen Smith; Rear Admiral Harry W. Hill, Northern Attack Force; and Major General Harry Schmidt, Northern Troops and Landing Force, disagreed and strongly

recommended two more lightly defended beaches (White 1 and White 2) on the northern end of the island. Hill wrote that to his “consternation and dismay, he [Turner] was adamantly opposed to even thinking of the White Beaches and gave me positive orders to stop all planning for such a landing.”

Terrible Turner’s stance set up a showdown with Howlin’ Mad Smith, who recalled, “Our session on board the [USS] Rocky Mount [ACG-3] generated considerable unprintable language.”

At the heated meeting Turner roared, “Holland, you are not going to land on the White Beaches. I won’t land you there.” Smith thundered back, “Oh, yes you will, you’ll land me any goddamned place I tell you to. I’m the one who makes the tactical plans around here. All you have to do is tell me whether or not you can put my troops ashore there.” Turner was adamant: “I’m telling you now it can’t be done. It’s absolutely impossible.” “How do you know it’s impossible?” asked Smith. “You’re just so goddamned scared that some of your boats will be hurt.”

The argument went on for some time, each man trying to convince the other of the soundness of his views. Smith brought up the Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion’s forthcoming reconnaissance of the landing beaches. It was like waving a red flag in front of a maddened bull. “They don’t know what to look for. They’re just a bunch of Marines. . . . People will laugh at you, if you keep talking about [the idea]. They’ll think you’re a stupid old bastard.”

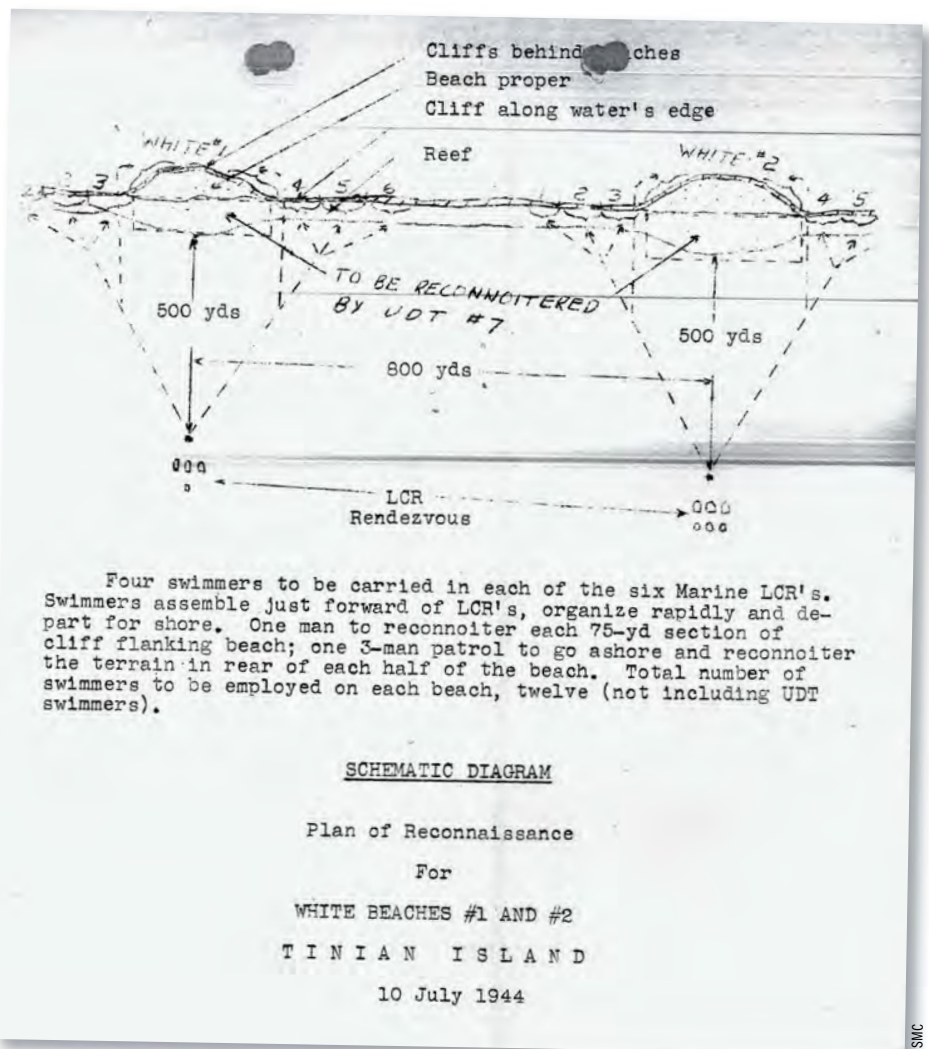
Just as fired up, Smith shouted, “You know goddamned well that it’s my business and none of yours to say where we’ll land. If you say you won’t put us ashore I’ll fight you all the way . . . I’ll take it up with Spruance, and if necessary with Nimitz. Now just put that down in your goddamned book!”

The meeting finally ended when the two agreed that a decision on the landing beaches would be deferred until after the results of the reconnaissance.

V Amphibious Corps (VAC) Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion

The Amphibious Reconnaissance Company was formed at Camp Elliott, Calif., in January 1943, under the command of Captain James L. Jones, the father of the future 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James L. Jones Jr.

In August 1943, the company was redesignated Amphibious Reconnaissance Company, V Amphibious Corps (VAC), Pacific Fleet. At the instigation of LtGen Smith, the company was expanded into a two-company battalion on April 14, 1944, and designated VAC Amphibious



Reconnaissance Battalion, Amphibious Corps, Pacific Fleet.

The VAC Amphib Recon Bn, under the command of recently promoted Major James L. Jones, in conjunction with Underwater Demolition Teams 5 and 7, was tasked with performing a night reconnaissance of the Tinian beaches. Their mission was multifaceted:

- Locate obstacles on the beach,
- Determine the height and characteristics of the cliffs and the vegetation behind the beaches,
- Determine the depth of the water and characteristics of the off-lying reef,
- Determine the types of landing craft that could be landed on each particular beach,
- Determine the types of vehicles that could cross the reef and move inland, and
- Estimate whether the infantry could climb the cliffs without ladders or cargo nets.

Capt Merwin H. “Silver” Silverthorn

Jr.’s Co A and a detachment of “frogmen” from Navy Underwater Demolition Team 7 were assigned Yellow Beach while First Lieutenant Leo B. Shinn’s Co B and 12 swimmers from UDT 5, led by the famed frogman Lieutenant Commander Draper

L. Kauffman, were assigned the two White Beaches. On July 8, the battalion officers and selected noncommissioned officers (NCOs) went aboard USS *Gilmer* (APD-11), a converted World War I four-stack destroyer transport, and cruised along the west coast of Tinian.

“The purpose of the cruise was to enable us to study the beaches through binoculars and to become familiar with the horizontal silhouette of the island,” 1stLt Shinn explained,

“in order to facilitate our direction during the subsequent reconnaissance.”

The following night, both companies, along with swimmers from the UDTs, conducted a rehearsal off the beaches of Magicienne Bay, Saipan. Shinn said, “It was jointly decided that the UDT



LtGen Holland M. Smith



Marines make for the beach on Tinian, July 1944. By the end of the first day, more than 15,000 Marines were ashore with relatively few casualties, especially as compared to Saipan. Some of the amtracs brought Marines beyond the shoreline; other Marines had to wade ashore in shallow water.

Second Lieutenant Donald F. Neff, Silver Star Citation



The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star to Second Lieutenant Donald F. Neff, United States Marine Corps Reserve, “for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity while attached to Company A, Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion, Fleet Marine Force, in action against enemy Japanese forces on Tinian Island, 10 July 1944. Carrying out his assigned mission, Second Lieutenant Neff led this three man night patrol on a hydrographic reconnaissance to a landing beach and, swimming ashore armed with only a knife, observed enemy activity.

Determined to complete his primary objective and find an exit from the beach, he instructed his unarmed men to remain on the shore line and, braving possible ambush, proceeded inland alone and found a footpath over which friendly troops landing could advance. After accomplishing his mission, Second Lieutenant Neff returned to his men and guided the patrol back to their battalion. His leadership, perseverance, and fortitude in fulfilling an important assignment reflect the highest credit upon Second Lieutenant Neff and the United States Naval Service.”

would accomplish the hydrographic reconnaissance while the Marines would reconnoiter and secure the information pertaining to the beach proper and the terrain.” At midnight the APD stood 3,000 yards offshore and launched 10 black neoprene rubber landing craft (LCRs), which were towed by the ship’s landing craft to a point 1,500 yards off the beach.

“From this point,” Shinn noted, “the LCRs were cautiously paddled to a point 500 yards from shore at which time the swimmers went into the water.” Each swimmer was equipped with an inflatable CO₂ rubber life belt, a flashlight and a package of aviator’s yellow emergency dye to be used in an emergency. “The rehearsal was executed as planned,” Shinn said, “and was completed at about 0500 the following morning.”

Tinian Beach Reconnaissance

“The actual reconnaissance of Tinian beaches was ordered for the night of 10-11 July,” Shinn said. “The entire day was spent in planning the reconnaissance, familiarizing the troops with the plan and holding debarkation drills and rehearsals. Exhaustive studies were made ... of all available aerial photographs, maps, etc. of the beaches.”

The plans called for USS *Gilmer* and USS *Stringham* (APD-6) to transport the recon Marines and frogmen to the objective area, some 3,000 yards off the beach where they would launch 10-man rubber boats. Ships’ landing craft, with muffled exhausts, would tow the boats approximately 500 yards off their respective beaches. At that point, the boats would be paddled to a point just outside the surf zone.

Yellow Beach

Capt Silverthorn selected 20 swimmers from Co A and eight from UDT 7 to make the Yellow Beach reconnaissance. At 2045, under a cloudy sky that obscured the moon, the teams started for the beach. “When the rubber boats were approximately 500 yards off shore, two sharp reports resembling rifle fire and showing flashes were heard off the south end of the main Yellow Beach,” Maj Jones said. “These were followed by two dull reports resembling the noise of mortars.” Under orders to remain covert, Jones ordered the boats to move north “and attempt to obtain hydrographic information from the reef.”

The UDT found floating mines in the approaches to the beach and a number of underwater boulders and potholes. On the flanks of the 125-yard beach, swimmers observed almost insurmountable cliffs which were 20- to 25-foot high.

On the beach itself, Marines led by Second Lieutenant Donald F. Neff discovered the Japanese had strung double-aproned barbed wire. Neff left his men at the high-water mark and, armed only with a knife, he worked his way through the wire to 30 yards inland to locate exit routes. As he crawled along, he could hear nearby Japanese work crews. At one point, he spotted three Japanese sentries peering down from a cliff overlooking the beach. They occasionally shined flashlights onto the beach, but failed to spot the Marine officer. Neff found that the Japanese were preparing defenses sited directly at the proposed landing site. After a harrowing time ashore, he returned to his men and swam back to the rubber boat.

Based on the reconnaissance, the commander of Task Force 52 decided that “Yellow Beach was found to have fairly heavy surf, and [was] unsuitable for a large body of troops because of the steep cliffs and narrow exits.”

White Beach 1

Shinn split his company into two teams, one for White Beach 1 (the northernmost beach) and the other team for White Beach 2. “The beaches were about 60 yards and 160 yards,” recalled Brigadier General Russell E. Corey, who was a lieutenant at the time. The two were separated by 1,000 yards of rocky coast. At 2130, the two Marine teams disembarked from *Gilmer*. “Debarkation went well until the LCRs were cast off from their tows,” Shinn said. A strong tidal current carried both teams north.

The White Beach 1 team landed on a coral outcropping about 800 yards north of Tinian and never got ashore. If not for the coral outcrop, they would have been carried even farther into the Saipan Channel. The White Beach 2 team landed on White Beach 1 and made a hasty reconnaissance of the beach and its approaches. Meanwhile, the UDT swimmers scanned the water offshore, but did not find anything that would interfere with a landing. One group of frogmen, led by Lieutenant Junior Grade George Suhrlund, crawled onto the beach above the high-water mark to check out a report that mines had been planted, but he did not find any explosives.

During the recovery, the northerly current, plus low scudding clouds and a light fog, made it extremely difficult to locate the rubber boats. Gunnery Sergeant Sam Lanford, Private First Class John Sebern and LCDR Kauffman, the UDT commander, missed the recovery and were swept into the channel that separated Tinian from Saipan. They had to tread water for several hours before being rescued by USS *Dickerson* (APD-21), a picket boat patrol-



USMC

The choice of both LtGen Holland M. Smith, Expeditionary Force Troops commander, and RADM Harry W. Hill, Northern Attack Force commander, the White Beaches, pictured above and below, were eventually acceptable to VADM Richmond Kelly Turner, commander of the Joint Expeditionary Force, as the appropriate landing sites for the invasion of Tinian. Prior to the reconnaissance conducted by VAC Amphib Recon Bn, VADM Turner was adamant that Yellow Beach was more suitable.



USMC

ling the channel. Fortunately, the men had stuffed flotation bladders in their jackets which helped keep them afloat.

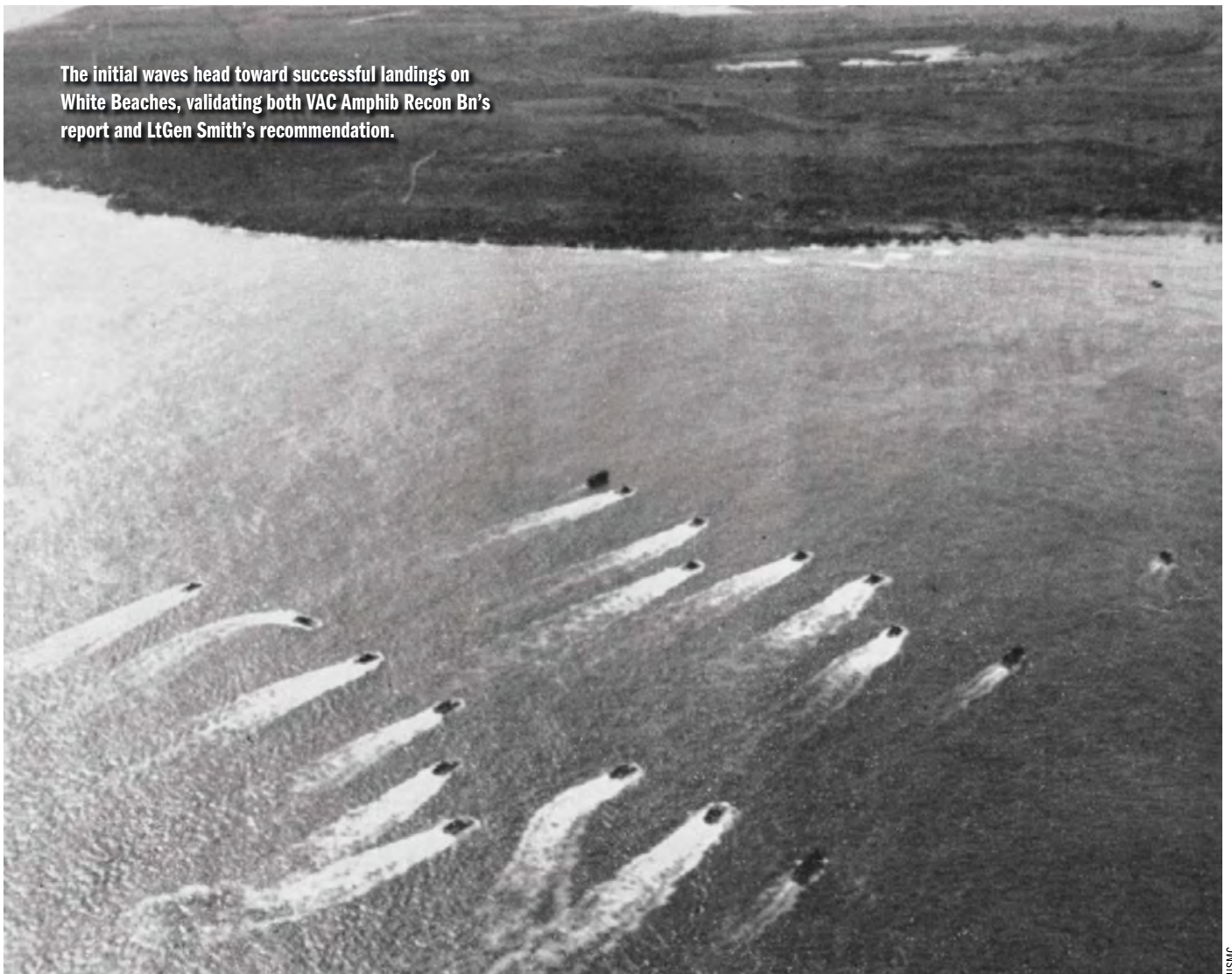
White Beach 2

With only half the mission accomplished, Jones assigned Silverthorn’s Co A to recon White Beach 2 the next night. “Arrangements were made to use the USS *Stringham* to land the troops and to use the USS *Gilmer* to pick them up,” Jones explained. “Five rubber boats with swimmers and paddlers and one drone rubber boat carrying a mounted tripod wrapped with wire mesh were towed to a point 1,900 yards off White Beach 2.” Jones blamed “the failure on the first night to a lack of surface radar on the *Gilmer* to guide the boats to the beach,” thus the improvised radar reflector. Co B furnished and manned the boats while Silverthorn

supplied six two-man swimmer teams of one officer and one senior staff NCO. Twelve UDT swimmers also accompanied the recon team.

“At 1,900 yards,” Jones said, “the rubber boats cast off, and the ship guided them by radio. All the men in the LCRs had steel helmets and together with the wire-mesh tripod enabled the ship to guide the boats to a point 400 yards to seaward and 100 yards south of White Beach 2.” At that point, all the swimmer teams slipped into the water and made their way toward the beach, using either the sidestroke or the breaststroke to keep from splashing or making noise. They were almost invisible. Only their heads were above water, and they had darkened their faces and necks with camouflage paint. The water over the reef was deep enough for the men to traverse without exposing themselves to

The initial waves head toward successful landings on White Beaches, validating both VAC Amphib Recon Bn's report and LtGen Smith's recommendation.



USMC

observation, although several swimmers were cut by the sharp coral.

Once ashore, the recon Marines quickly determined there were no obstacles on the beach, nor any evidence of Japanese activity. While the Marines worked the beach, the UDT scanned the water and the reef fronting the shoreline. At one point, a Japanese sentry almost stepped on two team members as they lay exposed on the sand, but they were not discovered. Silverthorn noted, "A very thorough reconnaissance of the surf conditions, reef, beach and flanks was done." The teams completed their assignments and returned to the recovery ships on time. Silverthorn briefed RADM Hill on the results of the reconnaissance. "Admiral, the beaches are narrow ... [but] there are no mines, no coral heads, no boulders, no wire, no boat obstacles and no offshore reefs. The beaches are as flat as a billiard table!"



VADM Richmond Kelly Turner

Decision Time

RADM Hill, having been forcefully rebuffed by VADM Turner, kicked the beach decision up to Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, 5th Fleet, who called a meeting of the primary commanders on the afternoon of July 12. LtGen Smith and RADM Hill strongly argued the case for the White Beaches. At the conclusion of the presentation, VADM Turner calmly announced that he would accept the plan. A participant later wrote, "We were all surprised at the unexpected rapidity and ease with which the plan was presented and accepted." VADM Turner remarked, "Before the reconnaissance ... I had tentatively decided to accept the White Beaches unless the reconnaissance reports were decidedly unfavorable."

On July 24, the assault elements of Fourth Marine Division landed successfully across the White Beaches in what

ADM Spruance declared as "the most brilliantly conceived and executed amphibious operation in World War II." Amphib Recon Bn had executed its mission perfectly, without casualties, and contributed significantly to the operation. On Aug. 9, the battalion sailed for Pearl Harbor to rest, refit and train for its next missions: Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

Author's bio: Dick Camp, a retired Marine colonel, is the former director of operations for the National Museum of the Marine Corps, former deputy director and director (acting) of the Marine Corps History Division and a prolific author. His latest e-book, "The Killing Ground: A Novel of Marines in the Vietnam War," is available online at Amazon.com, and he has two new nonfiction books, "Shadow Warriors" and "Assault From the Sky," available from The MARINE Shop. He is a frequent contributor to Leatherneck.



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In Every Clime and Place

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

■ KATHMANDU, NEPAL Marines Fly Critical Supplies To Earthquake Survivors

Utilizing the vertical takeoff capabilities of the UH-1Y Huey/Venom and MV-22B Osprey, Marines with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 469 and Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 262, both attached to Marine Aircraft Group 36, First Marine Aircraft Wing, III Marine Expeditionary Force, flew relief supplies to Charikot, Nepal, from the Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, Nepal, May 7.

“Today our mission was to deliver tarps and tent supplies to Charikot so the Nepalese people can cover their homes, which are now subject to the coming monsoon season,” said Captain Terence R. Desmond, a UH-1Y Huey/Venom pilot with HMLA-469.

The supplies will provide survivors with

shelter after a 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck central Nepal on April 25, causing fatalities, injuries and significant damage and leaving many without homes.

Official sources reported more than 7,600 deaths and 16,000 sustained injuries after the earthquake. These numbers continued to increase with each passing day. Survivors suffered the loss of their family and friends, as well as the destruction of their homes.

“A lot of the homes were destroyed,” Desmond said. “About half of them had some variation of damage, and quite a few of them were completely destroyed.”

Getting shelter supplies out to the Nepalese people to protect them from the elements was a critical mission for the Marines. The coming monsoon season posed a large threat to the recently exposed homes.

“They do have food to eat, but they

do not have shelters to stay,” said CPT Bishwas Adikari, a Nepalese army special forces team commander. “The U.S. Marines are helping in a great way, beyond our expectations.”

The Nepalese government requested assistance from U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). In response to USAID’s request, the U.S. military sent Marines, airmen, soldiers and sailors as part of Joint Task Force 505.

The Marines of HMLA-469 and VMM-262 worked together to complete the mission.

“HMLA-469 is our sister squadron on the flight line, and we are more than willing to work with them,” said Major Jason Laird, an Osprey pilot with VMM-262. “We have our maintainers and personnel helping HMLA-469 load up their [aircraft] to reduce the load time and get these supplies out to the Nepalese



Aid workers stand by to load relief supplies onto UH-1Y Huey/Venom helicopters and MV-22B Ospreys in Charikot, Nepal, May 5. This aerial photo was taken from a UH-1Y with HMLA-469. The squadron was instrumental in assisting with relief efforts in central Nepal following a 7.8-magnitude earthquake.



SGT JEFFREY ANDERSON, USMC

LCpl John Kingwell, left, and HM2 Jessica Gomez, both with JTF 505, help a Nepalese earthquake victim to an ambulance at a medical triage area at Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu, Nepal, in May.

people as quickly as possible.”

During May 5-8, the Marines from the two squadrons worked together to deliver more than 150 tarps and tents. They were also able to assist Joint Task Force 505 in delivering 3,000 pounds of food to the Nepalese people.

“You can see the Nepalese people have suffered a lot,” said Desmond. “They’re very happy to receive the additional supplies, and you can tell that they are very grateful. It’s definitely a good feeling to see that we are taking a terrible situation and making it better.”

Members of the Nepalese army expressed their gratitude for the help they received.

“Thank you very much for serving our country,” said Adikari. “On behalf of my Nepalese army and personally, we are very, very thankful for the special American teams to help us over here.”

Joint Task Force 505 was tasked with continuing to support Nepal as long as the Nepalese government requests their assistance.

“It feels great to help,” said Laird. “It’s what we want to do.”

LCpl Mandaline Hatch, USMC

■ ALBERTA, CANADA Maple Resolve Brings Together U.S., British and Canadian Forces

The Marines and sailors of 1st Air/Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO), I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group kicked off Exercise Maple Resolve 2015 with the Canadian Armed Forces at the Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre, Camp Wainwright, Alberta, Canada, on May 2.

The multinational exercise, conducted annually by the Canadian Army, is a three-

week, high-readiness validation exercise for Canadian Army elements designated for domestic or international operations. This year, the 1st Canadian Division and the 5 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group (5 CMBG) were supported by the British 12th Armoured Infantry Brigade, various U.S. Army elements, and for the first time, members of 1st ANGLICO, who bring a unique capability.

“Maple Resolve 15 is the certification exercise for the 5 CMBG because they are the [Canadian Army’s] battle group in high readiness, essentially their crisis response force,” explained Lieutenant Colonel Brian Russell, Commanding Offi-

cer, 1st ANGLICO. “Much like the [U.S. Marine Corps] maintains Marine expeditionary brigades in a crisis response posture—this is the same thing here with the Canadian Army. We’re here to support the exercise.”

The 1st ANGLICO is a unique unit designed to allow the Marines and sailors of I MEF to assist the militaries of partner nations by providing fire-support capabilities from artillery, aircraft and ships while they are working hand in hand with the MEF and joint U.S. military forces. The unit also advises and trains their partner militaries, which assists in theater support cooperation around the world.

“We are meeting some of the [Commandant of the Marine Corps’] intent in his most recent planning guidance to build partner capacity,” said Russell. “Part of the reason we do these exercises with our strategic allies is when we go to war, we often find [them] right here with us.

“We are here to help the Canadians not just operationally, but from an institutional perspective. We are helping them bridge Canadian Army and [Royal Canadian] Air Force capabilities,” he added.

The 1st ANGLICO is organized into teams, which are able to attach to and support various-sized military elements. There is a headquarters platoon and a division fire support cell, which is made up of forward observers, radio operators, joint terminal attack controllers and all the support capabilities needed to assist a commander in calling in precise and timely fire and communications support.

The division cell coordinates and sup-



SGT BOBBIE CURTIS, USMC

Capt Austin Jones, left, company air officer, 1st ANGLICO, I MEF Headquarters Group, shows a Canadian soldier how to call for fire during Exercise Maple Resolve 2015 at the Canadian Manoeuvre Training Centre, Camp Wainwright, Alberta, Canada, in early May. The Marines and sailors of 1st ANGLICO teamed up with the Canadian Armed Forces to conduct a series of close air support missions.

ports with smaller teams that they assign to subordinate elements. These small teams are called brigade platoons, supporting arms liaison teams and firepower control teams.

Maple Resolve is the first time 1st ANGLICO has supported such a large force in recent years.

“The Marine Corps is getting back to some higher-level, major contingency operations scenarios. The same thing is going on here in the Canadian Army,” LtCol Russell said.

“We are designed as an ANGLICO to support a joint or coalition division operating as a second ground combat element underneath a MEF, so that’s why I view this as a very valuable opportunity,” he added.

He added that Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom demonstrated the need for smaller teams as opposed to a division fire support cell and that this exercise and other similar exercises allow the company to refresh their conventional skill sets.

SSgt Bobbie Curtis, USMC

■ CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. Scout Sniper Candidates Attempt Grueling Preparation Course

Stealthily making his way through the brush under the beating sun, a Marine gradually makes his way closer to instructors searching for him through high-powered binoculars. Over the course of two hours, he steadily moves more than 250 meters to get to his final firing position, where he will position himself

to take a shot on one of the men searching for him.

In order for him to successfully complete his mission, he must advance undetected, establish a firing position, take a shot without being seen and retreat before being discovered.

Marines with Scout Sniper Platoon, Weapons Company, 2d Battalion, Second Marine Regiment completed a two-week preparation course prior to the Basic Scout Sniper Course at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., April 13-24.

Fifteen Marines participated in the introductory course, but only 11 completed the training and were given the opportunity to stay in the platoon.

“This was an evaluation and introductory phase to give the Marines an idea of what they can expect in the future,” said Sergeant Charles Holloway, a chief scout with the platoon. “Two weeks isn’t enough time to hit all the wickets, but it’s enough time to build a good foundation and build the skills they will need in order to be prepared for the Scout Sniper Basic Course.”

Holloway said once the foundational skills are built, the platoon members can begin training at more advanced levels and in areas that are more applicable to the overall mission of a scout sniper.

Throughout the training, the candidates were pushed to their limits and tested on various levels. While continuously learning new skill sets, the candidates still had to find ways to make it through the strenuous training.

“This is all I’ve ever wanted to do as a kid,” said Lance Corporal Alec Jones, a candidate with the platoon. “Sometimes you just have to remember why you volunteered for something like this, because on some days that’s all you have to get you through to the next day. It feels good to challenge yourself daily. I’m grateful for this opportunity to learn from the scout snipers and senior leadership in the platoon. It feels good to be a part of such a tight-knit family, and I’m looking forward to having the opportunity to better myself.”

The 11 Marines who completed the training will begin to build on what they learned as they head to the next step: Scout Sniper Basic Course.

“The Marines who finished the training have potential and a good outlook ahead of them,” said Holloway. “They have the mentality to keep improving themselves and their skills. Now we can begin to build the skills they will need in order to support the types of mission they will be tasked with.”

Sgt Austin Long, USMC

■ SIERRA DEL RETIN, SPAIN Marines Team Up With Spanish For Live-Fire Training

A platoon of U.S. Marines with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force—Crisis Response-Africa (SPMAGTF—CR-AF) completed a live-fire assault course during a training exercise with 2d Battalion, Spanish Marine Brigade at a range in Sierra del Retin, Spain, May 4-6.

The exercise allowed the two forces to share their resources in a combined training environment where they could support each other and demonstrate their maneuver procedures.

“We shared the same [staging area], and we practically lived together for three days,” said Lieutenant Pablo Torres, the bilateral training officer for the Spanish battalion. “The purpose of this training was mainly live-fire assaults, so we decided in agreement with [the U.S. Marines] to share the same range and take turns to do our dry runs and live-fire runs, giving us the opportunity to see our differences and similarities.”

The two groups completed a series of day and night maneuvers through the range’s thick vegetation as they built up to their culminating platoon-level assaults with machine-gun support. All the while, the two groups observed their partners in action.

“It’s good to understand that not everybody does it the way we do, and there are things we can learn from other militaries and vice versa,” said Second Lieutenant Peter Severson, the platoon commander from SPMAGTF—CR-AF.



SGT AUSTIN LONG, USMC

A Marine scout sniper candidate looks through the scope of his weapon during a stalking exercise at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., April 22. The exercise, which taught the importance of concealment during movement and while firing at a target, was conducted by Marines attending the Basic Scout Sniper Preparation Course.



SGT PAUL PETERSON, USMC

A Marine with SPMAGTF–CR–AF fires rounds during a training exercise with 2d Bn, Spanish Marine Brigade in Sierra del Retin, Spain, in early May. The exercise allowed the platoon to take advantage of a huge training area while deployed and to interact with Spanish Marines.

“[Just] the fact that we can use the Spanish training area is huge. . . . That’s one of the only places we can train like this while deployed. If we couldn’t train with the Spanish, we couldn’t complete a lot of our core infantry skill requirements,” he added.

In return for access to the ranges, SPMAGTF–CR–AF provided the Spanish Marines with an opportunity to use the MV-22B Osprey. Two of the aircraft delivered the U.S. Marine platoon to the training site and then their Spanish counterparts boarded for a bilateral aerial assault mission to test their ability to complete combined operations.

Although the units did not integrate on the assault range, the shared assets were a demonstration of the two forces’ strong desire to continue their growing and mutually beneficial partnership.

“We don’t need a fully integrated exercise to work as a team,” said Torres. “We understand that there’s no need to have a mixed platoon, for example, as that’s not likely to happen in a real operation. In spite of that, we can find alternatives and

other ways to obtain benefits from this training, specifically through debriefings and watching each other work.”

The Marines of SPMAGTF–CR–AF have participated in numerous training exercises with their Spanish partners and have plans to continue to build upon that mutually beneficial relationship.

SGT Paul Peterson, USMC

■ BRIDGEPORT, CALIF. GCEITF Marines Begin Assessment On New Terrain

“Trail High Point: 7,337 feet,” reads a wooden sign atop a mountain. The Marines briefly catch their breath and sip their water, one of many essential items securely packed in their 75-pound fighting load. Many tasks remain before they travel back down this path.

Marines with “Alpha” Company, Weapons Company and Engineer Platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force (GCEITF) began their Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity (MCOTEA) assessment at Ma-

rine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center (MCMWTC) Bridgeport, Calif., May 5.

The unit’s arrival at MCMWTC followed its completion of the standards-based tasks conducted since March aboard Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif. After spending time in the sand and dry brush of the desert, the companies now found themselves operating in heavy changes of scenery: uphill dirt trails, sky-high trees, running streams of water and even snow-topped mountains.

For the first several days, the Marines were briefed on basic knowledge of their new environment. They were presented the opportunity to explore their designated route and given thorough instruction in tying knots and using a carabiner, the two essential tools for their assessment.

“Hiking along these trails is beautiful compared to the desert,” Lance Corporal Jordan Osborne, a rifleman with Co A, GCEITF, said. “I volunteered to try something new. I thought this was a really cool opportunity that will not pass by again.”

Unlike their assessment in Twentynine Palms, which saw offensive and defensive operations split into two days, all tasks at MCMWTC were completed over the course of a single day. One day, the infantry-trained Marines of Co A and Wpns Co completed their assigned tasks, and the following day, the provisional infantry Marines of those companies, as well as the combat engineers, conducted the same required tasks.

Representatives from MCOTEA collected data through the use of heart-rate monitors worn by participating Marines, and overseeing data collectors assessed each run-through.

The assessment began with a squad of Marines, each donning a main pack of 75 pounds, as they conducted an approximately 3-mile movement from the lower base camp, along an elevating trail and ending at a gorge. From there, each member of the squad was required to don a Kevlar helmet and tie a military rappel seat around his or her waist to create a harness. With the assistance of the mountain leaders, known as “red hats,” the Marines were secured to a rope bridge and required to maneuver upside down across the gorge, hanging 170 feet above the ground.

“I was intimidated by the gorge cross,” Osborne said. “Ropes kind of scare me. It was the first time I have ever had to cross over like that.”

From there, the squads regrouped and traversed a short distance to their next objective: scaling a 40-foot cliff face.

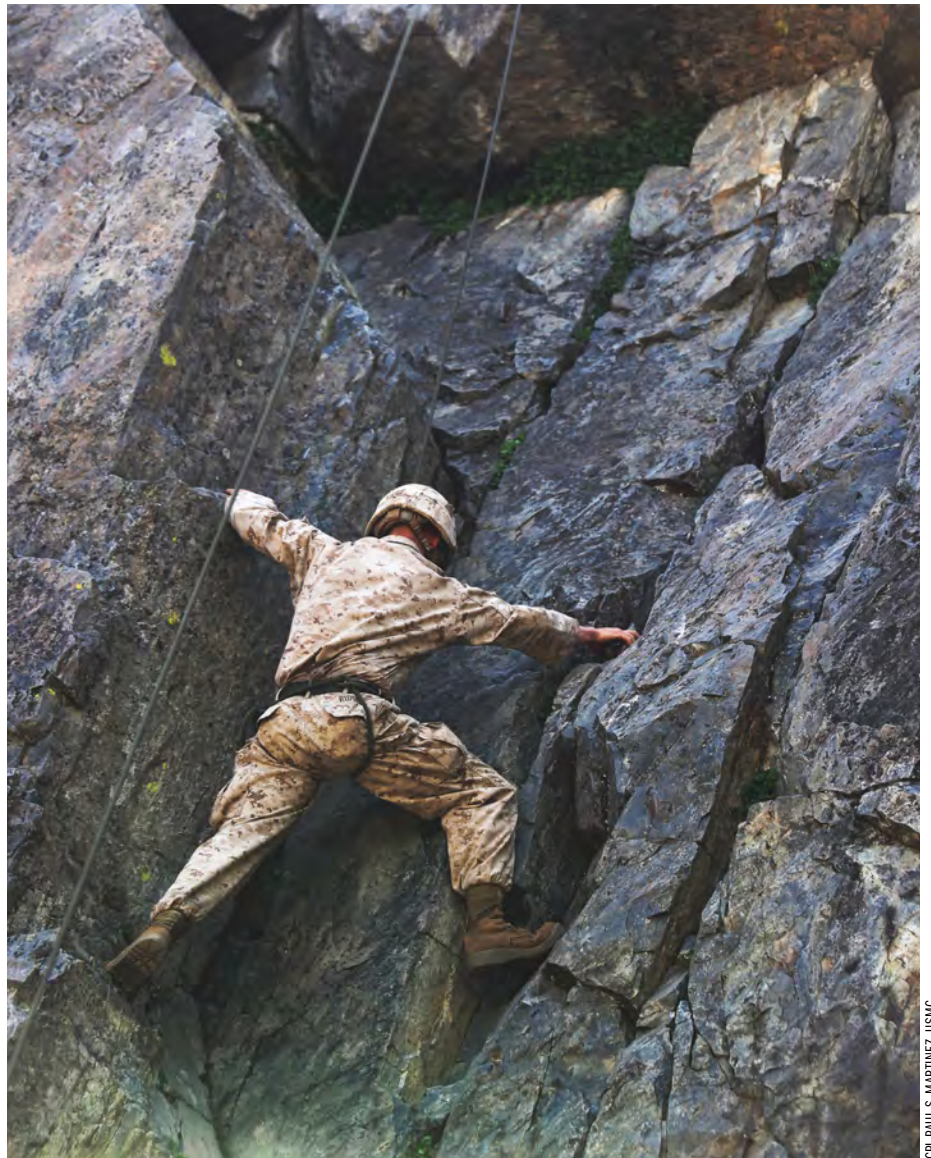
Once again making their rappel seats, Marines stepped up to enter one of two designated lanes, secure their ropes and make their ascent. They worked in crews of three—a climber, a “belayer” and a spotter—to ensure safety. Once the climbers reached the top, they stretched their legs to a standing position and rappelled back down, guided by their partners on the ground.

“A few people have a fear of heights,” said Sergeant Courtney G. White, machine-gunner, Wpns Co, GCEITF. “But it’s a team effort, and other people are depending on you to get across and continue the mission. [Climbing] the rock wall was not the easiest thing for me, but you learn to do it.”

After the last Marine completed the descent, the squad regrouped to hike 3 miles back.

“In your lifetime, you only get a limited number of opportunities to [do] something historic,” White said. “Being one of the first females to try out for a combat position was something I had to do.”

The task force was slated to continue its assessment aboard MCMWTC through the end of May.



CPL PAUL S. MARTINEZ, USMC

Above: Cpl Destin L. Ridge, a rifleman with Co A, GCEITF, climbs a 40-foot cliff face during the unit's assessment at MCMWTC Bridgeport, Calif., May 5.

Below: Cpl Jordan Yearsley, a combat engineer with GCEITF, is secured under a rope during the rope gorge-crossing event of the MCOTEA assessment.



CPL PAUL S. MARTINEZ, USMC

From October 2014 to July 2015, the GCEITF has conducted individual- and collective-level skills training in designated ground combat arms occupational specialties in order to facilitate the standards-based assessment of the physical performance of Marines in a simulated operating environment performing specific ground combat arms tasks.

Cpl Paul S. Martinez, USMC

■ JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, WASH.

R&S Patrol Hones Marines' Readiness

Reconnaissance and surveillance (R&S) patrols typically involve a clandestine insertion, movement under darkness, surveillance from concealed positions and an expeditious extraction from the area.

Marines with Company C, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion conducted a 48-hour R&S patrol in an evergreen forest surrounding Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., to kick off a 10-day combat readiness evaluation in April.

It began at a nearby airfield where Marines, each strapped with more than 100 pounds of equipment, loaded onto a CH-47 Chinook. The helicopter climbed to an altitude of 10,000 feet and the temperature dropped below zero degrees Fahrenheit. The bitterly cold air gushed through the helicopter, but the reconnaissance men were unbothered and remained focused on the mission at hand. They were moments away from free-falling into the abyss below.

A jumpmaster aboard the Chinook communicated with the men by using hand and arm signals, and one by one they rose from their seats and filed out the rear of the aircraft. As the last Marine began a free-fall descent, the pilot turned the helicopter around to return to the flight line.

Once the helicopter landed, the final batch of Marines loaded, and they were soon on their way to the drop zone. The Chinook landed in a cleared area of the forest, and its occupants sprinted out to assume security positions. The aircraft departed, and the recon Marines began moving to their pre-plotted surveillance positions.

"The Marines haven't operated in this kind of environment before," said First Lieutenant Patrick O'Mara, a platoon commander with Co C. "They are used to training in Southern California, so their movement times were extended significantly due to trees and downed foliage."

Although the terrain was new to many of the Marines, they adapted and reached their objectives after several hours of navigating. After the long night of hiking, each reconnaissance team established "hide sites" before sunrise to remain un-

seen and keep watch on each area of interest during the day. Each team successfully remained hidden and relayed information to the area commander.

"The sole purpose of recon going out there is because we have an area we need intelligence on," O'Mara said. "The best way to get intelligence is to get eyes on the ground. So recon teams go out, and their job is to build a situational awareness for the commander that owns the battlespace. They focus on the weather, enemy and terrain."

During the second day of the patrol, one of the "hide sites" came under simulated indirect fire. Artillery simulators exploded and echoed across the area, and a Marine suffered simulated shrapnel wounds. The designated team medic immediately began treating the wounds while a fellow team member called in a casualty evacuation request over a handheld radio.

Within a couple of minutes, the reconnaissance Marines abandoned their "hide site" with their gear packed and moved to a landing zone for an MH-60S Seahawk to receive the "wounded" Marine. The team established a security perimeter around a dirt road where the helicopter would arrive, and the medic continued to provide medical aid until the helicopter arrived.

Once the Seahawk reached the area, it hovered over the landing zone as an aircrew member and a special amphibious reconnaissance corpsman rappelled from the hovering aircraft. They were hoisted back up to the aircraft with the wounded

leatherneck and returned to the airfield.

Although the team members evacuated the casualty without harassment, the initial indirect fire indicated that an opposing force knew of their presence and location. The reconnaissance men began movement down a nearby dirt road to leave the area, but soon came under simulated fire from a group of "enemy" role players armed with AK47s and inert rocket-propelled grenades. In an instant the Marines raised their weapons and engaged the role players, eliminating the group in less than 60 seconds.

The team hastily searched the surrounding area for other potential threats before speeding to a new position to avoid further detection. Each Marine was sleep deprived and exhausted from the past 24 hours of the patrol, but they maneuvered to their new position, established a new "hide site" and resumed surveillance of the area.

While battling cold temperatures and rain, the reconnaissance team continued its constant surveillance before extracting from the training area via CH-47.

The company returned to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, and each team came away from the arduous patrol having learned valuable lessons. Evaluators who traveled with the reconnaissance teams also provided important insight and advice during follow-on debriefs.

Sgt Joseph Scanlan, USMC



SGT JOSEPH SCANLAN, USMC

Cpl Chris Kaaz, team medic, Co C, 1st Recon Bn, provides medical aid to a simulated casualty during a three-day reconnaissance and surveillance patrol at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., April 10. The patrol was one of many exercises the company completed as part of a combat readiness evaluation to prepare for an upcoming deployment.

Force Multiplier in the Sky

KC-130J Harvest HAWK Is Here to Stay

By Sara W. Bock

When most people think about Marine Corps close air support (CAS), a traditional strike platform like the F/A-18 Hornet or the AV-8B Harrier is likely the first thing that comes to mind. But for Marines who were on the ground in Afghanistan between late 2010 and 2014, the venerable KC-130J Super Hercules makes that list, and it may even be at the top.

After demonstrating substantial capabilities in video reconnaissance and considerable success in providing fire support during Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), the relatively new Harvest Hercules Airborne Weapons Kit (HAWK) isn't going to disappear from the Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) anytime soon.

With system upgrades on the horizon and an enhanced mission kit expected to arrive at KC-130J squadrons beginning in fiscal year 2017, the Marine Aerial Refueler Transport (VMGR) community will be more equipped than ever to provide multi-sensor imagery reconnaissance (MIR) and CAS to aid in the Corps' future missions.

A new model of a mainstay in Marine aviation, the KC-130J has proven its tactical capabilities in a variety of functions. Continuously deployed since 2001 and often working behind the scenes during long-range operations in every clime and place, the Corps' VMGR squadrons have conducted resupply missions, provided battlefield illumination, inserted ground forces, performed medical evacuations and extended time on station for strike aircraft by providing air-to-air and aviation-delivered ground refueling.

"VMGR remains a force multiplier for the MAGTF and combat commander by increasing range and mission flexibility," said Major Paul Greenberg, Office of Marine Corps Communication, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps.

Endurance, continuity and accuracy were the things the Marines on the ground in Afghanistan desperately needed in terms of firepower provided from the air during the earlier years of OEF. Specifically, they needed an asset that had multiple radios, could provide overwatch for an extended time in low-threat sce-

narios without requiring a break to refuel, and could deliver precision-guided munitions with accuracy while maintaining low collateral damage estimates. These requirements resulted in an urgent-need request. Marines needed a new CAS platform to take out enemy combatants, and they needed it fast.

The solution? Create a bolt-on/bolt-off, ISR/weapon mission kit to re-configure the KC-130J Super Hercules into a CAS platform.

The KC-130J "was capable of providing in excess of 10 hours of time-on-station over an objective area. This far exceeded time-on-station of any other MAGTF CAS asset in theater," said Captain Andrew Myers, a KC-130J pilot and Harvest HAWK instructor with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 252. Essentially, it was the only airframe in the MAGTF that could fit the demand for an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) platform with a long loiter time, which provided the continuity the ground combat element required to complete the mission in an increasingly convoluted battlespace.

Over a period of 18 months, a joint team from the Marine Corps, Lockheed Martin and Naval Air Systems Command developed a solution to those specific CAS demands by taking several components that already existed and placing them on an airframe that was already in use by the MAGTF. Their ingenuity gave birth to Harvest HAWK, and the first system was fielded to VMGR-352, based at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., in late 2010.

As of Oct. 31, 2014, the weapons kit had launched 307 precision guided missiles with a 94 percent on-target rate among more than 1,000 sorties and more than 6,000 flight hours in support of OEF, said Greenberg.

Its success in Afghanistan was not only measured in ordnance fired on target, said Greenberg, but also in the extensive ground force joint tactical air strike requests (JTARs) for Harvest HAWK on-station support that were submitted and fulfilled.

According to Myers, who flew the Harvest HAWK in Afghanistan in 2013, typical missions during OEF supported two to four JTARs during a single sortie.





Capt Craig Fitzhugh, left, and Capt Mike Jordan, KC-130J Super Hercules pilots with VMGR-252, act as FCOs as they operate the Harvest HAWK system in the back of a modified KC-130J at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., Sept. 2, 2014. (Photo by Cpl J.R. Heims, USMC)



A Harvest HAWK-equipped KC-130J takes flight over MCAS Cherry Point, N.C. From this angle, all of the external Harvest HAWK modifications are visible—the M299 quad-mount Hellfire missile launcher, the Target Sight Sensor and the “derringer door.”

JOHN ROSSINO, LOCKHEED MARTIN



JOHN ROSSINO, LOCKHEED MARTIN



CPL J.R. HEINS, USMC

The electro-optical, infrared and laser-targeting Target Sight Sensor from the AH-1Z Super Cobra/Viper is attached to the left external fuel tank of the KC-130J and allows the crew to view video footage from the ground.

Capt James Brophy, left, and 1stLt David Bick fly a Harvest HAWK-equipped KC-130J at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C., Sept. 2, 2014. On the screen on the left side of the cockpit, the aircraft commander can view footage from the Target Sight Sensor before giving the final consent for munitions release.

“This [ability to support multiple JTARs] reduced asset allocation of the MAGTF commander, which was significant due to the reduction of forces and assets in theater,” Myers said of the period following the drawdown of troops in Afghanistan.

At a cost of \$8.2 million per kit (after initial engineering), the Harvest HAWK modification is substantially more cost-effective than purchasing a dedicated fixed-wing strike aircraft. Harvest HAWK’s “bolt-on/bolt-off” modular configuration was designed to complement the Super Hercules’ existing capabilities without making significant permanent modifications to the low-density, high-demand refuelers.

The fielding of Harvest HAWK systems allowed the VMGR community to augment its role while still supporting the Marines on the ground through its traditional missions. In many cases, the new CAS capability was a complement to traditional C-130 missions like battlefield illumination and command and control; these missions were combined to conserve the MAGTF’s resources.

It quickly became a highly requested asset by the joint terminal attack controllers (JTACs) and commanders leading troops to battle insurgents in Afghanistan.

To the KC-130J community, the ability to provide overwatch and fire support isn’t any more or less important than any of its other roles. It’s just another way to help Marines on the ground. The pilots, crew and maintainers who have enabled Harvest HAWK’s success aren’t as concerned with the data—which illustrates the CAS asset’s extraordinary success over the past five years—as they are with simply knowing that they are doing their part to support and protect ground forces, according to Lieutenant Colonel Daniel R. Campbell,

commanding officer of VMGR-352.

“Whether that was preventing an ambush, preventing an IED [improvised explosive device] from being placed—there’s no doubt that it saved lives, and that was success. Harvest HAWK is one more critical piece of the MAGTF commander’s tool bag,” said Campbell.

In order to allow the aircraft to carry a standard conventional load of 14 precision guided munitions, several modifications are made to the exterior of a Harvest HAWK-equipped KC-130J. Due to time constraints and the urgency of the request for a CAS platform with an extended on-station presence, the modifications were adopted from other Navy-Marine Corps airframes.

On the left side of the aircraft, the pylon that normally carries an aerial refueling pod instead holds an M299 quad-mount

Hellfire missile launcher, which comes from the AH-1W Super Cobra. The AGM 114P Hellfire 2 was Harvest HAWK’s most utilized weapon during OEF.

Just inboard of that launcher, the left external fuel tank houses the Target Sight Sensor (TSS), borrowed from the AH-1Z Super Cobra/Viper. The TSS is an electro-optical, infrared and laser-targeting sensor, which streams video footage of vehicles and insurgents on the ground to the pilots and to the fire control operators (FCOs) on board the KC-130J. The FCOs, who operate the sensor and weapons system and communicate with the ground forces, are pilots as well. In Harvest HAWK’s earlier stages, the FCOs on KC-130Js were pulled from other platforms—AH-1W Super Cobras, F/A-18 Hornets and AV-8B Harriers.

Today, Harvest HAWK training within



SSGT CHRISTOPHER FLURRY, USMC

In the skies above southwestern Afghanistan in 2011, Capt John L. Belsha, an FCO with VMGR-352, operates the Harvest HAWK sensor and weapons system and communicates with ground forces.

LCpl Lorenzo P. Villarreal, an aviation ordnance technician with VMGR-252, straps a rack that can hold up to 10 Griffin missiles onto the loading ramp of a Harvest HAWK-modified KC-130J.



LCPL SCOTT L. TOMASZYCKI, USMC

the VMGR squadrons has evolved to the point that KC-130J pilots are simultaneously trained as Harvest HAWK aircraft commanders and FCOs.

“Ultimately, the aircraft commander has final consent for munitions release, so they require the same training and knowledge as an FCO,” said Myers. “The ultimate goal is to provide crews capable of employing the weapons system while ensuring the gold standards of Marine Corps CAS are upheld.”

At the rear of the aircraft, the left paratroop door has two ports that hold AGM-175 Griffin missiles, which can be launched from the inside of the aircraft. The “derringer door” launcher allows the Griffins to be fired from inside the aircraft without depressurizing the cabin.

Inside the fuselage, a pallet-mounted fire control console sits in the forward-most section of the cargo compartment. It houses a mission computer taken from the Navy’s SH-60 Seahawk, which displays video imagery from the target sight sensor and other information pertinent to the FCO’s role. The station has seating for two FCOs, who operate the sensor with a joystick and control the weaponry.

Behind them are several wire bundles that allow the Harvest HAWK kit to interface with the aircraft systems. In the extreme aft of the aircraft there is a rack

that holds 10 Griffins situated right next to the mounts where the missiles are ejected through the derringer door. On the flight deck, the center console has been reconfigured slightly to accommodate laser and weapon release consent switches for the aircraft commander, and two video repeaters that duplicate the screens in the fire control station are mounted to the dash for the pilots’ reference.

Operating the Harvest HAWK requires more than the typical two-pilot KC-130J mission. One or two additional pilots must be on board to act as FCOs and man the fire control station. KC-130J maintainers and aircrew also must be proficient in a unique set of skills. The crewmasters have to be qualified to handle munitions in the cargo compartment and to preflight and troubleshoot the Harvest HAWK equipment. It’s been no small task for members of the VMGR community to take on the MIR/CAS role, but they have acclimated exceptionally well.

“Our pilots have adapted very well to the close air support mission,” said Maj Andrew Alissandratos, a Harvest HAWK instructor and the operations officer for VMGR-352, adding that the training syllabus, which consists of a ground school and a flight phase, now qualifies KC-130J pilots to be both Harvest HAWK aircraft commanders and FCOs.

The pilots have to be trained in special procedures for starting and flying a Harvest HAWK-equipped aircraft and for flying timely and accurate weapons delivery profiles. The FCOs need to be experts at operating the sensor, communicating with ground forces and delivering weapons on their intended targets. The simultaneous use of multiple radios requires every crewmember to utilize effective communication and coordination. Everyone on board has to be familiar with the local rules of engagement and the ground scheme of maneuver that they are supporting.

“We train to it just like we do to any other mission set we have here,” said LtCol Campbell, who added that the VMGR squadrons took a “crawl, walk, run” approach to their newest role. “Whether an [airdrop] or fixed-wing [air-to-air refueling], it is a mission we perform and are required to do so.”

According to Myers, an important aspect of training Harvest HAWK pilots and FCOs is helping them understand how the JTACs who are calling in the JTARs think and operate. Ground school instruction includes map studies, techniques and communication procedures, learning system capabilities, laser consideration, weapons basics and employment techniques.

“I felt the platform was truly a success

A KC-130J aircrewman with VMGR-252 performs a preflight check of the aircraft and the Harvest HAWK system. “Preflighting” the Harvest HAWK-equipped KC-130J requires knowledge of special equipment such as the Target Sight Sensor and the Hellfire launcher. (Photo by John Rossino, Lockheed Martin)

when I was able to use it during my operations,” said Myers of his experiences during OEF. “It was highly sought after from not only traditional Marine Corps ground combat element and logistics combat element units, but also joint, coalition and special operations forces. The true success can be attributed to the aircrew and maintainers that sought to develop and enhance the platform’s role as a MIR/CAS provider.”

In addition to the aforementioned benefits of employing Harvest HAWK—long loiter time and the ability to conduct precision airstrikes with low collateral damage—a few other unique advantages came to light after the system began to be employed in Afghanistan.

During many named operations, said Myers, Harvest HAWK was used as an airborne mission commander (AMC) platform, which allowed a qualified AMC to manage multiple assault support assets from the fire control console on the Harvest HAWK-equipped Super Hercules. Additionally, Harvest HAWK could simultaneously provide battlefield illumination and MIR of the objective area, further reducing the need for additional assets during operations.

Battlefield illumination, according to Myers, reduces the risk for low-light level landings and was frequently required by assault support assets for insert and extract of ground forces within the objective area.

“Additionally, the HAWK provides the commander with another option for airborne offensive capabilities in locations where other TACAIR [tactical air] platforms are limited by range or availability,” said Greenberg.

Today, just shy of five years after the first Harvest HAWK system was fielded operationally, the VMGR community is already preparing for the next step. Upgrades and modifications are expected to begin rolling out to the squadrons in fiscal year 2017.

“The combat lessons learned in Afghanistan, combined with the experience of VMGR aircrews fielding the Harvest HAWK, have certainly led to constructive feedback in developing the Harvest HAWK upgrade plan,” said Greenberg, who added that future modifications include full-motion video and “beyond line of sight” communications, a software upgrade to



incorporate more capable Hellfire missiles and the full integration of Harvest HAWK systems into an all-encompassing battle management system.

Greenberg also stated that an improved sensor will be added to the aircraft and will be relocated from the left external fuel pod to a chin mount, which not only provides the Super Hercules with the ability to regain about 18,000 pounds of

fuel, but also prevents the sensor from being masked by the wing at certain angles of bank.

“The upgrades and modifications not only will increase the situational awareness and airborne endurance for the MAGTF commander, but are keeping with the Deputy Commandant for Aviation’s priorities of maximizing readiness and digital interoperability,” said Greenberg.



Ultimately, for the pilots, maintainers and aircrew, it all comes down to being a force multiplier in support of the Marines on the ground. New tasks and new ideas only drive the KC-130J community to want to provide more and more support to the MAGTF, according to Campbell.

“While we take on board some better ways to do business, what we’re really doing is trying to look even further ahead

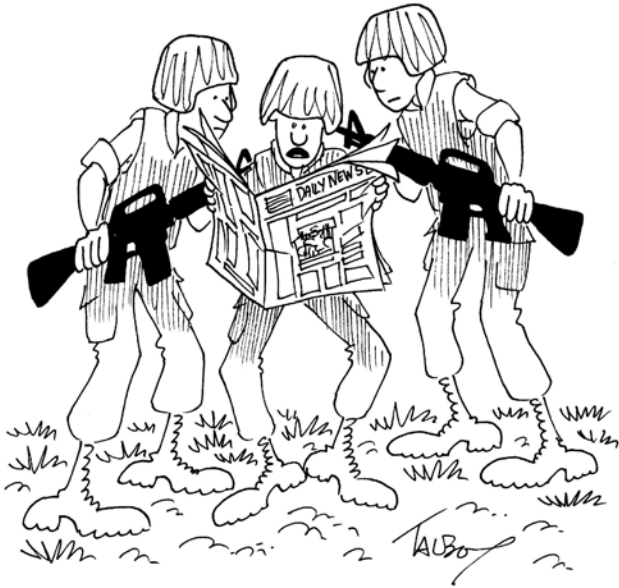
and trying to shape this platform so that we provide the MAGTF commander with more resources—better assets to take on however the next battlefield evolves,” said Campbell.

With initiative and innovative thinking, today’s Marines continue to adapt to meet the needs of the Corps in a changing and complex global security environment. The KC-130J community is no exception.

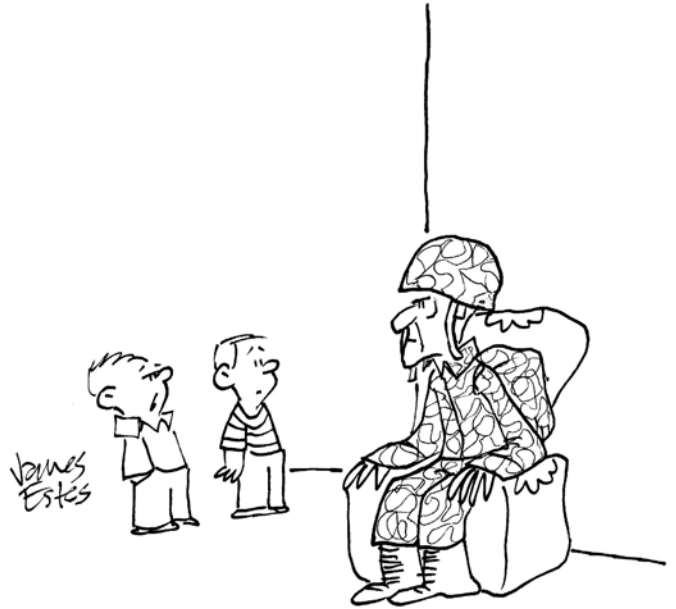
“We’re excited about our future. ... We continue to shape and refine other ways that we can support the MAGTF commander. We stay ready. We prepare all our essential tasks ... that’s what we continually train to do. ... We’re ready to do it and thrilled to be a part of something much bigger than ourselves,” Campbell said.



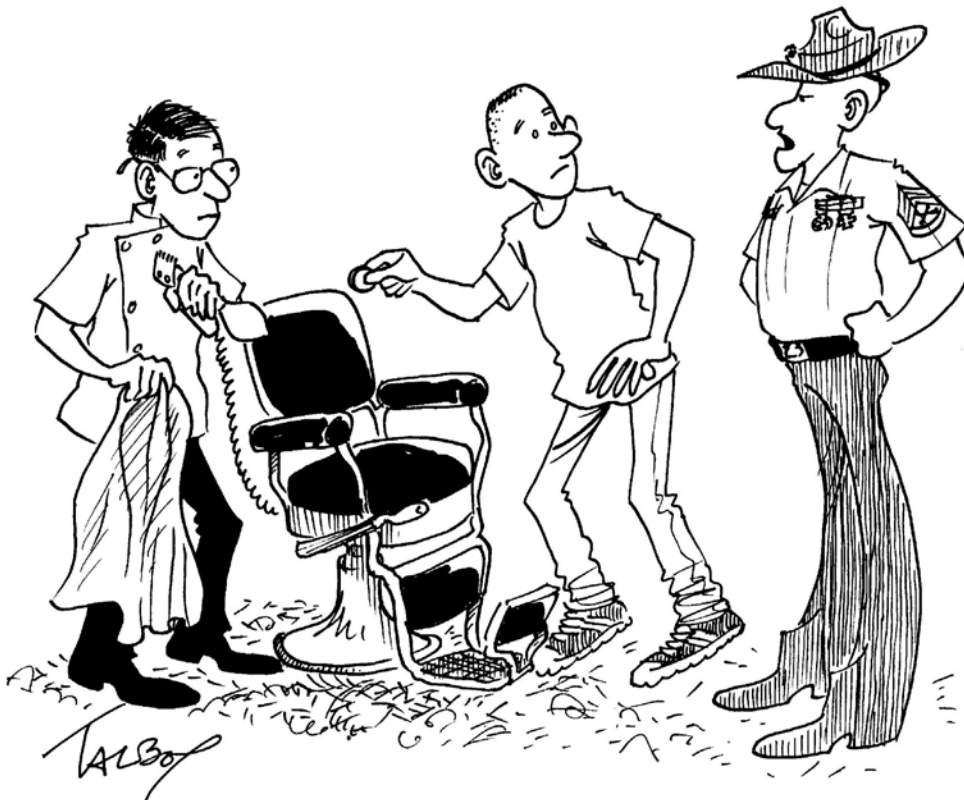
Leatherneck Laffs



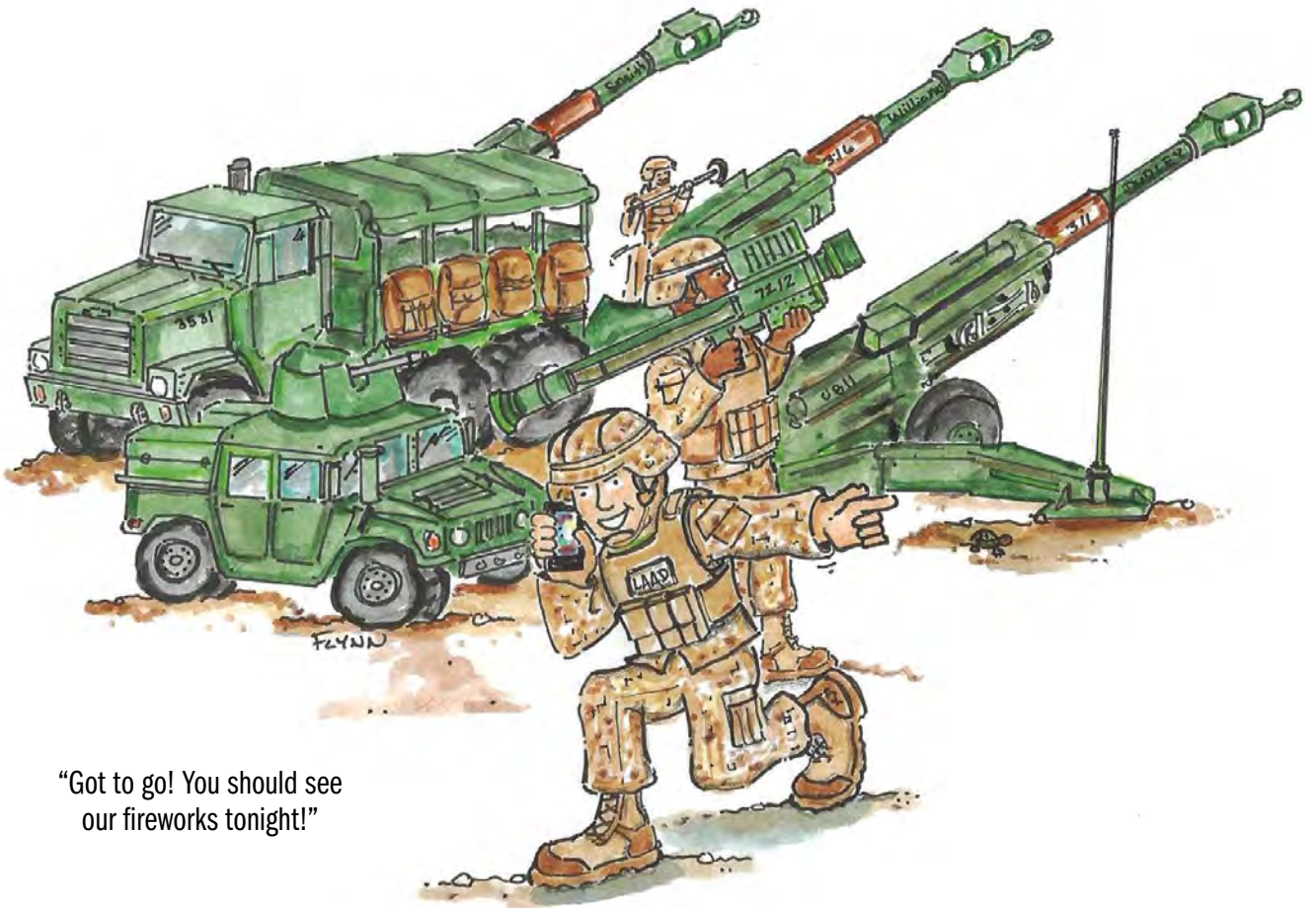
"So that's where we are."



"My great-grandfather—'Once a Marine, always a Marine.'"



"Recruit, you don't have to tip the barber."



“Got to go! You should see
our fireworks tonight!”

BOOT CAMP S.J. Stout



“From this day forward, we will do our very best to do our duty. Now smile!”



Operation Starlite

Marines Score in the First Battle of the Vietnam War

By LtCol Otto J. Lehrack, USMC (Ret)
Part I

By the summer of 1965, the Communist forces in South Vietnam were very worried about the Americans. The Yankees were building up their forces quickly, and they needed to be disrupted before they could become organized and interfere with the North's takeover of their southern brethren. The Communist headquarters in Hanoi sent a full infantry division marching down the Ho Chi Minh Trail that year to augment the Viet Cong (VC) forces near Saigon, and they ordered the battle-hardened 1st Viet Cong Regiment to organize an attack against the

new U.S. Marine air base at Chu Lai. They thought that if they showed the Americans that it would be a long, costly and bloody war, the Americans would give up and go home.

The Marines knew the 1st Viet Cong Regt was no ragtag band of part-time farmers. The unit was made up of professional soldiers, many of whom had campaigned for decades. Its commander, Le Huu Tru, had commanded the regiment against the French at the iconic Battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954. More recently, the regiment had achieved a great deal of notoriety when it mauled the 51st Regt of the Army of South Vietnam in July 1965.

For weeks that summer, the Marines

chased numerous rumors and reports that the 1st Viet Cong Regt was planning attacks against their Chu Lai base. The best available intelligence placed the enemy headquarters in the mountains, 50 to 60 kilometers west. Then they got a lucky break. On Aug. 15, a National Security Agency analyst in Saigon, poring over radio direction finder reports, found several that placed the enemy on the Van Tuong Peninsula, within an overnight march south of Chu Lai. The information was passed quickly to Major General Lewis W. Walt, the senior Marine in Vietnam and the III Marine Amphibious Force commanding general.

The Americans needed to conceal from

The first casualties of Operation Starlite, the first major U.S. ground combat operation of the Vietnam War, are about to be lifted out by a UH-34 Seahorse helicopter of Marine Aircraft Group 16 with a Marine M48 tank standing by to provide firepower, and Marines, including the one in the foreground with an M79 grenade launcher, also preparing to provide cover.



USMC

It is slow, methodical and dangerous work searching villages for VC. Two Marines from D/1/7 search the area for snipers, Aug. 22, on the Van Tuong Peninsula, 12 miles south of Chu Lai. (Photo by Sgt Choate, USMC)

the enemy that they had a signals intelligence capability that could locate enemy forces, so a cover story was concocted. The tale was that the information about the location of the 1st Viet Cong Regt came from a defector who had gone over to the South Vietnamese side on Aug. 15.

MajGen Walt, a highly decorated officer from World War II and the Korean War, acted quickly. He gave Colonel Oscar F. Peatross, the Seventh Marine Regiment's commanding officer, the task of hitting the enemy with a pre-emptive attack on Aug. 18, less than three days away. Peatross had been a member of Carlson's Raiders in WW II and received the Navy Cross for the raid on Makin.

MajGen Walt gave Peatross two battalions, 3d Bn, 3d Marines and 2d Bn, 4th Marines, as the assault units. Resources were scarce, and the only unit available as a reserve was 3d Bn, 7th Marines, aboard USS *Iwo Jima* (LPH-2) in the Philippines. The ship received orders to immediately begin steaming toward Vietnam and prepare to insert 3/7 into a combat situation.

Col Peatross considered his options. He did not have the helicopter lift to insert enough Marines into the battlespace by air. The only serviceable road for an overland attack was Vietnam Route One, but that road was 14 kilometers west of the Van Tuong Peninsula. A large force moving down Route One would be noticed immediately and reported to the VC, permitting them to melt away. A purely amphibious operation had the same disadvantages of an overland assault. It would give the enemy plenty of time to disappear out the back door and into the western mountains.

Peatross quickly decided that conditions were ideal for a combined air and amphibious assault. The Marines had practiced such an assault for more than a decade, but had never tested it in combat. It would be a modified hammer-and-anvil operation.

His plan called for a double hammer, two opposing forces that would come at the enemy from the east and west at the same time. The two hammers would meet in the south and force the enemy to

When ADM U.S. Grant Sharp, Commander in Chief Pacific, arrived on the tarmac at Da Nang, he was greeted by MajGen Lew Walt, CG, III MAF, who briefed him on the situation in Vietnam and the Marine plan to land amphibious forces south of Chu Lai.



flee north, where they would be trapped against the anvil or against the sea and then destroyed.

"Mike" Company of 3d Bn, 3d Marines would be the anvil. It would move overland under cover of darkness and set up a blocking position on a ridgeline north of the Van Tuong Peninsula. The remainder of 3/3 would be the eastern part of the hammer and land over the beach from ships offshore, destroying the enemy that stood in their way and driving the re-

Col Peatross quickly decided that conditions were ideal for a combined air and amphibious assault. The Marines had practiced such an assault for more than a decade, but had never tested it in combat.



mainder to the west or north. Second Battalion, 4th Marines would land by helicopters at Landing Zones Red, White and Blue well inland from the beach. The Marines would press the enemy from that quarter, prevent them from escaping to the west and, along with 3/3, drive them north, smashing them against the anvil.

The Marines expected the enemy to flee toward the anvil, as they had so far in Vietnam, rather than stand and fight. They were mistaken.

There was only one helicopter squadron available—Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM) 361, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Lloyd F. Childers. The squadron flew the UH-34 Seahorse which, because of its limited capacity, would permit the squadron to insert only one company of 2/4 at a time onto the battlefield.

The enemy was not completely oblivious to the possibility of an attack by the Marines, but they did not understand Marine capabilities. They knew, for example, that the Americans did not have enough helicopters to bring decisive combat power to the battlefield quickly. Therefore, the

enemy decided that the Marines would have to come at them overland, in which case they would have plenty of time to consider their options and either fight or withdraw into the western mountains as the situation dictated. What they did not count on was the amphibious capability joined with a helicopter lift that permitted the Marines to mount a combined assault simultaneously from the sea and from the air. Nor did the enemy take into account the rapidity with which the Marines could make a decision and move.

For the Marines, secrecy and haste were paramount. The assault units had to be organized, helicopters and ships procured and orders issued. The Marines had fewer than three full days and three sleepless nights to put it all together. The operation was to be named Satellite, but the electrical generator in the bunker where the clerks labored failed, and they misread the instructions as they typed the operation orders by candlelight, so the operation went down in history as Operation Starlite.

Amphibious Squadron Seven, Captain William McKinney, USN, commanding, had the task of landing 3/3, minus Mike

Co, over Green Beach. On the afternoon of Aug. 17, Col Peatross moved his headquarters aboard USS *Bayfield* (APA-33), CAPT McKinney's flagship. The 3/3 headquarters and India and Kilo companies loaded aboard USS *Cabildo* (LSD-16), and Lima Co was embarked in USS *Vernon County* (LST-1161). The ships sailed due east to deceive any watching enemy. They turned south after dark and anchored off the Van Tuong Peninsula at 0500 a mile and a half from shore.

USS *Galveston* (CVG-3), a cruiser, and two destroyers, USS *Orleck* (DD-886) and USS *Prichett* (DD-561), stood by to provide naval gunfire support.

There were not enough bunks for the Marines, so most just stretched out on the decks and between the amphibious tractors (amtracs) and got what sleep they could. They had chili and rice that night for dinner, which might not seem like much of a meal, but it was a treat for men who had been living on a steady diet of C-rations.

Capt Cal Morris' Mike Co, 3/3 was ferried by amtracs after dark across the Tra Bong River south of Chu Lai and then



SGT CHOTAIE, USMC

Marines, backed by a tank, check the streams and canals for holes along the water's edge which potentially provide hiding places for VC.

made a long night march overland to a blocking position north of the battlefield. A battery of 4.2-inch howtars (a 4.2-inch mortar mounted on a 75 mm howitzer carriage) was heli-lifted in at first light to join them. The anvil was in place.

Just before dawn, artillery and naval gunfire pounded the helicopter landing zones, but Green Beach was not prepped because of the proximity of the hamlet of An Cuong 1.

It was still dark when the Marines aboard ship were roused from a short night of sleep and loaded onto the amtracs after a breakfast of pancakes. As the edge of the sun burst over the horizon, CAPT McKinney gave the traditional order, "Land the landing force; away all boats."

As Vietnam awakened on the morning of Aug. 18, the villagers of An Cuong 1, the small hamlet nearest the beach on the Van Tuong Peninsula, were stunned to see a U.S. naval armada anchored offshore. In a flash, runners hotfooted through the peninsula, passing the word. As the Vietnamese watched, the ships disgorged amphibious landing craft, which circled and then lined up for assault.

Capt Bruce D. Webb's India Co and Capt Jay Doub's Kilo Co were in the first wave.

The units of the 1st Viet Cong Regt went on full alert. While some readied themselves for battle, the regimental headquarters prepared to withdraw to the west. To provide cover for them, Capt Duong Hong Minh ran to the beach and set up a command-detonated antipersonnel mine where he thought the Marines would land. His mission was to kill as many Marines as possible and give them pause.

Backing him up was Lieutenant Phan Tan Huan, another Viet Cong. Huan had an important mission. Fewer than four kilometers separated the landing beach from the headquarters of the 1st Viet Cong Regt that was located in the village of Van Tuong. Huan organized a small force of reliable fighters and placed them on a small ridge halfway between the beach and the headquarters in order to delay the Marines and permit his headquarters element to withdraw. It was to be a closely run operation.

The amphibious tractors nosed onto the beach, dropping their ramps, and the two companies of 3d Bn, 3d Marines, commanded by LtCol Joseph E. Muir, stormed ashore. Sergeant David Horne recalled that as soon as his boots hit the sand, there was a loud explosion directly in front of him. He was amazed that it was all noise and smoke and that no one was hurt. Capt Minh apparently had an anxiety attack and set off his antipersonnel mine prematurely. The sight of about 30 amtracs

Some of the first VC prisoners wait—blindfolded and with silent apprehension—for what was perhaps their first helicopter ride ever. The helicopter, a UH-34 Seahorse belonging to HMM-161, would fly them north to Chu Lai where they would be interrogated, Aug. 1. (USMC photo)



heading through the water toward him undoubtedly contributed to his nervousness. Minh later claimed to have killed 15 Marines, but the blast neither killed nor wounded anyone.

While the Marines from 3/3 were boarding their amtracs, the flying leathernecks from HMM-361 were picking up 2/4. As LtCol Childers' pilots filed out of the ready room toward their aircraft, Major Homer

Sergeant David Horne recalled that as soon as his boots hit the sand, there was a loud explosion directly in front of him. He was amazed that it was all noise and smoke and that no one was hurt.

Jones, a former helicopter pilot who had become a fighter pilot, approached Maj Al Bloom, the squadron operations officer, and wanted to know if he could go along as his copilot. Bloom quickly assented.

En route to the aircraft, Master Sergeant R.M. Hooven, the maintenance chief, intercepted Bloom. Hooven wanted to fly as crew chief, and, moreover, he wanted to take along First Sergeant Dorsett as door gunner. Dorsett, an infantry type,

recently had joined the squadron and was less than impressed with what he regarded as the unmilitary appearance and attitude of "airdales." MSgt Hooven wanted to show the first sergeant what his Marines could do. Maj Bloom agreed and loaded up his high-priced and overqualified crew, lifted off and headed out to pick up the infantry Marines.

As 3/3 went ashore, 2d Bn, 4th Marines, one company at a time, alighted inland in the three landing zones. LtCol Joseph R. "Bull" Fisher commanded 2/4 and was a storied Marine. He earned a Silver Star as an enlisted man on Iwo Jima and a Navy Cross at the Chosin Reservoir where he was a company commander and protégé of Col Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller.

Fisher's Golf Co landed without incident in LZ Red and began moving toward the sea. Echo Co and 2/4's command group were next. They came into LZ White under moderate mortar and small-arms fire, but pushed east against it.

Hotel Co was not so fortunate. Commanded by First Lieutenant Homer K. "Mike" Jenkins, the company set down at LZ Blue, an open field that was an easy rifle shot from the headquarters of Maj Tranh Ngoc Trung's 60th Viet Cong Bn. The Marines came under fire even before the helicopters touched down. Corporal Dick Tonucci's squad was first off the



SGT WOLINER, USMC

In spite of the rain, squad leaders still have to brief their fire team leaders as members of 3/3 clear the area of Communists during Operation Starlite, Aug. 19. Left to right are PFC Jose Pacheco, Sgt Muliman Tela, LCpl Charles Landaur and Cpl Richard Milton.

choppers and moved to secure the LZ. The squad began taking fire from nearby Hill 43, one of its objectives. Lance Corporal Jimmy Brooks, a tall and lanky Marine they called “Buzzard,” was hit with a round from a .50-caliber machine gun. He was the first Marine to be killed that day.

The VC found the range of the helicopters that were taking the last of Hotel Co into the LZ. One crewmember had his jaw shot off, and nearly all of the helicopters took hits. A pilot, Capt Howard B. Henry, recalled that some of the pilots just shut their eyes and dropped to the ground in order to ignore the fire.

Despite the fire, the Marines quickly secured the landing zone and prepared to seize their objectives.

Up to that point in the war, the VC had not stood and fought against a Marine attack, and 1stLt Jenkins had no reason to think his attack would be any different. His orders called for him to take two objectives, and he decided to attack them both simultaneously. One was Hill 43. The other was the village of Nam Yen 3.

Jenkins sent one platoon against each objective, holding a platoon in reserve. Neither attack succeeded.

Operation Starlite was the first time the Marines learned what it was to come up against professional infantrymen like those in the 1st Viet Cong Regt. Lt Jack Sullivan’s platoon was stopped at the base

Operation Starlite was the first time the Marines learned what it was to come up against professional infantrymen like those in the 1st Viet Cong Regt.

of Hill 43, and the attack on Nam Yen 3 failed when the Marines discovered that many of the huts in the village of Nam Yen 3 were actually bunkers; the sides of the huts dropped down revealing fortified positions with preset fields of fire. Withering machine-gun and small-arms fire stopped the Hotel Co attack on the village.

Lt Jenkins pulled his men back and decided to take one objective at a time. Hill 43 would be first because the hill would give him command of the surrounding terrain. As he prepared for the attack, two tanks that had landed across the beach and a flight of U.S. Army helicopter gunships joined him. As the gunships raked the hill, one of the Army pilots, MAJ Don Radcliff, who had volunteered for the mission, was shot through the neck and killed. But with that support, Jenkins was able to carry Hill 43 without too much of a fight. He then set out to assault the village of Nam Yen 3 once again.

Editor’s note: Read part II of “Operation Starlite” in the August issue.

Author’s bio: A retired Marine infantry officer, LtCol Otto J. Lehrack is a frequent contributor to Leatherneck and author of several books about Marines at war. His most recent book is “Road of 10,000 Pains: The Destruction of the 2nd NVA Div. by the U.S. Marines, 1967.”



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Robert C. “Bud” McFarlane

A Life Dedicated to “Duty, Honor, Country”

Story by Maj Fred C. Lash, USMC (Ret)
Photos courtesy of
LtCol Robert C. McFarlane, USMC (Ret)

Rarely does one encounter a Marine who has served in the jungles of Vietnam as well as the corridors of power in Washington, D.C., working directly for three U.S. presidents. Nor is it common to know a Marine who has been so deeply involved in international politics and world events, such as the rescue of

American hostages in Grenada and the tragic bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert C. “Bud” McFarlane, USMC (Ret) has had an insider’s view of many of America’s triumphs and setbacks during the last few decades.

And, it would be difficult to find a man who is as proud of his service to both the Marine Corps and the United States of America as Bud McFarlane.

Native Texan—Born in Washington, D.C.

No one would guess that McFarlane, a retired Marine lieutenant colonel, combat veteran and national security advisor to President Ronald Reagan, is the son of a populist Democratic congressman from North Central Texas, who rode the Franklin Delano Roosevelt bandwagon into Congress in 1932.

As Bud McFarlane noted, “I was born in Washington, D.C., by mistake. I am



Left: Initially serving as Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's military assistant, LtCol Robert C. McFarlane was later appointed Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs by President Gerald Ford. From the far left, LtCol McFarlane, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary Kissinger and President Ford enjoy a moment of levity prior to a White House social event.

Below: White House Chief of Staff James Baker, a Marine veteran, far left, and McFarlane greet the 27th Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen Robert H. Barrow.



a Texan by right of roots and heritage, but can claim that President Franklin Roosevelt was the reason that I was born in Washington, D.C.”

The McFarlane family lived in Graham, Texas, when Congress was in recess; however, they remained in the nation's capital in the summer of 1937 due to a move by President Roosevelt to expand the Supreme Court to 15 members. Drawn into debate over this issue, Congress did not go into recess as scheduled on June 30, so Bud, the fifth McFarlane child, was born in the District on July 12, 1937.

After completing elementary and high school in the D.C. area, Bud was selected to attend the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. Both his uncle Robert (Class of 1925), a World War II destroyer

commander, and his brother Bill (Class of 1949), a Korean War fighter pilot, had graduated from the academy and served as inspirations to young Bud.

In June 1955, McFarlane took his first of several oaths of office to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.” He was extremely fortunate to have as a roommate during his plebe summer, a former enlisted sailor who schooled him in the “arts” of spit shining shoes and other arcane grooming skills that facilitated a squared-away appearance.

Along with 400 other freshly minted sophomores at the USNA, McFarlane went to sea for the first time in the summer of 1956, aboard the battleship USS *New Jersey* (BB-62), an aging man-of-war and a ship that was to loom large in McFarlane's future. Some 27 years later, in 1983, *New Jersey* broke the horizon off the coast of Lebanon at a crucial moment in cease-fire negotiations with Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, in which McFarlane was a major participant. Once again, the old battleship symbolized American naval power and to McFarlane the prospect that such power could be employed to restore peace to a war-ravaged land. Assad, who had remained adamantly opposed to a cease-fire for weeks, agreed to one the

morning after *New Jersey's* arrival. A few weeks later, on Oct. 23, 1983, things would change.

In June 1958, McFarlane sailed off on his first-class cruise aboard the carrier USS *Essex* (CVA-9). In Washington, D.C., that summer, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, responding to growing unrest and assassinations in the Middle East, dispatched the 6th Fleet, with its embarked contingent of Marines, to Lebanon at flank speed. McFarlane, on shore for one evening in Athens, barely was able to get back aboard the ship before *Essex* weighed anchor for Lebanon.

In full battle dress, 2,000 Marines, supported by aircraft from the carrier, swarmed across the beach south of Beirut on the afternoon of July 15, 1958, the unopposed landings disturbing sunbathers and soda-pop vendors. A quarter of a century later, Marines would find themselves in Lebanon once again, fully engaged in a “peace-keeping mission.”

On service-selection night at the Naval Academy in 1959, McFarlane chose to be commissioned in the Marine Corps because, as he said, “It seemed to offer earlier opportunities for command than the Navy. I thought the Navy was more technical, and the Marine Corps placed more value on leadership skills.”

Shoot, Move and Communicate

Soon after getting married to Jonda Riley, McFarlane reported for duty at Quantico, Va., in July to begin seven months of training at The Basic School. Upon completion of TBS (Class 2-59), he was designated an artillery officer and sent to artillery school for two months, also located then at Quantico.

Lieutenant McFarlane's first assignment after school was with the Second Field Artillery Group at Camp Lejeune, N.C., part of what then was referred to as "Force Troops" (technically Force Troops, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic). McFarlane soon became a platoon commander in a 155 mm howitzer battery, which was made up of four guns.

After about a year and a half in that billet, he reported to an "Honest John" heavy artillery rocket battery, and, as McFarlane observed, it was a weapon not known for its accuracy. "In short," he said, "they couldn't hit the broadside of a

barn." Throughout all of his assignments, Lt McFarlane mastered the essential elements of the artilleryman's job: shoot, move and communicate.

In the spring of 1962, he and his family were transferred to the Army Artillery Missile School at Fort Sill, Okla., where he first attended the Field Officers' Orientation Course and was honor graduate; he then served as an instructor in the Advanced Course. Two years later, after having been promoted to the grade of captain, McFarlane left the United States for Okinawa for duty with the Third Marine Division, a 13-month, unaccompanied tour.

Again placed in a command billet, Capt McFarlane took over "Fox" Battery, 2d Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment. A few months after he arrived on Okinawa, the Gulf of Tonkin incident took place off the coast of South Vietnam, and Marines of the 3dMarDiv were ordered to mount out. McFarlane's 105 mm battery was

placed in direct support of the 3d Bn, 9th Marines. "For the next two months," McFarlane recalled, "we were out there on a ship boring holes in the ocean, seeing neither action nor a liberty port." It offered valuable time to teach the Artillery Officer Advanced Course to all Marines in Fox Btry.

The unit would not remain embarked for long, and, in October 1964, Btry F would find itself back on Okinawa. The battery also was able to train for about six weeks at Camp Fuji on mainland Japan. Then in early 1965, the situation in Vietnam, which had been the reason for Fox, 2/12's deployment the previous summer and fall, worsened, and "McFarlane's Foxes" as the unit was called, again embarked in a ship, this time USS *Vancouver* (LPD-2), a *Raleigh*-class amphibious landing dock that had been commissioned in May 1963.

In the aftermath of a Viet Cong attack on a small American base near Pleiku, South Vietnam, President Lyndon B. John-



son ordered the landing of two Marine infantry battalions, along with their supporting elements, to provide security for the American air base at Da Nang.

Although military advisors and Marine Corps helicopter units had been in Vietnam for several years, the landing of the 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade (MAB) on March 8, 1965 (50 years ago this past March), marked the first time that American ground troops had been deployed to South Vietnam as self-contained operational units.

For McFarlane, the first moments of his initial war experience were hardly uplifting. They were instead, according to him, “a rather bungled, Keystone Kops-like attempt aimed at landing the artillery battery over the beach, despite clear evidence that tidal conditions would not permit it.” Not only would the tide be a factor, but in the offloading of the infantry and other units, the Navy encountered significant problems with the ship’s cranes,

which because the ship was relatively new had never been tested thoroughly.

“The engineers had already identified a sandbar that, at low tide, would preclude our driving onto the beach without first hitting a deep, broad lagoon,” recalled McFarlane. “As the evening approached, the tide went out, and it came time for my artillery battery to disembark. I recommended to the battalion commander that we simply sail up to the pier, which had been secured hours before, and allow the battery to drive directly off onto dry land. My recommendations were sent up to the bridge, and before much time had elapsed, the order from Brigadier General F.J. [Frederick J.] Karch, the 9th MAB commanding general, came back down, short and sweet: ‘Washington has said that we will land on the beach in traditional Marine Corps fashion, and those are your orders, Captain McFarlane.’ ”

And so, despite a few seemingly insurmountable problems in getting his guns and equipment ashore that day, Capt McFarlane became a historical footnote, having led the first Marine artillery battery into South Vietnam.

Scholarly Pursuits and a Return to Vietnam

While deployed during his tour with the 3dMarDiv, McFarlane was selected for graduate studies under the Olmsted Scholar Program (named in honor of Major General George Olmsted, USA (Ret), who had served with General

Eisenhower in Europe in World War II and seen the need for officers not only to be able to speak the local language, but to be familiar with different countries’ history and culture). McFarlane immersed himself in the disciplines of law, economics and diplomacy which, as he said, “channeled me toward strategic planning and diplomacy.”

In Geneva, Switzerland, with his wife, Jonda, and their three children, he studied Clausewitz, Sun Tzu and numerous military and political thinkers of their times who shaped the world’s direction. From counterinsurgency to socioeconomic principles, he developed an analytical rigor that would remain a part of him throughout his career.

The education he gained in Geneva provided McFarlane with a much broader strategic framework than many others who served in Vietnam. However, one would not want to characterize him as a detached scholar. He had been there, on the ground, picking up the pieces. More than anything else, he was a Marine, and as with most men and women of his generation in the military, his memories of Vietnam always will be refracted through a filter smeared with blood of friends and comrades.

In September 1967, upon completion of his two years of studies in Geneva and having received a master’s degree with highest honors in strategic studies from the Graduate Institute of International Studies (*Institut de Hautes Etudes Inter-*



Above: Capt McFarlane’s “Fox” Battery, 2d Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment was the first Marine artillery battery in Vietnam.

Left: As national security advisor, McFarlane participated in the 1985 Geneva Summit with Secretary of State George Shultz, a Marine veteran; President Reagan and White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan as they faced the leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev.

nationales), McFarlane received orders to return to Vietnam. He wanted to command an artillery battery again, but instead was assigned the less glamorous, but no less important role as the fire support coordinator (FSC) for 9th Marines (1967-68).

The job involved integrating the fires of nine artillery batteries with naval gunfire (including from *New Jersey*), close air support for the infantry units and the Arc Light strikes of Air Force B-52 bombers that flew out of Andersen Air Force Base on Guam.

During his tour as the FSC, McFarlane planned and directed strikes along the Demilitarized Zone during the Tet offensive and numerous actions in support of Marines at Con Thien, Cam Lo, Dong Ha, the Rockpile, Khe Sanh and points in between.

In 1971, following his second tour in Vietnam and an assignment as an action officer within the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, Policies and Operations, McFarlane was named a White House Fellow, the first Marine officer selected for that program.

He initially was assigned to the Office of Legislative Affairs at the White House and at the conclusion of that assignment was selected as the military assistant to Henry Kissinger at the National Security Council.

In that position, from 1973 to 1976, McFarlane dealt with intelligence exchanges with the People's Republic of China, giving detailed intelligence briefings to China at the time of the Sino-Soviet split. He was deep selected for lieutenant colonel in 1974.

In addition to accompanying Kissinger on his visits to China, McFarlane dealt with other aspects of foreign policy, including the Middle East, relations with the Soviet Union and arms control. He was appointed Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs by President Gerald R. Ford and was awarded the Navy Distinguished Service Medal in 1976.

Upon leaving the White House following the elections in 1976, McFarlane was assigned to the National Defense University, where he co-authored a book on crisis management. For his work on that project, he would be recognized by the Navy League of the United States with its Alfred Thayer Mahan Award for Literary Achievement in 1979. The award is presented to a U.S. Navy or Marine Corps officer who has made a notable literary contribution that has advanced the knowledge of the importance of sea power for the United States.

The previous year, after having been



After retiring from the Marine Corps, McFarlane continued in public service in support of the Senate Armed Services Committee and returned to the White House in 1982 as an advisor to President Reagan.

ordered once again to Okinawa and the 3dMarDiv, McFarlane served as the operations officer of the 12th Marines. In that assignment, he planned and coordinated first-of-its-kind off-island training in South Korea at Nightmare Range.

McFarlane retired from the Marine Corps in July 1979 and went to work on the Senate Armed Services Committee. He moved to an office in the White House in 1982 as the deputy national security advisor and a year later was sent to Lebanon as a special envoy.



McFarlane served as a special envoy to Lebanon shortly before the Marine barracks bombing Oct. 23, 1983.

A Few Years Forward

In 1983, less than a week after Robert C. McFarlane was appointed national security advisor, the Marine barracks at the Beirut International Airport was blown up by a suicide bomber in an explosives-laden truck. What was McFarlane's reaction, and how did it affect him personally?

"I felt a deep sense of personal loss," he said. "I knew these men because I had just come to my new job from Beirut. From a policy viewpoint, I had advocated that the Marines not sit at the airport, but be used proactively to advance American policy in getting the Syrian and Israeli forces out of Lebanon. I was deeply saddened by the loss, but also saw the need to go after the terrorists who were responsible for the attack. We could not establish the precedent that an enemy could attack Americans with impunity and not pay a price."

An op-ed piece written by McFarlane years later on Oct. 23, 2008, appeared in the *New York Times*. In it, he called the American stint in Beirut, "one of the most tragic and costly policy defeats in the brief modern history of American counterterrorism operations." According to McFarlane, the U.S. decision to pull out of Lebanon lent credence to the notion that America folded under attack, which encouraged the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, as well as other future attacks against the country. He also criticized the lack of a "clear military mission" in Beirut and blamed leaders for refusing to "undertake military operations that might result in Muslim casualties and put at risk Muslim goodwill."



McFarlane, Vice President George H.W. Bush, Secretary of State George Shultz and President Ronald Reagan meet in the White House.

Iran-Contra and Bud McFarlane

Following his assignment in Lebanon, McFarlane served as President Reagan's national security advisor, responsible for the development of foreign and defense policy.

The Iran-Contra Affair that followed involved secretly selling arms to Iran and funneling the money gained from such sales to support the Contras in Nicaragua, who were in a struggle with the Sandinista government, led by Manuel Ortega. As the national security advisor, McFarlane urged President Reagan to negotiate the arms deal with Iranian intermediaries. A significant part of the arrangement with the Iranians was the delivery of three planeloads of weapons to Iran in return for the release of all American hostages then being held in Lebanon.

However, by late December of 1985, McFarlane was of the opinion that the arms shipments should cease, because all necessary arrangements had not been going as planned. McFarlane resigned that same month and was replaced by Vice Admiral John Poindexter.

The Iran-Contra Affair came to light in November of 1986 and a huge political scandal ensued, complete with numerous hours of testimony before the U.S. Senate, which included the presence of McFarlane's aide, Marine LtCol Oliver North.

In looking back at this rather embarrassing chain of events, McFarlane noted that it was the right policy to try to open lines of communication with Iran before it became, as he put it, "too skewed toward only hostages and arms."

Tributes and Reflections

In his book "The Nightingale's Song," author Robert Timberg offers a descriptive account of the Vietnam and postwar journeys of Annapolis graduates John Poindexter, Robert McFarlane, Oliver North, John McCain and James Webb. Timberg notes, "Bud McFarlane was, to my mind, an unusual combination of combat-tested Marine and strategic thinker. These dual achievements should be matters of great pride to him. I think that, for the most part, they are."

The career of Bud McFarlane is summed up best in a Dec. 4, 1985, letter from President Ronald Reagan accepting McFarlane's resignation as Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

"Dear Bud:

It is with deep regret and reluctance that I accept your resignation as Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. Your more than thirty years of service to the United States have been exemplary in all regards. As a career Marine, you served your country in peace

and war—from your days at the Naval Academy to Vietnam. You have truly lived up to the proudest traditions of your beloved Marines. A president could ask for no more. *Semper Fidelis.*"

"For nearly 30 years," noted McFarlane, "I had been a public servant, dedicating my life's labors to the good of my country in the manner of my father before me. I had shaped my life according to the principles taught me first by him, then re-emphasized at the U.S. Naval Academy, and finally by the U.S. Marine Corps. Duty, honor, country. These are the values I had striven to sustain in all my endeavors, the absolutes I cherished and wished to uphold."

This indeed is a man who did his best to live up to the "special trust and confidence" he swore to as a commissioned officer of Marines.

Editor's note: Robert C. McFarlane presently is leading the United States Energy Security Council (USESC.org) and resides in Washington, D.C.

Author's bio: Maj Fred C. Lash, USMC (Ret) is a frequent contributor to Leatherneck, who currently is serving in the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security.



Passing the Word

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

MCAS Miramar Celebrates Volunteers, Recognizes Contributions

Marine Corps Community Services held a volunteer appreciation celebration aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., April 16.

MCCS recognized the hard work and dedication of volunteers from the Single Marine Program, Navy and Marine Corps Relief Society, Flying Leatherneck Historical Society, School Liaison Program and various units and organizations from across the air station.

MCAS Miramar holds this ceremony each year during National Volunteer Appreciation Week, a program established in 1974 to commend, engage and encourage its attendees to keep contributing.

“Volunteering, to me, is very important,” said Sergeant Jonathan Vazquez, a supply administration chief with Marine Aircraft Group 16. “I feel it’s just a way to give back to the community, and it makes me feel good to help others, so it’s a win-win situation.”

Vazquez volunteers a full day every month to community outreach events coordinated by the Single Marine Program.

In line with past years’ celebrations, the Third Marine Aircraft Wing Band held a special concert to accentuate the exceptional impact of volunteers.

“From me and [my wife] Susan, I want to thank you for your passion, your unselfish caring, your patience and your love for the Marines and sailors of Miramar,” said Major General Michael A. Rocco, Commanding General, 3d MAW.

MajGen Rocco and Colonel John P. Farnam, Commanding Officer, MCAS Miramar, displayed the importance of volunteers with an oversized “check” for \$450,000, which represented the value of more than 4,000 collective hours volunteered to the local community throughout the year.

“You [volunteers] are very humble people, and I respect that. ... All the work that you put in makes Miramar a great part of San Diego, and we’ll be here for a long time because of your service, so thank you very much,” said Farnam.

Sgt Melissa Wenger, USMC

New Peer-to-Peer Service Aims to Provide Counseling Support

Beginning this summer, the Department of Defense will offer an additional counseling service to help military servicemembers, transitioning troops and family members deal with a host of issues before the issues become crises.

Peer-to-peer support, available through

Military OneSource, will offer assistance from counselors with military experience who have at least a master’s degree in the social psychology field to help with a host of issues, according to Rosemary Freitas Williams, deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and family policy.

With that level of education and experience, Williams said, peer support counselors can chat confidentially with clients and assist with any underlying issues online or by phone.

Since Military OneSource is the central one-stop service that offers military families a variety of direct services and resources, it made sense to add peer-to-peer support to its list of services, according to Williams.

Such counseling services are not a new concept for DOD. Vets4Warriors currently provides peer-to-peer support, but its contract will expire in August.

Peer-to-peer counseling will be available for active-duty, National Guard and Reserve servicemembers, their families and veterans who have separated within the last 180 days.

A client can talk to a peer-to-peer counselor via Military OneSource and can obtain up to 12 sessions with a clinical counselor if needed.

“The peer-to-peer approach gets after the issue at the earliest possible point of intervention, so folks who get help early get better quicker,” said Dr. Keita Franklin, the director of the Defense Suicide Prevention Office, who also noted the importance of providing peer support for military personnel and their families before a problem escalates.

For transitioning servicemembers who will soon re-enter the civilian sector, peer-to-peer counselors will offer their expertise during what might be a turbulent and life-changing time, Franklin said.

While peer-to-peer support is not a crisis counseling service, Military OneSource works with other organizations such as the Military Crisis Line or the Veterans Crisis Line as necessary, she noted.

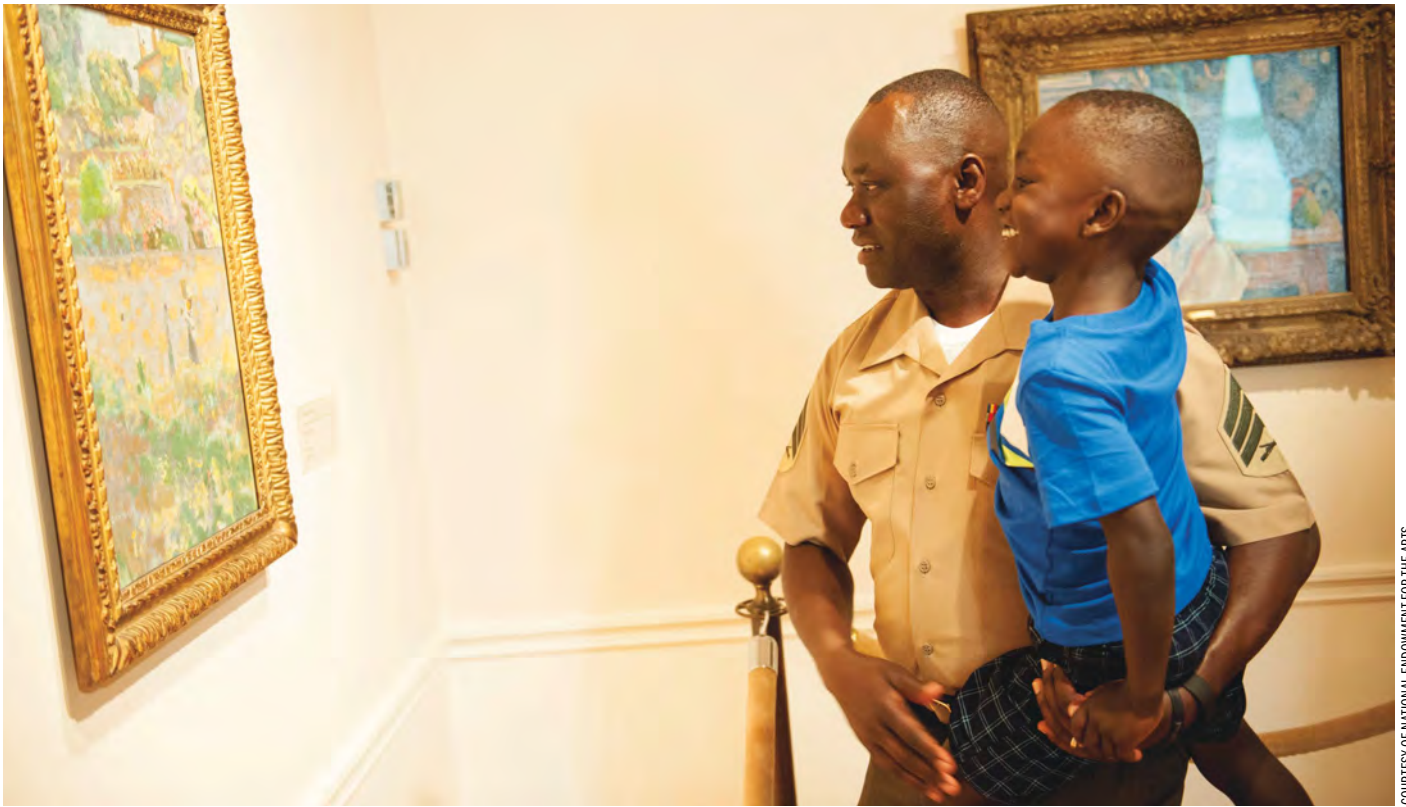
For more information about the counseling services provided by Military OneSource, visit www.militaryonesource.mil or call toll-free: (800) 342-9647.

Terri Moon Cronk, DOD News



MajGen Michael A. Rocco, left, CG, 3d MAW, presents an award to Cpl Ryan Kent during the volunteer appreciation celebration at MCAS Miramar, Calif., April 16. Kent was recognized with the silver level of the President’s Volunteer Service Award for the more than 225 hours he volunteered with the San Diego House Rabbit Society during the past year.

SGT MELISSA WENGER, USMC



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Sgt Jimmy Ochan and his son William enjoy a painting during their visit to the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., during the 2015 launch event for Blue Star Museums, May 20.

Museum Visits This Summer Free for Military Families

Below the spring landscape painted by American artist Ernest Lawson that hangs in the Music Room of Washington, D.C.'s Phillips Collection, military families and others gathered for the sixth annual launch of Blue Star Museums, May 20.

A collaboration of the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, the Department of Defense and museums across America, the Blue Star Museums program offers free admission to the nation's servicemembers and their families each year from Memorial Day to Labor Day. This year, more than 2,000 museums in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and American Samoa are taking part in the program.

"The response has been so far beyond anything we ever imagined it to be," said Kathy Roth-Douquet, CEO of Blue Star Families, who noted that more than 700,000 military personnel and their families participated in the program last year. Visiting museums "enhances resilience, it broadens your perspective; it opens your mind to beauty and ideas and things that you might not have known before," she said.

Ellyn Dunford, wife of the 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Joseph F. Dunford Jr., was in attendance at the launch and commented on the larger impact of the program. "The gift you give us through Blue Star Museums and the additional exposure and education and experience that our military families gain is valuable for the whole country

and the world because we share that as we go along," she said.

Following the remarks, participants enjoyed a tour of the Phillips Collection, which has been a Blue Star Museum since 2010. Guests viewed masterpieces such as Vincent van Gogh's "The Road Menders" and Hilaire-Germain-Edgar Degas' "Dancers at the Barre."

This year's participating Blue Star Museums include not only fine arts museums, but also science museums, history museums, nature centers and dozens of children's museums. Among this year's new participants are the Museum of Contemporary Art in Jacksonville, Fla.; the Duluth Children's Museum in Minnesota; the Space Station Museum in Novato, Calif.; and the Lyon Arboretum at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

The free admission program is available to any bearer of a common access card (CAC), a DD Form 1173 ID card (dependent ID) or a DD Form 1173-1 ID card. Some special or limited-time museum exhibits may not be included in this free admission program. For questions on particular exhibits or museums, contact the museum directly.

A list of participating Blue Star Museums for 2015 is available at www.arts.gov/bluestarmuseums.

National Endowment for the Arts



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

From the left, Blue Star Families CEO Kathy Roth-Douquet, National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu and Ellyn Dunford, wife of the 36th CMC, Gen Joseph F. Dunford Jr., attended the launch event at the Phillips Collection.



We—the Marines

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

Recon Marines Compete In Memory of Fallen Brothers

■ Waves from an 8-foot swell slammed into the strip of rocks lining the beach. The early morning darkness of the Pacific Ocean was abruptly broken by the glimmer of scattered green glow sticks as reconnaissance Marines equipped with rifles, 45-pound packs and wetsuits began to vigorously fight the surf as they made their way back ashore at San Onofre Beach, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., during the Seventh Annual Recon Challenge, May 15.

Without hesitation, the Marines hit the beach, found their assigned partners and started running in two-man teams to their next objective.

In the Recon Challenge, a competition hosted by the Reconnaissance Training Company, Advanced Infantry Training Battalion, School of Infantry West, Marines from the recon community take on the grueling tests in memory of their fellow recon Marines and sailors killed in action.

The competitors began with an early morning 1,000-meter swim with fins in the Pacific Ocean, followed by an observation and memorization game, a navigation and map work test, radio and communication tests, an obstacle course event, a weapon

assembly and disassembly test, two pool challenges, a fireman's carry event, live-fire range and a knot-tying test scattered along the route to the finish line.

"It comes down to knowing your strengths and weaknesses, knowing how to exploit them when you need to and just keep pushing forward," said Master Gunnery Sergeant Christopher May, a reconnaissance Marine with Plans, Policies and Operations, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, and a competitor in this year's challenge.

The teams ran slightly more than 25 miles as they tackled each obstacle. Each team dedicated its run to the memory of a Marine or sailor killed in action, with the name of the servicemember written on a safety vest wrapped around their packs.

"These guys are such a close-knit community; they're a brotherhood unlike I've ever seen in my life," said Diane Homm, a Gold Star mother attending the event in memory of her son, who was killed in a parachuting accident. "They really have each other's back, and they would give their lives for each other. So if one [member] of their community is taken from this life, they're never going to forget them."

MGySgt May has been running in memory of Homm's son, Staff Sergeant Caleb Medley, since his death in 2013.

"It brought me closer to his family, so I'll run for him until I retire," said May.

The first-place team in this year's Recon Challenge was Master Sergeant David Jarvis and Captain Patrick Zuber from 1st Recon Bn, with a final time of 8 hours and 35 minutes.

MSgt Cory Paskvan and SSgt Nicholas Barcelona of 2d Recon Bn took second place, followed by Capt William Wellborn and Sergeant James Coe, also from 2d Recon Bn.

The Recon Challenge is about keeping the brotherhood of the recon Marines alive, according to May.

"That means the world to me, because you don't want anyone to forget your child, because you're certainly not ever going to forget him," said Homm.

Cpl Eric Keenan, USMC

Female Marine Aviator Makes History

■ Since 1946, members of the Blue Angels, the U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, have performed jaw-dropping shows all across America. However, in the squadron's nearly 70-year existence, there never has been a woman in the cockpit during the performances; that is, until now.

Captain Katie Higgins, USMC, the newest pilot of "Fat Albert," a C-130T



CPL ERIC KEENAN, USMC



CPL ERIC KEENAN, USMC

Above left: Recon Marines hike to their next obstacle during the Seventh Annual Recon Challenge at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., May 15. The competition is held each year in honor of recon Marines and sailors who were killed in action.

Above right: A recon Marine swims 500 meters during a qualification round for a spot in the Recon Challenge. One of the many events during the grueling challenge is a 1,000-meter swim.



LCPL OLIVIA G. ORTIZ, USMC

Capt Katie Higgins, a Marine C-130 pilot and the first female aviator on the Blue Angels team, speaks with media at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., April 9. Higgins is the newest pilot of “Fat Albert,” the Blue Angels’ C-130 Hercules.

Hercules flown by the Blue Angels, has become the first woman in history to fly with the squadron.

“I am so glad I get to be a part of the [C-]130 team members who are the best in their field,” said Higgins, a Severna Park, Md., native. “I came to the Blue Angels because I wanted to be a part of the elite team dedicated to precision and expertise. I didn’t come out here thinking I was going to be breaking barriers; I simply wanted to do my job to the best of my abilities.”

Higgins said it’s a great honor to fly for the Blue Angels and that she is not treated any differently because she’s female.

“The Blue Angels are a family, and they have supported me all the way, always being there for me when I need them,” Higgins said. “I wouldn’t be here without the support of the team. We’re all cogs in a machine, and without just one of those pieces, it wouldn’t function properly.”

She was greatly influenced by her family’s legacy of aviation—her grandfathers, uncles and father, all of whom were pilots, played a key role in her decision to fly. She is a third-generation pilot, but the first Marine and the first woman in her family to become an aviator.

Marine Capt Corrie Mays, a squadron naval flight officer and events coordinator with the Blue Angels, said it’s only a matter of time before it is common for women to hold more and more prominent roles.

“Capt Higgins becoming a pilot is a reflection of what the military has been doing for decades, and it shows the public that women are filling roles and it is actually happening,” said Mays. “For any women who think their goals are too much of a challenge or they aren’t possible, I hope

they go for it. We are here to inspire a culture of excellence—that’s what we stand for.”

Higgins said she hopes women keep pushing toward breaking down barriers because that is the Blue Angels’ mission—to inspire people to excellence.

“I hope women in the military and civilian worlds know they are capable of anything they put their minds to,” Higgins said. “For those who may think women don’t belong in any particular position, give them a shot. Let them show you their skills and abilities, that they can exceed the standard. Give them the benefit of the doubt and don’t be quick to judge because of their gender, skin color or religion.”

Her advice to those who are striving to achieve goals is to persevere and refuse to settle for mediocrity, no matter what obstacles or hardships they may face.

LCpl Harley Thomas, USMC

Marines Recognized for Culinary Excellence

■ The National Restaurant Association hosted the 2015 Armed Forces Food Service Awards Dinner in Chicago at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel, May 15.

The event recognized military personnel from all branches of the Department of Defense for excellence in food services and preparation.

“Tonight is truly a celebration of excellence,” said Dawn Sweeney, the president and CEO of the National Restaurant Association. “It is our restaurant industry’s opportunity to express our gratitude to the U.S. military for ensuring that our country remains free and remains a place where anyone can succeed no matter what our background.

“The military food service awards is a program that rewards military food service professionals for your exceptional work and offers additional training to help you in your current role in your food service careers,” Sweeney added.

Lieutenant General William M. Faulkner, Deputy Commandant, Installations and Logistics, spoke on behalf of the military personnel who received awards during the ceremony.

“Just like all of the attributes that are required to execute our Secretary of Defense’s future security strategy, we must have [the] capabilities to be more flexible, more agile, be ready to deploy wherever and whenever it’s required,” LtGen Faulkner said. “These same kinds of attributes apply to our food services.”

The following mess halls and units were recipients of the 2015 Major General W.P.T. Hill Memorial Awards for Food Services Excellence, sponsored by the National Restaurant Association Military Foundation:



SGT TERENCE BRADY, USMC

Marines with MWSS-274 accept the 2015 MajGen W.P.T. Hill Memorial Award for Best Active Field Mess during the Armed Forces Food Service Awards Dinner at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel on May 15.

- Best Military/Contractor Garrison Mess Hall: Mess Hall 1104, Camp Mujuk, Korea, Marine Corps Installations Pacific
- Best Full Food Service Contracted Garrison Mess Hall: Mess Hall 455, Camp Johnson, Marine Corps Installations East, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.
- Best Active Field Mess: Marine Wing Support Squadron 274, Marine Aircraft Group 29, Second Marine Aircraft Wing, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C.
- Best Reserve Field Mess: MWSS-472, MAG-49, 4th MAW, Wyoming, Pa.

The MajGen W.P.T. Hill Memorial Awards program serves the Marine Corps' food service program by promoting excellence in food service, thereby improving quality of life for the Fleet Marine Force.

Sgt Terence Brady, USMC

“Magnificent 7th” Welcomes Veterans To Combat Center

■ Marines old and young exchanged stories of their shared legacy during a tour of Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., April 8. The tour, spearheaded by the Marines of Seventh Marine Regiment, was given to members of the First Marine Division Association, Desert Cities Mitchell Paige Medal of Honor Chapter.

The Marines of the 1stMarDiv Association have developed a strong relationship with 7th Marines through their coordination of support for Marines, sailors and their families—particularly when servicemembers are deployed, during the



LCP MEDINA AYALA/LO, USMC

Cpl Anthony Pen, training cadre, 7th Marines, talks to a member of the 1stMarDiv Association, Desert Cities Mitchell Paige Medal of Honor Chapter, about the functionalities of different types of weapons during a tour of MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif., April 8. The Marines of the regiment expressed their appreciation for the association by welcoming them to the combat center for a visit.

holiday season and during other events throughout the year.

“The tour today was a way for us to show our appreciation to the association, specifically the Desert Cities Chapter,” said Lieutenant Colonel Jared Spurlock, Executive Officer, 7th Marines. “They have been big supporters of the regiment, and today was about giving them a chance to see what we are all about.”

The tour began at the rifle range with a demonstration of the M40A5 sniper rifle and a presentation on 14 different weapons systems. The veterans then were taken to Range 800, where a cadre from the Marine Corps Engineer School and Marines from 1st Battalion, 7th Marines provided insight on how Marines and sailors train to operate in an improvised explosive device environment.



COURTESY OF HOWARD “JOE” COLLINS



COURTESY OF HOWARD “JOE” COLLINS

THEN AND NOW—Above left: Marine veterans, from left, Clarence Enneking, Howard “Joe” Collins and Mike Flaherty served together in Korea as wiremen and radio operators in 4.2-inch Mortar Company, Seventh Marine Regiment, First Marine Division from 1951 to 1952. Above right: Sixty-three years later, on Feb. 17, the three Marines—from left, Flaherty, Enneking and Collins—reunited for the first time in Bakersfield, Calif. “It was an amazing experience seeing these guys again after such a lengthy separation,” said Collins.

“The visit up here is always very uplifting for our veteran Marines because we’ve all served at one time,” said James E. Sullivan, a member of the chapter. “We come back, and we all feel better when we leave, being able to see the Marine Corps in such good hands.”

Members of the 1stMarDiv Association include veterans who served in World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the post-Vietnam eras. The tour concluded with a luncheon in the 7th Marines’ command post, where the veterans interacted with Marines and sailors. All parties expressed their mutual appreciation for each other.

According to LtCol Spurlock, a big part of the relationship 7th Marines has developed with the city of Palm Desert is due largely to the work that the 1stMarDiv Association’s members have done including organizing events for Marines and sailors such as “dinner drives” for servicemembers and their families.

“These veterans are instrumental in keeping the esprit de corps alive,” Spurlock said. “Events like this give them a chance to interact with a new generation of Marines and get a feel for how the regiment is doing.”

LtCpl Medina Ayala-Lo, USMC

Quick Shots Around the Corps

Camp Pendleton Fisher House Opens

■ Military personnel, families and community leaders celebrated the opening of a newly constructed Fisher House with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tour at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., May 15.

Military families who have a loved one receiving medical treatment at the Camp Pendleton Naval Hospital now have a “home away from home” at which to stay at no cost.

United Health Foundation provided a \$2.65-million grant to fully fund the construction of the eight-suite, 8,000-square-foot home, which is expected to serve more than 280 families and provide nearly 3,000 nights of lodging annually. The Fisher House is adjacent to the hospital, with a view overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

“This home is a symbol of hope and will be an important resource for military families while their loved ones receive medical care,” said Brigadier General Edward D. Banta, Commanding General, Marine Corps Installations West-MCB Camp Pendleton.

Fisher House

Software Update Speeds Supplies To Marines

■ The Marine Corps acquisition force is closing the gap between forward-deployed Marines and the web-based logistics support they need. With the latest software release from Global Combat Support System-Marine Corps (GCSS-MC), even Marines with limited or no Internet service can fill out requests for weapons, vehicle parts and anything else they could find at a logistics depot.

GCSS-MC is the primary technology provider for Marine Corps Logistics Modernization strategy using commercially available resource-planning software. Marine Corps Systems Command, aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., provides programmatic, technical and administrative support for GCSS-MC.

The newest software update includes the Mobile Field Service capability, which allows Marines in locations with poor Internet connectivity to download and fill out a form, which the system saves until better connectivity becomes available.

Carden Hedelt, MARCORSSYSCOM



Crazy Caption Contest

Winner



CPL JONATHAN R. WALDMAN, USMC

“Hey, where did the plane go?”

Submitted by
Nick Vitale
Darien, Conn.

This Month's Photo



PFC JULIO MCGRAW, USMC

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Dream up your own Crazy Caption. *Leatherneck* will pay \$25 or give a one-year MCA membership for the craziest one received. It's easy. Think up a caption for the photo at the right and either mail or e-mail it to us. Send your submission to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or e-mail it, referencing the number at the bottom right, to leatherneck@mca-marines.org. The winning entry will be published in two months.

The Corps' Record Keeper

Col William G. Swarens Retires After 52 Years of Service



Surrounded by mementos representing what has been important in his life—his family, his Marine Corps, his service to others—William G. Swarens diligently prepares for the day ahead and moves one step closer to retirement after 27 years of leadership at Manpower Management Records and Performance Branch in April 2015.

By Mary D. Karcher

“Bill Swarens is one of the hidden heroes in the United States Marine Corps. He has had more impact than Marines realize.”

—LtGen Henry P. “Pete” Osman, USMC (Ret)

Every Marine has an Official Military Personnel File (OMPF). Aside from a birth certificate, it may be the most important record in a Marine’s life. It contains information relevant to promotion, selection for schools, medical or burial benefits, loan qualification, and even serves as a testament to character—good or otherwise. So every Marine—active-duty or veteran—should offer a handshake in gratitude to Colonel William G. Swarens, USMC (Ret) when he retires from government service on July 30, 2015.

As branch head for Manpower Management Records and Performance Branch (MMRP), Swarens has overseen Marine Corps records since 1988 when, as an active-duty colonel, he was personally selected by James Wesley Marsh, Assis-

tant Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and a retired Marine colonel, to relocate the Manpower Management Division from the Navy Annex in Arlington, Va., to Marine Corps Base Quantico. It was supposed to be a one-year assignment. At his retirement this month, Swarens will reflect on 27 years of leading MMRP, three as an active-duty colonel and 24 as a federal government employee.

Manpower Management Records and Performance, as the name implies, manages Marines’ records and Performance Evaluation System. MMRP interacts with active-duty Marines and veterans to ensure their records are complete. The branch provides individual career counseling to Marines as well as classes to units or schools.

When promotion boards meet, the branch supplies information and technical support to board members. The Performance Evaluation System relies on MMRP for standards and procedures, as well as the operation and maintenance of the system. The branch also provides the Worldwide Locator, which has been used

in a variety of ways including contacting Marines who may have been affected by the Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., water contamination issue.

The Correspondence Section handles inquiries from veterans, federal agencies and Congress about Marine records; helps Marines correct verifiable errors; coordinates performance evaluation appeals; and even offers unit diary research services, providing information helpful to historians (for example, identifying all the Women Marines from World War II) or even movie makers (for films such as “Windtalkers” or “Taking Chance”).

A critical aspect of MMRP’s mission is the technical data storage requirements for secure and accessible records management, including the OMPF, the Automated Fitness Report System, the Performance Evaluation System and the six digital boardrooms. With 4 million Marine records at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis and 940,000 digital Marine records at MMRP, most Marines living today have benefited from Swarens’ leadership and the diligence of the Marines and civilians at MMRP.

Under Swarens’ leadership, Marine OMPFs evolved from paper to microfiche to optical imagery to digital, a monumental undertaking. His vision transformed the way the Marine Corps keeps and utilizes records today, providing Marines with timely access to current OMPFs and producing efficient systems to evaluate and locate Marines; provide, maintain and correct records; and support digital promotion boards.

Lieutenant General Henry P. “Pete” Osman, USMC (Ret), who served as Deputy Commandant of the Marine Corps for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (2004-06), said: “Bill Swarens’ legacy to the Corps is his personal leadership, his understanding and utilization of information technology, and the creation of a system that allows us to pick the right people for assignments and promotions. Nobody knows that; I’m fortunate that I do.”

Swarens Joins the Marines

Vision is a key element in Swarens’ success, but to understand what drives him, you would have to go back to his roots in Lawrenceville, Ill., where his bedrock was his family, church and community.



COURTESY OF COL WILLIAM G. SWARENS, USMC (RET)

In the first of his two tours in Vietnam, 2ndLt William Swarens, a pilot with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265, boards his CH-46A in preparation for a mission while flying out of Dong Ha in 1967.

As the oldest in a family of six children, Swarens said his family was rich in values: “The Marine Corps values—honor, courage and commitment—I didn’t know what they were called, but I learned those values from my family.” He earned every dollar needed to pay for his college education at Eastern Illinois University, where he majored in math and minored in physics. During one summer job, while doing maintenance on the local airport runway, he admired the planes as they landed and thought, “I want to fly.” The Marine Corps would give him that opportunity.

Swarens enlisted in the Marine Corps, inspired by what he described as a post-World War II culture nurtured by John Wayne movies and paperbacks passed around from locker to locker in high school, such as Leon Uris’ “Battle Cry.” To Swarens, the Corps represented respect, a chance to be the best and to be challenged. His Marine Corps career began on the yellow footprints at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, in 1963, followed by MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., while awaiting orders to Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla.

As a Marine aviation cadet, a program that filled the need for more pilots during

the Vietnam War, he was commissioned and received his wings on the same day. He learned to fly helicopters, both the H-34 Seahorse and the CH-46 Sea Knight, before serving a 13-month tour in Vietnam in 1967, followed by a second tour three years later.

When he was a major-select, a friend



COURTESY OF COL WILLIAM G. SWARENS, USMC (RET)

Marine Aviation Cadet Swarens proudly grins after completing his first solo flight in the TH13M Bell helicopter at NAS Ellyson Field, Pensacola in 1966.

urged him to view his Marine Corps record. Unlike today when OMPFs are available in seconds via website, then Marines had to physically go to the Navy Annex to access their records. Swarens wasn’t so sure the trip was necessary; after all, he already had been selected for major. But he did go and still talks about the experience today.

Reviewing his own OMPF served Swarens well, both in the Corps and in his position as branch head of MMRP. At the Annex he was given a box that was marked with a sign admonishing him not to remove or add anything to the box. The first item he saw was not his; an award that belonged to someone else had been attributed to him. He realized then that it had been a good idea to review his record since its accuracy was critical to his future in the Corps. Continuing to sift through his record, he came across the comments of a demanding reporting senior, whom Swarens recently described as being “hard-line, he didn’t pull any punches.”

As Swarens recalls, “Embedded in the narrative was [the statement]—and it’s stayed with me all this time—‘If I was surrounded in a hot landing zone and I had my choice of pilots to get me out, I would ask for Bill Swarens.’ It just floored me.



MARY D. MARCHER

In April 2015 Swarens and his leadership team reviewed their preparations for the gunnery sergeant board, one of the 90 annual selection and promotion boards MMRP supports. From left, representing the MMRP sections, are Steve Muskus, Systems Support; Cathy Dye, Correspondence; Sandra Jarrells, Records Management; Swarens; Jeff Shattuck, Operations and Integration; LtCol Brett Sherman, Career Counseling; SgtMaj Brian Cullins, Performance Evaluation; and Jesse Buzzard, Database Administration.

And it was a lesson learned that leaders should be friendly, but they shouldn't be your friend."

Little did he know at the time that his future in Marine Corps record management would have a profound effect on Marines individually and on the Corps as an institution.

From Microfiche to Digital, Days to Seconds

Many Marines may recall earlier days when records were on microfiche. A small rectangle of film about the size of a standard 4-by-6 photograph contained documents in miniaturized format, requiring a special reader to magnify and project the page for viewing. While efficient to store, documents on microfiche were not easy to read, and it took some searching to locate an individual document. Swarens said the need for microfiche arose after a fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis destroyed 18 million military files. Fortunately, the Marine Corps files were spared, escaping with only water damage to some. Since microfiche enabled duplicate copies and provided a back-up to the original paper files, Congress urged each branch of the military to convert to microfiche. Swarens explained, "It turned out to be very costly, very labor-intensive, but it was the best we had then."

Recognizing the advancements in digital technology, MMRP evolved again in 1994, converting the microfiche files to digital. Converting the files required a colossal effort at MMRP. Three shifts worked around the clock with the exception of a 16-hour stoppage on Sundays to get the equipment ready for the new week. It took 19 shifts a week for 21 months to convert 21 million images from microfiche to digital. It was another critical step to preserve and back up Marines' OMPFs.

Protecting OMPFs is still a priority, coupled with accessibility. Today when a new document or image is added to a Marine's digital file, it is updated and visible online within 24 hours. For example, when a fitness report is added to a Marine's record at Manpower Management Records and Performance Branch, within a nanosecond it is written to a mirror server, which is then backed up on tape every week. The online capability is updated, and since that is housed in St. Louis, it provides a tertiary backup. Swarens believes, "It is important that we update the OMPF in St. Louis at least three times, and sometimes four times, a day, so when a Marine logs in the next day, he will see a current OMPF." Providing timely and current files is a key part of MMRP's mission.

Sandra Jarrells, head of the Records Management Section, has been working

for Swarens for 27 of her 35 years in government service. She vividly recalls the days of microfiche: "You would order it through a computer system, but it was DOS Run. You would type in a Social Security number and hit 'send' and three days later you would get a microfiche. ... We've gone from that to within seconds of keying the record, to visually seeing the record and the actual documents in there. It has been a big improvement, and [Swarens] played a major role in that, ensuring that it got done, and done quite efficiently."

Commitment to the Corps

The Marine Corps offered Swarens experiences far beyond what he might have had in Lawrenceville, Ill. Besides fulfilling his desire to fly, he also was stationed in many climes and places, including Vietnam, Okinawa and Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii. After serving in Vietnam, he went to 1st Air/Naval Gunfire Liaison Company in Hawaii, prompting him to attend jump school at Fort Benning, Ga. After a second tour in Vietnam, he attended the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif., earning a master's degree in financial and personnel management. Later, he was selected to attend top-level school at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (currently called The Eisenhower School).

The one tour that would determine Swarens' future at MMRP came when he was a colonel and discussing his options with his monitor. There was an assignment available at United States Southern Command, which was located in Panama at the time, but when Swarens considered his wife and four children moving to Panama, he seriously thought about retiring. That was when he received an important phone call from James Wesley Marsh advocating that he was the man for the job of relocating Manpower Management Division.

The job included heading up Records Branch, which was already understaffed and overworked. As they moved to a new location, they faced the task of providing records to any boards that convened during the process of moving the Corps' entire collection of microfiche records. No boards were to be postponed. Despite the challenge, the mission was accomplished, and at the end of the move, Swarens was asked to stay another year.

When word came that Col Swarens was preparing to retire from active-duty Marine Corps service, Marsh and General John Sheehan asked Swarens if he would be willing to compete for his job if they were to convert it to a civilian billet. Back then, this meant foregoing

military retirement pay. Although he eventually agreed, Swarens had one clear-cut requirement: he did not just want to store records; he insisted that "we have the vision to take advantage of technology."

Swarens was committed to improving the technology and promoting the evolution of record maintenance to best serve Marines. Jarrells summarized the qualities that have served Swarens so well in his profession: "He is very much a statistician. He is open to new ideas. He wants to do right by the Marine Corps. He wants to make sure every Marine gets a fair chance for a promotion board. He's always looking to do the right thing for the Marine Corps and the way ahead. He's always looking to the future."

A Life Rich in Families

So what does the future hold for Swarens? For the employees at MMRP, it means saying goodbye to the only person who has headed the branch. "The knowledge that is going to walk out the door in July is going to be huge. We're anticipating what will happen, but we're sad to see him go," said Jarrells.

But it's much more personal than that. It's almost like a family saying goodbye to a respected member.

Joann Lovell, head of the Correspondence

Section, reflects on Swarens' interactions with people: "He loves everyone. He never has a bad thing to say about anyone. He treats every Marine, whether it's their records or whether it's [a Marine] in the building, he treats them as a person." When her son worked there one summer, "he was just so mesmerized by Mr. Swarens." Lovell said her son joined the Marine Corps not because she was a Marine, but because Swarens told him it was a good idea—and he chose to work in the aviation field because Swarens was a pilot.

Bill Swarens' life is rich in people and activities; after retirement he plans to have more time for what he calls his six families: his immediate family, his Marine family, his church family, his family of West Stafford Ruritan members, his high school Class of 1958 (he stays in touch with them and some will attend his retirement ceremony), and his "little farm," Noah's A.R.C., with its horses, dogs and cats.

Author's bio: Mary Karcher is a former Leatherneck staff writer and editor of various segments of the magazine. She currently works as a freelance writer.



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In Memoriam

Compiled by Nancy S. Lichtman

"In Memoriam" is run on a space-available basis. Those wishing to submit items should include full name, age, location at time of death (city and state), last grade held, units served in, dates of service and, if possible, a local or national obituary. Allow at least four months for the notice to appear.

Marines Die in Nepal Helicopter Crash While Conducting Humanitarian Relief

Six U.S. Marines died when a UH-1Y helicopter with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 469 crashed near Charikot, Nepal, on May 12. Two Nepalese soldiers on board also died.

The helicopter was delivering humanitarian assistance as part of Joint Task Force 505 in support of Operation Sahayogi Haat, the U.S. military earthquake relief effort.

Lieutenant General John E. Wissler, the commander of JTF 505, said those who died were "courageous, selfless individuals dedicated to the international humanitarian aid mission here in Nepal whose memories will live on through the lives they touched during this disaster relief operation and in their previous service to their countries."

The Marines who died are:

Lance Corporal Jacob A. Hug, 22, of Maricopa, Ariz., who was a combat videographer with Marine Corps Installations Pacific, Okinawa, Japan.

Sergeant Ward M. Johnson IV, 29, of Seminole, Fla., who was a crew chief with HMLA-469, Marine Aircraft Group 39, Third Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Captain Dustin R. Lukasiewicz, 29, of Harlan, Neb., who was a UH-1Y pilot with HMLA-469, MAG-39, 3d MAW, Camp Pendleton.

Corporal Sara A. Medina, 23, of Kane, Ill., a combat photographer with MCI Pacific, Okinawa.

Capt Christopher L. Norgren, 31, of Sedgwick, Kan., a UH-1Y pilot with HMLA-469, MAG-39, 3d MAW, Camp Pendleton.

Sgt Eric M. Seaman, 30, of Riverside, Calif., a UH-1Y crew chief with HMLA-469, MAG-39, 3d MAW, Camp Pendleton.

Compiled from JTF 505 media releases

Osprey Crash in Hawaii Causes Two Marine Fatalities

Two Marines died when the MV-22B Osprey they were aboard crashed during

training at Marine Corps Training Area Bellows, Oahu, Hawaii.

Those who died are:

Lance Corporal Joshua E. Barron, 24, of Spokane, Wash., May 17 of injuries sustained in the crash. LCpl Barron was a tiltrotor crew chief assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 161 (Reinforced), 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit. He was stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., prior to deploying with the MEU.

"Words cannot express our sorrow at the tragic loss of this fine young man. He is the best our nation has to offer," said Colonel Vance L. Cryer, Commanding Officer, 15th MEU. "Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family and the families of all the Marines involved in Sunday's crash. If there is anything positive to relay in this situation it is ... the heroic, selfless actions of the Marines aboard the aircraft along with the quick lifesaving actions of the civilian and military first responders."

LCpl Matthew J. Determan, 21, of Maricopa, Ariz., May 19 of injuries sustained in the crash two days earlier.

Determan was a rifleman assigned to 3d Battalion, First Marine Regiment. He was stationed at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., prior to deploying with the 15th MEU.

"Lance Corporal Determan represents the best America has to offer," said Col Cryer. "Our country and our Corps are poorer for his loss, but his example will continue to inspire us."

"I would like to thank all of those individuals who selflessly, and without regard to their own safety, responded on-scene at Sunday's mishap. You have the undying gratitude of everyone in the 15th MEU for your heroic efforts. Words cannot adequately express our appreciation," added Cryer.

The cause of the crash is under investigation.

Compiled from 15th MEU media releases

James E. Barnes, 87, of Marshall, Texas. He served in the Marine Detachment of

USS *Antietam* (CV-36) during WW II. Later he worked for Eastman Kodak. He was a member of the USS *Antietam* Association.

John C. Dick, 88, of McCalla, Ala. He was a Marine who served in WW II.

Tillman H. Dickerson, 94, of Dallas. During WW II he was part of the landing force on Iwo Jima. He also saw action on Saipan and Tinian. He later worked in the electrical supply business and, for many years, ran his own company.

John E. Drake, 97, in Morgan Hill, Calif. He served 22 years in the Marine Corps and saw action on Okinawa and Guam. After his retirement, he worked for the government.

Col Warren H. Edwards, 98, of Greenwood, Fla. He was with 1stMarDiv on Guadalcanal. After the war he graduated from law school. He became a criminal court judge in Orlando and eventually was a circuit court judge in Florida.

Albert M. "Buddy" Farrell, 88, of Ridge, N.Y. He was a Marine veteran of WW II who later retired from a career as a New York City police officer.

Monte "Flagman" Florence, 61, of Daingerfield, Texas. He was a Marine Corps veteran. Later he worked as a truck driver. He supported the local football teams on Friday nights, cheering from the sidelines.

George L. Forry, 89, of Lititz, Pa. He left school in his senior year at the Hershey Industrial School to join the Marine Corps and saw action in the Pacific during WW II. After the war he worked for 50 years as the parts manager at Keller Brothers Ford.

Maj Richard A. Froncek, 87, of Good-year, Ariz. He was 16 in 1943 when he enlisted in the Marine Corps and was sent to the South Pacific. After the war, he went to college. He was commissioned in 1952 and called back to active duty during the Korean War where he was a platoon commander with G/3/7, 1stMarDiv on the DMZ. He later saw action in the Vietnam War, when he commanded an artillery battalion at Gio Linh. He retired in 1968 and settled in Arizona, working for the

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state government and the Census Bureau.

Robert G. Hall, 89, of Louisville, Ky. He was a U.S. Navy Seabee attached to 4thMarDiv. He participated in the Battle of Iwo Jima, going ashore in the second wave of Marines on the first day of fighting. He later worked for General Electric, designing and testing equipment.

Emil Harley, 91, of La Quinta, Calif. He was a member of the 1st Raider Bn during WW II. He also was a veteran of the Korean War. He later founded Bannerville USA, a Chicago company that created and installed outdoor banners.

Richard J. Jacobs, 70, of Cornwall, Ontario. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1963 and served until 1967. During his time in the Corps, he competed in various shooting competitions as well as athletic competitions. He was part of the Honor Guard during the funeral of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur.

Cpl Jerry R. Kranz, 89, in San Marcos, Calif. At age 17 he enlisted in the Marine Corps. Serving with 4thMarDiv, he fought in the Pacific on Kwajalein, Saipan, Tinian and Iwo Jima. After the war, he attended Moorehead State Teachers College in Minnesota and embarked on a career as a teacher and coach. He was a member of the MCL, VFW and American Legion.

Cpl Craig J. Lane, 48, of Manassas,

Va. He was a Marine veteran who worked for the U.S. Park Police for 17 years. He was an avid outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting and fishing.

LCpl Jacob K. Matthews, 21, in Jacksonville, N.C., died in an auto accident. He went to boot camp at Parris Island, S.C., in 2012. He served with 1/6 at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C. Following an overseas deployment, he was assigned as an MP.

Edmond N. "Ted" Morse, 92, in Darien, Conn. In 1943 after graduating from Brown University with a degree in economics, he served in the Marine Corps in the South Pacific. He was with 24th Marines during the Battle of Iwo Jima. After the war, he had a successful career in banking and finance.

Capt P. Henry Mueller, 97, of Summit, N.J. He was an adjutant in VMF-914 from 1944 to 1945. Prior to that, he developed courier networks for the State Department. After WW II, he returned to the State Department. Later he had a successful career in banking and business.

Cpl Francis X. "Frank" Noe, 66, of Stoughton, Mass. He was a Vietnam War veteran who received the Purple Heart. He was a firefighter for 28 years.

Stanley L. Noggle, 97, of Harrisburg, Pa. He was a veteran of WW II. He saw



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action on Saipan and Tinian. He was a founding member of the MCL Patrick William Milano Det. #299.

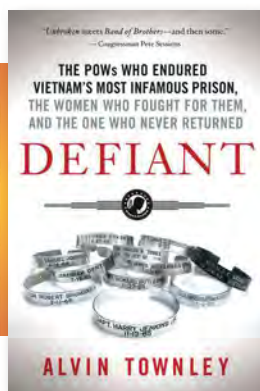
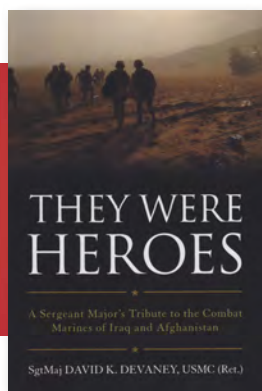
Richmond Pendleton, 88, of St. Augustine, Fla. He was a Marine Corps veteran of WW II and the Korean War.

LCpl Harold R. Reed, 78, of Dallas. He served in the Marine Corps and later worked for the U.S. Postal Service.

Katherine Marie Schlegel, 95, of Big Bear Lake, Calif. She was a Marine who served during WW II and was a member of the MCL, Big Bear Valley Detachment #1038.

Books Reviewed

Unless otherwise noted, these books may be ordered from *The MARINE Shop*. Subscribers may use members' prices. Include \$5.99 for shipping. Virginia residents add 6 percent sales tax; North Carolina residents add 6.75 percent. Prices may change. Make check or money order payable to: MCA, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, call toll-free: (888) 237-7683, or shop online at www.marineshop.net.



THEY WERE HEROS: A Sergeant Major's Tribute to the Combat Marines of Iraq and Afghanistan. By SgtMaj David K. Devaney, USMC (Ret). Published by Naval Institute Press. 296 pages. Stock #1612517897. \$31.46 MCA Members. \$34.95 Regular Price.

Sergeant Major David K. Devaney's fine book, "They Were Heroes," would make an excellent gift for your Marine, or for that matter, any military history buff. Within this extremely well-executed volume are the compelling accounts of precisely how 44 Marines and eight Navy corpsmen earned their awards for gallantry. The author, a retired sergeant major, notes the general public is often aware of the stories of Medal of Honor winners. People are usually less informed, however, about the military heroes who have been honored with our country's various other decorations for gallantry.

Devaney's book is broken into three main parts: the combat awards received by 26 Iraq war veterans, 24 veterans of combat in Afghanistan, and the heart-rending accounts of casualty assistance calls he made following the deaths of two Bronze Star recipients. In the book, the range of awards includes the Navy Cross, the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

Devaney's book begins with the assertion that we must remember our country's amazing warriors and heroes. His experience visiting our wounded warriors led him to write: "In general, the wounded

warriors do not want pity; they want understanding and compassion. There is no way to empathize with an amputee unless you are also an amputee."

Once gaining the wounded warrior's trust, Devaney would simply ask, "What happened?" The results are recorded in this remarkable volume. He concluded that what was best for a wounded warrior, and other combat veterans, is simply to get him to speak about his combat experiences. Devaney's goal was to tell the unique stories of how each warrior earned his citations for gallantry. Additionally, each concise account also includes a reprint of the combatant's award citation.

The Navy Cross citation for Hospital Apprentice Luis E. Fonseca reads: "Without concern for his own safety, [he] braved small arms, machine gun, and intense rocket propelled grenade fire to evacuate the wounded Marines from the burning amphibious assault vehicle and tend to their wounds. ... His timely and effective care undoubtedly saved the lives of numerous casualties."

SgtMaj Devaney served as a casualty assistance call officer and in his book includes two difficult casualty calls he made to the families of Corporal John R. Stalvy and Staff Sergeant Joel P. Dameron, both of whom posthumously were awarded the Bronze Star. Devaney notes that with his multiple combat tours, including facing the heat of a rocket-propelled grenade, he felt nothing more fear-producing than making casualty assistance calls.

Cpl Stalvy's mother knew immediately upon SgtMaj Devaney's arrival that her son had died. The corporal had been killed by an improvised explosive device. The family asked Devaney to give Cpl Stalvy's eulogy. Devaney said that at the funeral he was unable to speak for an agonizingly long period before being able to make his heartfelt remarks. Imagine, if you will, any proceeding wherein a sergeant major of Marines becomes powerless to speak; that may tell you something of the gravity of this experience.

SgtMaj Devaney, a scout sniper, also had been the chief instructor of the III Marine Expeditionary Force Special Operations Training Group's Reconnaissance and Surveillance Course. There, he encountered a quiet, but very proficient, Marine named Brian Blonder.

Only days after Blonder had received his Navy Cross, he addressed students at the prestigious Scout Sniper Instructor School. Scout snipers are noted for harboring their well-earned elitist reputation. But Gunnery Sergeant Blonder reminded them that they were employed to support the infantry and not to act "too cool for school." His message to the students included his firm reminder: "Do your job and be proud, but do not flaunt it."

Gunny Blonder received a Navy Cross for heroic actions in Shewan City, Afghanistan, in 2008, while serving as platoon sergeant for Force Reconnaissance Platoon, 2d Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment in support of Central Command (Forward). After leading a foot patrol through the city, Gunny Blonder's patrol came under intense fire. Exposing himself to enemy fire several times, he managed to rescue the Marines trapped in the kill zone. Later in the battle, Blonder personally led his platoon on a decisive flank attack into and through the enemy trench lines.

His citation reads: "He [Blonder] was a driving force during the eight-hour battle and pushed the platoon to gain and maintain the momentum against the enemy

until they were destroyed. Gunnery Sergeant Blonder's valorous actions helped reduce a major enemy stronghold as his platoon killed over fifty enemy fighters, destroying several Taliban cells and opening the highway in Shewan to coalition convoys."

Devaney's extraordinary book is a lasting tribute to these few unsung American heroes. Thanks to Devaney's gripping work, the experiences of these 52 gallant warriors will now be preserved. Well done, Sergeant Major, well done, sir!

Robert B. Loring

Author's bio: Readers will recognize Marine veteran "Red Bob" Loring as a frequent Leatherneck reviewer, who has had more than 100 book reviews published in the magazine. A tireless worker for the Marine Corps and his local community, he volunteers for various charities, including helping to run a very successful Toys for Tots program in Pasco County, Fla.

DEFIANT: The POWs Who Endured Vietnam's Most Infamous Prison, the Women Who Fought for Them, and the One Who Never Returned. By Alvin Townley. Published by St. Martin's Griffin. 432 pages. Softcover. Stock #1250060338. \$16.20 MCA Members. \$17.99 Regular Price.

In 2009, USS *Stockdale* (DDG-106), a guided missile destroyer, was commissioned with the motto, "Return With Honor." Five years later, Alvin Townley shared the story of the ship's namesake, Vice Admiral James B. Stockdale, and the other 10 prisoners of war who became known as "the Alcatraz Gang." Townley's book "Defiant" tells the harrowing story of 11 POWs during the Vietnam War who were isolated from the other POWs and imprisoned in solitary cells in the Hanoi prison known to the men as "Alcatraz."

With every page, Townley sends the reader into the dark, lonely cells, detailing the physical and mental torture these men endured for years after being shot down and taken prisoner. The book describes the cruelty the POWs dealt with every day while in captivity, but the true storyline of this book is the resilience and unwavering patriotism of these men.

VADM Stockdale and the other 10 men featured in this book caused continual problems for the Viet Cong as they never lost sight of their mission: defeating the enemy. "Defiant" describes the acts of rebellion and strong leadership demonstrated by the men throughout their years as POWs. From developing communication techniques to use without VC detection, to keeping morale up, the Alcatraz Gang resisted their captors every way they could. Even after they were captured, they still fought their war.

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The stories of the wives and families of the POWs are included in Townley's book, reminding the reader that for every Marine, sailor, soldier, and airman who deployed to Vietnam, there was a family waiting for them at home.

Specifically, the author details the work of Sybil Stockdale and other wives who formed the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia. These women were fighting to bring attention to the POWs and men who were missing in action.

The children of the Alcatraz Gang grew up without their fathers, and some of the wives spent more of their marriage waiting to hear if and when their husbands were coming home than they actually spent with their husbands.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of "Defiant" is the way Townley is able to portray the internal struggles of these 11 men. Yes, he details the physical torture, but the focus on the emotional and mental struggles faced by the POWs sinks deep into the reader. After weeks turned to months and months turned to years as a POW, the men questioned their religion and intensely missed their families. Some spent years in solitary confinement, seeing only their VC guards. Their isolation was such that when the Viet Cong informed the men of the large antiwar protests in the United States, they didn't know if it was communist propaganda or if the people back home were giving up on the men's mission.

While Townley outlines all the reasons the men could have given up their fight, he emphasizes the determination, honor and love for their country and home that kept the men alive and resisting.

Townley's book is a story of a brother-

hood that extends beyond different military services, grades and ages. It is a brotherhood forged through tapping on walls in code, enduring the same brutal torture, and living in the same deplorable conditions. A brotherhood so strong that the individuals refused to cooperate with the enemy, even if it meant they would receive special privileges or early release. The Alcatraz Gang wanted to "return with honor"; they kept their military traditions, established a chain of command, followed their codes to the best of their capabilities, and would only accept release in the order all the American POWs were shot down.

Near the end of the Alcatraz Gang's imprisonment, when they were back in the Hoa Lo Prison, nicknamed the "Hanoi Hilton," with other POWs, the VC were angry that the Americans had held a church service within a cell filled with dozens of POWs. As the VC escorted the leaders of the church service out of the room to punish them, the Americans began to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" as loud as they could. Soon, the entire prison rang out with the song. As Townley writes, "With this song, they told each other and all of North Vietnam that they had endured the worst; they would survive the rest."

When the American POWs finally were released, one POW scratched into the wall, "Freedom has a taste to those who fight and almost die that the protected will never know." With "Defiant," Townley explains why.

Emily K. Reinwald

Author's bio: Emily K. Reinwald is a college student majoring in political science.



SOUND OFF

[continued from page 6]

Well, now that I am one of those artifacts of Vietnam I would like to say that 2d Battalion, First Marine Regiment did a good job in those landings. And, while the "Echo" raid company didn't get to use its rubber boats, we and portions of the 7th Fleet must have made an impression on the coastal villagers and in some cases the Viet Cong. We even found and protected villagers by hiding them in a train tunnel until we could clear the area.

There just wasn't enough resistance to warrant a paragraph of information in *Leatherneck*. We weren't an invasion force until drawn into Operation Harvest Moon.

But for those of us who went over the side thinking we can't do less than our predecessors, we would like to know why the Dagger Thrust raids are not mentioned in polite Marine Corps gatherings.

Tom Isenburg
USMC, 1964-70
Livermore, Calif.

• *Who says they are not mentioned at Marine Corps gatherings? Leatherneck's September issue will have our Vietnam story "The Dirtiest War Americans Ever*



COURTESY OF JAMES K. ANDERSON

From left: Ed Smith, James Anderson, Al Kinyon and Mike Dolan celebrated the 50th anniversary of Marines landing at Red Beach by standing at the spot on the marge of Da Nang Harbor, March 8, 2015.

Had to Fight," and Dagger Thrust raids are mentioned.—Sound Off Ed.

Vietnam 50 Years Later Much Friendlier

It was a beautiful day on March 8, 2015. The sea was calm, and the temperature at Red Beach in Da Nang was around 80 degrees. So it was hard for us to believe that

50 years ago on that date the 3d Battalion, Ninth Marine Regiment of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade landed with the seas being rough, the sky overcast, the temperature, I'm sure, somewhat cooler, and all those Vietnamese girls hanging leis around their necks. Thus started America's ground war in Vietnam and

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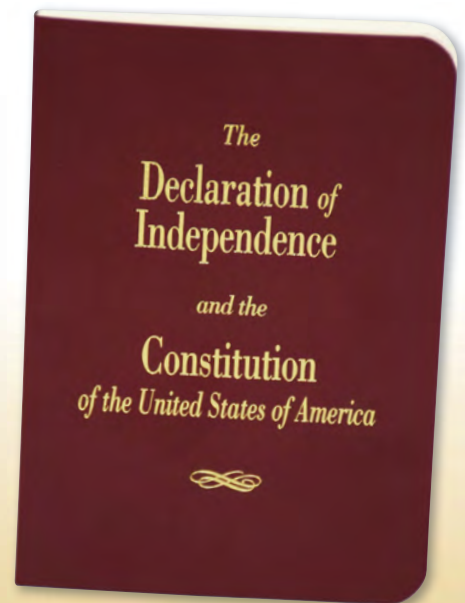
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the start of our buildup where in just a few years more than 500,000 troops would be committed, including our group of four who decided to get together in Da Nang to see how it all has changed since our tour of duty.

We had served in Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 17, Marine Wing Support Group 17, First Marine Aircraft Wing from 1968 to 1969. There was Albert "Big Al" Kinyon, a dispersing clerk, now known as Bert who had organized our get-together; Mike "Rocketman" Dolan and Edward "Smitty" Smith, both of whom were aviation avionics technicians; and finally myself, James "Rauman" "Andy" Anderson (*Rau* being Vietnamese for mustache for I had a handlebar mustache), and I was an aviation ordnanceman.

Our tour guide for our trip was Jeremy Wilking of Looking Glass Jeep Tours, who was a young Army veteran of about 35, and our interpreter was Tam from Tam's Pub, who was a young girl back during the war.

Jeremy thought for sure there was going to be a celebration of some sort to commemorate the Red Beach landing so he had paper placards ready for us, two American flags, a Marine flag and emblem placard, as well as one to denote the occasion. When we arrived at Red

Beach, Jeremy played "The Marines' Hymn" on his smart phone connected to speakers in his jeep, but to our surprise it was just us for the celebration.

Imagine us four somewhat misfit Marines from the past representing this big event for all Marines who served in Vietnam since that date. I must say I was truly overwhelmed with emotion, and I'm sure the others were too. When we were done reminiscing from this event, we headed for Monkey Mountain to continue our tour.

Part of my tour in Vietnam was being with Marine Attack Squadron 223 in Chu Lai, and believe it or not, the runway at Marine Aircraft Group 13 is still there and quite a few of the revetments.

We went to An Hoa where the airfield there is overgrown and the red clay is now being made into bricks. Hill 55 still has quite a view, but there is a Communist victory statue there and Dodge City has a village now. Most everything in Da Nang from back then is gone because of development, and MAG-16's airfield, although overgrown, probably will not be there within a year or so. But not far from all this is the Sandy Shores Resort where we stayed, and it's a hop, skip and a jump away from Marble Mountain, and we were treated like kings.

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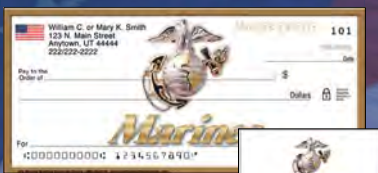
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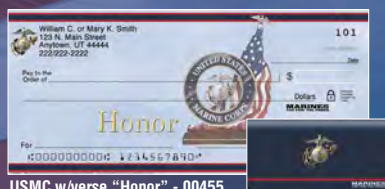
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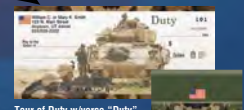
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All the Vietnamese people we met on our six-day tour were very friendly and made us feel very welcome.

China Beach is all developed, and you probably won't recognize it now, but it is still nice. So if you can plan a trip to Da Nang with some buddies, you will be guaranteed a great time.

Cpl James "Andy" Anderson
USMC, 1967-71
Portland, Ore.

Aye, Whatever Happened to "Aye, Aye"?

"The Swashbuckling Rebirth of the Marine Corps" in the April issue is a classic story and is certainly of great interest to those Marines who love our history.

It brought back so many and varied memories of the Corps that I had to share some. Author R.R. Keene's stories have always fascinated me. This one, so well illustrated by Colonel Charles H. Waterhouse, also renewed memories of carrying on conversations with Col Waterhouse as he painted some of his historic scenes at the museum when I was the exhibit curator there. Talking never distracted him. We would discuss the types of molding he would like to see the paintings framed in while he was still painting, and I would frame them accordingly.

Keene also mentioned Marine historian Col Robert Debs Heintz Jr., who made many visits to the old National Marine Corps Museum at the Washington Navy Yard. One day the colonel stopped and asked the young enlisted Marine who was manning the desk a question. When he had answered, the colonel thanked him, and as he started to leave, the young Marine said, "Yes, sir!" The colonel said to no one in particular, "Whatever happened to 'Aye, aye, sir'?" Heintz was from the real old Corps.

MSGt C.M. "Bud" DeVere Sr., USMC (Ret)
Longmont, Colo.

• *You are right, talking never distracted Col Waterhouse. We still and always will miss him. Semper Fi, aye, aye, Bud.—Sound Off Ed.*

He Never Wore a Tuxedo On Embassy Duty

Today I read an article about the tattoo policy that is in effect. I'm not writing this because I agree or disagree with the current policy.

I'm writing this because I take exception with R. Lee Ermey's comment referring to embassy duty as a "tuxedo job." While in the Corps, I served with Marine Security Guard Battalion, and I never wore a

tuxedo and I never saw any of the MSG hostages from the American Embassy in Tehran, Iran, wearing them either. In fact, I don't think the MSGs in Vietnam were wearing them during Operation Frequent Wind either. I could go on.

For R. Lee Ermey to refer to our mission as a "tuxedo job" is really an insult to all of the Marines who have stood watch at our embassies and consulates around the world. I've known and served with too many good Marine security guards to let him have a pass on this. Oh, by the way, I have a Marine Corps tattoo on my right forearm, and, yes, I had it while on MSG duty. In fact, the deputy chief of mission at the American Embassy Tehran, Iran, commented on it when he was presenting me with my promotion warrant to corporal. And, no, I wasn't wearing a tuxedo.

Barry E. Hales
Reidsville, N.C.

• *Lighten up. The Army used to sing: "I wouldn't give a hill of beans to be a fancy-pants Marine. I just wanna be a dog-face soldier." People still refer to tuxedos and full-dress suits as "monkey" suits. Marines liked to say: "Dress blues, tennis shoes and a light coat of oil." I've known R. Lee Ermey for a long time, and he is not a Marine who insults his fellow*

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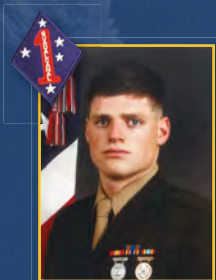
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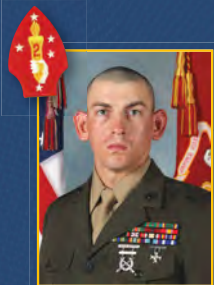
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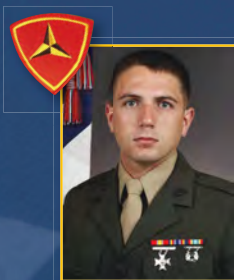
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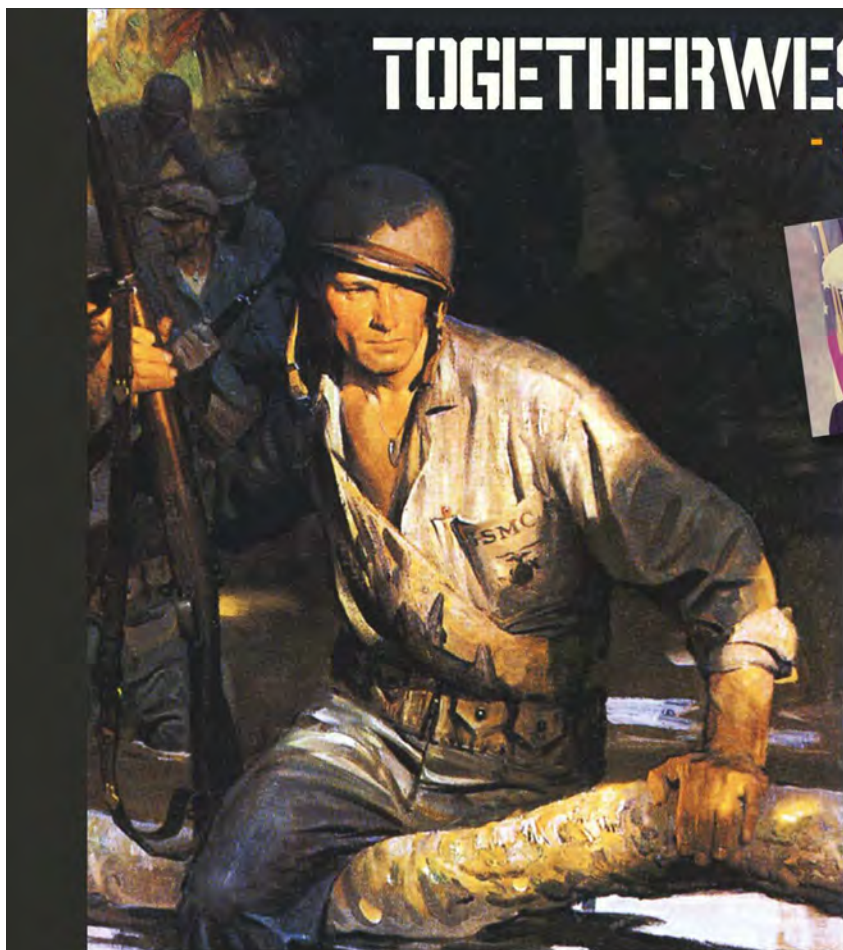


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leathernecks. "Black tie affairs" mean tuxedo or Dress Blue Alphas. If you think about it, he's saying that Marines on MSG duty have a "tuxedo job" that requires them to dress formally, and when they stand Post One, they look sharp in the best version of a tuxedo that any service ever had. Congratulations on your tattoo.—Sound Off Ed.

Don't Forget Peleliu

I was a sergeant with Company K, 3d Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment, First Marine Division during World War II.

Of all the things that happened to me, my experience in the Pacific with the 1stMarDiv was the most significant.

I say this because the Pacific didn't get much press when the war was going on. A few islands did, but not many. Take, for instance, Peleliu. We had more than 8,000 casualties on Peleliu, yet nobody ever heard about it. We didn't get all that much press.

But, wherever you are, war is hell. I fought on New Britain, Peleliu and Okinawa. We were there in the monsoon season, and it rained and it rained and then it rained some more. It stayed wet so long that my two little toenails rotted completely off. It seemed to me we wore the same clothes forever before we ever

got a change of clothes. The only time we would rinse them out was when we crossed a stream or were on the beach.

A lot of times you would discover the Japanese only when you were in an ambush. That's the first time you knew they were anywhere. From day one, we would push forward, and we had two really bad fights. One was on Suicide Creek. We had to cross the creek to get to them, and they were zeroed in on us. It took a while and we took a lot of casualties. The other bad fight was on Walt Ridge, named after Colonel Lewis W. Walt. We captured that ridge one afternoon. It took a while to take it, but we finally got our way to the crest, and we dug in. We stayed, we didn't back up. That night, starting about 1 o'clock, there was a *banzai* charge. We had five *banzai* charges between then and daylight, and I can assure you no one got a wink of sleep.

I don't know how many Japanese we killed on our frontlines, but I know one of them started into my foxhole and I stuck the bayonet right through his chest and heaved him over my head. I had an M1 rifle and emptied it. I really don't know how many shots I put into him, but I can assure you he was a very dead Japanese soldier when he hit the ground. That was a horrifying night.

The Japanese would talk to you. Some of them knew English. I remember one incident early in the night. One called out and said, "Raider! Raider! Why you no shoot?" Well, the Raider was the machine-gunner who said to another one of his gunners, "Give him a short burst of about 200 rounds." He did, and we didn't hear any more talk that night.

Despite the ambushes, I never thought I wasn't going to make it out of there. I had a mindset that I was going home. On that ridge where we had those *banzai* charges, my buddy, Lonnie Howard, said, "Burgin, if anything happens to me, I want you to have my watch." I said "Howard, there's no way anything's going to happen to you. You're OK." He said, "I'm not kidding." Sure enough he got killed that night. He had a premonition that it was his time. I saw several guys like that, and every single one of them who had that premonition got killed.

I wouldn't allow that kind of thinking.

When I reflect back on the Pacific campaigns, I must say there was damn little joy out there for more than 2½ years. But even in combat, you remember some things funny that happen even in the heat of battle. Jim Burke and I were inseparable. On Suicide Creek there was a 5-gallon water can sitting under a tree, and it had

a canteen cup on top of it. I walked down to it and poured a drink of water and set the cup back on top of the water can. Jim decided he wanted a drink, so he went, too, and just as he reached for the canteen cup, a Japanese sniper shot the canteen cup out from under him. He took about three steps backward and looked at me, and said, "I don't think I'm that damn thirsty."

Sgt R.V. Burgin
1stMarDiv, 1942
Lancaster, Texas

Reunions

• **1stMarDiv Assn.**, Aug. 18-22, San Diego. Contact Carolyn Leary, (757) 625-6401, carolyn@afri.com.

• **3dMarDiv Assn. (all eras)**, Aug. 11-16, Orlando, Fla. Contact Don H. Gee, P.O. Box 254, Chalfont, PA 18914-0254, (215) 822-9094, gygee@aol.com, www.caltrap.com.

• **5thMarDiv Assn.**, Sept. 10-13, Virginia Beach, Va. Contact Monroe S. Ozment, 1362 Little Neck Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23452, (757) 340-8784, monroeozment25@hotmail.com

• **Montford Point Marine Assn. (50th Annual Convention)**, Aug. 12-16, Mobile, Ala. Contact Rodney Lee, (251) 776-2424, or Ron Johnson, (504) 270-5426, www.montfordpointmarines.org.

• **Marine Corps Mustang Assn. (30th Reunion)**, Sept. 15-18, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact LtCol Richard J. Sullivan, USMC (Ret), (508) 954-2262, sul824@verizon.net.

• **Marine Corps Officers Reunion Assn.**, Oct. 9-12, San Diego. Contact John Featherstone, (310) 833-2190, johnf9375@aol.com.

• **Marine Corps Engineer Assn.**, Sept. 23-26, Jacksonville, N.C. Contact K.D. Frantz, (936) 273-4830 or (716) 720-1206, www.marcorengasn.org.

• **Marine Corps Counterintelligence Assn.**, Sept. 17-20, San Antonio. Contact George Turner, (830) 285-1636, gpturner@kctc.com.

• **USMC Combat Correspondents Assn.**, Aug. 16-20, New Bern, N.C. Contact Jack Paxton, (352) 748-4698, usmccca@cfl.rr.com.

• **USMC Vietnam Tankers Assn.**, Oct. 28-Nov. 2, Arlington, Va. Contact John Wear, (215) 794-9052, johnwear@yahoo.com.

• **Marines of Long Ago**, Oct. 13-16, San Antonio. Contact Joe Cullen, (203) 877-0846, www.marinesoflongago.org.

• **3d Bn, 4th Marines Assn.**, Aug. 26-30, San Diego. Contact Travis Fryzowicz, (732) 251-5518, maddogandgrace@verizon.net.

• **Marine Corps Air Transport Assn.**

(all VMGR/VMR), Oct. 22-26, Fort Worth, Texas. Contact Richard Driscoll, president@mcata.com, www.vmgr-reunion.com.

• **USMC Hawk Assn. (50th Anniversary)**, Aug. 19-23, Palm Springs/Rancho Mirage, Calif. Contact Stan Buliszyn, (352) 509-2043, sb353@usmchawkassociation.com.

• **USMC A-4 Skyhawk Assn.**, Oct. 8-11, San Diego. Contact Mark Williams, 400 Howell Way, #102, Edmonds, WA 98020, (425) 771-2030, roger.wilco@comcast.net.

• **Moroccan Reunion Assn. (all eras)**, Sept. 9-13, Branson, Mo. Contact Robert Sieborg, 2717 N. 120th Ave., Omaha, NE 68164, (402) 496-1498.

• **U.S. Navy Amphibious Force Veterans Assn.**, Sept. 6-10, Chattanooga, Tenn. Contact John J. Walsh, 2745 Dalton Ln., Toms River, NJ 08755, (732) 367-6472 (no calls after 9 p.m. EST).

• **USMC Postal 0160/0161**, Sept. 13-18, Savannah, Ga. Contact Harold Wilson, (740) 385-6204, handk.lucerne06@gmail.com.

• **BLT 3/9 (50-Year Reunion)**, Sept. 8-12, San Diego. Contact Charles Saltamaggio, (504) 812-7369, csaltamaggio@yahoo.com.

• **1/1 (RVN, 1965-71)**, Aug. 26-31, Washington, D.C. Contact Rick Bazaco, 14727 Mountain Rd., Purcellville, VA 20132, (843) 324-2734, info@1stbn1stmarines.com, www.1stbn1stmarines.com.

• **1/3 (WW II, Korea, RVN, Gulf War)**, Aug. 11-16, Orlando, Fla. Contact Richard Cleary, P.O. Box 128, Mammoth, AZ 85618, (520) 487-0327, clearyrp@msn.com.

• **2/1 (RVN, 1965-71)**, Nov. 5-9, San Diego. Contact Mario Sagastume, (530) 343-9481, choncho0331@sbcglobal.net.

• **2/3 (RVN)**, Sept. 9-12, Las Vegas. Contact Art Ferguson, (623) 780-1819, clydesdadfergy@aol.com.

• **2/4 ("The Magnificent Bastards," all eras, honoring Gold Star families)**, July 23-26, Quantico, Va. Contact Jim Rogers, (703) 887-6238, jwr@verizon.net, or Dave Jones, (410) 310-4571, oystercove@gmail.com.

• **2/9 (RVN, 50th Anniversary, all eras welcome)**, Nov. 8-12, Arlington, Va. Contact Danny Schuster, (978) 302-4126, ditson35@verizon.net.

• **Battery Adjust, 3/11**, Sept. 23-27, Charleston, S.C. Contact Doug Miller, (402) 540-9431, dmiller48@gmail.com.

• **A/1/7 (Korea, 1950-53)**, Sept. 29-Oct. 1, Virginia Beach, Va. Contact Leonard R. "Shifty" Shifflette, 25 Emery St., Harrisonburg, VA 22801-2705, (540) 434-2066, (540) 746-2066, captshifty@comcast.net.

• **B/1/5 and C/1/5 (RVN, 1966-67)** are planning a reunion. Contact SSgt Jim Proulx, USMC (Ret), (904) 343-4850, bertojoto1@gmail.com.

• **B/1/7 (1960-64)**, Nov. 7-11, Las Vegas. Contact Pete Morley, (732) 778-8126, pmorley39@icloud.com, or Frank Vanicore, (916) 933-8152.

• **"Bravo" Co, 4th CEB, 4thMarDiv (Desert Storm, 25th Anniversary)**, May 13-14, 2016, Roanoke, Va. Contact Steve Garman, P.O. Box 748, Salem, VA 24153, stevegarman7@gmail.com.

• **F/2/7 (1965-70)**, July 19-24, San Francisco. Contact Robert Fitch, (609) 635-3441, bffox66@gmail.com.

• **G/2/7 (RVN)**, Aug. 25-30, Dillard, Ga. Contact Ray Taylor, (352) 978-9746, rapidray2@aol.com.

• **G/3/1 (Korea, 1951-55)**, Sept. 28-Oct. 1, Kansas City, Mo. Contact J.R. Camarillo, 19 Stanislaus Ave., Ventura, CA 93004, (805) 377-7840, or Carleton "Bing" Bingham, 1453 Patricia Dr., Gardnerville, NV 89460, (775) 265-3596, (775) 781-2726.

• **I/3/1 (Korea, 1950-55)**, Aug. 19-23, Branson, Mo. Contact Suzi Woodward, (860) 262-1334, suzi1111@aol.com.

• **1st Plt, I/3/1 (RVN, 1968-69)**, Sept. 10-13, Traverse City, Mich. Contact George Butterworth, (248) 627-9336,

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• **3d Plt, H/2/3 (RVN, 1967-68)**, Oct. 8-11, Stafford, Va. Contact Chuck Gaede, (512) 750-9265, csgaede@gmail.com.

• **3d 155 mm Gun Btry (SP) and 3d 175 mm Gun Btry (SP)**, San Diego, Oct. 1-3. Contact Ed Kirby, (978) 987-1920, ed-kirby@comcast.net.

• **1st Provisional Marine Brigade ("The Fire Brigade," Korea, 1950)** is planning a 65th anniversary reunion. Contact Col Warren Wiedhahn, USMC (Ret), Military Historical Tours, 13198 Centerpointe Way, #202, Woodbridge, VA 22193, (703) 590-1295, jwiedhahn@aol.com, www.miltours.com.

• **Marine Barracks, Great Lakes, Ill.**, is planning a potential reunion. Contact Gene Spanos, (847) 770-9049, genethemarine@gmail.com.

• **Marine Detachment/Barracks, NS Bermuda (all eras)**, Oct. 25-29, San Antonio. Contact Dennis McDonald, (763) 473-3458, d.mcdonald82575@comcast.net.

• **Tri-State Marine Detachment #494 (Marine Corps League) Marine Reunion**, Aug. 15, Youngstown, Ohio. Contact Chester Kaschak, (330) 533-6084, (330) 799-8497.

• **TBS 3-66 and 38th OCC**, Oct. 7-12, Norfolk, Va. Contact Pete Clay, (804) 221-9800, or Terry Cox, (310) 732-6908.

• **TBS, Co H, 8-68 and 48th OCC**, Oct. 22-25, San Diego. Contact Terrence Arndt, 20 Muirfield Ln., Town and Country, MO 63141, (314) 434-6908, tdarndt2@icloud.com, http://usmc.allence.edu.

• **TBS, Co F, 6-79**, is planning a reunion. Contact LtCol Tom Conners, USMC (Ret), (919) 303-2697, (919) 418-

757, tconners3@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 98, Parris Island, 1948**, is planning a reunion. Contact SSgt Jim Proulx, USMC (Ret), (904) 343-4850, bertojotol@gmail.com.

• **Plt 244, Parris Island, 1967**, is planning a reunion. Contact former Sgt J.D. Croom III, (704) 965-8521, jcroom47@aol.com.

• **Plt 245, San Diego, 1965**, is planning a reunion. Contact David S. Alvarez, (209) 735-2601, srt8o06@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 342, Parris Island, 1965**, Sept. 4-6, Parris Island, S.C. Contact Charles Harmon, (702) 458-3132, (702) 335-1304, chickster48@live.com.

• **Plt 2023, San Diego, 1983**, is planning a reunion. Contact Jeffrey R. Johnson, 3751 Merced Dr., Unit 4D, Riverside, CA 92503, jrj430@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 2030, Parris Island, 1965-66**, is planning a reunion. Contact John E. Lyford, (518) 654-6073, reniejohn@roadrunner.com.

• **Plt 4035, "Papa" Co, Parris Island, 2000**, is planning a reunion. Contact Tammy (Manyik) Epperson, (571) 451-7263, tammy.epperson@gmail.com.

• **Marine Air Groups (WW II to present)**, Sept. 16-19, Branson, Mo. Contact James Jordan, (417) 535-4945, james.m.jordan@hughes.net, or Bob Miller, (636) 327-5854, mbobsue13@gmail.com.

• **Aviation Logistics Marines**, Oct. 8-10, The Villages, Fla. Contact Col Don Davis, USMC (Ret), (321) 978-5147, greyegl@ec.rr.com.

• **Marine Air Command and Control System (MACCS) Community**, Sept. 23-27, Stafford, Va. Contact Tom Mulkerin, (703) 644-1724, tom.mulkerin@mulkerin.com, www.maccs-reunion.org.

• **HMM-265 (1962 to present)**, Nov.

8-15, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (Marine Corps Birthday Ball cruise, Holland America cruise line). Contact Tim Bastyr, (770) 304-2290, tmb2sdb@numail.org.

• **HMR/HMM/HMH-361 (all eras)**, Sept. 30-Oct. 4, Pensacola, Fla. Contact John Ruffini, (850) 291-6438, jruffini5@gmail.com.

• **HMM-364 (LTA 2, RVN, 50th Anniversary)**, Aug. 6-9, Long Beach, Calif. Contact Walt Wise, 1618 Hemlock Way, Broomfield, CO 80020, (720) 340-9534, wwise364@comcast.net, www.hmm-364.org.

• **VMFA-212 (1975-81)**, March 18-20, 2016, San Diego. Contact J.D. Loucks, P.O. Box 1, East Jewett, NY 12424, vmfa212reunion@aol.com.

• **VMFA-232 "Red Devils" (1968-70, El Toro, Chu Lai, Iwakuni)**, Aug. 3-5, Fredericksburg, Texas. Contact Gus Fitch, (803) 649-6466, pncfzfn@gmail.com.

Ships and Others

• **USS Boston (CA-69, CAG-1, SSN-703)**, July 16-19, Fayetteville, N.C. Contact Barry Probst, P.O. Box 7445, Brockton, MA 02302, (508) 580-3808, www.ussboston.org.

• **USS Bremerton (CA-130/SSN-698)**, Sept. 13-18, Louisville, Ky. Contact Jerry Adams, 106 Ashley Dr., Winchester, KY 40391, (859) 771-5651, jeradams106@gmail.com.

• **USS Canberra (CA-70/CAG-2)**, Oct. 14-18, Mobile, Ala. Contact Ken Minick, P.O. Box 130, Belpre, OH 45714, (740) 423-8976, usscanberra@gmail.com.

• **USS Elokomin (AO-55)**, Sept. 24-27, Cleveland. Contact Ron Finet, N6354 County Rd. H, Elkhorn, WI 53121, (262) 742-4269, finet@hotmail.com.

• **USS Hornet (CV-8, CV/CVA/CVS-12)**, Sept. 9-13, Lexington, Ky. Contact Carl and Sandy Burket, P.O. Box 108, Roaring Spring, PA 16673-9817, (814) 224-5063, hornetcva@aol.com, www.usshornetassn.com.

• **USS Houston (CL-81)**, Aug. 18-23, Green Bay, Wis. Contact Barbara Hillebrand, (608) 424-6095, bjhillebrand@charter.net.

• **USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2/LHD-7)**, Sept. 13-16, Baton Rouge, La. Contact Robert G. McAnally, 152 Frissell St., Hampton, VA 23663, (757) 723-0317, yujack46709@gmail.com.

• **USS John R. Craig (DD-885)**, Sept. 16-20, Atlanta. Contact Jerry Chwalek, 9307 Louisiana St., Livonia, MI 48150, (734) 525-1469, jermail@ameritech.net.

• **USS Mount McKinley (AGC-7/LCC-7)**, Sept. 16-20, Milwaukee. Contact Dave Long, (440) 292-7839, davidlong1944@msn.com.



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Edited by Sara W. Bock

Entries for "Reader Assistance," including "Mail Call," are free and printed on a space-available basis. *Leatherneck* reserves the right to edit or reject any submission. Allow two to three months for publication. Send your e-mail to leatherneck@mca-marines.org, or write to Reader Assistance Editor, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134.

Mail Call

• Christopher Hazel, Casting Producer, Pilgrim Studios, casting@pilgrimstudios.com, to hear from **snipers and marksmen who have stories of amazing shots made in the line of duty** and would be interested in **taking part in the History Channel program "Top Shot."**

• Michael L.R. Meade, 8723 Westbrook Dr., Boise, ID 83704, marinemikel@juno.com, to hear from or about **Marines who served as Little League coaches for 12th Marines, 3dMarDiv Rockets baseball teams, in the 3dMarDiv Little League program on Okinawa, 1961-65.**

• Marine veteran Gerald J. Ricca, 8821 Brocklehurst St., Philadelphia, PA 19152, (215) 676-4097, to hear **from or about the Marines (below left) who served with him on mess duty at Camp Geiger, MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., 1958-59.** He is pictured to the far left along with **Bill, Ken and Carl** (last names unknown).

• Former Sgt Tom Messimer, 819 Michaywe Dr., Gaylord, MI 49735, tmessimer@charter.net, to hear from or about **Sgt D.F. NICHOLS**, whose name is written along with a **serial number and the year 1968** under the handguard of a **WW II Russian rifle** Messimer recently acquired.

• Marine veteran Harold Yoker, 3728 N. Oak Point Ave., Springfield, MO 65803, (417) 833-3998, to hear from or about **Col John C. STUDD, USMCR**, who served with him in **Weapons Co, Construction Bn Center, Port Hueneme, Calif., 1966-67.**

• Former Sgt Lawson A. Rose, 190 Shelton Rd., Apt. 187, Madison, AL 35758, (630) 532-8514, alphaparsec@yahoo.com, to hear from or about **Lt Frank CHUKES Jr., a pilot with VMFA-323, 3d MAW, MCAS El Toro, Calif., 1974-76.**

• LeRoy W. Bloom, P.O. Box 21, Lawrence, PA 15055, (724) 514-6215,

lbloom618@gmail.com, to hear from anyone who knew **LtCol William R. CORSON** and would like to share **anecdotes or information** for a biography.

• Marine veteran Edward Harp, 641 Reed Ct., Northville, MI 48167, (248) 349-6589, edmar1962@comcast.net, to hear from anyone who served with **H&S Co, 3d Marines, 3dMarDiv, Middle Camp Fuji, Japan, 1956-57.** He also would like to hear from anyone who was on the **Camp Sukiran, Okinawa, Marine Baseball Team, 1957**, and anyone who served with **Hq Bn, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Va., 1957-58.**

• Former Sgt James J. Morrison, (203) 574-4796, jjmncm01@comcast.net, to hear from the original owner or anyone who can help identify the **deer-hoof-handle knife and scabbard (below right)**, marked "USMC," which his father found on **Okinawa in 1945.**



COURTESY OF GERALD J. RICCA



COURTESY OF JAMES J. MORRISON

Above: Former Sgt James J. Morrison would like to hear from the original owner or from anyone who can identify this deer-hoof-handle knife and scabbard, marked "USMC," which his father found on Okinawa during WW II.

Left: Marine veteran Gerald Ricca, far left, would like to hear from or about the Marines with him in this 1958 photo taken at Camp Geiger, MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C. Their first names are Bill, Ken and Carl.

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Wanted

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• Tammy Farmer, tralfaz57@yahoo.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 131, Parris Island, 1973.**

• Godfrey White, (443) 285-1930, devildog970@yahoo.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 141, Parris Island, 1970.**

• Marine veteran Edward Harp, 641 Reed Ct., Northville, MI 48167, (248) 349-6589, edmar1962@comcast.net, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 1008, San Diego, 1956.**

• Wendy Anderson, (650) 430-9465, wedastara@yahoo.com, wants a **platoon photo and recruit graduation book for Plt 1037, San Diego, 1981.**

• Marine veteran William Woodworth, 422 Archer St., McKeesport, PA 15132, (412) 673-3202, woodywoodworth@comcast.net, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 1058, Parris Island, 1966.**

• GySgt V.J. Kilbride, USMC (Ret), 2465 N. Idyllwild Ave., Rialto, CA 92377, usmc4280@att.net, wants a **platoon photo for Plt 1061, Parris Island, 1943.**

• Marine veteran Rolando Ortiz, 605 Ave. C, Yorktown, TX 78164, (720) 252-

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7274, ortizelectric61@gmail.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 1097, San Diego, 1982.**

• Mike Kerrigan, 7000 W. Montrose Ave., Norridge, IL 60706, (708) 218-8763, makltd@comcast.net, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 2062, San Diego, 1967.**

Sales, Trades and Giveaways

• Marine veteran Carl Withey, (315) 689-3653, crwithey@twcnny.rr.com, has a cruisebook, "1st Bn Reinforced 6th Marines, Mediterranean Cruise, 1957-58," which he will send for free to any Marine who may be looking for a copy.



Saved Round

Compiled by R.R. Keene



CPL ALIAZIMI, USMC

THEY PAY YOU TO DO THIS AND IT IS LEGAL—It would be just another vulgar brawl except these students of Martial Arts Instructor Course 2-14 grapple on April 17, 2014, as part of their final exercise at the three-week course on Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif.

The MCMAP (Marine Corps Martial Arts Program) is a combat system developed to combine hand-to-hand and close-quarters combat techniques with morale-enhancing and team-building functions and instruction in what the Corps calls the “Warrior Ethos.” The program, which began in 2001, trains Marines (and sailors attached to Marine units) in unarmed combat, edged weapons, weapons of opportunity, and rifle and bayonet techniques. It stresses mental fitness and character development, including leadership, teamwork and the responsible use of force. The MCMAP has several nicknames, including “Semper Fu” (a play on the Marine Corps motto Semper Fidelis and kung fu), “MCSlap,” “MCNinja” and “new bushido.” Rooted in the credo that “Every Marine is a rifleman” and can engage the aggressor from 500 meters to close-quarters, the MCMAP is designed to increase the warfighting capabilities of individual Marines and units as well as enhance Marines’ self-confidence and esprit de corps.





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