

JUNE 2014

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

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Of FMF Corpsman

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Necessary Step
To Tokyo

Col Ray Kelly:
Stock Boy to
NYC's "Top Cop"

Drums Along the
Chesapeake:
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In the War of 1812



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COVER: HN Glenn Samford, a Navy corpsman assigned to Co L, 3d Bn, 4th Marines, provides security during a visit to an Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) post in Now Zad, Helmand province, Afghanistan, May 26, 2013. Read more about training corpsmen, beginning on page 16. Photo by Cpl Trent A. Randolph. Copies of the cover may be obtained by sending \$2 (for mailing costs) to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134-0775.

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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 Anonymous letters will not be published.—Sound Off Ed.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 provide a one-year courtesy subscription to the non-MCA&F member whose letter is selected as the “Sound Off Letter of the Month.” *Leatherneck* will continue to pay \$25 for a “Sound Off Letter of the Month” submitted by a member.)

They come from all walks of life—various family members who have dedicated their lives, pledging their loyalty and honor to protect the United States and the country’s Constitution against all enemies and to further protect the home front.

Many gave their all—the supreme sacrifice of their own lives. They are all known for their valiant duty, service and commitment to their country. They are the spirit, proud tradition of the Marine Corps—known for courage and fearlessness to overcome all impossible obstacles to accomplish the mission. Some are “fallen heroes” in battles from the past and present. He or she, who stands by me in battle, will be a proud part of the Marine brotherhood and sisterhood for all time.

This writer prays that this message will bring some peace and comfort to all those families who have lost a loved one in the service of our country. They are the heroes along with the families who have someone serving in the military today.

Cpl John Messia Jr., USMC (Ret)
1950-54
Brockton, Mass.

“Parade Fists” for 8th & I Only

For many years now, I have noticed pictures of Marines at the position of attention with their fists doubled up as if they want to punch someone. I have an old “Guidebook for Marines” that states the proper position is for the back of the hands out and the fingers curled naturally. Can anyone tell me when this changed and why?

Capt Joe Burch, USMC (Ret)
Spokane, Wash.

• We went to “The Man” at the Marine Corps Association & Foundation, Ser-

geant Major Kevin S. Bennett, USMC (Ret), who said nothing has changed. “The current drill manual, Marine Corps Order P5060.20, still has palms inboard, thumbs along the seam of the trousers in a natural curl; like holding a roll of quarters.”

He doubled-checked with the Marine Corps Combat Development Command sergeant major, SgtMaj Gary W. Weiser, who reminded us that Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., has its own ceremonial drill manual.

SgtMaj Weiser wrote, “He is likely viewing photos of Marines from the Barracks. Ceremonial Drill prescribes a ‘parade fist’ as he has described. For the rest of the Marine Corps, it is still palms inboard with fingers in a natural curl.”

And, you know how Marines are. If their NCOs don’t remind them of the proper position of attention, they will, and often do, imitate Marines at 8th & I. We old salts prefer the current regulations to ceremonial “Parade Fists,” which reminds me of “Harmonious Fists,” and that would make us Boxers. Some of you got that.—*Sound Off Ed.*

More on Capt Hamilton of WW I And Gettysburg Battle Reenactment

Here is Captain George W. Hamilton’s [“Marines at the Battle of Gettysburg—1922,” April 2014 *Leatherneck*] headstone



Capt George W. Hamilton is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. After facing death a thousand times with the Marines at Chateau-Thierry, St. Mihiel, Belleau Wood and in the two Meuse-Argonne offensives, he died in Gettysburg, Pa., June 28, 1922, when his plane crashed at the historic battlefield where his old comrades from the 5th and 6th Marine regiments were reenacting “Pickett’s Charge” of 1863.

He is buried in Section SW, Site 4585.
CWO-4 James R. “Crash” Casey, USMC (Ret)
Deputy Executive Director
Marine Corps Aviation Association
Quantico, Va.

MGySgt Kyser Was a Mentor, “Persistent and Dedicated”

I read with much sadness the obituary for Master Gunnery Sergeant James G. Kyser III in the April issue. I did not know Jim on a personal level, but I have to admit that he was the one and only reason for me to awake from my long slumber of being a “non-participating former military member” and for morphing into a once-again proud American veteran.

It was 1990, and after being separated from the Corps for almost 20 years, I had no real interest in showing my colors as a military veteran. In fact, being a Marine with combat service in Vietnam, I kept my veteran status close to my vest so that I would not incur the unjustified scorn of the unwashed American public.

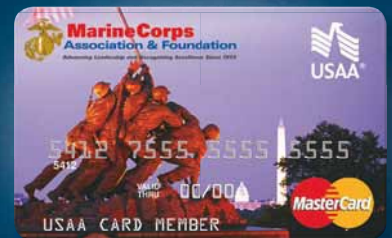
At the time, I was living in the Washington, D.C., area. Military pundit David Hackworth had an editorial in *The Washington Post* lambasting the Department of Defense for allowing an Army officer in Texas to present the Purple Heart to a few hapless soldiers who happened to suffer heat prostration during Operation Desert Storm. I was so incensed that the Department of Defense would debase this proud symbol of sacrifice that I wrote a letter to the editor, and the paper published it.

A few weeks later, I got a handwritten letter from Jim Kyser asking me if I’d like to become a member of the Third Marine Division Association. I joined and found



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men with whom I had served. I also attended a few reunions, and we formed the USMC Vietnam Tankers Association. I owe it all to Jim's persistence and his dedication.

Sgt John Wear
USMC, 3d Tanks, RVN, 1968-69
New Hope, Pa.

Once a Marine on the DMZ, He Now Gives the Weather in French

This is in response to the letter from Corporal Michael Sakran of Ottawa, Canada (April "Sound Off"). While visiting Canada some years ago, I had the pleasure of meeting a Canadian who had been living in the States during the 1960s and was drafted into the Marine Corps and sent to Vietnam.

Bill Bourque of Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada, worked as a weatherman on Vietnam's Demilitarized Zone and spent a good deal of his time underground in bunkers due to the constant incoming from the north. Today, he puts the skills he learned in our Corps to good use and is on TV every night at 6 p.m. giving the weather report in French. He asked me for a USMC decal to put on his car so all his neighbors and friends would know that he had served with the best.

Bill Ober
Huntington, N.Y.

• *Good on you, Bill, and thank you both for your service.—Sound Off Ed.*

Remembering Recon on Hill 452 And "Doc" Laporte

Earlier, I wrote you about Lieutenant Bill Woodier and his 1st Force Reconnaissance team on Hill 452 in July 1967. Hill 452 was a chopper insert position with a 400-foot sheer cliff on the west side. I was with Company H, 2d Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment. The enemy tried to overrun Woodier's recon team by scaling the sides

of the cliff—he got on the radio, and my unit responded to help.

In February, *Leatherneck* carried a story by Reuben Darby titled "Marines Parachute Into Happy Valley" and cited the loss of Hospital Corpsman Second Class Michael Laporte. Laporte was with Woodier and the Force Recon team in July, and the photo shows Laporte with Woodier on the hill.

No villager ever turned up with any of Laporte's rigging or chute ... a sad loss indeed.

Sgt Harold E. Wadley, USMC (Ret)
Saint Maries, Idaho

Purple Heart Order of Precedence Was Upgraded 29 Years Ago

The question is about the order of precedence of ribbons. I noticed in the March issue that both Charles Walker and Ethan Nagel wear their Purple Heart ribbons first in order of precedence. When I was in uniform, the Purple Heart was above the Good Conduct Medal. I do not wear my ribbons in public, of course, but I do have them on display in a shadow box. If there is a new order, and apparently there is, should I shift my ribbons around, and if so, where can I get that new order?

J. Birney Dibble
Eau Claire, Wis.

• *The order of precedence was changed in an amendment to the 1985 Defense Authorization Bill. It upped the order of precedence for the Purple Heart to above the Defense Meritorious Service Medal and below the Bronze Star.*

Some of our readers will recognize Dr. Dibble's name from Leatherneck as the battalion surgeon for 3d Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment and Commanding Officer, "Easy" Medical Company, 1st Medical Bn, First Marine Division in 1952 in the Korean War. As such, Dr. Dibble, you can change it, or, if you want to be



COURTESY OF SGT HAROLD E. WADLEY, USMC (RET)

First Lt Woodier, far left, at Fire Base 106, Nang San, July 1967. Doc Laporte, lower right, is eating rations.



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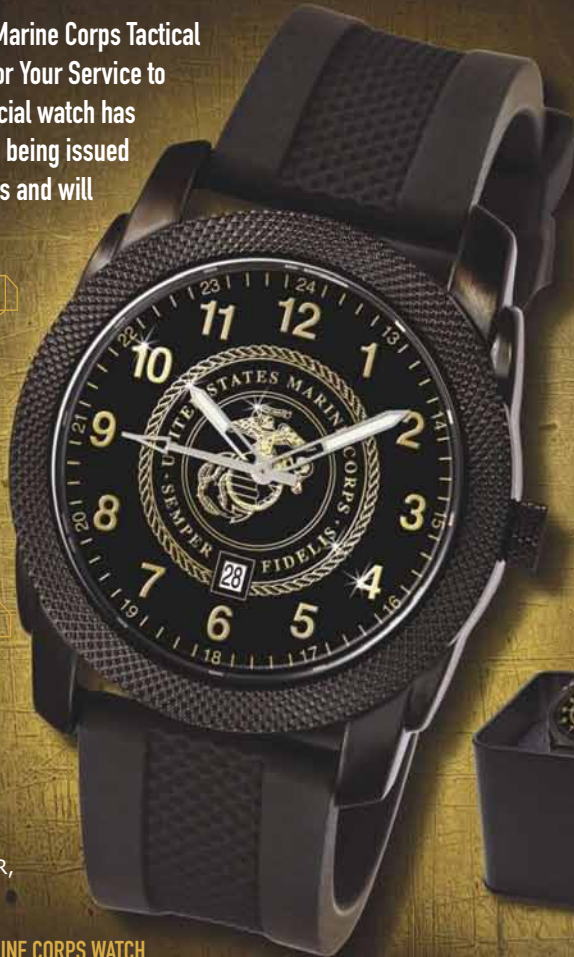
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“salty,” leave it the way you have it and explain, “That’s the way we did it when I was with the Marines in the Old Corps.”—*Sound Off Ed.*

Platoon Numbers and “Ike” Jackets

Over the years, I have read the discussions [in *Leatherneck*] about the numbering of recruit training platoons and how they are derived. Holy cow! The April issue contained a half-page photograph of Platoon 119 from Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., taken on April 10, 1951. I have attached an undated photograph of my Platoon 119, 7th Recruit Training Battalion, from MCRD San Diego. As we graduated on April 4, 1952, the photo must have been taken during the last part of March. They used the same platoon number in less than a year. How about that?

The photographs reveal that the Parris Island Marines graduated wearing the so-called “Ike” jacket [short for Army General and President Dwight D. Eisenhower], while we wore the blouse. I can’t remember if the Ike jackets were standard issue, but I did have one after I arrived at Camp Pendleton, Calif., and I remember they were the preferred liberty uniform. In the Fleet Marine Force, we wore the blouse only when ordered, standing for-

mation or guard, or inspection. Otherwise, the Ike jacket was preferred.

So, the mystery continues as to how the Marine Corps assigns platoon numbers and why some recruit platoons had their graduation photographs taken wearing the Ike jacket, and others the blouse. Did all recruits have one at graduation? If anyone finds out the secret, please let *Leatherneck* know. Possibly some former drill instructors can shed some light on this.

Robert C. Stebbins
Encinitas, Calif.

• *I believe we answered the question on how platoons are numbered in a recent “Sound Off” column. You can get an answer online from “Leatherneck FAQs”: <https://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck-magazine-faqs#PltNum>.*

*From what I remember, the battle jacket used by the Marine Corps, sometimes called the “Vandegrift” jacket, named for Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift, who commanded the First Marine Division on Guadalcanal, was adopted in Australia after the Division left Guadalcanal early in World War II. It originally was a tan Aussie Army short jacket. Later in the war, a forest green jacket was issued. It went out in the early 1960s.—*Sound Off Ed.**

“Operation Dewey Canyon” Inspirational, Yet Frustrating Story

Well done to *Leatherneck* and Major Allan C. Bevilacqua for the fine, no-holds-barred article “Operation Dewey Canyon” (April). There are enough inspirational stories here to move the heart of any Marine. It is, of course, frustrating to read of the constraints that created an enemy sanctuary in Laos, as well as the military folly of the “McNamara Line,” both of which needlessly cost Marine lives. I recall discussing the McNamara Line with fellow Marines at Khe Sanh in 1967 (it was quiet then) and asking, “Haven’t they heard of the Maginot Line?” I was a 21-year-old corporal with college and a masters’ degree in history years yet in the future. If I could figure it out, why couldn’t our “best and brightest?”

Vietnam was, alas, neither the first nor the last time that the blood of Marines and other young Americans was put on the balance scale against political calculations by leaders with little experience of war. One supposes this is part of the price of civilian control of the military, a necessary component in our guarantees of freedom. But there’s no law saying I have to like how it too often plays out.

Former SSgt Robert A. Hall
Madison, Wis.

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MCA&F Publisher and *Leatherneck* Editor Retires

Colonel Walter G. “Walt” Ford, USMC (Ret) will retire as Publisher/Executive Editor of *Leatherneck* magazine on June 30 after nearly 15 years at the Marine Corps Association & Foundation.

Following active-duty service of more than 30 years as an artillery officer, which included combat service in Vietnam, he initially was hired as editor of *Leatherneck* magazine in August 1999 and added the responsibilities of MCA&F publisher in 2007. He faithfully pursued the mission of *Leatherneck* to tell the Marine Corps’ story, to preserve the history and traditions of the Corps, and to act as a connection to the Corps for veteran Marines, friends of Marines and the general public.

Since Col Ford became editor, *Leatherneck* authors have earned the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation’s prestigious Colonel Robert Debs Heinl Award for excellence in historical writing four times and the magazine has won a Printing Industries of Virginia printing excellence award.

Col Ford supported both the Combat Camera and Public Affairs military occupational specialties. For numerous years, he assisted in judging the Department of Defense’s annual Thomas Jefferson Awards that recognize excellence in the Public Affairs field and also has been a judge for the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation’s annual awards program.

Active in the United States Marine Corps Combat Correspondents Association and a director of its foundation, he continues to support the organization’s photography and print and broadcast journalism awards program to recognize the superior achievements of Marines in those occupational fields. For all that he has contributed to the Public Affairs field and to the Marine Corps, Col Ford is the recipient of the USMCCCA’s 2013 Donald L. Dickson Memorial Award and the 2006 BGen Robert L. Denig Sr. Memorial Distinguished Performance Award.

He assisted the Women Marines Association with implementing a biennial essay contest to highlight the valuable contributions that women have made to our Corps over the years. To connect both active-duty Marines and veteran Marines with the leadership of the Corps, he initiated a “Senior Leaders of the Corps” insert annually in *Leatherneck*.

One of the significant efforts by the Corps to reach out to veteran Marines and Marine-affiliated organizations is the National Marine Corps Council. For almost a decade, Col Ford was the administrator of this important outreach vehicle for the Corps. In addition to accomplishing all the



Col Walt Ford, USMC (Ret)

RON LUNN



Col Walt Ford, USMC, Commanding Officer
12th Marine Regiment, Third Marine Division

COURTESY OF SHARON FORD

administrative functions required to conduct this semiannual meeting, he instituted a website that allowed member organizations to stay more closely connected as they sought to support Marines and the Marine Corps. He has served as the chairman of the council for the past two years.

Besides his service on the National Marine Corps Council, Col Ford was an active and invaluable member on both the Korean and Vietnam War Commemoration committees. He assisted in the outreach of these committees so that the veterans of those two wars would not be forgotten.

Furthermore, he, along with the *Leatherneck* art director, hosted a local Tiger Den of a Cub Scout Troop at the *Leatherneck* office the last five years, helping Scouts advance.

He has been more than a traditional editor in that he has kept the magazine relevant and timely during a time of flagging sales for printed media. Col Ford worked to keep the membership numbers stable and, with the magazine staffs, has assisted in bringing *Leatherneck*, and the *Marine Corps Gazette—Professional Journal of the U.S. Marines*, into the digital age of publishing with access to the magazines online, launching digital replica editions; shaping content for ease of access by laptop, tablet or smartphone; and expanding into social media and delivering fresh content via Facebook, Twitter and YouTube under the MCA&F umbrella.

Above all of these laudable accomplishments, Col Ford understood the purpose of a service organization. He will be remembered most for his support to both members and nonmembers; active-duty, retired and Marine veterans; Marine families; and friends of Marines. A call or an e-mail to Walt asking for help, whether or not dealing with his MCA&F duties, was sure to get a response. Col Ford’s 45 years of dedication to the Marine Corps earns our respect and admiration and serves as a benchmark for those who may follow.

Thanks, Walt. Well done and Semper Fi.

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

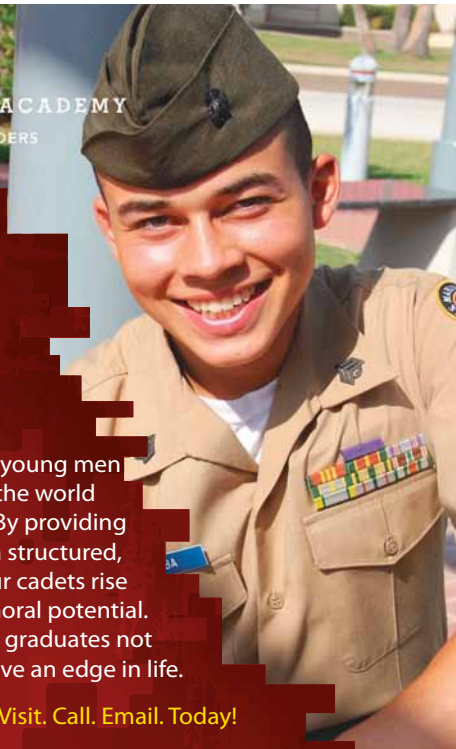


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sure I did not miss something. He used the term “we,” fully understanding that what he was writing about did not apply to everyone, but implying that it was the general rule. What I still do not understand is that after spending most of his time referring to “negative events” as he saw them, he summed up his letter by saying, “No, I don’t believe that what your father endured in Vietnam did the damage.” Regardless, I would like to offer another side, which is what I experienced in Vietnam.

I was a young lieutenant, artillery type, who spent a fair amount of time in the field being a “Forward Observer.” I had close relations with Marine officers and enlisted alike and experienced combat on a routine basis. I joined knowing that I would go to Vietnam believing it was my duty to do so. I never felt that I was “abused” in any manner by the system. I never believed that I was being “mised” by any senior Marine officer. My unit integrity was Company D, 2d Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment and I/3/5. Yes, Marines came and went just like they always have.

My bonds are just as strong today as they were back then. My radio operator and I, the person I was closest to, stay in touch and have visited together on more than one occasion.

I had friends, and I trusted Marines every single day I was there.

I never became a loner, and I talked openly with my father, a World War II Marine veteran, and others about Vietnam and still do.

I know my service was honorable, and I am proud of being allowed to serve my country in the Marine Corps in Vietnam.

In summary, my point is not to challenge Mr. Hamilton’s position, but just to offer a vision from my perspective. I am very proud of my time in the Marine Corps and Vietnam, and it has added to my life in a variety of positive ways.

Capt James S. Vinyard
USMC, 1967-71
York, S.C.

• *Good for you, Captain. You were fortunate. Others were not.—Sound Off Ed.*

Mr. John E. Hamilton’s letter completely tears at the foundation of today’s Vietnam Marines who did serve and are proud of it. The picture he paints of the American Vietnam fighting Marine, soldier, airmen or sailor is with too broad of a brush.

Yes, we bled. Yes, those times were harsh, and from time to time, we lost too many good Marines along the trail.

I strongly believe that all of those proud American servicemen who served, fought and at times gave their lives while in

[continued on page 64]

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Some Were Moved by John Hamilton's “Letter of the Month,” Some Were Not

I found John E. Hamilton’s April 2014 “Letter of the Month” to be one of the most profoundly powerful, succinct and accurate commentaries on Vietnam I have ever read. I was unable to read it aloud to my wife without bursting into tears.

For me, it was a truly enlightening look into my own personal issues with Vietnam and the consequences of its aftermath. It also rings true for the younger generations—how difficult it is for us to accept and be accepted into society after being to war.

Sgt Joe Doyle
USMC, 1964-70
Clarksville, Va.

I would like to thank the editor and staff for publishing the letter from John E. Hamilton and also thank John. We will never find this explanation in history books. I wish that I had had this to give to family and friends years ago when I could offer no explanation of why I was the way I was.

Paul D. Smith
Elenton, Fla.

I read Mr. Hamilton’s “Letter of the Month” (April 2014) several times to be



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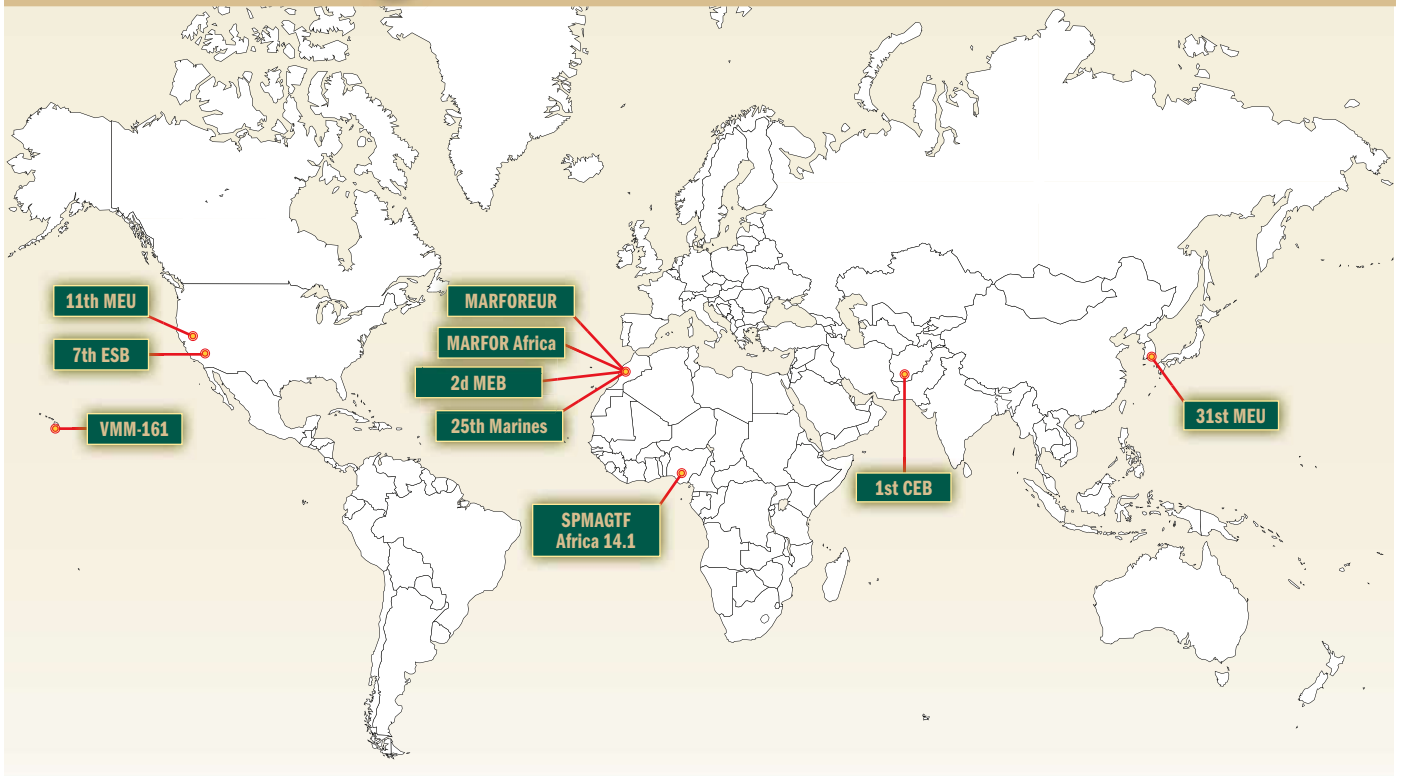
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■ HELMAND PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN

1st Combat Engineers Clear Way For Friendly Forces

The Marines of 4th Platoon, Mobility Assault Company, 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan conducted a route clearance operation in Helmand province March 24.

Route clearance missions are conducted in frequently traveled areas around Camp Leatherneck, ridding it of any explosive hazards and allowing for better freedom of movement for coalition forces and the civilian population along the route.

“We pushed out to Route Red by Patrol Base Boldak,” said Corporal Cameron Brown, a combat engineer with 4th Plt. He also said that the infantry units have taken quite a few casualties there due to vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices and complex ambushes, so they’ll request engineer support to clear the routes before they actually take them.

The Marines did not come across any IEDs, but they came across other obstacles.

“A lot of the challenges we face are the people we come into contact with,” said First Lieutenant Joshua Betz, the 4th Plt’s commander. “A lot of the local kids throw rocks and stuff at the convoy, and that definitely hinders our ability to maneuver safely around the civilians.”

Brown explained the complications

encountered during their mission, but still had a positive outlook on overcoming the challenges.

Although the platoon came across a few hurdles along the way, the Marines performed well and returned safely to Camp Leatherneck, with only rock damage to a few of the vehicles’ windows.

Of his Marines, Betz said, “They blow

me away every time we go outside the wire. Especially in a very rural area like that, the terrain is very constricting. The route we had originally planned was actually nothing like the route that was actually taken today, and that’s just because some of the roads our imagery shows as existing have been grown over with some of the poppy fields or have been



SGT FRANCIS JOHNSON

A convoy from 4th Plt, Mobility Assault Co, 1st CEB makes a brief stop on March 24 during its route clearance mission through Helmand province, Afghanistan.

destroyed for whatever reason. It just blows me away having to deal with so many variables, and I couldn't ask for a better group of guys to get us through this mission today."

Sgt Frances Johnson
Combat Correspondent, MEB-Afghanistan

■ TIFNIT, MOROCCO Moroccans, U.S. Engage in Stability Operations Training

Soldiers from the Royal Moroccan Armed Forces, U.S. Marines and other U.S. military personnel conducted stability operations during Exercise African Lion 14 in March.

Exercise African Lion 14 was a combined joint exercise between the Kingdom of Morocco and U.S. Armed Forces that involved approximately 150 soldiers of the Royal Moroccan Armed Forces, 350 U.S. military personnel and additional military personnel from European and African partner nations.

The primary focus of this year's exercise was the combined joint staffing process designed to prepare participating partner forces for the larger scale multilateral training.

A platoon from the Royal Moroccan Army and U.S. forces—including leathernecks from U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa, 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade and 25th Marine Regiment, soldiers from the 92d Military Police Company and a U.S. Air Force security detachment—had the opportunity to focus on patrolling, non-lethal engagements and convoy security.

"Working with the Moroccans is important because not only does it strengthen our relationships, but it creates an opportunity for both militaries to learn from each other," said First Lieutenant Aaron Anderson, a military police officer with 2d MEB. "Even with the language barrier, the Moroccans and Marines have been able to work together and effectively communicate with one another."

Moroccan and Marine leaders divided the training into three evolutions, which gave the Moroccans, Marines, sailors, airmen and soldiers the opportunity to work in small groups. This ensured proper application of training procedures and effective dissemination of information.

The first evolution consisted of four-man fire-team formations and hand-and-arm signals, which were followed by immediate action drills and patrolling.

"The Moroccans simply amazed the Marines," said 1stLt Shane G. Livingstone, an MP platoon commander. "This morning we did a 'check on learning.' There's nothing like being able to watch them pick up and execute everything they learned



CPL ALEXANDRIA BLANCHE

A member of the Royal Moroccan Armed Forces, center, supervised by a Marine with 2d LEB, right, and another Moroccan soldier, fires the M2 .50-cal. machine gun in a live-fire training drill during Exercise African Lion 2014, March 29, at the Tifnit military training area near Agadir, Morocco.

the day before with speed and accuracy, even after having received a lot of classes the same day."

Another class focused on entry and vehicle-control points, which included vehicle and personnel searches and escalation-of-force procedures.

"This training is essential because it gives the Moroccans another skill to employ when needed," said Corporal Alberto Camacho, a non-lethal weapons instructor. "Instead of having few options before use of lethal force, they now have more tools to draw from when attempting to de-escalate situations."

Participants also can use the training for noncombatant evacuations, humanitarian aid and other situations that require non-lethal force.

Moroccan soldiers and Marines finished the day with convoy security taught by U.S. Army MPs from Sembach, Germany, and U.S. Air Force police out of Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C. Their training focused on humanitarian relief and disaster stability operations, which covered sectors of fire, danger areas and escorting humanitarian supplies.

Stability operations training served as one portion of Exercise African Lion 14. The exercise also included live-fire training and a multinational observer program.

Cpl Mel Johnson
Combat Correspondent
MARFOREUR and Africa

■ ABUJA, NIGERIA Going Non-Lethal in Nigeria

Leathernecks with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force Africa 14.1 completed a five-day training exercise in Abuja, Nigeria, in late March.

Four Marines trained approximately 20 Nigerian soldiers on basic non-lethal weapons techniques in support of U.S. Africa Command and Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa's theater security cooperation requirements.

The non-lethal weapons demonstrations had a particular emphasis on basic riot-control formations, how to use shields and shin guards and how to properly use the collapsible batons, according to Staff Sergeant Camilo Zamora, the senior Marine in charge of the training.

"It was a good mix in the group. Some of the soldiers had a lot of experience," said Zamora about his Nigerian students.

Zamora noted that some of his Nigerian counterparts were instructors at both the entry and academy levels, which improved the training and made it easier to relate the techniques of non-lethal weapons tactics.

"They understood the concept, but once we started the training, they definitely enjoyed it," said Zamora, a Weslaco, Texas, native. "When we were conducting the takedown techniques, the Nigerians were aggressive, which is exactly what you want. It was motivating and showed their professionalism."

Started in 2011, SPMAGTF-Africa is a rotational deployment of Marines and sailors for theater security cooperation in various African countries. The task force currently is staffed by leathernecks from 3d Battalion, Eighth Marine Regiment, Second Marine Division, permanently based out of Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Sgt Ed Galo
Combat Correspondent
MARFOREUR and Africa

■ KANEOHE BAY, HAWAII VMM-161 Ospreys Complete Flights From Oahu to USS *Anchorage*

MV-22 Ospreys with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 161 completed several flight missions around the island of Oahu, Hawaii, March 31–April 4. Stationed at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., VMM-161 was assigned to the amphibious transport dock USS *Anchorage* (LPD-23) during its trip to Hawaii.

“The big reason we’re out here is to conduct cross training with [III Marine Expeditionary Force] in preparation for [2014 Rim of the Pacific Exercise],” said Captain Patrick McCammond, the ground safety officer and an MV-22 Osprey copilot. “The terrain in Hawaii is different from what we’re used to, so becoming familiar with the specifics of the island will help prepare us for the upcoming exercise.”

On March 31, VMM-161 completed a demo practice in preparation for a display of its flight capabilities to those aboard USS *Anchorage*. The unit flew two Ospreys from Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, on a designated flight path to Pearl Harbor to coordinate how they wanted to display their aircraft while flying over the ship.

After the demo practice, the Ospreys conducted different maneuvers around

Oahu, often switching between the aircraft’s two different modes: helicopter and airplane. At the end of the day, VMM-161 returned to MCAS Kaneohe Bay to debrief and make final preparations for its showcase.

“Our main effort out here is getting back to ship-to-shore operations while working on and around the ship,” McCammond explained. “Since we’ve been out here, a lot of the pilots completed their carrier qualification, which allows them to take off from and land on the boat.”

On April 2, VMM-161 held a static display of an Osprey on USS *Anchorage* while the other two “birds” departed MCAS Kaneohe Bay to showcase the aircraft’s abilities in the skies above the ship. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel was on board USS *Anchorage* and briefly spoke to the ship’s crew.

During the two-aircraft flyover, one of the Ospreys switched to helicopter mode and hovered directly over the ship while the second aircraft stayed in airplane mode and circled.

“Working alongside the USS *Anchorage* is going well with our day-to-day operations,” McCammond said. “They’ve been very accommodating to our needs and have worked hard to help us get the training we’re trying to achieve out here. We have an excellent relationship with the ship and crew.”

The unit practiced more maneuvers in the air before heading back to MCAS Kaneohe Bay to debrief.

The squadron had received a 72-hour warning order for the deployment to Hawaii. Within that short amount of time, the three aircraft and aircrews successfully completed necessary training to deploy aboard USS *Anchorage*.

“We’re out here to get in some good training in different areas, and doing that helps us maintain our readiness for RIMPAC,” said Private First Class Matthew Coats, a VMM-161 crew chief. “It’s important we don’t get complacent with ourselves as a unit, because it doesn’t matter where you’re training, you have to be prepared for anything.”

LCpl Matthew Bragg
PAO, MCB Hawaii

■ POHANG, SOUTH KOREA Exercise Ssang Yong 2014: 3d MEB Integrates 31st MEU For Forcible, Massive Entry in Korea

The 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit began its participation in Exercise Ssang Yong 2014, a large-scale amphibious training exercise in Pohang, Korea, April 1, but did it piecemeal.

Elements of the 31st MEU participated in a simulated forcible-entry operation March 31, serving in multiple roles as part of the 3d Marine Expeditionary Brigade.



An MV-22 Osprey with VMM-161 flies over Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, April 2. VMM-161 was assigned to USS *Anchorage* during its trip to Hawaii and conducted several training exercises.

LCPL MATTHEW BRAGG



LCPL ANDREW KUPPERS

Leathernecks with Co E, BLT 2/5, RLT-31, 3d MEB set up security positions March 31 after an amphibious assault during Exercise Ssang Yong. Elements of the 31st MEU participated in forcible entry training.

forces in maintaining forward momentum and introducing follow-on forces.

“We provide forcible entry from the sea and a rapid influx of combat power,” said Capt Travis W. Bowden, operations officer for RLT-31. “It’s not just poking a hole, but ripping it open to exploit the enemy’s vulnerabilities.”

The training integrated U.S. and ROK forces during amphibious operations. Ssang Yong is an annual exercise intended to strengthen ROK-U.S. combat readiness and combined interoperability and advances the command and control capabilities of the ROK Marine Corps through combined amphibious operations.

Sgt Paul Robbins Jr.

Combat Correspondent, 31st MEU

Battalion Landing Team, 2d Bn, Fifth Marine Regiment remained under the command of the 31st MEU as part of the MEB’s ground combat element, Regimental Landing Team 31. Combat Logistics Bn 31 became a part of the MEB’s Combat Logistics Regiment 3, and Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 265 (Reinforced) joined other aviation elements in forming Marine Aircraft Group 13, under the command of the 13th MEU.

“Each of our subordinate commands played a vital role in the MEB successfully exercising its forcible entry capability on multiple fronts,” said Captain John M. VanLant, operations planning officer for RLT-31.

Company E, BLT 2/5 conducted an amphibious assault on Dogu Beach alongside Republic of Korea Marines. Simultaneously, Co G, BLT 2/5 executed a vertical assault at a simulated enemy airfield.

To the south, CLB-31 landed the same day to establish a command center at Pohang’s Pier Nine and support the logistic needs of ground forces. VMM-265 (Rein) provided aviation support with troop insertions and simulated close air support.

The maneuvering by 31st MEU’s subordinate units was part of the much larger MEB operation. At numerous other locations, coordinated and simultaneous operations were carried out by BLTs 1/4 and 2/3, as well as elements of 1st and 4th Tank Bns, 3d Law Enforcement Bn and 3d Light Armored Reconnaissance Bn.

Additional aviation missions were led by MAG-13 and logistical operations were run by CLR-3 to make this year’s exercise the largest iteration in the history of Ssang Yong with more than 13,000 combined U.S. and ROK forces. The scale of the

operation is precisely why the 31st MEU was integrated into the MEB.

“The MEB is the appropriate-sized unit for forcible entry operations,” said Colonel John E. Merna, Commanding Officer, RLT-31, 3d MEB.

The missions given to the 31st MEU’s elements during Ssang Yong were tailored to the amphibious capabilities of the Marine air-ground task force. The amphibious assaults are fundamental to Marine Corps ground combat capabilities.

As the exercise moved forward, the MEB demonstrated its flexibility and the potential combat power of Marine expeditionary

LAUGHLIN, NEV.
Marines Practice Bridging Gap On the Fast-Moving Colorado River

Metal scraped against dirt as a Rubber-Tired, Articulated-Steering, and Multi-purpose Tractor (TRAM) broke down dirt barricades, granting more than 60 Marines with Bridge Company, 7th Engineer Support Battalion, First Marine Logistics Group access to the Colorado River after a 16-hour long convoy in late March.

This was just the beginning of weeklong



Marines with Bridge Co, 7th ESB march to their training site on the Colorado River, March 17. With the aid of Bridge Erection Boats and an Improved Ribbon Bridge, more than 60 Marines trained in moving heavy equipment across a flowing body of water. (Photo by LCpl Keenan Zelazoski)



LCPL KEENAN ZELAZOSKI

Leathernecks with Bridge Co, 7th ESB operate Bridge Erection Boats during a rafting exercise on the Colorado River.

training to familiarize the Marines with crossing a flowing body of water while transporting heavy equipment.

The Marines traveled 300 miles to Laughlin, Nev., for the opportunity to face the challenging current and put their training to the test.

“If we get deployed somewhere and we need to cross a river, the bridge has been taken out, and the other side is impassible, we can put equipment on the raft, move it upriver to an area that is passible and maintain movement forward in an expeditionary environment,” said Gunnery Sergeant Jeremy King, first sergeant with Bridge Co, 7th ESB, 1st MLG.

Without this resource, moving equipment over rapid waters would be significantly more difficult. The ability to bridge equipment across water is a valuable asset for Marines.

“Part of our mission in Bridge Company is to provide bridging capabilities for the I Marine Expeditionary Force,” said Captain Jonathan Hudson, company commander. “Part of that includes rafting. It wasn’t easy to travel 300 miles to train out here, but we wanted a challenge ... so it was definitely worth the trip.”

As the Marines prepared to dive head-first into the exercise on rough waters, many had doubts in how productive they would be in transporting gear upstream.

“We did the bridge reconnaissance right after we arrived, and I’ll admit I was a little skeptical,” said Corporal Anderson Krieger, a raft commander. “I didn’t think we could ferry equipment against the current. We weren’t used to operating in a current at all.”

In the early stages of the training, the Marines driving the boats navigated the river, both with the current and against it, in order to get a feel for how they should be operating in the new environment.

“It was definitely a crawl, walk, run approach to the exercise,” said King. “Safety is paramount when we are out here training on a public river.”

As the days went on, the Improved Ribbon Bridge, a multipiece bridge that functions as a raft, was inserted into the river. The Colorado River’s current moved

at an average speed of five feet per second. This kind of momentum was a far cry from the relatively calm conditions in the Del Mar boat basin at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., where the Marines usually conduct their training.

“Marines have to move significantly faster than they had to in a boat basin,” said Krieger. “The current carries the equipment downstream until everyone is in position and pushing it upstream. When we work on a river with expensive civilian houses on the other side, the last thing we want is to be too slow and ruin one of their boat ramps by crashing a very heavy piece of equipment into their property.”

The Marines went from not being sure what they could do against the current, to being confident that they could operate in even tougher conditions if they had to. Throughout the week, the Marines ferried a substantial amount of weight up the river. They transported a humvee, a TRAM and two 7-ton trucks, weighing approximately 60,000 pounds, in just three trips.

LCpl Keenan Zelazoski
Combat Correspondent, 1st MLG

■ FT. HUNTER LIGGETT, CALIF. 11th MEU: Repetition Produces Professional Efficiency

Leathernecks of the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit completed two weeks of land-based predeployment training at Ft. Hunter Liggett and nearby Camp Roberts, Calif., March 28.

Realistic urban training was the first large-scale opportunity for integration



Marines with 2/1, the 11th MEU’s ground combat element, maneuver toward the site of the explosion of an Antipersonnel Obstacle Breaching System during a live-fire training exercise March 18 as part of Realistic Urban Training at Camp Roberts, Calif. (Photo by Sgt Melissa Wenger)



SGT MELISSA WENGER

During a March 20 live-fire training exercise at Camp Roberts, Calif., Marines with Tank Platoon, BLT 2/1, 11th MEU fire the M256 smoothbore main gun from four M1A1 main battle tanks.

between the ground combat element, aviation combat element, logistics combat element and command element of the 11th MEU. The training placed its participants in environments similar to those they'll encounter during their upcoming deployment later this summer.

During the course of the training, the major subordinate elements of the MEU honed both their support and supported relationships. Together, the subordinate elements coordinated the planning and execution of a range of military operations, including raids, evacuations, site exploitations and other tactical operations.

According to Lieutenant Colonel Michael Estes, operations officer for the 11th MEU, the training applied every function of the Marine air-ground task force by running through full-mission profiles from the start of planning through recovering the force from the objective, incorporating each of the MEU's assets.

"Basically, we were able to take the entire organization that we call the Marine air-ground task force and run it through its entire functionality," said Estes. "The interoperability with all three of those elements as well as the command element, which does the command and control of

those subordinate units through these mission profiles, is designed to get us ready to then move on to our next stage of training."

The majority of the unit traveled more than 350 miles from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., to Ft. Hunter Liggett and surrounding training areas before stepping off on its first joint training mission.

For the 11th MEU's ground combat element, Battalion Landing Team, 2d Bn, First Marine Regiment, leaving its comfort zone proved exceptionally advantageous from a training standpoint.

"You're comfortable in Pendleton. You know it; you know where the Marine Corps exchange is, you know home is right around the corner, and you know that cell phone connectivity works," said Major Robert Christafore Jr., operations officer for BLT 2/1. "The terrain out here is somewhat better and more challenging for the infantry battalion and elements of the BLT. Anytime we go somewhere we're not completely comfortable with, it's always better. The Marines are more focused too, because they're not worried about everything that goes on back at the home station."

When it comes to live operations, practice, especially in a new environment, makes perfect.

"I think that any time you get to perform the full-mission-profile MEU tasks, whether it's from a ship, or land-based, you can't get enough repetitions of that," said Christafore. "It's all about the reps of raids, airfield seizures, tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel, reconnaissance and surveillance, etcetera. The more reps we get from that, the more efficient and effective we'll be once we're on ship and should the call come once we're deployed.

"We can't do our MEU mission sets unless we are good at our core competencies, and I think we were able to come up here and continue to build upon a year's worth of the training and exercise employment plan in offensive operations, defensive operations and some stability operations," said Maj Christafore.

Partnered with Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 5, the 11th MEU is scheduled to deploy later this summer.

Sgt Melissa Wenger
Combat Correspondent, 11th MEU



Fleet Marine Force Corpsmen Train for Mass Casualties

Story and photos by LCpl Sullivan Laramie

The calm of the medical aid station faded as a quick reaction force returned with seven “casualties.” It shattered completely when Marines began shouting, “Corpsmen!”

Marines and sailors with 2d Medical Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 25, Second Marine Logistics Group rushed to remove Marines with simulated injuries from a humvee and a 7-ton truck during a field exercise held in late March and early April at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.

The task of moving the casualties for treatment did not go as was anticipated, just as it has been since the birth of the Navy Hospital Corps 116 years ago on June 17, 1898. Corpsmen always have been in the thick of the fight, so staying sharp through all types of training, including the recent mass casualty exercise at Lejeune, ensures they are ready when called.

“The quick reaction force called in five casualties, said they had six when they arrived, and showed up with seven,” said Captain Michael Sokolowski, USN, the commanding officer of the battalion. “[Corpsmen] who have been deployed downrange know that’s a real thing. These are things we have to prepare for, and the only way to get prepared is doing this.”

Some of the simulated casualties were unconscious, while others were cooperative. One Marine attempted to flee the scene and had to be restrained before the corpsmen could treat his injuries—an



HM2 Fabian Andrini, a hospital corpsman with 2d Medical Bn, CLR-25, 2d MLG, speaks to a sailor with a simulated injury to gauge his alertness and keep him conscious during a medical field exercise aboard Camp Lejeune, N.C., April 2, 2014.

occurrence familiar to medical personnel in combat environments where confusion and psychological trauma can set in.

“I used to work at a clinic, and this is more urgent than I’m used to,” said Hospital Corpsman Third Class James Pollock, a native of Clearwater, Fla., and hospital corpsman with Bravo Surgical Company, 2d Medical Bn. “Here, people

come in with amputations and more severe injuries, but at the clinic it’s more appointment-based. You don’t know who’s coming in [from combat]. You just get the patient and treat him from there.”

The unit is scheduled to complete similar exercises on a regular basis to better prepare both corpsmen and Marines to care for and treat large numbers of casualties. During an upcoming regimental field exercise, 2d Med Bn plans to receive and treat approximately 15 casualties at once.

“The setup we have right now is what we would use in a deployed environment,” said HM2 Geoffrey Polizoti, a hospital corpsman with the battalion. “We’re using it to find our strengths, weaknesses and what we can work on as far as training our corpsmen for future deployments.”

Leathernecks who have deployed said the scenario enacted during the exercise was similar to some of their experiences overseas, and treating role players helps them understand not only how to treat injuries, but the nature of the medical emergencies themselves.

“The tempo changes all the time,” said Polizoti. “It can be very stressful at times, and other times it can be steady, but as Marines and sailors, we should be ready to do our jobs at all times.”

Author’s bio: LCpl Laramie is a combat correspondent currently assigned to the 2d MLG, II Marine Expeditionary Force, MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C.

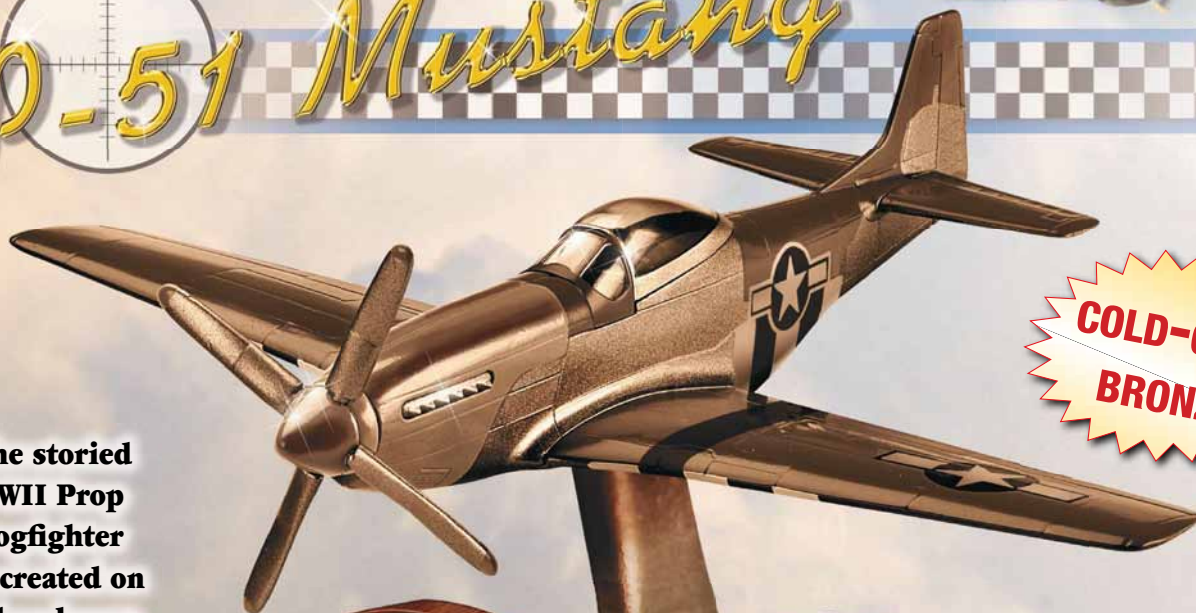


A Marine with a simulated injury is restrained by hospital corpsmen with 2d Medical Bn, CLR-25, 2d MLG during a medical field exercise aboard Camp Lejeune, April 2.



Hospital corpsmen with 2d Medical Bn prepare a Marine with a simulated injury for surgery during a medical field exercise at Lejeune on April 2.

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HM2 Jayden Sandi, student, 1st Platoon, Field Medical Training Battalion-East (FMTB-E), under simulated combat pressure, participates in a moulage training exercise at FMTB-E aboard Camp Johnson, N.C. The training was conducted to better prepare the sailors for future combat operations in the most realistic way possible.



Corpsman Up! Blueside to Greenside

“We Make FMF Corpsmen”
at Field Medical Training Battalions East and West

Story by CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret)
Photos by Cpl Bryce J. Burton

“I turned to my sergeant guide, as we lay there in the sand, and asked him where his men were. He started to point and right before my eyes his hand dissolved into a bloody stump. He rolled over, screaming ‘Sailor! Sailor!’ (This was our code name for a corpsman. Bitter past experiences of the Marines had shown that the Japs delighted in calling ‘corpsman’ themselves and then shooting anyone who showed himself.)”

—Capt John C. Chapin, USMCR

(From his firsthand account of the 1944 World War II Marine attack on Roi-Namur)

Marines often quote a droll adage: “It’s hard to be humble when you’re among the world’s finest.”

Ask any Fleet Marine Force (FMF) corpsman and he or she will probably tell you the same thing. After completing eight weeks of arduous training to earn the title FMF corpsman serving alongside Marines, it’s just very hard to be humble.

FMF corpsmen—informally known as “greensiders” as opposed to “bluesiders” who are corpsmen serving in Navy commands—have shared a common bond with their Marine partners since the Navy Hospital Corps was established formally 116 years ago on June 17, 1898.

Just as Marines are “made” at East and West Coast boot camps, so too are FMF corpsmen made at two Field Medical Training Battalions (FMTB): one at Camp Johnson in Jacksonville, N.C., and one at Camp Pendleton in California. They share a common program of instruction that transforms basic U.S. Navy sailors (Navy Enlisted Classification Code 0000, or blueside) into FMF corpsmen (NECC 8404, or greenside).

“It takes a lot of work to get that FMF qualification badge, so I guess greenside corpsmen are a bit more cocky,” asserted Hospital Corpsman Second Class (FMF) Daniel Lowderman, an instructor at the East Coast school. Graduating from FMTB is only the first in a long line of steps involving study, tests and practical applications to earn the Navy badge bearing the eagle, globe and anchor of the Marines.

“But in our defense, when you’re greenside, you have to be a jack-of-all-trades because when you’re deployed, you’re it,” he emphasized, adding that when he was deployed he often didn’t see a medical officer or chief for weeks or months at a time.

“All Navy corpsmen complete basic corpsman school and then they get orders to go greenside or not, based on availability of those billets,” explained Master Chief Hospital Corpsman Harlan Patawaran, the command master chief at the Pendleton school. “We do have some basic corpsmen who volunteer to go greenside and we also get fleet returnees who were on the blueside and choose to switch for their own personal reasons, but either way, they’ll all be trained from day one to be FMF corpsmen.”

Lowderman can speak about the short learning curve from personal experience. He was a “pipeline” student at the East Coast FMTB school in 2007; this means he went from Navy boot camp to his 16-week basic corpsman school and then right to FMTB.

“Two weeks after graduation I was with 2d Battalion, 6th Marines [2/6], boots on

the ground, in Fallujah,” he recounted. “Two weeks after that I was on patrol with my platoon and we were hit with our first bicycle bomber and ended up with mass casualties—16 Marines injured plus the guy who blew himself up. I was it, there were no other docs there, and it took four hours to get help because they couldn’t land helicopters where we were and the quick reaction force sent out to pick the injured up was hit by an IED [improvised explosive device].”

That sort of baptism under fire, plus above-and-beyond actions such as extending with 2/6 to go on another deployment, is why dedicated, combat-tested FMF corpsmen such as Lowderman fill the ranks of instructors at the schools.

“We started a screening process several years ago to ensure we’re getting the best and that they’re coming here for the right reasons,” remarked the East Coast school’s commanding officer, Captain David T. Clontz, USN.

“Every corpsman here has had multiple combat tours. The caliber of our staff is consistently high. I don’t want anybody here as an instructor who doesn’t want to be here,” said Clontz, who was an FMF corpsman 34 years ago as a 19-year-old sailor and notes, “I am still very proud of that.”

Each school’s relatively small staff of about 50 includes Marines serving as instructors there, to help initiate sailors into the realm of the Corps. Both are Marine Corps schools under the Marine Corps Training Command headquartered at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va.

The programs of instruction (POI) at both schools are identical, explained the executive officer of the East Coast program, Lieutenant Commander John G. Meeting, who also was an 8404: “Our POI is derived from terminal learning objectives that are directly related to tasks found in the Navy/Marine Corps Training and Readiness manuals.”

“The schools are mirror images, pretty much the same, just with regional differences due to terrain or facilities available,” said Navy CAPT Dan Cornwell, commander of the West Coast school, who enlisted in 1975 and earned his 8404 code at the same school. “But the end products, the FMF corpsmen we produce, are virtually identical.”

Keeping the training relevant to operational reality is central to the instructional philosophy at the schools. Course content review boards made up of operating force Marines and sailors meet on a three-year cycle to determine how the tasks in the training and readiness manuals will sync with training.

The East Coast school has the distinction



Above: HM2 Eddie R. Rodriguez, right, an instructor at FMTB-E, evaluates students during a tracheotomy class aboard Camp Johnson.

Below: HM2 Alejandro Calzada, left center, an instructor at FMTB-E, describes the procedures for performing a tracheotomy.



of being the only place where female FMF corpsmen are trained; they get exactly the same training as males. They do the multiple hikes totaling 20 miles, they do the Marine Corps PFT, and they do the special obstacle course that includes a litter drag through mud. They earn the same badge; they serve in combat service support roles in artillery units and in the headquarters units of a Marine division. They are embedded in training teams and in female engagement teams.

“A lot of people, even on this base, don’t know that this school exists,” said HM2 (FMF) Maqueda Mouton, a female in-

structor at the East Coast school. “When I tell people I’m a corpsman at Camp Johnson, they think I’m an instructor at one of the other Marine schools. I have to break it down for them and explain how we go through this process to make an FMF corpsman.”

Mouton said she started as a blueside corpsman and obtaining the 8404 distinction was not one of her goals.

“I vowed I’d never do two things—serve with the Marine Corps and work in a dental clinic; I spoke too soon,” she recalled, as the needs of the Navy overrode her plan. “I got orders to field medical



SSgt Joseph Medina, an instructor at FMTB-E, gives corpsmen a period of instruction on leadership as part of their training.

school, and after I graduated I was assigned to the dental battalion,” she said, retelling the story she said always gets a laugh from her students.

Providence proved to be in her favor though, as now she affirms, “I wouldn’t change it for the world. I’ve had the time of my life since I put on this uniform,” she noted, looking every bit the Marine as those she cares for. “Call me crazy, but I love it. When I came here as a student, I wasn’t all that squared away, I didn’t have that much pride. I think the Marine Corps helps a lot in showing that sense of pride. Navy boot camp was nothing compared to Field Med School.”

The realistic Marine Corps infantry training is provided by experienced infantry Marines who are full-time staff instructors teaching the basics of being Marines.

“Yesterday was the first day we ‘woke’ them up,” said the East Coast’s Staff Sergeant Joseph Medina, an 0369 infantry unit leader turned instructor. He referred to the morning wake-up process for about 200 new students who had just checked in for training, noting that it is a little like phase one of boot camp.

“During the entire first week or so we march them everywhere, calling cadence, teaching them the basics of Marine Corps life,” he said, his enthusiasm for the job clearly showing. “You can see the difference in a few days. They’re starting to march as a unit.”

While it’s not considered a special duty assignment for Marines, it still is a critical instructor billet. “This is a teaching billet you have to request, and the selection process is tight,” confided Corporal Hudson Nall, an 0311, infantryman, instructor at the West Coast school. “I got interested in it due to interaction I’ve had with FMF corpsmen in the past, so I went looking for my chance to have an influence on the corpsmen going into the field.”



Field training, wearing camouflage and the gear worn by a Marine in the operating forces, is a central aspect in developing new FMF corpsmen. HM2 Jayden Sandi, a student with 1st Pit, FMTB-E, is pictured in the field during a training exercise.

“I went looking for these orders,” asserted Medina. “All the corpsmen I’ve served with, except one, have been phenomenal people, superior personnel, absolutely amazing. This assignment is my way of giving back to the Corps and to my corpsmen because, quite honestly, I wouldn’t be here today, and a lot of my Marines wouldn’t be here, if it wasn’t for our corpsmen.”

Medina explained that he and fellow Marine instructors teach corpsmen how to walk, talk, act and essentially be Marines. They teach them the basics of Marine Corps infantry tactics, patrolling, what to expect when they’re with Marines, handling a weapon and basics such as properly wearing the Marine uniform and “falling in” for formation.

“Their welcome to the Marine Corps is close order drill, Marine Corps history, leadership and uniform regulations,” agreed Nall. “Then it goes into more depth of patrolling, field training, land navigation, shooting and marksmanship, how to deal with IED encounters, and five-paragraph orders. It’s really similar to what is taught at MCT [Marine Combat Training Battalion, School of Infantry], what is expected of every Marine—a rifleman.”

A recent graduate from the West Coast school concurred. “The first couple weeks they do have complete control over us, showing us how to march and all that,” recalled HM3 Chris Regh, who graduated in March and was scheduled to report to Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif. “But as long as students show instructors the respect they deserve, they don’t need to go full boot camp on you.”

Perhaps the superlative description Medina uses when talking about FMF corpsmen he has known offers a glimpse of the respect that Marines have for their medical warriors.

“I remember once in Twentynine Palms, I’m carrying all my gear, plus an AT-4 [shoulder-fired antitank weapon] and an M16 with six or eight loaded magazines, and my corpsman has his pack, a rifle plus all his med bags, and I’m dying, but he’s running back and forth checking on Marines,” he remembered. “In Afghanistan, I’m making an entry into a building and I’m thinking a Marine is standing next to me and it’s my corpsman.”

As critical as FMF corpsmen are to Marines in battle, very few know much about where their corpsmen come from.

“I think you’d find that maybe 5 percent of the entire Marine Corps, regardless of rank, has a clue what goes on at FMTB,” said Nall. “Before I came here, the extent of what I knew was what I’d heard from

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Above: HM3 Brian A. Nielson, center, a student with 1st Plt, FMTB-E, ties a tourniquet during a simulated combat training exercise.

Below: HM3 Christopher D. Marchetta, a student at FMTB-E, participates in a simulated casualty training exercise aboard Camp Johnson as new corpsmen train to be named FMF/greenside corpsmen.



not stand out as an identifiable target.”

But even being a Marine look-alike can't hide the fact that when Marines are resting, FMF corpsmen keep moving and working.

“When we're on hikes and Marines take a break, corpsmen keep going, moving up and down the line, checking feet, making sure everybody is hydrated,” Conant observed, adding that this fact is why he and other instructors emphasize physical training (PT) at the school.

“I preach PT a lot to students, but it's not just physical fitness to stay fit; it is

physical fitness so you don't get mentally fatigued,” remarked Lowderman. “I [push] my students and when they're dead tired, that's when I go into casualty assessment, to see how they react when they are physically tired, because that's when it's important. In my experience, the bad guys don't shoot at you when you're fresh out on patrol; they do it when you've been out three hours and you're on your way back, when you're tired. So if you're struggling through it and you're too tired, you're not going to be a good enough corpsman to do what you need to do. We link PT with real-world scenarios.”

Describing combat situations from the relative comfort of a classroom can sometimes lose its impact, according to Conant, who noted, “It's hard to turn on that switch so that students believe everything the instructor is preaching. It is one thing to hear it and another thing to see something where you have to react—you're the only person on scene, and once they say ‘corpsman’ or ‘doc,’ all eyes are immediately on you, so you either react or don't react. You have that freeze moment or you will respond. Every person here will have their own tale of their first real moment, that scare when they say you're up, it's not pretend anymore.”

Realism is central to effective training. Both schools use live role players who can portray anyone from a victim to a villain. Very realistic moulage kits (mock injury) made of plastic, wax and paint are used to simulate the type of battlefield injuries students will encounter.

The schools each have simulation labs (Sim Lab), state-of-the-art indoor facilities where students are evaluated on all the basic skills of a corpsman under simulated combat conditions, using computer-controlled mechanical mannequins that are so eerily realistic they're like something out of a Stephen King novel.

“You can make these things bleed wherever you want them to bleed, you can stick needles in their chest to decompress them, you can intubate them, you can trach them, you can do almost anything you can do to a human on these dummies,” said Lowderman with obvious professional zeal. “You can also simulate administering any medication to test the corpsman's ability to properly administer it.”

Conant agreed, adding, “They can breathe, cough, their mouth moves, the chest rises and falls—they can basically do anything you can imagine besides get up and walk to you.”

The mannequins can even talk to students, via computer-controlled programmed audio or through instructors at a separate central control board who can tap in with their own voice.

FMF corpsmen I served with. But I think it is important for the general population of infantry Marines to know what is expected of a corpsman to graduate from here and what they are expected to know when they reach the fleet.”

“We've had multiple general officers come through here, and they are amazed at what we do and are glad to get that perspective because before coming here they just didn't know,” confirmed Marine Capt Cory Vaselenko, the logistics officer at the West Coast school and the senior Marine there. “On the officer side, when you're coming up through schools, they focus you on Marines; you know you're going to get a corpsman and you're glad for that, but you're just focused on other things at that point.”

“I've seen it from both sides,” said Chief Hospital Corpsman (FMF) Lawrence Pacheco, course chief on the West Coast, who has served as an FMF corpsman from the platoon to the regimental levels. “I've been that chief at an infantry battalion getting corpsmen just out of field med school, and now I came here to do my part in training them to be ready to report to the fleet. I take my job seriously and I expect my corpsmen to take it seriously. The Marines will take care of teaching them about the Marine part, but when it comes to taking care of Marines and making sure they get home safe, that's my job.”

Looking like a Marine is more than a point of pride for FMF corpsmen; it can be a lifesaver. “We intentionally try to blend in as best we can,” explained East Coast instructor HM2 (FMF) Charles Conant, who said that he went into the Navy to be an FMF corpsman. He tells his students, “You want to look just like Marines and

The Sim Lab is set up like a bazaar using a series of concrete stalls with a mannequin in each stall. Virtually every element of a chaotic battle scene can be brought to bear on the students—sound effects, gunfire, smoke and even an instructor standing over them shouting instructions. And it records visually and factually everything the student does so that afterward students can review the recordings, learning from their own mistakes.

The West Coast school has an additional feature to add even more realism—an outdoor combat town for MOUT (military operations in urban terrain) training dedicated to the school’s use where students go for their final exercise, or FINEX; and, they bring in live actors to role-play as combat casualty victims.

“We are using hyper-realistic training that appeals to all their senses and puts them into a lifelike situation,” said Nathan Lis, a veteran Marine and now civilian chief of academics at the Pendleton school. “The outcome is that when they get on the battlefield and experience it for the first time, they’ve seen something very close to it in training.”

Lectures and demonstrations are held in classrooms, but practical application occurs in the field. Up to half the course is spent in the field.

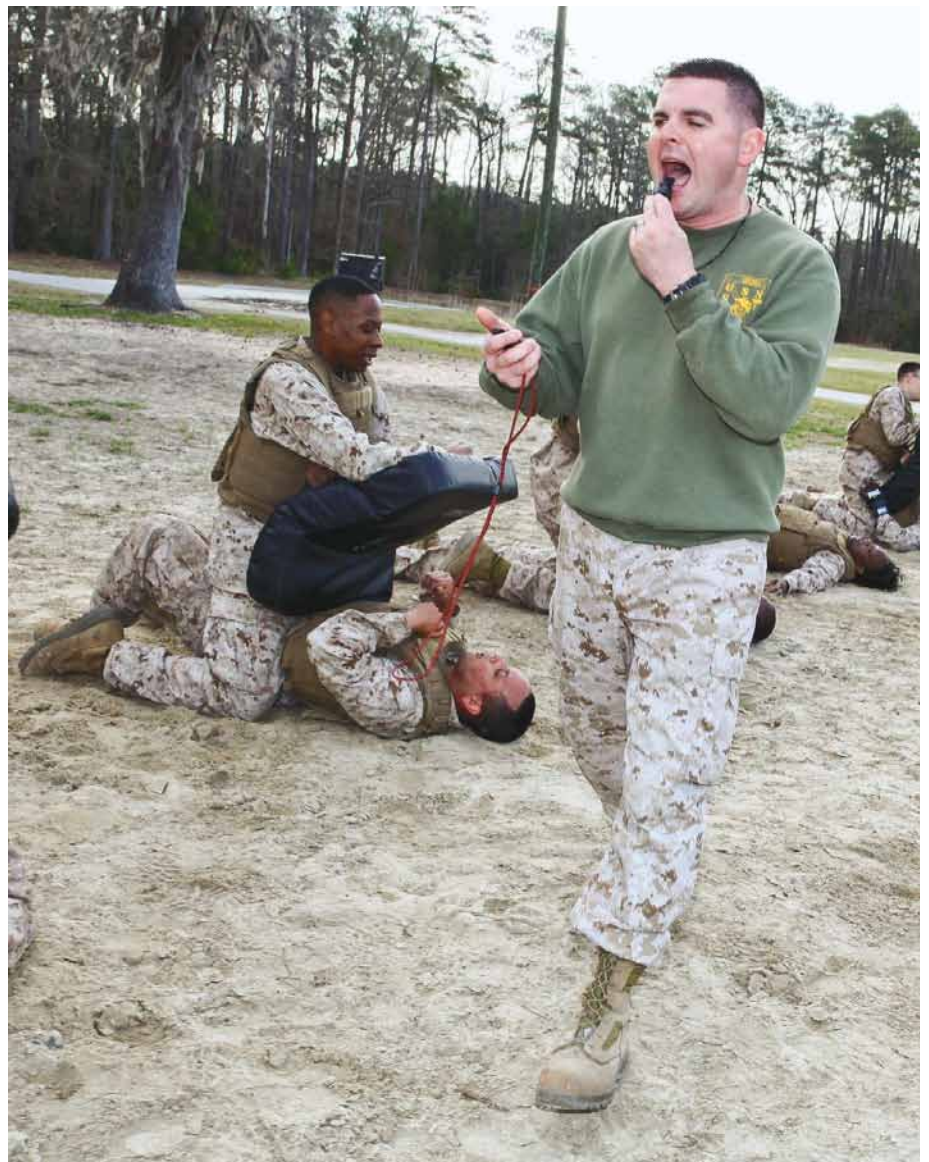
“This school is not a place meant to sit down in the chair all day long; that’s not what we do as corpsmen,” said Conant. “We’re out, we’re adaptable, we are in the elements, so that’s how we train them.”

“For the FINEX, we hire a private contractor who brings in pyrotechnics, moulage and actors—some who are actually veteran military amputees—so we have live kicking and screaming victims in the MOUT town,” explained Pacheco. “Students have to use everything they’ve learned. They go through a patrol scenario, they endure simulated explosions, and they have to treat two to four living casualties at a time under fire. Think of it as the Marines’ Crucible. It’s their final test. All the training, sweat and tears they’ve put into the course is wrapped up in this final test.”

Once a Marine, always a Marine—and so it goes with FMF corpsmen. Docs carry the 8404 as a badge of honor with them forever. Some carry it visibly, like Conant who had “8404” tattooed on his right forearm. Others carry it beyond the Navy.

Dave Bray graduated FMTB-E in 1995 as platoon “Top Dog,” meaning his fellow platoon members and instructors chose him as the student with the most motivation, professionalism, leadership and assistance to other students.

“FMTB was motivational, for me,” said Bray, now the lead vocalist with a unique



Personal defense is a necessary skill for FMF corpsmen, and here HM2 Charles P. Conant, an instructor with FMTB-E, motivates students during Marine Corps Martial Arts Program training.

patriotic grunge-rock band “Madison Rising.” He started on the blueside working in hospital emergency medical services but said, “The clinic setting didn’t float my boat. When I went to field med school, I knew that was more my speed, more like I grew up, with guns, camping, getting up early, being in the woods, getting dirty. I adapted very quickly. I realized I probably should have been a Marine.”

He spent four years in the Navy, saying that he served half the time with Marines. “I wish I’d stayed in,” he reminisced. “I miss it. You never quite get back that kind of camaraderie. It keeps you young and on your toes.”

Corpsmen have been part of Marine

Corps history for more than a century, but HM2 (FMF) Alejandro Calzada of the East Coast school’s staff pointed out that the opposite is true as well. “Corpsmen have served alongside Marines from the beginning,” noted the corpsman. “That is a part of our FMF corpsman history too.”

Editor’s note: Happy 116th Birthday to the U.S. Navy Hospital Corps.

Author’s bio: 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 is a contributing editor for Leatherneck.



Leatherneck—On the Web

See more photos of the U.S. Navy’s Field Medical Schools and the training of corpsmen at www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/corpsmen



“The Final Stand at Bladensburg,” by Col Charles Waterhouse, USMCR (Ret), depicts Marines, as part of Commodore Joshua Barney’s naval battalion, manning 12-pound guns at the Battle of Bladensburg, Md., 24 Aug. 1814.

THE UNITED STATES MARINES IN THE **WAR OF 1812**

Actions Along the Chesapeake and the 1814 Battles of Bladensburg and Baltimore

By GySgt Tom Williams, USMC (Ret)

A generation after the American War of Independence founded our nation, America once again found herself facing a military confrontation with her former sovereign and adversary, England. Although an often misunderstood and forgotten conflict, the War of 1812 would redefine us as a people and establish our Navy and Marine Corps as forces to be reckoned with. The accomplishments of those Marines of the War of 1812 would lay the foundation for today’s Marine Corps. “*Fortitudine*” (with courage and fortitude) would become their motto and define their actions.

During the first year of the war, Britain’s attention was predominately on fighting the French in Europe. That led to most actions with the United States being waged between navy ships at sea. During that time the American Marines refined their skills as marksmen in the fighting tops and as aggressive fighters in boarding enemy vessels. The Marines quickly would gain a reputation as professional seagoing soldiers equal to their European counterparts. That first year, however, would have little direct impact on most American citizens at home.

Starting in the summer of 1813, that would change for those living along the Chesapeake Bay. The Marines soon would have the opportunity to demonstrate their prowess as a land fighting force.

The Chesapeake Theater—Summer 1814

With the defeat of Napoleon in the spring of 1814, Britain was able to turn her full attention and resources toward the Americans. Since the beginning of 1813, the Royal Navy had gained complete dominance over the Chesapeake Bay. The few scattered American gunboats in the various harbors could do little against the armada of British vessels, and the larger U.S. ships could not attempt to break out. The constant British raids and major attacks caused distress among the citizens throughout the region. There was a need for a plan and for an individual to execute that plan. In mid-1813, the plan and the individual came together.

Joshua Barney, an aging semi-retired Navy captain, spent the early part of the war as a successful privateer. With the blockade of the Chesapeake, however, he thought it was his responsibility to ease the pressure on the region he called home. In July 1813, he proposed a plan to build and man a squadron of sturdy, shallow-

The Secretary of the Navy called upon the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Lieutenant Colonel Franklin Wharton, to send all available Marines from the Marine Barracks and Navy Yard at Washington, D.C., along with three 12-pound field guns, to protect Barney's flanks.

draft gunboats that could be powered by oar and/or sail. The gunboats could outgun the launches used by the British to land their troops, but could use their dual propulsion to outrun the ships they could not outfight. In the spring of 1814, the flotilla set sail in an effort to harass the enemy.

An initial series of hit-and-run attacks by Barney's small fleet gave some good news and respite to the people along the Chesapeake. The attacks also attracted the attention of the British, who quickly became determined to capture or destroy the American flotilla. After one of those flying attacks on a small British squadron, the American flotilla was forced to flee into the Patuxent River by larger British ships coming to the aid of their comrades. Seeking a better defensive position, Barney moved his force up St. Leonard's Creek. The creek was too shallow for the larger British ships to navigate, leaving any assault to the shallow-draft British barges and smaller vessels.

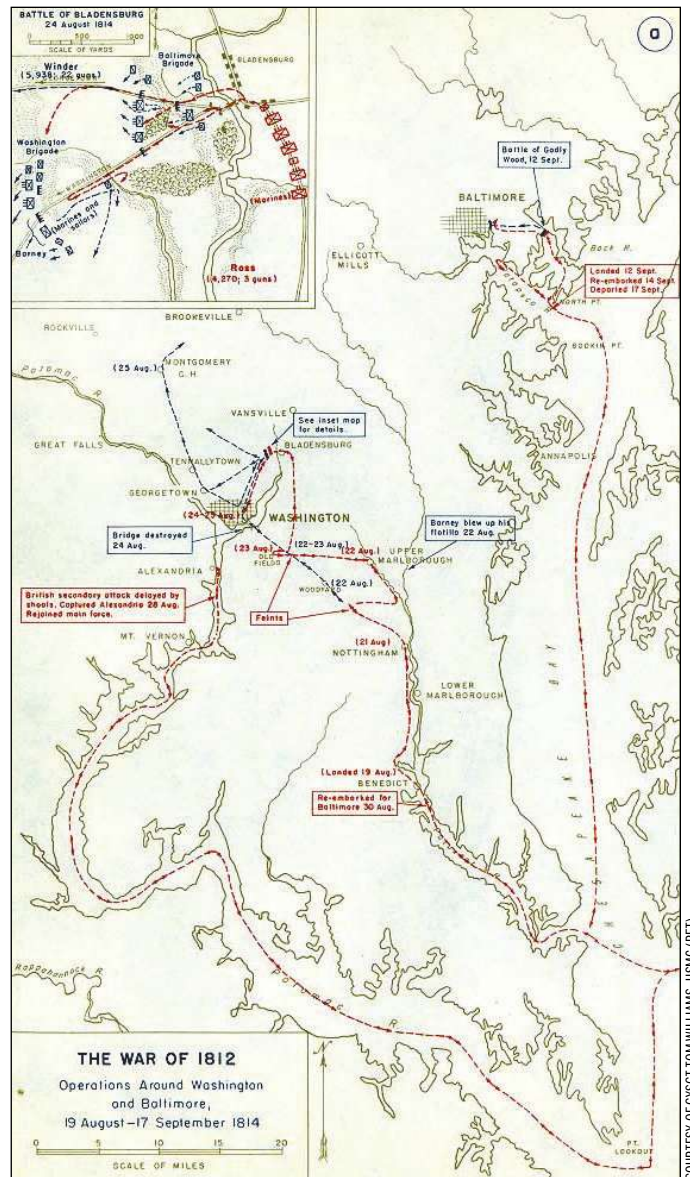
On 10 June 1814, the British attempted an attack up the creek. Predicting the move, Barney was prepared and drove the enemy back into the Patuxent. Unable to assault Barney's position, the British blockaded the mouth of the creek. Hoping to draw Barney out, the British went on a destructive spree, burning and pillaging many homes in the surrounding area. Barney would not take the bait, however, and maintained his defensive position.

In an effort to assist CAPT Barney, the Secretary of the Navy called upon the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Lieutenant Colonel Franklin Wharton, to send all available Marines from the Marine Barracks and Navy Yard at Washington, D.C., along with three 12-pound field guns, to protect Barney's flanks. On 12 June 1814, Captain Samuel Miller and 114 Marines left Washington and marched five days to the creek. Upon arrival, they threw up earthen breastworks on a hill overlooking the creek and placed their three guns to assist in "annoying the enemy." On 26 June, the Marines, manning the artillery pieces along the shore and laying down musket fire, assisted Barney's gunboat fleet in driving off a British attack in the Patuxent.

The Marines already had gained experience in that type of operation. In August of the previous year, after petitioning the Commandant for a chance to meet the enemy, Capt Miller and 100-plus Marines had been sent to defend Annapolis, Md., from British raids. They soon would establish their competence as both artillerymen and infantry on land as well as at sea.

Despite that initial success against the British, Barney's position soon became untenable, and orders came to dismantle the flotilla and take the men overland to Washington. However, on the same day the order was issued, Colonel Decius Wadsworth of the U.S. Army ordnance department offered to go to the Patuxent with two 18-pound guns to coordinate an attack to break Barney out of the creek.

At dawn on 26 June, Wadsworth's 18-pounders, along with Miller's 12-pounders supported by 600 infantry, opened fire on the two blockading



Marine power versus horsepower. Once ashore, landing guns such as this one had to be moved via manpower. These Marines use "bricoles," shoulder straps with ropes and hooks, to move the half-ton cannon into place. (Photo courtesy of GySgt Tom Williams, USMC (Ret))



"Battle of St. Leonard's Creek," 10 June 1814

frigates. Barney moved down the creek and joined in the "chorus," and the British ships were driven away. Although a temporary American victory, the engagement was not without controversy. The Marines served their guns with such speed that they ran out of solid shot before Wadsworth's 18-pounders.

Unable to use his remaining grapeshot against the frigates, Miller moved his guns toward the river to fire upon approaching British barges. Miller's movement confused the supporting infantry officers, who mistook the movement as a retreat and proceeded to leave the field. Miller, seeing his infantry support leaving and thinking they knew something he did not, felt it prudent to follow. In turn, the men manning the 18-pounders saw the entire body of troops leaving without them and quickly spiked their guns and got in line.

Although the St. Leonard's Creek blockade had been broken, ultimately Barney was forced to scuttle his flotilla and withdraw. After destroying his boats on the western bank of the Chesapeake, he formed his sailors and proceeded back to Washington as well.

The ensuing disagreements over the actions of that day eventually caused the President of the United States to step in and order the Secretary of the Navy to conduct a court of inquiry into Miller's actions. Miller was cleared eventually, but the entire episode left him with a desire to prove that he and his men were not the types to leave a fight. Less than two weeks after the end of the court of inquiry, the Marines would have their chance.

The British Chesapeake fleet was well-reinforced with more than 4,000 infantry and Marines, and with Barney's flotilla no longer a threat, the door was open for the British to conduct a land invasion. The British officers debated their target. Would it be Washington or Baltimore? Baltimore would be a much greater strategic target, but Washington, as the nation's capital, would be a massive psychological blow to their enemy. The decision was made to make the attempt on Washington.

On 19 Aug., a British force, under Major General Robert Ross, was landed on the banks of the Patuxent River near Upper Marlboro, Md., for a march overland to the capital. The American force that was supposed to meet the battle-hardened British was composed predominantly of local militia. Of the nearly 6,000 Americans, only a few small groups would be professionals. One of those groups would be the Marines under Capt Samuel Miller.

The Battle of Bladensburg and Beyond

Initially left out of the defensive plans by Brigadier General William H. Winder in overall command of the American forces, the Marines were left in Washington without orders. Along with the Marines were the flotilla men, under Navy CAPT Joshua Barney, numbering an additional 400 men. Barney was told to use his men and the Marines to protect another route into Washington.

Knowing the battle was not coming in their direction, Barney sought out the Secretary of the Navy and requested to be sent to the battlefield. On 24 Aug., the Marines and sailors, taking with them three 12-pounder and two 18-pounder guns double-timed it to the impending battle.

Arriving in Bladensburg, Md., just a few miles east of Washington, the naval battalion saw that a battle was already well under way. BGen Winder's men were arrayed in three lines, but were not in position to support each other mutually. Furthermore, there were almost no defensive works, and Winder had given no plan of action. Still without orders from BGen Winder, Barney bolstered the center of the third line, placing his two large guns in the middle of the road leading to Washington.

Miller placed his three guns on Barney's right. The Marines and sailors not serving the five guns were formed up into lines of infantry. Together with a militia rifle company to their extreme

right, they formed the third and last defensive line. They watched as the two American lines in their front collapsed under the disciplined advance of the British and the terrifying, screeching and erratic Congreve rockets.

The British then bore down on the Marines and sailors. They advanced right down the road into the mouth of Barney's guns. Having swept aside the previous American lines of militia, MajGen Ross' redcoats and Royal Marines received an unpleasant shock from the small, resolute naval brigade opposing them.

Barney held his fire until the British were uncomfortably close, then blasted their lead columns with his well-served artillery firing grapeshot in naval broadside fashion. The effect of the fire was devastating, clearing the road and destroying an entire company with the first volley. The Marines and sailors not manning the guns poured volley after volley of musket fire into the British ranks and drove them back. The British lines advanced again to meet the same fate.

With their enemy falling back, the Marines and sailors audaciously charged the larger enemy force and pursued them over a rail fence and into a ravine. Climbing over the fence struck a familiar chord with the Marines and sailors. As they charged, the cry spread throughout to "board 'em." Once the enemy was driven back, it was necessary to return and protect the guns.

The Marines and sailors again formed into line. Recognizing the danger of another frontal assault on the heavy guns, the British decided to move on the American line's right flank where the militia company had taken position. The British assault on the flank was too much for the untried militiamen. After only firing a few volleys, the Americans turned and fled. With the high ground theirs, the British again focused on the Marines and sailors.

At close range, the enemies poured rounds into each other. Miller himself was in a personal duel with a single British soldier. They exchanged fire and began to reload. Miller, having trouble with his flint, could not load quickly enough, and his nemesis planted a ball into his arm. Barney also was down with a ball in his thigh, and the rank-and-file Marines and sailors began taking heavy casualties.

Soon, Miller's second in command, Capt Alexander Sevier, and Lieutenant William Nicholls also were wounded, and the mounting casualties made an already impossible situation worse. Orders were given to retire back to Washington to make another stand. Capt Samuel Bacon, Quartermaster of the Marine Corps, had accompanied the Marines to Bladensburg. With the other Marine officers down, he assumed command of the Marine Detachment.

In a letter he would later write to Commandant Wharton, he gave an overview of the battle from his perspective. Capt Bacon said about the Marines: "I will tell you something now about the battle of Bladensburg. ... The Marines are a dead shot. They killed more than each his man. 150 lay before them before they left the field: they were only about 106 in the battle."

Upon arriving in the capital, it was evident that the Marines and Barney's sailors were among a very small group hoping to make any stand. Realizing the hopelessness of the situation,

they again retired in search of the remnants of the main army which was last seen in Georgetown and still moving toward Virginia. The heroic stand at Bladensburg cost the Marines eight dead, three officers and 12 enlisted wounded and five captured or missing.

Another contemporary observer later commented: "No troops could have stood better; and the fire of both artillery and musketry has been described as to the last degree severe. Commodore Barney himself, and Capt Miller of the Marines in particular, gained much additional reputation."

With resistance broken, the British moved into the capital city intending to punish the Americans. Government buildings, including the Capitol, the President's home (it was not yet called the White House), the Treasury and many others were put to the torch. The Navy Yard was looted and burned, but the Marine Barracks and the Commandant's House were left untouched.

Although Marine Corps tradition alleges that it was spared out of respect for the stand the Marines had made at Bladensburg, it was more likely that the barracks' close proximity to residential homes caused the British to leave the Marine Corps quarters alone. However, British MajGen Ross later commented that Barney's Marines and sailors "have given us our only real

Barney held his fire until the British were uncomfortably close, then blasted their lead columns with his well-served artillery firing grapeshot in naval broadside fashion.



A 12-lb. naval landing gun, representative of the guns used by the Marines at St. Leonard's Creek and Bladensburg, is fired by these Marines at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine in Baltimore. (Photo courtesy of GySgt Tom Williams, USMC (Ret))

fighting." The following day, the British left Washington to return to their ships.

While the British land force stormed Washington from the east, seven British warships, under the overall command of CAPT James Gordon, sailed up the Potomac River toward the capital. Moving up the river through Alexandria, Va., the British fleet met little initial resistance, unaware of what was ahead of them. On the heights of White House, Va., at what is now Fort Belvoir, Navy CAPT David Porter with a force of sailors, militia and the remnants of Capt Miller's Marines, still under the command of Capt Bacon, hastily had constructed a battery, mounting 13 guns of various sizes.

The British fleet would have to sail close to the heights to remain in the channel and not run aground. When the fleet



COURTESY OF GYSGT TOM WILLIAMS, USMC (RET)

“Bombs Bursting in Air.” Fireworks detonate over Fort McHenry, recreating the 1814 British bombardment as part of the annual commemoration of the Battle of Baltimore each September.

sailed into point-blank artillery range as well as musket range, the battery and the Marines, concealed by the vegetation along the shore, opened up. Caught by surprise, the fleet halted and backed its ships in an effort to better meet the onslaught. They made numerous attempts to get by the American position, but each time had to halt and retreat.

Between 1 and 4 Sept., the British were halted in the river. On 4 Sept., the British, weighing down their port sides and removing the wheels from the rear of their gun carriages to gain elevation, finally were able to fire into the American positions. With the Americans receiving heavy fire and with ammunition running short for their guns, the British fleet was able to force its way past the battery. In the battle, two Marines were killed.

The Marines next received orders to proceed to Baltimore, which many rightfully expected would be the next target. In the first few days of September, the Marines from Washington would

meet up in Baltimore with Marines assigned to USS *Guerriere*, then under construction in Baltimore, the Marines from USS *Ontario*, also in Baltimore Harbor, and detachments from the small Baltimore shipyard and from the Philadelphia Navy Yard.

Totalling roughly 170 Marines, they formed into an infantry battalion and were attached to nearly 1,000 sailors from the mentioned posts under the command of Commodore John Rodgers. The arrival of the naval brigade stiffened the resolve of the people of Baltimore. The Marines and sailors now joined citizens, soldiers and slaves in the erection of a series of defensive positions. In the center of the American line was “Rodger’s Bastion” where the Marines and sailors would anchor the American defense.

The British plan of attack on Baltimore was composed of a land

assault combined with a naval assault on the main fortification in Baltimore Harbor: Fort McHenry. On 12 Sept., the British land forces advanced on Baltimore. They met stiff resistance at the Battle of North Point. There, unlike at Bladensburg, the American force, still made up mainly of militia, but anchored around the professional force including the Marines, stood, fought well and made a strategic retirement from the field back to the defensive positions just outside the city.

During the battle, the British commander, MajGen Ross, was killed, disrupting British command and control and greatly impacting morale. They needed a great success from the naval attack on Fort McHenry. On the morning of 13 Sept., an intense

25-hour bombardment of the fort began. The Marines, sailors, soldiers and militiamen watched in awe as the rockets soared and the bombs burst over the fort. The next morning, when it became evident that the fort did not fall, the British com-

manders looked uphill at trenches ahead of them and thought it prudent to retire back to their ships.

The conduct and courage of the Marines during those summer months along the Chesapeake would endear them to the American people and establish the Corps’ reputation as a formidable force in readiness both on land and at sea.

Author’s bio: GySgt Williams is the director of the nonprofit United States Marine Corps Historical Company, a very active nationwide organization of volunteer historical interpretive specialists who take Marine Corps history from behind glass and put a human face on it.



The arrival of the naval brigade stiffened the resolve of the people of Baltimore. The Marines and sailors now joined citizens, soldiers and slaves in the erection of a series of defensive positions.

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“What a small world.
I work in quality control too.”



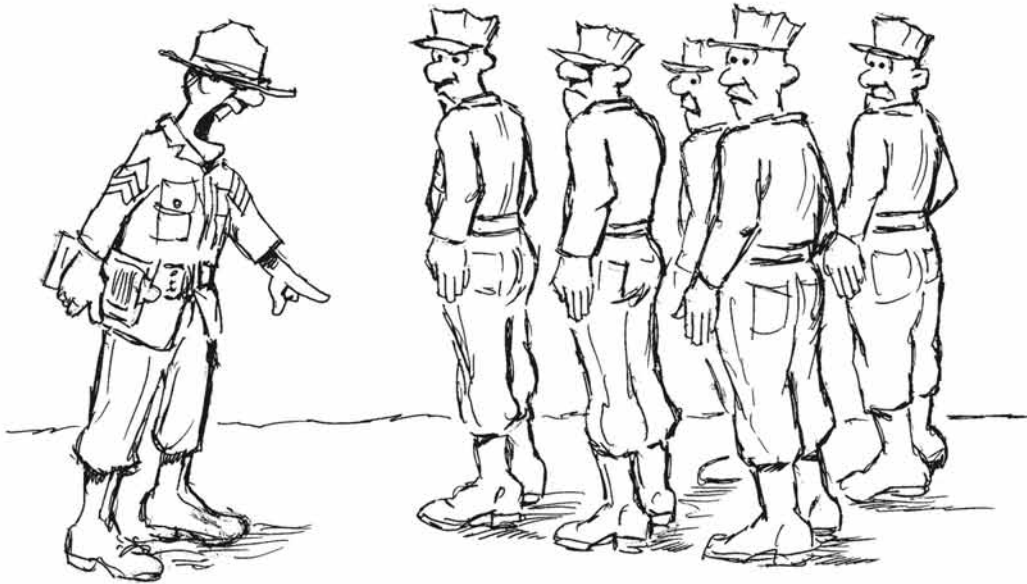
“You have a complaint, Marine?
Well, you’ve come to the right place.”



“Sir, is that a rhetorical question?”

BOOT CAMP

S.J. Stout



"I said, 'Left face!'
Now, move the lower part of your body to the left!"

BOOT CAMP

S.J. Stout



"What's this? The pin came out."

We—the Marines

Edited by Clare A. Guerrero

4th Force Recon Company Completes Jumps Over K-Bay

■ Marines and sailors with 4th Force Reconnaissance Company took to the skies and completed several jumps at Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, March 18-21.

The Recon Co leathernecks and sailors conducted static line and free-fall parachuting as part of their annual training. When assigned to a Recon unit, they must maintain skills for insertion and also tactics on the battlefield.

“The intent of these missions was to get the guys refreshed, because it’s been just over a year now since they last jumped,” said Gunnery Sergeant Eddie Myers, the parachute safety officer with 4th Force Recon Co. “As [members of] a Reserve unit, these guys have a busy training schedule when they’re on the clock, so we do the best we can to get them as much training as possible.”

Training for the company began with

refresher courses in a classroom setting. They transitioned to mock aircraft and simulated parachute landings. From there, the Marines and sailors prepared for the real thing.

The military personnel donned their gear and were inspected twice to make sure their parachutes were properly rigged and would safely deploy after the jump.

“Nothing can truly prepare you for when you’re about to jump out of the aircraft,” Myers explained. “Once you step off, you just revert to your training and take it one step at a time until you make contact on the ground.”

On board the aircraft, the 4th Force Recon Co Marines and sailors were brought to an altitude between 1,500 to 2,000 feet. From there, the Marines and sailors commenced a low-level static line jump exiting the aircraft three to four men at a time.

“Once they jump and pull their ‘chute, they have a [short] count until they’re under full canopy,” Myers explained. “From

there, they just have to identify where they are in relation to the ground and steer to the landing zone.”

The jumpers faced a challenge in the air with the wind as it constantly changed speeds, preventing them from dropping to the landing zone with ease.

The Recon Marines also fought against the wind when they hit the ground, keeping their parachutes from dragging them across the grass and flight line. They worked quickly to pack up their parachutes and rendezvous with their squad.

“The jump packages [specified numbers and types of jumps] were a great opportunity for the Marines to practice their insertion capabilities,” said Captain Jared Sprunk, the inspector-instructor with 4th Force Recon Co. “It was great working with both U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps aircraft to get these guys in the air.”

Jump packages also benefit those who want to attend the Jump Master’s Course



LCPL MATTHEW J. BRAGG

Marines and sailors with 4th Force Recon Co board a CH-53E Super Stallion, assigned to Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 463, as they prepare to conduct a low-level static line jump at MCAS Kaneohe Bay, March 18.

in Ft. Benning, Ga. To participate in the Jump Master's Course, a minimum of 15 jumps are required.

"This is what we're out here to do, and that is to help get these guys in that course," Myers said. "Attending the school would increase their jump capabilities and give them a better skill set overall."

LCpl Matthew J. Bragg
PAO, MCB Hawaii

Leathernecks Participate in Ceremony To Honor Father of the Constitution

■ In honor of the 263rd anniversary of former United States President James Madison's birth, Colonel David Maxwell, commander of Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., was designated as President Barack Obama's representative for an official wreath-laying ceremony on March 16 at Montpelier Station, Va. Madison, the fourth President of the United States, is known as the Father of the Constitution, because of his pivotal role in the document's drafting.

Each year, on the anniversary of the birth of deceased U.S. Presidents, wreaths are laid upon their final resting places to show respect for the critical leadership position they have held.

"We are to think like men of action and act like men of thought," said Col Maxwell, quoting General James Mattis, USMC (Ret), as he spoke to guests at the ceremony. "These words are certainly true of Madison, as he constantly made sure he was properly educated, but actively pursued what he thought was best for the country."

Active citizenship is what President Madison encouraged from the people of a young America, according to Maxwell, much like the Marine Corps encourages those who leave its ranks to be better people than when they entered.

President Madison, in the crafting of the Constitution, also drafted the crucial first 10 amendments, the Bill of Rights, which protects individual rights of the citizens of the United States.

Although President Madison believed that individual rights were fully protected by the Constitution as it was ratified, he recognized that drafting the Bill of Rights was imperative.

"James Madison served the commonwealth and his nation as advisor to the president, and then as president himself," said Peter E. Broadbent Jr., a member of the Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission and vice chair of the library board of Virginia, before he presented a proclamation from Terence McAuliffe, the governor of the commonwealth of Virginia, declaring March 16 to be James Madison Appreciation Day.



CPL PARIS CAPERS

Col David Maxwell, Commanding Officer, MCB Quantico, carries a wreath to the grave of James Madison, fourth President of the United States of America. Maxwell presented the wreath at the Madison family cemetery, Montpelier Station, Va., March 16, as part of a tradition of honoring all deceased U.S. Presidents.

"It is only right we pay respects to his sacrifices."

With another wreath laid in freedom's name, Marines continue to honor Presidents past, present and future.

Cpl Paris Capers
PAO, MCB Quantico, Va.

New R2C Robots Keep Marines Safe

■ The Robotic Systems Joint Project Office (RS JPO) conducted new equipment training on the Route Reconnaissance and Clearance (R2C) robot with Marines from the 2d Combat Engineer Battalion at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., March 10-13. The training included classroom instruction, practical exercise and a test to certify the Marines to operate the R2C robot.

"The R2C robot is a [counter-improvised explosive device] tool," said Lou Anulare, assistant program manager for Marine Corps Unmanned Ground Vehicles under the RS JPO in Warren, Mich.

"This system provides a new option for route reconnaissance and clearance operations to be used in place of putting Marines in harm's way."

As the office responsible for everything from acquisition to sustainment of unmanned ground systems for the Army and Marine Corps, RS JPO reports to both the Army's Program Executive Officer for Ground Combat Systems and Marine Corps Systems Command. They have fielded 22 R2C robots to Marine operating forces since January.

The R2C robot features an improved communications system with two radio frequencies so that it can operate in the continental United States and overseas. The robot also is equipped with a fiberoptic spooler, allowing it to be tethered to the controller in situations where radio frequency cannot be used.

"While under radio frequency operation, the R2C increases the Marines' arm length to over 800 meters, providing



RON LUNN

HANDING FORWARD HISTORY—
On occasion, a Marine will bring in a unique photograph depicting a time in Marine history. Maj Don Brodie, USMC (Ret), of Springfield, Va., collected these China Marine handball championship medals from 1930, and we thought our readers might appreciate a look.

them a safe distance to do interrogation of possible IED threats,” Anulare said. “So far in theater, we’ve had more than 800 robots destroyed. We believe each one of those losses represents a Marine or soldier’s life or limb saved.”

Additionally, a three-link arm gives the robot increased reach for more flexibility. The robot also has multiple cameras, providing Marines improved visibility when evaluating potential threats.

The R2C robots were fielded to Marine combat engineers who support ground forces by performing demolition, construction, mine-clearing, maintenance and repair operations.

“This robot is a great piece of gear,” said Sergeant Jared Mount, a combat engineer with the 2d CEB. “This is the sixth or seventh robot I’ve worked with. It definitely tops the robots we’ve used. The controllers are easier to use, and it can pick up more weight with the heavier arm. The cameras and new arm make it much easier to maneuver. It’s going to save more Marines’ lives.”

The R2C robot is based on the Army’s FasTac robot, a legacy commercial-off-the-shelf platform. The Army provided excess FasTacs to the Marine Corps, which reduced the time it took to field the capability to Marines, said Colonel Ben Stinson, RS JPO project manager.

The Marine Corps worked with Army engineers and logisticians from the Detroit Arsenal Team to modify and upgrade the FasTacs to meet Marine Corps requirements, according to Stinson.

“Additionally, [Marines] are embedded with the Army at RS JPO,” he said. “Their



CPT. JOEY MENDEZ

Marines with 2d CEB, 2dMarDiv learn to operate an R2C robot during a training exercise at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C., March 11. R2C robots can scout for roadside bombs, search buildings and vehicles and are capable of traveling up to 800 meters from the control point.

knowledge and expertise played heavily in our ability to establish a production line to upgrade the robots. RS JPO has a depot-like maintenance capability, so the expertise of how to tear apart and rebuild the robots was resident because of the mission we’ve had for the last 12 years supporting [Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)].”

The R2C robot is the first robotics program of record for the Marine Corps.

“Being a program of record means the robot now has the ability to exist after the war,” Stinson said. “It is in the base funding for R2C, will be incorporated into the school house [curriculum] and provisioned through the Marine Corps supply system.

We transitioned a commercial item procured for OEF to an enduring program that will be used after the war.”

Monique Randolph
PAO, MARCORSSYSCOM

Quick Shots Around the Corps

HITT Program Adds Website, App To Benefit Reserve Marines

■ Corporal Codey Underwood, Public Affairs Office, Marine Corps Forces Reserve, reports that the Marine Corps Semper Fit Program’s High Intensity Tactical Training (HITT) program now is available through a website and mobile application.



LT001 MIKE KESSLER, USMC (RET)

YOUNG MARINES VISIT GUAM AND IWO JIMA—Ten Young Marines of the Marine Corps League representing divisions from around the nation embarked on the organization’s annual “Reunion of Honor” trip to Guam and Iwo Jima. The Young Marines toured battlegrounds, listened to veterans’ testimonies and attended a service at the Anniversary Monument on Iwo Jima, March 19, during which the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen James F. Amos, delivered a eulogy for the fallen from both sides. Gen Amos is pictured with the Young Marines near the Anniversary Monument on Iwo Jima.

The HITT website and mobile application provides Marines with a virtual resource to implement the HITT program as a structured physical training program to develop combat readiness. As Reserve Marines, the opportunity to participate in Marine Corps programs may be limited, and the website and app brings the program to their fingertips.

The website for HITT is www.usmccs.org/hitt, and the free mobile app can be downloaded to any mobile device by visiting iTunes or Google Play. The keyword to search for the mobile app is HITT. Once downloaded, Marines can view all exercises and workout videos related to the HITT program.

Corps Revises Guidelines For Private Firearms on Base

■ Sergeant Jessica Ito, Public Affairs Office, Marine Corps Forces Reserve, reports that following the Washington, (D.C.) Navy Yard shooting on Sept. 16, 2013, the Marine Corps has conducted a comprehensive review of the policies related to the handling, storage and accountability of privately owned firearms and ammunition aboard its installations.

According to Marine Administrative

Message (MARADMIN) 176/14, all commanders will review and update their current local directives concerning privately owned firearms to ensure that good order, discipline, security and force protection remain constant aboard their respective installations.

Local directives will contain provisions that:

- Prohibit privately owned firearms in all federal facilities, to include government-leased spaces and government vehicles.

- Prohibit carrying privately owned firearms as concealed weapons aboard Marine Corps installations.

- Ensure all privately owned firearms stored aboard Marine Corps installations are registered and on file with the provost marshal's office and the Marine Corps police department.

- Prohibit storage of privately owned firearms and ammunition in bachelor enlisted quarters for noncommissioned officers and below. Storage within bachelor officer or staff noncommissioned officer quarters is at the discretion of the installation commander.

- Reemphasize compliance regarding storage of privately owned firearms and ammunition in government family housing.

- In all cases, privately owned firearms will be stored in a fully encased container that is capable of completely enclosing the firearm and must be locked with a key or combination lock. All firearms will be fitted with a trigger lock.

- Ammunition must be stored separately from firearms and in a container capable of being locked with a key or combination lock.

- Privately owned firearms will not be stored in privately owned vehicles.

- All personnel will continue to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws for the purchase, registration, transportation and storage of privately owned firearms and ammunition.

- Transporting privately owned firearms is authorized in a personally owned vehicle to and from an authorized storage area or to an off-base location consistent with federal, state and local laws.

Marines are expected to handle privately owned firearms with the same level of safety and professionalism that is required when handling their individual issued weapons. For more information about the new policy, see MARADMIN 176/14 at www.marines.mil.



Crazy Caption Contest

Winner



LOPLB. A. STEVENS

"OK, Marines, three miles in under 18! We can do this!"

Submitted by
GySgt Jerry Moore, USMC (Ret)
Lebanon, Ohio

This Month's Photo



LOPL BOBBY J. YARBROUGH

(Caption) _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ ZIP _____

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.

SAIPAN: 15 June–9 July 1944



Story by Eric Hammel
Photos courtesy of the author

Introduction

The mid-1944 American campaign in the Mariana Islands was an important strategic step because it put Tokyo and the rest of Japan's industrial heartland within the range of the B-29 Superfortress, the U.S. Army Air Forces' new long-range bomber. Once the islands were secured and the airfields were built, the Army's Marianas-based 20th Air Force could do to Japanese industry what its counterparts in Europe had been doing to German industry since mid-1943. And then there was Guam, an American possession that had

fallen to a Japanese invasion force within at the very start of the war, its tiny Marine garrison sent into captivity. For Marines, retaking Guam would be payback and the fulfillment of a blood oath.

Even though those important objectives had been accorded an early place in prewar strategic planning, the shape of the Pacific War had left them alone for 2½ years of hard battles in the Solomon Islands and at the far eastern periphery of Japanese central Pacific holding: first Tarawa in November 1943, then the Marshall Islands in January and February 1944. Then air bases had to be improved and developed in the western Marshalls so that American land-based bombers could reconnoiter and

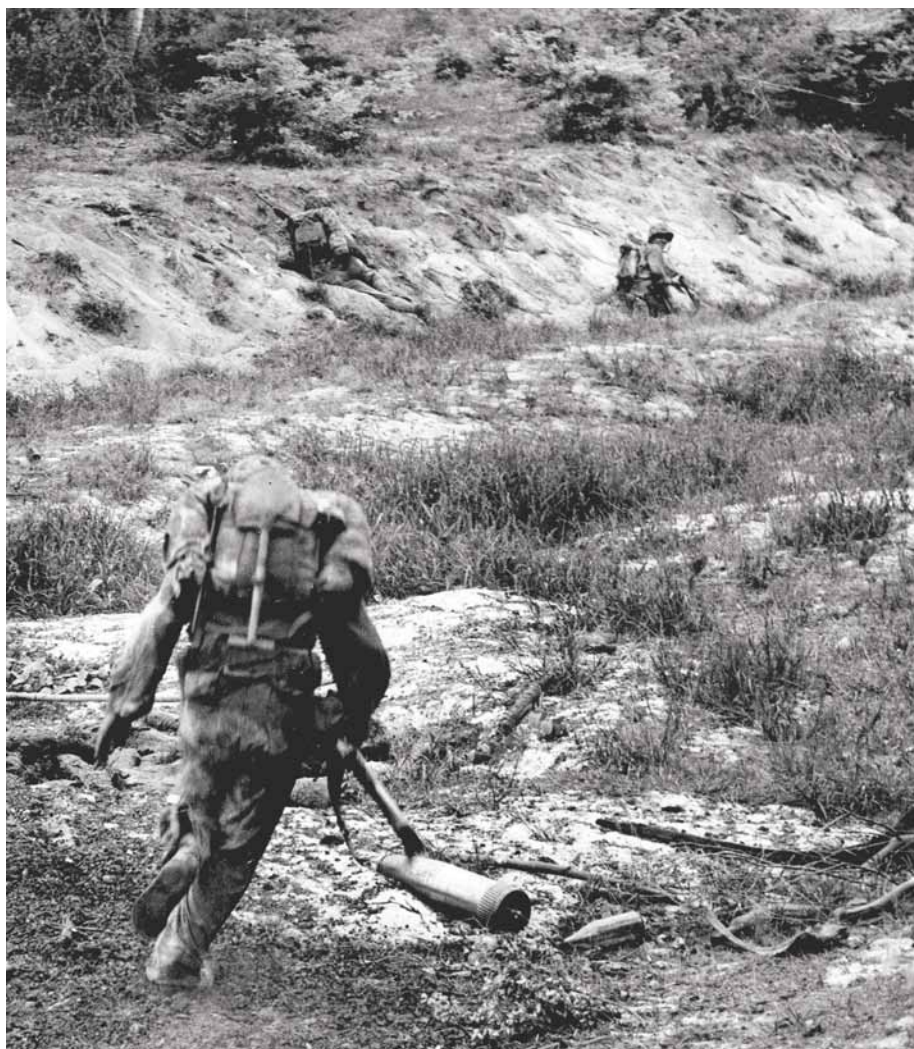
soften Saipan, Tinian, Guam and other Japanese bases in the Marianas. It was a tried-and-true procedure, but painstaking as well.

The Strategic Situation

So far, the American Central Pacific drive, begun in the Gilbert Islands in November 1943, had been a complete vindication of American strategic pronouncements and planning going back to 1913. Back then, the scheme to seize and hold a line of bases that unfolded from east to west—from Hawaii to Japan—had been in service of maintaining the strategic weapon of the day, the mighty surface fleet built around a solid core of battleships.

Below: Marines on the Saipan beach get ready to move inland, June 1944.

Right: A Marine rushes across open ground in northern Saipan to avoid sniper fire. Note the unexploded ordnance lying around.



By late 1943, the solid core of the strategic advance across the wide Pacific had become a burgeoning carrier fleet supplemented by land-based bombers escorted by land-based fighters. Nevertheless, the execution of the American drive was a nearly picture-perfect implementation of the early vision.

It had been a painstaking advance, often a frustrating advance, in 1942, 1943 and early 1944, but the tempo was to hit overdrive, for a new paradigm was about to emerge. If a string of advancing fleet bases looked old-fashioned and clunky in 1942, a string of advancing bases tied to the range of land-based fighters looked even clunkier by early 1944.

That was because the U.S. Army Air Forces had in its hands the means to strike the Japanese heartland itself from as far away as the Mariana Islands. And the Marianas happened to be the next logical target of the 2-year-old strategy based on the need to mount new assaults on islands that could first be bombarded and reconnoitered at some length by multiengine land-based bombers that could be escorted by land-based fighters.

So if the island-hopping basing strategy that had dragged the Allies forward from Samoa to Wallis Island to the Ellice Islands to the Gilbert Islands to the Marshall Islands had made *tactical* sense in the age of land-based fighters and long-range bombers, the hop from the Marshall Islands to the Mariana Islands made sense in the *strategic* possibilities that could be available in the emerging age of land-based *very* long-range bombers, B-29s.

By geographical luck more than human desire, the Marianas were not only close enough to Japan for the B-29s to reach the Japanese industrial heartland, but also the islands themselves were large enough to support the massive bases the B-29s required to mount a meaningfully large

and efficient bombardment campaign against that Japanese industrial heartland.

When detailed planning for the Marianas campaign began, the B-29 was still untested in war. There were no bases in the Pacific that could accommodate the giant bombers and no targets in the Pacific save Japan itself that were worth the effort of building bases for those aircraft. Instead, from early 1944, B-29s were flown to India and China in the hope of striking Japan from that direction, but the B-29 would be able to reach Japan from the Marianas when large islands there could be seized and adequate facilities could be built.

Thus, for the time being, the Pacific island-hopping strategy was co-opted by an even higher-level strategic requirement for B-29 bases from which the centers of Japanese industrial power, 1,200 miles away, could be reached. Luckily, the program for standing up new B-29 units and the progress of the Pacific War dovetailed perfectly in mid-1944. If the requisite bases fell into American hands, there would be B-29 groups ready to use them by the time runways and infrastructure were in place.

Organization

The organization and arms available to Marine divisions had been in flux since the start of the war. Two factors were in play: needs based on lessons learned that could be projected into the next campaign, and the growing size and strength of the American industrial base.

In the first case, an ongoing problem that had yet to be licked was shore-party support at the beachhead. It was known that the sheer violence of island warfare could not tolerate even the temporary use of combat troops in a supply-handling role, so the Marine Corps beefed up its pioneer (shore-party) units and drew on U.S. Navy Seabee (naval construction) battalions attached to the Marine divisions for rapid beach-development work, then stood up depot and ammunition units for overseeing dumps. Too many amphibian tractors (amtracs) were needed for a divisional assault for the divisional organization to handle, so independent amtrac battalions were stood up as corps troops and, in the wake of the Marshalls operation, the organic divisional amtrac units were reassigned as corps troops.

Although trained to build roads and the like, Marine engineer battalions had been used in the assault role—demolitions and flame throwers—since Tarawa, and that role was beefed up by training and the availability of many more flame thrower and demolitions teams. The task of building and maintaining roads fell more heavily on Seabees attached to the divisions as well as on an independent Marine engineer construction battalion organized for use at the corps level.

In 1944, a cornucopia of weapons allowed Marine infantry units at all levels to be upgraded and reorganized. All the infantry squads were reorganized into 13-man units, consisting of a squad leader and three four-man fire teams, and each fire team was built around a Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR). Divisional special weapons (antitank) battalions were disbanded, and regimental heavy-weapons companies received additional 37 mm antitank guns and self-propelled mounts (SPMs), tank-destroyer halftracs, each mounting a 75 mm antitank/antibunker assault gun.

The availability of more 105 mm howitzers caused the conversion of one 75 mm battalion per divisional artillery regiment to a second 105 mm battalion, and several independent 105 mm and 155 mm battalions were added as corps troops. Armored amphibian tractor battalions also were added as corps troops, and new LVT(A)4 armored amtracs, each wielding a short-barrel 75 mm howitzer, replaced many older 37 mm-armed LVT(A)1s.



In sum, each Marine division was about 2,000 men smaller than it had been, but each was significantly more lethal. That was a bit of excellent timing, because Saipan, the first objective in the Marianas, was seen as a significantly tougher proposition than any previous objective. At 72 square miles, it was much larger than any objective in the Gilberts and the Marshalls, yet significantly smaller in land area than any objective in the Solomons. The problem was that every inch of Saipan was or could be defended in considerable strength by an estimated 31,000 troops, so a weeklong battle of the intensity of Tarawa was foreseen.

The Plan

Saipan was slated for assault on 15 June 1944, by the veteran Second and Fourth Marine divisions, with the U.S. Army's veteran 27th Infantry Division in reserve.

Once a beachhead was established, it was felt that at least two and probably all three divisions would undertake a continuous assault to clear the island, then go on to land on adjacent Tinian and do the same.

As soon as possible after the landing on Saipan, at least one of the existing airfields would be rehabilitated and improved to provide land-based tactical air support for the ongoing fighting and the invasion of Tinian. Thereafter, the island's air bases would be improved for B-29s and to support the neutralization from the air of bypassed Japanese bases in the Marianas. Until local air support got up and running, the ground campaign would be supported by carrier air, naval gunfire and divisional and corps artillery.

The Saipan and Tinian operations would be overseen in their entirety by V Amphibious Corps (VAC), a Marine-run organization. The Guam operation would



town of Charan Kanoa; and then the 25th Marines landing on the southernmost beaches from south of Charan Kanoa to Agingan Point.

The objective of all four combat teams was to advance a mile or more inland to the day's phase line, then resume the assault all the way across the southern third of Saipan, including Aslito Airdrome. The 2d Marines, the 24th Marines and the independent 1st Bn, 29th Marines (1/29) made a feint toward several beaches in northwestern Saipan. They kept Japanese reinforcements from rushing south, but they didn't draw any of the southern forces northward.

The landing, beginning at 0843, was marred by ineffective final bombardments and air attacks. There was too much ground for the naval and aerial bombardment to cover. Moreover, the 6th and 8th Marines drifted between 400 and 600 yards north of their assigned beaches due to an unanticipated heavy northward current. Defenses at the beach were far heavier and better camouflaged than anticipated, and they were overcome only through sheer determination and a great deal of blood.

The plan of the 6th and 8th Marines was

Left: Marine tanks and infantry assault Japanese positions on Saipan, 2 July 1944. In the foreground are two 2dMarDiv combat cameramen recording the action.

Inset: Japanese soldiers tenaciously defended the built-up areas, making the Marines earn every inch of ground.

CPLE C. WILBERT

be overseen by III Amphibious Corps (IIIAC, formerly designated I Marine Amphibious Corps, or IMAC), also a Marine-run organization.

Invasion

Beginning at 0812 on 15 June 1944, the lead waves of the 2dMarDiv and 4thMarDiv began the final lap of their assault on Saipan's southwestern shore. Each division was led by two reinforced regiments (now known as regimental combat teams), which in turn were each led by two reinforced infantry battalions (now known as battalion landing teams). From north to south, the regiments were arrayed as follows: the Sixth Marine Regiment (6th Marines), then the 8th Marines, covered the 2dMarDiv front of 2,400 yards ending at Afetna Point; then the 4thMarDiv's 23d Marines landing south of Afetna Point directly against the sizable



USMC

to alight from their amtracs and follow-on landing craft, reorganize and advance inland on foot. The leading elements of the 23d and 25th Marines planned to advance while remaining aboard their amtracs. All the regiments counted heavily on support from LVT(A)s.

On Beach Red, the 6th Marines fought inland about 100 yards in the face of plunging fire from machine guns, mortars and artillery emplaced on the ridge line that was the regimental objective. Several small tank attacks had to be beaten back as well. By 1300, the regiment had suffered losses as high as 35 percent, including the commander of 2/6 and his executive officer. By the end of the day, every available rifleman was on the line, which was 400 yards inland at its deepest point.

Just to the south, on Beach Green, the 8th Marines' two assault battalions had

day. Both were broken up to seal various gaps. By the end of D-day, the reinforced 8th Marines was isolated from the regiments on either flank and stymied by the marshes; it had not fully secured its day's objectives. The commanders of 2/8 and 3/8 were wounded in the day's fighting.

The 23d Marines, landing on Beach Green from Afetna Point across Charan Kanoa, faced little opposition at the beach. Still mounted in its LVTs, it reorganized and advanced inland. Troops from 3/23 mounted in eight LVTs and supported by three LVT(A)4s charged straight down the road through Charan Kanoa, all the way to the regimental objective atop Mount Fina Sisu. They were subjected to heavy fire through the day and had to withdraw during the night because no other friendly units could get so far forward.

Similarly, troops in three LVTs accom-

battalion, 1/25, was stopped cold just inland from the beach, and many LVTs were forced to retract under intense fire before supplies and gear could be unloaded. The bulk of the defensive fire was based on Agingan Point, beyond 1/25's right flank.

The Japanese constantly attacked northward from the point, but by early afternoon, once 3/25 and a company of 4th Tank Bn Sherman M4 medium tanks had been committed to support 1/25, the Marines sealed the flank once and for all. Indeed, the 25th Marines was able to conduct a steady advance inland despite the contest on its right flank, and by day's end the entire regiment had advanced to its phase line between 700 and 2,000 yards inland.

Throughout the beachhead, once naval gunfire observers were ashore, the naval bombardment was highly accurate, as was aerial bombardment guided by observers in the front lines. The pinpoint accuracy of the supporting arms was something of a marvel. And the advances, such as they were, owed much success to tanks and LVT(A)4s, even though many tanks and armored amtracs went astray, were lost in accidents or were knocked out by enemy fire from the heights. Seven of nine divisional artillery battalions also were landed on D-day, but many of the 14th Marines' howitzers were mislanded, and Japanese mortars knocked out four 4/14 105 mm howitzers.

It later was estimated that D-day casualties totaled 2,000 killed and wounded, more or less, but by nightfall the troops had advanced inland from 400 yards in the north to 2,000 yards in the south. Plenty of supplies were ashore, the medical evacuation system was working, and all but two reserve infantry battalions were ashore to plug gaps or await breakthroughs they could exploit. In sum, the beachhead had been well established, albeit at great cost.

The Japanese mounted numerous counterattacks during the night, most heavily against the 6th Marines, where tanks were used. All those attacks were beaten back, some quite easily. As far as the troops were concerned, they would face hundreds fewer dug-in Japanese the next day.

Abandoned

During D-day, the high command learned that a vast Imperial navy carrier and surface armada had been put in motion toward Saipan. There was no great surprise in that; all thinking about a war with Japan always had contemplated a decisive naval battle as its culmination. That the Japanese were making their move at Saipan was no great shock either. Both sides considered the Marianas to be the



Marines dig out a well-concealed, wounded Japanese soldier, who had hidden in a cramped hole for days in a Marine motor transport parking area. One of the leathernecks had slept over the hiding spot.

been driven together by the current, and both had landed in the northern half of the regimental zone, albeit with few casualties. The assault battalions quickly sorted themselves out, and 3/8 attacked inland, as planned. Company G, 2/8 attacked southward toward Afetna Point, using the coastal road as a boundary. By nightfall, the northern half of Afetna Point was in Marine hands, and seven of nine antiboat guns in beachside positions had been silenced. The rest of 2/8 advanced toward Lake Susupe, but became isolated in marshland and had to withdraw before nightfall.

Two reserve battalions—1/8 and 1/29—also landed on Beach Green during the

panied by five LVT(A)s fought through to the 2/23 phase line, but they also were withdrawn in the dark. The marshes that had stymied 2/8 to the north also stymied the 23d Marines, which came up well short of its D-day goals despite opposition so light that the regimental reserve battalion, 1/23, wasn't even committed.

The 25th Marines, mounted in Army LVTs, landed on Beach Yellow in the standard two-battalion assault. On the left, 2/25, which was supported by Army LVT(A)4s, overcame small-arms fire and advanced through heavy artillery and mortar fire to a rail line that ran diagonally across its front between 500 and 700 yards inland. To the right, the VAC right-flank



USMC

Marines pause in their move forward as a flame thrower goes into action to destroy a Japanese pillbox on 17 June 1944.

outer line of the empire itself. The Japanese carriers had not been seen since October 1942, and their battleships had not been seen since November 1942. If they were going to be of some use in the Pacific, Saipan almost had to be the place, and mid-June 1944 had to be the time.

The American admirals reacted by postponing the 18 June Guam invasion indefinitely and ordering all transports and landing ships to sail east, out of range, by the night of 17 June. Inasmuch as the beachhead was fairly deep by the end of D-day, as many supplies as possible were to be landed in good order as quickly as possible. The VAC commanding general also decided to land two-thirds of the 27th Infantry Division that was his Saipan reserve; the D-day fighting had been heavy enough to warrant the landing of at least a regiment, and nobody knew when the transports might return. No doubt, the GIs would come in handy.

Attacks by carrier aircraft were expected, so Army and Marine anti-aircraft units also were rushed ashore. The last of all those reinforcements landed after dark on 17 July, and the transport fleet sailed east—for a week. By then, Navy amphibian patrol bombers were operating from a seaplane anchorage off the invasion beaches.

The Southern Drive

The ground fighting on 16 and 17 June was heavy, and it proved to be decisive. The 4thMarDiv and attached Army units fought to the edge of Aslito Airdrome, Marines fully secured Charan Kanoa and Afetna Point, and the 2dMarDiv fought inland into the high ground overlooking the northern beachhead.

The only delays were in the marshlands around Lake Susupe, but even that vexing terrain was overcome at the divisional boundary on 17 June. Moreover, the Japanese mounted a large tank-supported night attack that did little lasting damage and mainly thinned their own ranks. Also, a counterlanding mounted on the night of 17 June from the northwestern coast was turned back with heavy losses when engaged by artillery and surface warships.

Night attacks by Japanese torpedo bombers based at Truk, in the Caroline Islands, were largely beaten back, but an LCT was damaged fatally, an LST was damaged, and an escort aircraft carrier was damaged severely. Basically, those land, amphibious and air attacks failed to make a dent. With or without its fleet of transports and cargo ships—and even in the face of a massive naval confrontation—VAC so firmly was embedded on Saipan with so many supplies at its disposal that

the fate of the invasion was not the least bit in doubt.

During the rush to clear decks for the upcoming naval battle, Marines flying light OY observation planes went ashore from escort carriers to locate paths to and around Japanese positions and to spot artillery fire and air attacks. The OYs, based initially on Beach Yellow and Charan Kanoa, were operated by VMO-2 and VMO-4 and often were flown by volunteer enlisted pilots. (The innovation had originated with an ad hoc 1stMarDiv squadron using borrowed Army spotter planes at Cape Gloucester.)

The Northern Drive

Elements of the 4thMarDiv drove to the southeastern coast on 16 June, which cut off the Japanese in southeastern Saipan from the rest of the defense force. The 4thMarDiv next pivoted northeast of Lake Susupe to join the 2dMarDiv on 21 June along a steep, hilly line stretching across Saipan on the southern side of Mount Tapotchau to Magicienne Bay. The unoccupied areas of southeastern Saipan were left to the 27th Infantry Div.

It was no romp. Many of the Japanese units were first-rate—well-trained and highly skilled soldiers and naval infantry who sold their lives at great cost. Others



The leatherneck crew of a halftrac takes a smoke break prior to moving beyond Hill 500, 22 June 1944.

were cannon fodder who died in badly conceived counterattacks that accomplished nothing of value to their cause. The terrain was a horrible mix of lowland cane fields on table-flat land dominated by hills or mountains or the steep-sided, ravine-cut hills and mountains themselves where Japanese troops lay in wait in invisible dominating positions that had to be torn down toe-to-toe by infantrymen. Moreover, bad planning had denied the Marine divisions pools of replacements, and the fleet's weeklong departure added to that miscalculation; Marine unit strength and fighting power had trended downward to the tune of 6,165 dead, wounded or missing from the first shot onward.

The fleet and light carrier air groups of Task Force 58 tore the heart out of Japanese carrier aviation on 19 and 20 June in the utterly one-sided Battle of the Philippine Sea, the Marianas Turkey Shoot. It was, as many prewar planners had foreseen, the grand fleet action that doomed one side to certain defeat. Even if Japan

no longer had a real hope of winning the Pacific War, the Japanese thought they never would be ready to stop the killing and dying.

Eight Army Air Forces fighter-bombers operating from Aslito Airdrome supported Marine ground units in the inauguration of VAC's all-out northern attack on 22 June. The Marines unknowingly hit the Japanese main line of resistance that day. Determined defenders numbering nearly 10,000 well-led and well-equipped Imperial Army troops and 5,000 less-well-equipped naval infantrymen and sundry Imperial Army stragglers held the Americans to half the day's objectives. That night was the first in which there were no significant counterattacks, which indicated that the Japanese commanders had given up on defeating the invaders and were content to fight a battle of attrition with what remained of their best troops.

The worst ground fighting lay ahead as the gallant and determined Marines attacked into equally determined and gal-

lant Japanese holding high ground in extremely broken terrain. The names that Marines and the GIs who joined them there gave to terrain features say it all: Death Valley, Purple Heart Ridge and Hell's Pocket.

The 27th Infantry Div went into the line between the two Marine divisions on 23 June, and right away there were complaints and retorts that the Army was going too slow or the Marines were going too fast. The Marine VAC commander relieved the Army division commander on 25 June and sparked a controversy that neither service has laid to rest since.

Americans prevailed in the atrocious battles for the northern half of Saipan, but it took thousands of tons of bombs and naval and artillery shells to help them do so. The ground battle was unremitting and exhausting, but the Americans kept going. In the end, the surviving Japanese troops were pushed back into the Marpi Point area, and there Americans saw the true face of the enemy. A mad, useless final *banzai* attack broke the Japanese defensive organization, but Japanese troops continued to hold out unto death in caves that honeycombed Mount Marpi.

It would have been one thing if only Japanese troops held out there in the caves, but Saipan had been the center of a large, civilian-run sugar-growing and -processing industry. Thousands of Japanese civilian men, women and children were on the island, and they were held in the caves and warrens alongside the troops. As the noose tightened, they were pressed into service to build fighting positions; then they were held hostage. They died with the troops. And in the end, they flung themselves from the cliffs into the ocean. Disbelieving young American troops thought until then that they had seen the worst war could expose to them. Mothers took their children with them off the cliffs, and Japanese soldiers who were about to die in useless little rearguard fights used precious bullets on civilian countrymen who could not defend themselves.

Saipan was declared secure on 9 July, but fighting persisted for months as the island was scoured for stragglers by its U.S. Army garrison. Some Japanese held out for nearly 30 years.

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Leatherneck—On the Web

See more photographs of the Battle of Saipan at www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/saipan



Marines at Vera Cruz

Part II

Story by J. Michael Miller

President Woodrow Wilson saw the need to protect American interests and promote democracy in Mexico 100 years ago, and the U.S. Navy and Marines were sent into Vera Cruz. Part I of this three-part article, in the May issue, told of the landing of the force. Now read about the action ashore.

After the unopposed landing of Lieutenant Colonel Wendell C. “Buck” Neville’s Second Marine Regiment on 21 April 1914, the streets of Vera Cruz were very quiet. Major Randolph C. Berkeley’s 1st Battalion, 2d Marines began its push up Calle Montesinos without incident. Despite the lack of resistance, the Marines moved through the streets in open formation, column of squads, with advance guard and flank patrols to avoid providing easy targets to any potential enemy.

Equipped with four Colt machine guns, the column passed the quiet buildings ready for any threat ahead. The sound of Marine boots on the pavement was the only noise that pierced the silence of the city. Maj George C. Reid, commanding 2d Bn, 2d Marines, the provisional battalion comprised of the ships’ Marine detachments, ordered 8th Company, led by Captain Jesse F. Dyer, to join the 1st Bn column as well, bringing up the rear.

At 1130, three scattered volleys of gunfire rang out from the cross street of Cinco de Mayo. The shots had no specific target other than the general direction of the Marine column. Berkeley’s Marines also noticed, with some concern, distant clusters of Mexican soldiers keeping even with their column, but on parallel streets. A deadly silence then continued, as if both sides were wait-

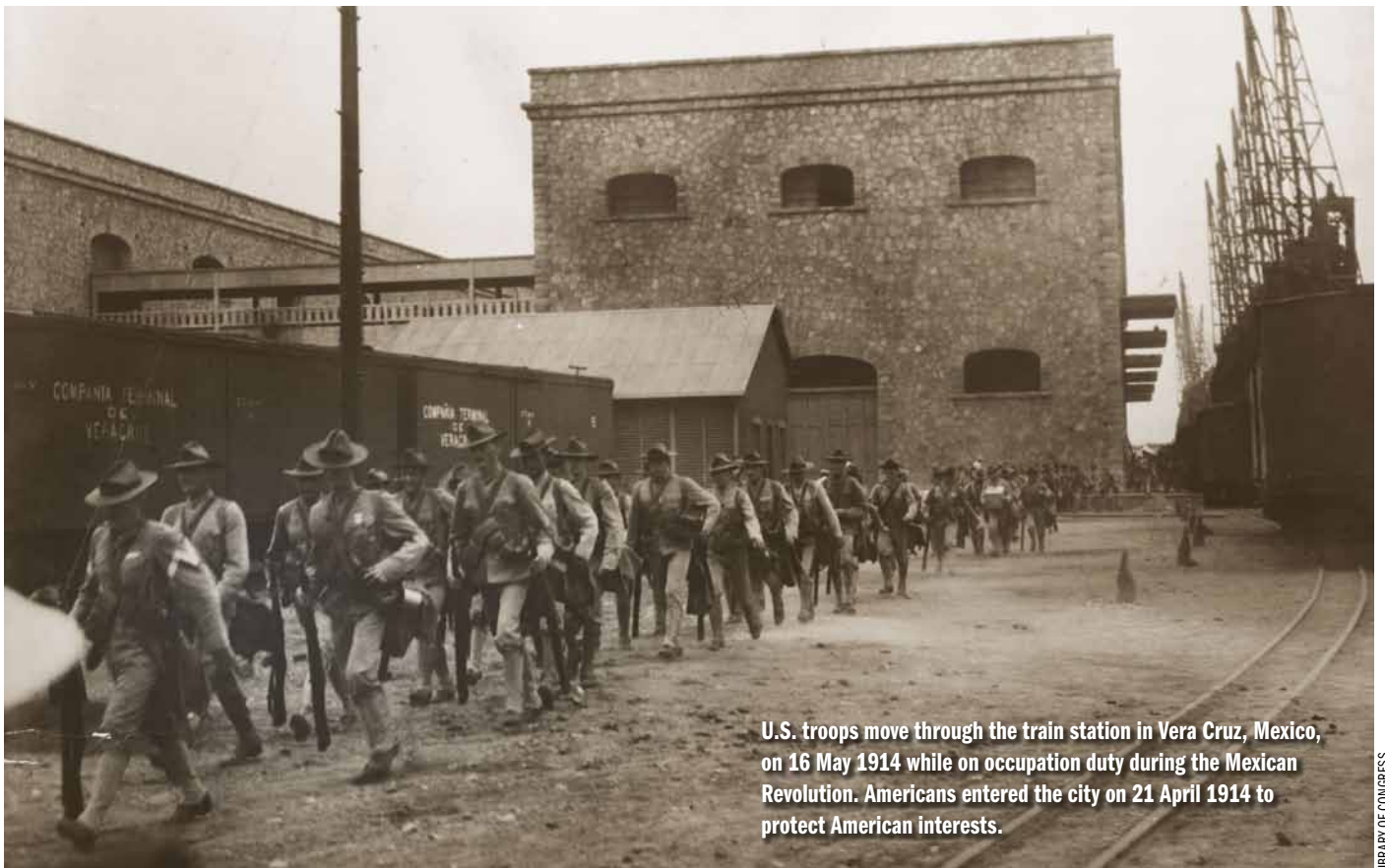
ing for the other to fire the next shots. As a precaution, Maj Reid ordered a squad of 8th Co dropped at every cross street after the column passed to avoid anyone coming in behind and cutting them off from the docks.

A deadly silence then continued, as if both sides were waiting for the other to fire the next shots.

As the head of the Marine column reached Avenue Nicholas Bravo, almost five city blocks from the waterfront, intense gunfire erupted along the Marine column. The shots seemed to ring out from every part of the Montesinos road, but were focused at the intersections with the cross streets of Independencia and Cinco de Mayo. The Marines

took cover at the corners of the wide streets, dodging the bullets that ranged about them.

With the hope of a peaceful occupation gone, Neville dispatched a runner back to the commander of the entire naval



U.S. troops move through the train station in Vera Cruz, Mexico, on 16 May 1914 while on occupation duty during the Mexican Revolution. Americans entered the city on 21 April 1914 to protect American interests.



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A U.S. Navy signalman contacts USS *Chester*, directing fires on the Mexican Naval Academy, April 1914.

brigade, Captain William R. Rush, USN, for further instructions. Orders came back in minutes that “if first fired upon and in danger to return fire.”

The heaviest resistance came from Cinco de Mayo, where the first Marine casualties occurred. With the core of resistance threatening to divide his command, Neville used the broad streets to his advantage by deploying his four Colt machine guns and fire teams of eight riflemen at the head of every major cross street leading into the city. The machine guns poured overwhelming fire at every suspected enemy post, expending 5,000 rounds during the day. The streets soon were clear of Mexican soldiers.

However, after 20 minutes of firing, the Colt gun at Independencia retired, leaving 8th Co exposed to enemy fire. Paying attention to the little details, Dyer kept most of his company under cover while dispatching a left-handed Marine to cover the right corner of the street and a right-handed marksman to cover the left corner, both flat on the sidewalk and sheltered by the corners of the house there.

In response, the Mexican defenders of Vera Cruz moved higher onto rooftops, towers and in upper-story house windows to continue their attack on the Marines. Neville again countered by ordering his Marine riflemen into the cover of the warehouses that lined the north side of Montesinos where they loopholed the walls and drove the Mexicans into cover. Individual rounds, however, continued to strike the Marine positions. “This fire was irritating,” Neville wrote later. He ordered an advance into the cross streets, clearing the city house by house for the first city block into Vera Cruz. “This was done very quickly,” Neville wrote, “but in arriving at

Constitution [Avenue, I] received orders to fall back and hold original position.”

Falling back to the warehouses along Montesinos, 1st Bn improved the loopholes in the concrete and brick walls covering each of the six cross streets and continued to reply to the Mexican snipers. Most of the Marines took shelter on the sidewalks or in defilade behind the warehouse steps on the north side of the building. Particularly offensive were snipers firing near the Hotel Allemagne, but a squad of Marine marksmen entered the hotel and took up firing positions on the rooftop. The nearby rooftops soon were clear.

Capt Dyer dispatched a squad under Corporal William S. White to the Terminal Hotel to gain a commanding position to engage the Mexican riflemen. Once the Marines reached the roof, they found instead the hotel was swept by well-aimed

The squad again had tried to gain command of the roof with Sgt Baker, but for a second time were driven to cover by the accurate Mexican rifle fire. He discovered the bullets came from a church tower.

rifle fire, dominating the rooftop. A bullet struck Private Daniel Haggerty in the head, knocking him to the ground. A sailor from USS *Florida*, Third Class Radioman Hopkins, tried to pull the Marine private to safety, but was wounded by the next round. The rest of the squad pulled both men to safety below, but Haggerty soon died of his wounds.

Once Dyer, the commander of 8th Co, learned of Pvt Haggerty’s death, he dispatched Sergeant Tracey Baker to get the Marines back on the roof and engage the

Mexican snipers again. Concerned with the lack of success at the hotel, Dyer acquired permission to go to the rooftop himself. He found the squad again had tried to gain command of the roof with Sgt Baker, but for a second time were driven to cover by the accurate Mexican rifle fire. He discovered the bullets came from a church tower on the corner of Independencia and Zamora, which completely dominated the hotel and prevented the Marines from any reply.

CAPT Rush’s sailors also encountered heavy resistance in the Customs House area and he began to realize that his brigade encountered perhaps more than he anticipated. Information was received noting the possibility of the U.S. force being outnumbered by the Mexican forces. He sent a message at 1230 to Rear Admiral Frank Fletcher, commanding the offshore Navy squadron: “One thousand men with machine guns reported in this vicinity; desultory firing heavy at intervals; hurry *Utah*’s troops.” RADM Fletcher immediately committed his reserve, with orders to USS *Utah*: “Send your battalion ashore; urgent; you may steam in closer.”

The battalion quickly landed, with the bluejackets moving into the Customs House area.

At 1345, Neville received reinforcements in the form of Capt James C. Breckinridge with his 86 Marines from the battleship *Utah*. Neville promptly dispatched Breckinridge to occupy the railroad roundhouse in the marshaling yards. Ten minutes later, Neville ordered his men to cease fire along Independencia to allow a detachment of British forces to enter their consulate. The battle soon quieted to only a few shots being exchanged between the Marines and the Mexican forces, essentially an individual duel of sniper fire between the Marines on the loopholes and their enemy concealed in the streets and houses.

At 1500, a squad of 8th Co relieved Marines from 17th Co in position on the rooftop on the corner of Independencia, with another fire team in support on the street itself. The Marines soon silenced the Mexican sharpshooters and in conjunction with the other Marine detachments on the cross streets controlled the area. “After that,” Berkeley recalled, “we never had a man touched.”

The rest of the day turned into hours of sniper fire, but no further large exchanges of gunfire. There was no sign of the Mexican army approaching from outside



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Anchored in the Vera Cruz harbor (above), the U.S. warships could easily land their Marine detachments and provide continuing support. The church tower (left) clearly shows the effects of USS *Chester's* gunfire in support of U.S. forces receiving sniper fire.

the city and no further orders from CAPT Rush for the Marines.

As afternoon became evening, Neville fixed his defenses for the night. The majority of the force, 1st Bn, 2d Marines, under the command of Maj Berkeley, defended Calle Montesinos and faced the immediate threat from the streets of Vera Cruz. Berkeley's men remained firmly in position in the streets and buildings along Montesinos. Commanded by Capt John A. "Johnny the Hard" Hughes, 15th Co held the most exposed position at the

intersection of Bravo and Montesinos which was the farthest point reached by the Marines. The Marine defense line then extended back to Morales, with Capt Walter N. Hill's 16th Co and Capt Eli T. Fryer's 17th Co extending the line over four city blocks. Capt Dyer's 8th Co held the left flank at Morales.

Maj Reid, with his ship detachments battalion, moved up behind Berkeley's Marines and defended the rail yard and the ground back to the docks. USS *Utah's* leathernecks, under Capt Breckinridge,

defended the Round House, which covered the areas north, while USS *Florida's* detachment under Capt William G. Harllee extended the line from *Utah's* Marines to the beach, defending the ground to the west. With only 150 Marines, Reid's force was stretched far too thin to cover all the ground necessary for an adequate defense. However, several detachments of sailors arrived to bolster the defense.

As night fell over the streets of Vera Cruz, firing died out, and as Neville remembered, the darkness was "quite quiet." Neville ordered an overnight watch of two Marines be posted at the six cross-street intersections, with orders to observe the enemy, but not to fire unless actual Mexican intruders were sighted. The fear of civilian casualties remained a concern for the Marines, but no incidents were reported. Total American losses on the first day were four killed and 20 wounded, including two Marines killed and six wounded.

The Marines and sailors found the sidewalks and warehouse platforms of Vera Cruz unyielding for comfort, but the heady combat of the day had created enough exhaustion for the men to sleep

without much disturbance. Discipline remained strong, despite the temptation of a large amount of alcohol discovered in the railroad warehouses. Even a Marine detachment defending a brewery storehouse exercised restraint.

Shortly after midnight, USS *Chester* arrived from Tampico with Maj Smedley D. Butler, commander of the Panama Bn, and his 10th Co, commanded by First Lieutenant Howard W. Stone. The Marines came ashore immediately, landing on the city docks at 0200 accompanied by a company of USS *Chester's* sailors.

The arrival of Maj Butler's reinforcements allowed Neville to defend ably the ground facing north and west. He deployed Butler's two detachments between the *Utah* and *Florida* Marines, securing the rail yards and reducing concern about the Mexican army threat from the north.

More Marines arrived with the U.S. Navy's Atlantic Fleet at 0445, 22 April. Maj Albertus Catlin landed with the combined ship detachments from the newly arrived battleships USS *New Jersey*, USS *Arkansas*, USS *New Hampshire*, USS *South Carolina* and USS *Vermont*, totaling 300 Marines. Neville used those ship detachments to form a reserve force. Although Neville had little sleep during the night, he finally could rest easily with his force almost doubled in size. Both of his flanks were secure, and he had a strong reserve to meet any threat that daylight might bring.

As the first rays of sunlight broke over the city of Vera Cruz, orders arrived from CAPT Rush simply to hold in place, specifically not to attack the Mexican forces. Negotiations for a cease-fire were being

attempted with Mexican officials still in the town. The U.S. landing parties faced strong resistance and heavy casualties in the Customs House area, and RADM Fletcher wished to avoid shelling the city.

Capt Dyer, with his 8th Co, waited on Montesinos, expecting orders from Neville to move forward. CAPT Rush suddenly appeared and ordered him to go onward immediately. Dyer explained his orders from his regimental commander, but he

Marines using picks and axes
smashed through doors or broke openings
through the adobe walls of the houses,
clearing each floor and then driving snipers
from the rooftops.

reported later CAPT Rush "gave me personal orders to begin my work at once." With the failure to establish a cease-fire, the Marines had no choice but to continue to clear the city. At 0730, 8th Co began its attack alone.

Rush then issued new orders at 0800, instructing Neville to prepare his entire force to attack. The orders cracked with electricity throughout the Marine positions on the streets and warehouses. Preparations were completed quickly. Maj Berkeley's 1st Bn, with 8th Co still attached, would form the main assault force into the city, attacking down each cross street just as it was deployed. The city would be cleared block by block to Calle Ledo, approximately 27 city blocks.

Neville ordered Maj Reid and Maj Butler to advance their Marines and extend the Marine line farther down Montesinos, past Hughes' 15th Co at Bravo and out the

city streets into the sand hills. Maj Catlin's amalgamation of battleship detachments received orders to form in line behind Maj Berkeley's 1st Bn and follow one city block behind Berkeley's advance.

With one flank tied off at the beach and the other on the sand hills, Neville could sweep forward into the city, advancing street by street, and drive any opposing force from the buildings without fear of the Mexican forces getting behind him.

Every Marine advance began with a two-man fire team, taking firing positions without cover, lying prone in the open streets. Those Marines worked together to suppress the enemy snipers, calling out targets and estimating ranges.

Maj Butler's companies attacked into the city, using machine guns for covering fire at the end of the streets, while Marines using picks and axes smashed through doors or broke openings through the adobe walls of the houses, clearing each floor and then driving snipers from the rooftops. "All day we fought like hell through the streets," Butler remembered, "advancing in two or three long lines, driving everybody with a rifle in front of us."

Two of Butler's Marines were wounded in the stomach as they burst into a dwelling. Strangely, the enemy rounds seemed to come from the floor. Butler ordered a volley fired into the flooring and then pulled up the shattered wooden planks. The surprised Marines uncovered two dead Mexican snipers hanging from the crossbeams, victims of the deadly volley.

Maj Berkeley's battalion advanced into the first block of buildings, searching every room in every structure, no matter how small. Initially, the Marines pounded on each door demanding entry, but found many of the inhabitants were too frightened to answer. If no answer was forthcoming from inside, the door was flattened, and entry was made. Every male inhabitant was searched, and if any weapons were found, they were destroyed and the owner taken to a holding facility at the Terminal station.

At 1000, the leathernecks of 8th Co reached the central plaza of the city, where they joined USS *Utah's* bluejackets. The area of the plaza was still under heavy fire from the southwest, and each house still had to be cleared. Capt Dyer ordered Pvts Rufus Percy and August G. Ebel to break down the door of a house on the south side of Calle Benito Juarez. Both Marines came under heavy fire and were

U.S. sailors in the landing party stand guard at the front door of the Naval Academy, which had been bombarded by USS *Chester* and USS *Prairie*.



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U.S. Navy landing party bluejackets take a break on the sidewalk as other U.S. sailors can be seen pulling a cannon down the road.

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wounded seriously, with a bullet entering Percy's brain while Ebel was struck in the back. The two Marines remained exposed to the continued sniping, unable to pull themselves to safety. Every man paused; knowing that to go into the street risked the same fate as Percy and Ebel.

An unknown sailor and Pvt Lee Mahr leapt into the open road and used a stretcher to pull Percy away from the sniper bullets. Seconds later, Corpsman John H. Hendrickson, with Pvts Mike Cohen and James C. Leddick, did the same for Ebel. "In view of the previous effect of the fire directed at this point, of the constant close striking of bullets whenever a man crossed the middle line of the street," Capt Dyer later asked that the courage of the rescuers be mentioned in orders and "their bravery suitable recognized." Pvt Percy later died of his wounds.

By 1030, the companies of Hughes, Hill and Fryer reached Calle Benito Juarez, clearing approximately 18 city blocks, while 8th Co moved more quickly along Cinco de Mayo and Independencia, reaching the target street, Calle Lerdo, and liberating the Americans under siege at the Hotel Diligentias.

Reid, with leathernecks from USS *Utah* and *Florida*, kept pace with the battalion advance. A fierce fight erupted unex-

pectedly when Capt Breckinridge's *Utah* Marines entered a corner lunchroom. Pvts Jeremiah G. Peoples and Harry E. Holsin went down wounded, and two Mexican defenders were killed. After the initial gun battle, six more Mexicans surrendered to the Marines, who then secured the building. Breckinridge noticed the Mexicans were armed primarily with American hunting rifles and a few German army rifles.

The Advance Base Brigade commander, Colonel John A. Lejeune, also arrived that morning, 22 April, with 1st Marines, direct from Tampico. LtCol Charles D. "Squeeze" Long commanded the regiment, composed of two infantry battalions, 1st Bn under Maj Charles S. Hill and 2d Bn led by Capt Hiram I. "Hiking Hiram" Bearss. An artillery battalion under Maj Robert H. Dunlap completed the regiment. At 2200, the lead elements of 1st Marines began landing on Pier No. 4. Attached to the regiment was 9th Co, led by Capt Eugene P. Fortson, and Marine detachments from the battleships *Minnesota* and *Michigan*. Lejeune gave Long the task of pushing through the rest of the city, which Long later wrote was the "worst in the city as it contained the red light district."

The 556 leathernecks of 1st Marines

were ready to join the fight after hearing the reports from shore that day. Capt Logan Feland assembled his noncommissioned officers of 2d Co aboard ship and briefed them of the situation on shore, including the casualties already suffered by the Marines engaged in the house-to-house fighting. Each man in the company was issued 120 rounds of ammunition and two days rations, including the hated hard-tack biscuits. Once ashore, the regiment massed in the railway-station forecourt, where they greeted leathernecks from 2d Marines guarding the prisoners from the earlier house clearings.

Editor's note: See the July issue of Leatherneck for the conclusion of the "Marines at Vera Cruz."

Author's bio: J. Michael Miller is Special Projects Historian, World War I at Marine Corps History Division and is engaged in writing a multi-volume centennial history of the Marine Corps in WW I. The events of Vera Cruz are the starting point for that definitive work. He has served more than 30 years working in the Marine Corps historical program, including Director of the Marine Corps Archives.



Colonel Ray Kelly, USMC to NYPD

“Big Apple” Police Chief Applied Corps’ Lessons

By CWO-4 Randy Gaddo, USMC (Ret)

“Virtually everything I learned about leadership I learned in the Marine Corps,” reflected retired Marine Colonel Ray Kelly just days before relinquishing command of about 35,000 police officers and more than 15,000 civilian staff in the New York City Police Department.

On Jan. 1, 2014, when Kelly turned over leadership of the largest urban police force in the nation, he retained a unique distinction: He was the first person ever to hold the post of New York City police commissioner during two separate tenures for two different mayors. He was the only person with that distinction until newly elected New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio appointed William Bratton as the new police commissioner. Bratton also had served as commissioner from 1994 to 1996 under Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

Kelly served under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg from 2002 to 2013 and under Mayor David N. Dinkins from 1992 to 1994. During Kelly’s 47-year career with the NYPD, he was in 25 different commands before being appointed commissioner the first time. He is the longest-serving police commissioner in New York City’s history.

It may seem odd that for a cop with such credentials, police work was not his first career choice; from birth, Kelly was destined to be a Marine.

“From the age of 8 or 9, I knew I would go into the Corps. I had no choice,” noted the slim and fit 72-year-old Vietnam veteran. The youngest of five children, his three older brothers all were Marines. “They would not have let me do anything else; they’d have given me Indian burns if I hadn’t,” he said, jokingly.

He was youngest by seven years, so his Marine brothers would return home on leave in uniform, bringing with them Marine Corps memorabilia. “I remember

as a kid reading the ‘Guidebook for Marines.’ You know, that little green book?” he reminisced. “I still have a couple copies of it.”

His brothers were not career Marines. Ray was the only one who would go the distance. After three years on active duty, he transitioned to the Reserve, for a total of 30 years.

he reinforced my interest in the Marine Corps. I’ve followed his life, and he actually wrote a book about growing up on the west side of Manhattan where I grew up. His brother sent me a copy of the book.”

In the end, Kelly figured out a way to have both careers at the same time. Both emerged when he was in college.

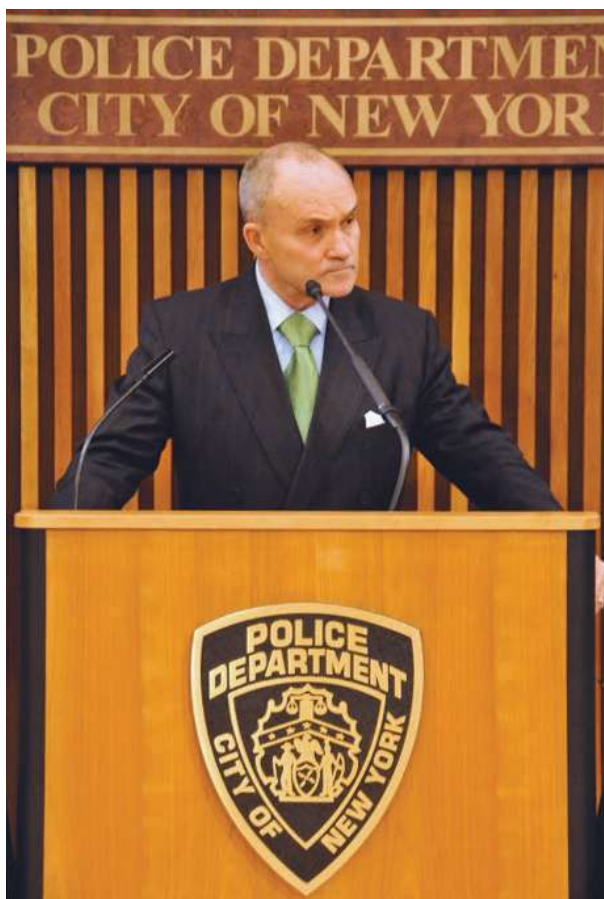
The native New Yorker was raised in Manhattan and Sunnyside, Queens. He was attending Manhattan College and working as a stock boy at Macy’s when he saw an ad for the police cadet program and joined the inaugural class for three years. “It was a part-time job in the police department, and it was used as a tool to attract college students to police work,” Kelly recalled. In his case, the tool worked because he would come to realize he enjoyed police work.

“It was a velvet trap,” he said in an online article published on Veteransadvantage.com. “Responding to calls on a 4-12 [p.m.] tour has all the elements that make it one of the most exciting—and rewarding—jobs.”

The idea of a Marine Corps career also emerged during college “and grew on me,” he admitted. He said he joined the Air Force ROTC program because it was the only available elective choice besides another class he didn’t want to take. “I never intended to join the Air Force,” he confided.

In 1962, between his junior and senior years in college, he attended the 12-week Officer Candidates School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. It was a bit of culture shock. “I had never done anything like that,” he recalled. “It was very difficult, and in those days the drill instructors were old school, a little different than it is now in terms of physical contact.”

He remembered that running was challenging through the hills of Camp Upshur, where he and his fellow candidates spent the first half of the program, after which



Retired Marine Reserve Col Raymond W. Kelly, a Vietnam War veteran, served the city of New York for 47 years, twice as the police commissioner.

He remembered a Marine influence from another place: the Boy Scouts. “The drill master in my Scout group was a Marine, a Korean War veteran,” he noted, pulling the memory from his days growing up in Manhattan. “He was really squared away, and I’m pretty certain he had been a drill instructor. He was a good guy, and

COURTESY OF RAY KELLY

he said they marched down to the main side Quantico base for the remaining six weeks. The Hill Trail and the Hill Trail Extension were two infamous courses he recalled. "I don't know if they still exist now, but I remember that they were tough."

In order to get into the police cadet program, he had to pass the test to become a police officer. He actually served in that capacity for a brief time before he entered the Corps after graduating from college in 1963 with a commission to second lieutenant.

He shipped out to The Basic School (TBS) at Quantico and went on to become an artillery officer going to Camp Pendleton, Calif., with the 11th Marine Regiment. He deployed from Pendleton to the Republic of Vietnam for 12 months with 2d Battalion, 1st Marines.

"There were a lot of difficult days," he told Veteransadvantage.com about his Vietnam tour, noting that some of the most difficult came during an engagement, coincidentally called Operation New York, from Feb. 27 to March 3, 1966. That was an operation against the Viet Cong east of Phu Bai involving U.S. military and Army of Vietnam forces.

"We trapped a VC battalion on a peninsula," he said in the Veteransadvantage.com article. He described how his battalion encountered heavy resistance as they tried to rout the enemy. Kelly said that he witnessed the courage of young Marines who exposed themselves to enemy fire to go to the aid of fellow Marines. "To put someone else's life before your own personal safety embodies the essence of courage," the article attributed him saying.

"I still use the lessons I learned in the Corps every day," he said, stating that the



Police Commissioner Ray Kelly was the Grand Marshal of the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade, March 17, 2010. (Photo courtesy of Ray Kelly)

lessons have formed the foundation of his career or rather careers.

After release from three years of active duty, Kelly joined the Marine Corps Reserve and served with the 6th Communications Bn in New York, starting in 1966. At the same time, he started working for the NYPD. Not known for half-stepping, Kelly graduated from the New York City Police Academy with the highest combined average for academics, physical achievement and marksmanship. About the same time, he returned to college, at-

tending law school at night.

Over the years, Kelly has achieved an impressive curriculum vitae: a B.B.A. (Bachelor of Business Administration) from Manhattan College, a J.D. (Juris Doctor) from St. John's University School of Law, an LL.M. (Master of Laws) from New York University Graduate School of Law and an M.P.A. (Master of Public Administration) from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He also has a cornucopia of honorary degrees from a dozen colleges and universities.



COURTESY OF RAY KELLY



COURTESY OF RAY KELLY

In 1992, Mayor David N. Dinkins (above left) appointed Ray Kelly as the New York City police commissioner where Kelly served for more than a year. Then, in 2002, Kelly returned to his position as the city's police commissioner, reappointed by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg (above right), becoming the first person to hold the post for a second, separate tenure.



COURTESY OF RAY KELLY

As commissioner, Ray Kelly oversaw the operations of the largest police force in the country and promoted coordination with numerous police agencies to provide a safe living environment. In this photograph, he is chairing a meeting with the Northeast Corridor Coalition, which meets to help secure the Amtrak rail line between New York and Washington, D.C.

Kelly's career outside the NYPD has been equally impressive, including senior managing director of global corporate security at Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc.; commissioner of the U.S. Customs Service; and undersecretary for enforcement at the U.S. Treasury Department where he supervised the department's enforcement bureaus including the U.S. Customs Service, U.S. Secret Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. He also held posts in INTERPOL, the world's largest international police organization.

During those assignments, he earned numerous prestigious awards, including the Alexander Hamilton Medal for Exceptional Service and the Exceptionally Meritorious Service Commendation from President Bill Clinton. The latter was awarded to Kelly after serving as director of the International Police Monitors in Haiti, a U.S.-led force responsible for ending human rights abuses and establishing an interim police force there.

His background paved the way for noteworthy meritorious service in his recently completed post as NYC police commissioner. Some of his accomplishments as

the commissioner include establishing the first counterterrorism bureau of any municipal police department in the country, establishing a new global intelligence program and stationing New York City detectives in 11 foreign cities, lowering NYC crime rates by 40 percent under his tenure and no further terrorist attacks occurring in NYC.



COURTESY OF RAY KELLY

As a Marine, 1stLt Ray Kelly served a one-year combat tour with 2/1 in Vietnam beginning in 1966.

Kelly returned for his second tour as NYC police commissioner just after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. When Mayor Bloomberg offered him the opportunity, he didn't hesitate. "I wanted to get back in the game," he said in a CBS interview. "After the events of 9/11, I felt a little bit helpless not being in government."

Among the many antiterrorism measures he implemented was the first counterterrorism bureau of any municipal police department in the country: 4,000 cameras monitored by police officers observe life in the Big Apple minute to minute. NYPD police officers who answered directly to Kelly were stationed at nine countries outside the United States, assuming responsibilities for counterterrorism that normally were considered a federal-level function.

"Not everybody was happy about that," Kelly noted with a shrug of his shoulders during the CBS interview, addressing critics who said he was overreaching his authority. "That's life—you have to do the things that you think are right. This is a total-immersion job. You either do it, or you don't do it."

At least 16 potential terrorist attacks on New York were thwarted under his watch.

Below left: After leaving active duty, Ray Kelly went back to school and also became an NYPD patrol officer. He rose from cadet to commissioner.

Below right: New York City Police Commissioner Ray Kelly discusses the city's public transportation with Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano at NYPD Headquarters in Manhattan, Feb. 18, 2009.



COURTESY OF RAY KELLY



PA3 ANNIE R. BERLIN, USCG

Kelly said he plans to be on the speakers' circuit after leaving his commissioner's post. His new career path also has led to a visiting fellowship at the Council on Foreign Relations, an independent, non-partisan membership organization that is widely known as a think tank and publisher focused on foreign-policy choices facing the United States and other countries. His focus will be on counterterrorism, cybersecurity and other national-security issues.

Through it all, his Marine Corps background and experience have formed the foundation of his day-to-day approach.

"I have the 14 Marine Corps Leadership Traits taped to a page divider in my scheduler on my desk, and every day I look at it," he said. "I don't necessarily focus on it every day, but it is there, and I find that

it's a good reminder of how to do things: with integrity, with unselfishness, with courage and so on. It sort of centers me to go through the list and say, 'That's the way I should be; those are the leadership traits I should exhibit.' "

Kelly keeps close ties with the Corps and said he believes it is as good today as it has ever been, if not better. "The Marines that I meet, and I meet a lot of them, are smart; they're in shape; they're technically proficient and know their jobs," he asserted. "I have contact with the Commandant and the generals, and I'm very impressed with them. In my mind, there's no other service like the Marine Corps in terms of teaching you discipline and leadership skills and the things that you need to succeed in this complex and demanding world that we live in.

"It's not for everybody. It's clear that the Marine Corps is not a service for every individual. But for people who want to test themselves, to challenge themselves and see what they can do in some very demanding circumstances, it's the service for them because if you succeed, I think it gives you a lasting confidence and the ability to handle just about anything that comes up."

In spite of his many scholastic degrees, the basic lessons Ray Kelly learned in the Corps remain at the forefront. "You could teach hours and hours of courses on these things, but the leadership traits sum it up," he noted. "You use your Marine Corps training every day, but you're not necessarily conscious of it. The Marine Corps has a terrific way of teaching it and giving you fundamentals that lay such a foundation that it stays with you. ... It seems to work for me."



COURTESY OF RAY KELLY

Commissioner Ray Kelly and two NYPD Cricket league members celebrate the cricket league, which was formed by the New York City Police Department for teenagers from the Caribbean and South Asian-American communities in New York City to develop better relations between New York police and rising-immigrant communities in NYC.

Editor's note: Leatherneck appreciates the support of former deputy director of the Marine Corps Association and great friend, retired Col Lou Piantadosi, in making the interview with Col Ray Kelly possible.

Author's bio: 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 is a contributing editor for Leatherneck. He also is the winner of the 2014 Marine Corps Heritage Foundation's General Roy S. Geiger Award for best aviation feature published in 2013.



In the Highest Tradition

Edited by R. R. Keene and Tina Pearce

Corpsman Dashed Through Enemy Fire, Shielded Wounded With His Body



“I didn’t think, I just reacted,” said Hospital Corpsman Third Class Zackery Penner, recalling the events of late June 2012, while serving with Company B, 1st Battalion, Eighth Marine Regiment in Afghanistan.

For his actions, Penner was awarded the Silver Star, March 19, 2014, during a ceremony at the U.S. Naval Hospital, Pensacola, Fla.

On June 22, 2012, with approximately 30 days left in country, Penner’s platoon encountered Afghan insurgents on the first day of a seven-day operation, and a Marine was severely wounded on a nearby rooftop. Without hesitation, Penner ran to the Marine while exposing himself to enemy fire coming from 50 meters away.

With rounds impacting around them, Penner treated and evacuated the Marine. Although the Marine did not survive, Penner’s actions reflected the relationship and camaraderie shared between Marines and U.S. Navy corpsmen.

“Marines love their corpsmen, and I love being with Marines,” said Penner. “I wanted to be a corpsman because I wanted to help Marines.”

Penner was able to help a Marine again the very next day.

While on a partnered patrol with Afghan soldiers, insurgents opened fire.

When a Marine and an Afghan soldier sustained wounds, Penner ran more than 100 meters through enemy fire to quickly establish a casualty collection point behind a wall. When the squad began receiving enemy fire from the rear, Penner shielded the casualties with his body until evacuation aircraft arrived. The casualties did not survive, and Penner fortunately was not wounded despite putting himself in harm’s way.

“It never crossed my mind that I wouldn’t be hurt,” said Penner. “It’s actually hard to remember the events of those two days in detail now, because I just reacted.”

After returning from the seven-day



HM3 Zackery Penner, a corpsman with Naval Hospital Pensacola, is awarded the Silver Star by MajGen Raymond C. Fox, CG, II MEF, March 19, for actions while serving with 1/8 in Afghanistan during the summer of 2012.

operation, Penner immediately contacted his wife.

“I couldn’t tell her what happened because of [operational security], but I wanted her to know I was OK,” he said. Penner also called the family of the Marine he evacuated from the rooftop.

“He was my best friend, and I wanted to talk to them,” said Penner before trailing off.

Major General Raymond C. Fox, Commanding General, II Marine Expeditionary Force, traveled to Pensacola to present the award. He said: “The relationship the Marine Corps has had with corpsmen for a long time is what saves a lot of Marines, and [Marines] cherish that relationship incredibly. Every one of us should aspire to do what he did when called upon.”

After returning from the combat de-

ployment, Penner was transferred to Naval Hospital Pensacola where he currently works in the emergency medical department. He said being Stateside has given him a new perspective.

“The stress of working in the emergency room does not compare to the stress of combat,” said Penner.

Penner also is taking college classes and is planning to continue his career in the Navy. He is considering the Medical Enlisted Commissioning Program.

Asked how he felt about being awarded the Silver Star, Penner replied, “It’s humbling. I was in the right place at the wrong time, but any of the Marines would have done the same thing.”

Jason Bortz
PAO, Naval Hospital Pensacola, Fla.

Squad Leader Who Led Under Fire Awarded Bronze Star



Corporal Brandon K. Moore was awarded the Bronze Star with combat "V" on March 14, 2014, during a ceremony at Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan.

Moore was recognized for heroic action during a firefight with enemy combatants while deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"Moore's dedication to his Marines on that deployment was unquestionable," said First Sergeant Cristo Gomez with 1st Battalion, Eighth Marine Regiment, currently assigned to 4th Marines, Third Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force under the unit deployment program. "He is a humble, quiet man who puts a lot of heart and soul into preparing his Marines for any contingency."

On June 23, 2012, during a clearing mission in the Nahr-e Saraj District of Helmand province, Afghanistan, Moore's squad was pinned down by machine-gun fire and suffered two urgent casualties.

Disregarding his personal safety, Moore immediately moved more than 100 meters under heavy fire to reach the wounded. He then calmly and clearly reported the situation and the enemy positions, coordinated the casualty evacuation and simultaneously directed his squad's actions against the enemy.

In spite of the intensity of enemy fire, Moore repeatedly exposed himself to gunfire in order to identify and mark enemy positions for close air support, assess the effects of fires and adjust artillery fire onto the enemy.

When an enemy force maneuvered behind Moore's squad, he quickly worked to coordinate additional fires against the new threat. Through Moore's skill and leadership, as well as his expert control of fires and coordination with adjacent units, the enemy suffered multiple casualties and was forced to withdraw.

"Moore was given the opportunity to lead his squad," said Major General H. Stacy Clardy III, Commanding General, Third Marine Division. "He stepped up and got it done."

"I don't think I deserve it," said Moore. "The citation and summary of action made it sound like I did everything on my own. Everyone from my squad and the supporting elements helped. I wish I could [share this award], so that other Marines can be recognized for some of the extraordinary things they did."

The Marines who served with Moore said the medal reflects both his actions and the lasting impact he will have on the unit for years to come, according to 1stSgt Gomez.



LCP1 DIAMOND PELEN

Cpl Brandon K. Moore, right, is presented the Bronze Star with combat "V" by MajGen H. Stacy Clardy III, CG, 3dMarDiv, March 14, during a ceremony at Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan. "Moore was given the opportunity to lead his squad," said MajGen Clardy. "He stepped up and got it done." Moore is a rifleman with 1/8 on Okinawa.

"I feel it is very well-deserved for the situation that he and his platoon were in during that particular operation," Gomez said. "He has a great reputation in the company as a skilled warfighter who takes care of his men. His calm demeanor, extraordinary leadership and skillful execution of his duties under fire have left a mark on the company and battalion."

LCP1 Cedric Haller
Combat Correspondent, III MEF

New York Marine Honored For Heroics After Harlem Explosion

Sergeant Rasheem Thomas was honored at the Marine Corps-Law Enforcement Foundation's 19th Annual Semper Fidelis Gala, March 20, for helping to save a man trapped in a van beneath a collapsed building in Harlem, N.Y.

Thomas, a native New Yorker assigned to Transportation and Support Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 2, Second



CPL KRISTINE E. MORENO

Sgt Rasheem Thomas meets Joe Kinkade for the first time since rescuing him after the Harlem gas leak explosion on March 12. Thomas was saluted for his heroics at the Marine Corps-Law Enforcement Foundation annual gala, which was held on March 20 at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City.

Marine Logistics Group, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., happened to be in town for a visit when a gas leak explosion occurred.

Immediately following the March 12 explosion in Harlem, which reportedly leveled two buildings, killed eight and injured dozens more, Thomas left the building he was in to see what happened.

Down the street he found a van with the windows blown out that was covered in rubble. The driver was able to get out of the vehicle and let Thomas know that his friend was trapped in the passenger seat and injured. The door would not open, and the seatbelt would not release.

Thomas, along with bystanders, began clearing rubble, trying to pull the passen-

ger from the roof of the vehicle, which had collapsed and split open. After several minutes of clearing debris, Thomas said he realized they were not getting anywhere and found a knife to cut the seatbelt and pull the passenger out.

Upon the arrival of emergency response teams, the passenger was taken to receive medical care. Thomas had not seen or heard anything about the man he rescued until the night of the gala when he met Joe Kinkade, the passenger he pulled to safety.

"I felt obligated to help," said Thomas. "I'm absolutely humbled because the situation could have been a lot worse than it was. It's a tragedy, my condolences go to the families and friends of those people who lost their lives during this incident,

but this situation is a lot bigger than just me or any other persons."

Thomas said he was glad Joe Kinkade was safe.

Thomas also was reunited with Master Gunnery Sergeant Theodore Grell, who was the staff noncommissioned officer in charge of Recruiting Substation Manhattan, Recruiting Station New York at the time Thomas enlisted. Grell said Thomas is "an example of exactly what the Marine Corps is about. His actions show the type of caliber of Marine and citizen he is."

Thomas has deployed to Afghanistan twice in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Cpl Kristin E. Moreno
PAO, 1st MCD

Personal Combat Awards

The awards records in the Marine Corps' Award Processing System (APS) and Improved Awards Processing System were used to populate this list, which reflects personal combat awards from the start of the global war on terrorism presented to Marines and sailors serving with U.S. Marine Corps forces only. This list may not reflect certain personal combat awards processed outside of either system and/or approved by another branch of service. Any questions on the content should be submitted in writing to the Personal Awards Section at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Manpower Management Division, MMMA-2, 2008 Elliott Rd., Quantico, VA 22134.

The following awards were announced in March:



Bronze Star With Combat "V"

Capt Lucas A. Balke,
2d Battalion, Seventh Marine
Regiment, First Marine
Division

1stSgt Jeremy W. Barone, 2/8,
2dMarDiv

LtCol Kevin E. Clark, Command
Element, II Marine Expeditionary Force
(Forward)

Capt Derek J. Herrera, 1st Marine
Special Operations Bn (MSOB), U.S.
Marine Corps Forces Special Operations
Command (MARSOC)



Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal With Combat "V"

SSgt Edward L. Asher III,
II Marine Expeditionary Force
Headquarters Group, II MEF

MSGt Kenneth M. Blankenship II,
MHG, II MEF

Capt Joseph T. Buffamante, 3/7,
1stMarDiv

SSgt Matthew T. Cummings,
1st MSOB, MARSOC

SSgt Mark W. Damm, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC

HMC Ricardo Gutierrez, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC

Capt William E. Harley, 2d Marines,
2dMarDiv

SSgt James C. Jones, 2d Marines,
2dMarDiv

Capt Robert S. Long, MHG, II MEF
GySgt Nathaniel S. Maurer, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC

Capt Nicholas J. McGrath, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC

1stLt Ian T. McKechnie, 2d Marines,
2dMarDiv

SSgt Isaac J. Moore, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC

Sgt Anthony J. Musselman, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC

Cpl Michael T. Narron, 2d Marines,
2dMarDiv

HM2 Richard D. Neading, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC

Sgt Jeremy S. Newman, 1st MSOB,
MARSOC

GySgt Colt H. Schermer, 1st MSOB,
MARSOC

SSgt Drew T. Sears, 1st MSOB,
MARSOC

SSgt Jonathan R. Smith, 1st MSOB,
MARSOC

Maj John E. Vaquerano, 1st MSOB,
MARSOC



Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal With Combat "V"

SSgt Ryan C. Alcorn, MHG,
II MEF

Cpl Daniel A. Anderson, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC

1stLt Jacob T. Burton, 3/7, 1stMarDiv

Sgt Dustin W. Carlton, 2d Marines,
2dMarDiv

Sgt Anthony R. Custance, MHG,
II MEF

Cpl Joey R. Davis, 2d Marines,
2dMarDiv

Sgt Caleb H. Ducworth, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC

LCpl Caleb L. Erickson, 1/9, 2dMarDiv

Sgt Gerald W. Foxx, 2d Law
Enforcement Bn, MHG, II MEF

Sgt Michael H. Gnoffo, MHG,
II MEF

Sgt Cory A. Loeper, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC

HM2 David C. Noto, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC

Cpl Joseph M. Nunez, 2d Marines,
2dMarDiv

Sgt Raymond A. Rivera-Rodriguez,
1st MSOB, MARSOC

Cpl Reagan C. Selman, MHG, II MEF

Sgt Arne R. Smith, MHG, II MEF

Sgt Jason A. Smith, 1st MSOB,
MARSOC

HM2 Jordan M. Wilkins, 2d MSOB,
MARSOC



From left: Janis Albuquerque, wife of CWO-2 Michael D. Fay, USMC (Ret); the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen James F. Amos; CWO-2 Fay; Robert Bates; and Bates' wife, Brynn Bates, pause in front of diptych paintings by Fay at the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Ball, March 22.



Marine Artists Capture War's Realities

Story and photos by Clare A. Guerrero

Then-Corporal Robert Bates was sitting outside a Barnes & Noble bookstore near Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., doing pencil sketches in 2011, when he met Suzanne Dana, the chairwoman of the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Ball Committee. His brilliant renderings of wounded warriors and Marines in the element of combat impressed Dana. After exchanging a few brief words with Bates, Dana promised to someday assist in showcasing his work.

Three years later, Bates was surprised by an e-mail from his friend and mentor Chief Warrant Officer 2 Michael D. Fay, USMC (Ret), informing him that their artwork was selected for a display at the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) Ball that took place March 22 at the Washington Hilton in the District of Columbia.

The exhibit, titled "Portraits of War," featured selections from former Official



A painting by Robert Bates from his December 2012 embed, titled "These Walls," depicts the lone silhouette of an Afghan police officer standing guard near a sandbag fortification.

Marine Corps Combat Artist CWO-2 Fay and Robert Bates. The artwork recalled scenes from Iraq and Afghanistan and the aftermath—the personal battles of wounded and injured military personnel undergoing rehabilitation.

The event also showcased the musical talent of Lieutenant Colonel Mike Corrado, who, accompanied by members of "The President's Own" United States Marine Band, performed his single "Still in the Fight."

The featured art of Bates, Fay and Corrado was a microcosmic display of the tight network of Marines. Dynamic sketching duo Bates and Fay became acquainted in 2011 after Bates contacted Fay in hopes of obtaining information on an artist-in-residence position at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va. The two artists share a similar journalistic sketch-style and later worked together on Fay's concept exhibit "The Joe Bonham Project."

Both also won awards from the Marine



The sergeant major of Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., SgtMaj Angela M. Maness, and SgtMaj Carl W. Bratton, USMC (Ret) admire CWO-2 Fay's diptych painting, "Wounded Warriors, Corporal Marcus Dandrea and Sergeant Zach Stinson With Children."

Corps Heritage Foundation in April 2013: Fay received the Colonel Robert D. Heintz Jr. Award for feature writing and Bates was awarded the Colonel John W. Thomason Jr. Award for his artwork.

Fay and Mike Corrado met while mobilized with the II Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Fallujah, Iraq, in 2005. At the time, Corrado, then a major, was in charge of Headquarters and Service Company, said Fay. "He was a musician. I was an artist. We used to joke that we

were the [only] two creative guys in the entire Marine Corps."

Fay and Corrado reconnected several years later after Fay had done a series of articles for *The New York Times* called "Still in the Fight." The series focused on three wounded Marines who were receiving treatment at the Hunter Holmes McGuire Medical Center in Richmond, Va. At Fay's urging, Corrado wrote a song and produced a music video based on Fay's "Still in the Fight" project.

The "Still in the Fight" music video, which was played during the NMCRS Ball, mapped the inspiring stories of heroic action and recovery of medically retired Cpl Kyle Carpenter, Master Sergeant William "Spanky" Gibson Jr. and U.S. Navy SEAL, Lieutenant Jason Redman. The video showed clips of these warriors overcoming their wounds and continuing on with daily life—such as undergoing therapy, learning to walk again, working out and spending time with their families.

The event's guest speaker was Cpl Carpenter whose heroic story was largely communicated through Fay's sketches. At press time, Carpenter is rumored to be a possible candidate for the Medal of Honor.

Fay met Carpenter while working on his "Still in the Fight" project for *The New York Times* in 2011. According to Fay, Carpenter was one of the most profoundly wounded of all his subjects and also was the inspiration for his concept "The Joe Bonham Project." While serving in the Marjah District in Afghanistan's Helmand province, Carpenter used his body to absorb the blast of a grenade in order to protect a Marine standing nearby. Carpenter lost teeth, an eye and more than half of his face. His arm was shattered, and black scars were tattooed into his skin from the gunpowder in the grenade. Despite his injuries, Carpenter retained an indomitable spirit.

Among Fay's featured artwork at the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Ball was a sketch he did of Carpenter after the Marine had endured 30 surgeries in nine weeks. The piece was titled "Scars."

Also, keeping with the witness art theme



Cpl Kyle Carpenter stands with CWO-2 Fay's portrait of him, titled "Lance Corporal Kyle Carpenter, Early Recovery at McGuire VA Hospital."



Cpl Carpenter's parents, Robert and Robin Carpenter, display the sketch of their son. To their left is the artist, CWO-2 Fay.



A 2012 painting, titled "Sergeant David Adams" by CWO-2 Fay, was one of the many striking images on display at the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Ball VIP reception.

was Robert Bates' artwork from his December 2012 embed in Afghanistan called "Sketching the Drawdown."

For 10 days, Bates traveled from base to station in Afghanistan, documenting the situation and challenges Marines face during the drawdown.

His three contributions at the art exhibit were paintings and sketches titled "Turret Gunner," "Dismount" and "These Walls."

According to Bates, both "Turret Gunner" and "Dismount" were meant to communicate the uncomfortable and uncertain living conditions for Marines.

In "Dismount," a lance corporal on a patrol is depicted carrying a heavy pack containing a THOR, a portable device that jams improvised explosive devices using radio frequencies. The grimace on the lance corporal's face clearly signals the miserable conditions, and that the threat is out there and we are at war.

Bates said that with "Turret Gunner," anyone who knows what it is like to endure extreme weather conditions can relate to this sketch. Bates also noted that his subject, a lance corporal turret gunner in a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle (MRAP), maintains a heroic upright

stature despite the miserable weather conditions. "He has a scarf over his face to protect his face from the cold wind and sand," Bates said. He added that it may be the case that the gunner sits in the turret for several hours at a time.

Bates said that from his perspective, the most interesting piece in the display was a painting called "These Walls." He described the uncomfortable moment right before snapping the photo which served as a model for the painting. It was when he saw the lone silhouette of an Afghan police officer standing post near a sandbag fortification.

"We were walking out of there, going back to the MRAP, and I didn't have a weapon with me ... I felt kind of vulnerable ... knowing that there were these 'Green-on-Blue' [incidents] that were not very uncommon. ... That's why I called [the painting] 'These Walls,'" continued Bates. "Because even though these are our allies, there are still these walls that divide us mentally. It's really supposed to emphasize being divided, culturally and religiously, and to have that tension between us and them, even though we're supposed to be working together."

Fay's Joe Bonham Project was exhibited at the University of Colorado-Denver's Fulginiti Pavilion for Bioethics and Humanities from April through June 12, and in 2015, the Joe Bonham Project will be featured at the National Veterans Art Museum in Chicago.

While flourishing as a student at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, Bates continues to gain notoriety as a freelance illustrator for media outlets such as the *New York Observer* and *Sports Illustrated*.

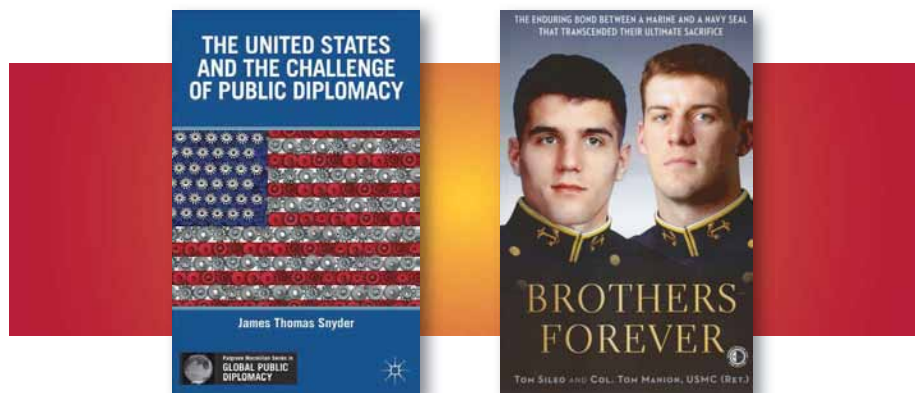
LtCol Corrado serves as the executive officer at the Wounded Warrior Regiment on Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., and continues to perform and compose songs dedicated to Wounded Warriors so as to promote the values of "Still in the Fight."

Regardless of where barriers might exist, artists like Bates, Fay and Corrado continue to play a special role in the military community and society at large by providing insight and awareness through their work, whether it concerns wounded Marines or the portraits of war.



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.



THE UNITED STATES AND THE CHALLENGE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY. By James Thomas Snyder. Published by Palgrave Macmillan. 215 pages. Stock #0230390706. Not held in stock. Order through The MARINE Shop's Amazon store found at www.marineshop.net. (Select "Digital Bookstore on Amazon" under the "Books" heading.)

"Public diplomacy is the last three feet, in the words of Edward R. Murrow, the faith's first and last great apostle. Policy means nothing if it cannot coherently reach the public. And I have seen whole departments, entire bureaucracies, and international organizations back up, stall, stutter, and collapse behind those last three feet."

—James Thomas Snyder

James Snyder writes that "The United States and the Challenge of Public Diplomacy" is "about those last three feet."

"Public diplomacy and our nation's reputation are made and broken in that space," according to Snyder. "Yet most of those worrying about policy have never done this work and don't know how to do it, or how difficult it is to do well," writes Snyder.

Snyder addresses these issues in a style that reads like part history, part personal memoir, and depicts the good, the bad, and the ugly side of U.S. personal diplomacy as he has seen it unfold over the past decade.

Why is it important?

The 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Charles C. Krulak, coined

the phrase the "strategic corporal" in an article about the "Three-Block War" published in the January 1999 *Leatherneck*, which was based upon experiences during deployments to Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia. Gen Krulak's position was that "the inescapable lesson of Somalia and of other recent operations, whether humanitarian assistance, peace-keeping, or traditional warfighting, is that their outcome may hinge on decisions made by small unit leaders, and by actions taken at the lowest level."

So it is this "strategic corporal," who more often than not, will be the first American to engage indigenous people in those critical "last three feet" that Snyder writes about. Snyder echoes Gen Krulak's call for continued professional training at "the lowest level."

Snyder says that his book is more about training, technique, technology and organization than the priorities in audiences, appropriate "messaging," and strategic approaches that seemingly dominate most political communications today.

During the recent conflicts in the Middle East, the State Department's budget constraints limited engagement activities, which then were of necessity executed by the U.S. military and our coalition partners. The slogan "every servicemember a diplomat" is taken seriously.

The two Battles of Fallujah in western Iraq stand out in contrast as examples of what may be accomplished with deadly force and by "soft power" of counterinsurgency tactics (COIN), which employs

personal diplomacy and key leader engagement at the tribal level. The Marines in Anbar province convinced the tribal leaders to join forces with them to expel al-Qaida in 2006 and 2007.

"America operates in a spotlight, under a microscope, in a global fishbowl, every day watched by six billion eyes," writes Snyder. "The last three feet is really the strategic territory in public diplomacy, and we have to understand that human terrain."

Snyder concludes that understanding ourselves is probably the most overlooked patch of that high ground. "We need to understand ourselves better than anyone else before we begin to 'talk to the world,'" and then we need to engage the world—in those last three feet.

"The United States and the Challenge of Public Diplomacy" should be a part of every professional reading list ... from that strategic corporal up to his commanding general.

Maj Robert T. Jordan, USMC (Ret)

Author's bio: Retired Marine Maj Jordan is a past Leatherneck associate editor, former managing editor of Sea Power, and past editor-at-large for Homeland Defense Journal magazines. He currently is a contract senior faculty instructor in the Public Affairs Leadership Department of the Defense Information School on Fort Meade, Md., and co-author of the book "Is America Safe?"

BROTHERS FOREVER: The Enduring Bond Between a Marine and a Navy SEAL That Transcended Their Ultimate Sacrifice. By Tom Sileo and Col Tom Manion, USMC (Ret). Published by Da Capo Press. 269 pages. Stock #0306822377. \$23.40 MCA Members. \$25.99 Regular Price.

"Brothers Forever" is the heartrending account of a bond between two U.S. Naval Academy roommates, their friendship, and their heroic transcendence—far beyond the grave. Travis Manion, the Marine son of one of the authors, and his close friend Brendan Looney, who became a Navy SEAL, were those roommates, and

their story will grip readers—even after they’ve finished the book.

Manion and Looney were second-year midshipmen when our country awoke to witness the devastation and carnage which resulted from the dastardly terrorist attacks on 9/11. For these two future warriors, as well as their fellow midshipmen, that single horrific day would impact all their young lives.

As midshipmen, both men were competitive and star athletes. They pushed each other to excel in their academic studies as well as in sports and physical fitness. Travis Manion was commissioned a Marine upon graduation in 2004, while Brendan Looney became a U.S. Navy officer.

After The Basic School, as a newly minted second lieutenant, Manion was sent to Iraq for his first combat tour. Navy Ensign Looney deployed to Korea and served as an intelligence officer. The friends stayed in touch and, when opportunity arose, visited each other.

By 2007, First Lieutenant Manion was deployed on his second tour in Iraq with the 1st Reconnaissance Battalion in Fallujah. His mission was to support and train Iraqi forces. Having to fight a dangerous enemy, while leading his men by example, the young officer continually pushed himself and his men to engage and press the attack. His efforts, and that of the Marines serving in Anbar province, helped turn the tide of battle in one of the world’s most dangerous places. Part of the vexing problem faced by the Marine advisors was that the Iraqi troops they led were from the Shiite branch of the Muslim faith while the majority of the local population they protected were Sunni.

The nickname given 1stLt Manion by his observant Iraqi counterparts was “*Asad*,” meaning lion. The “Lion of Fallujah,” as Manion was called, won their everlasting allegiance. While on a mission late in his second tour, Manion and his men were ambushed. As usual, the young lieutenant put himself at great risk and was killed by a well-aimed sniper’s bullet. In a flash, his devastated parents became another Gold Star family of the Iraqi war.

LT Looney was scheduled to commence the grueling training to become a Navy SEAL when he learned of his friend’s death. Instead of grieving, Looney turned his pain and anguish toward successfully completing Basic Underwater Demolition School. He was named honorman of his class.

Looney deployed for a combat tour in Iraq after getting married. He served in the same general area of Fallujah where his friend had been killed. Home again for a short time, Looney was then sent on his second combat tour to Afghanistan. Serving with SEAL Team 3 in rugged

Leatherneck Book Browser

“*We Also Serve*,” by Nanette Sagastume, is an emotion-filled tale of the impacts of war on a Marine family. The father, a combat-hardened veteran, served with 2d Battalion, First Marine Regiment in Vietnam in the late 1960s. Fast forward to 2004, and the son, in the same battalion—2d Bn, 1st Marines—is fighting in and around Fallujah, in some of the more violent battles in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The wife and mother describes, in gripping prose, the impacts of these two wars on her family and friends.

As a new Marine wife in 1972, Nanette Sagastume had no idea her husband’s actions were driven by combat experiences. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was not a recognized malady. Through her education as a nurse, she learned and came to understand how her husband had been shaped by the Marine Corps and war. Just as she and her family were coming to grips with the head of the family’s issues and actions, her son deployed to experience the horrors of war in Iraq.

Read the exceptionally well-written and -edited “*We Also Serve*” to learn more about the numerous resources available today for Marine family members as they come to understand and work with the effects of PTSD. The Military Family Support Group, the battalion’s e-mail support group and the outreach of the 2/1 Vietnam veterans group join a list of the many options that Sagastume enumerates as strong contributors in the positive adjustments of her husband, son and family.

Sagastume’s “*We Also Serve*” is 216 pages, published by iUniverse Inc., and available in hardcover for \$25.16; softcover, \$16.16; and may be downloaded to a Kindle for \$9.99 through Amazon.com. The ISBN-10 is 1462030890.

mountainous terrain, he became an effective sniper and accounted for many enemy kills. On his 59th mission, things went wrong. When his team attempted an insert on a mountainside, the UH-60 Black Hawk tumbled down the side of an Afghan mountain. LT Looney, along with all on board, was killed.

The grieving Looney family, like the Manions, also rated a Gold Star for loss of their son. Taking a cue from their sons, the two heartbroken families sought support from each other and bonded in their suffering. Ultimately, they decided to have their two sons rest in adjoining graves in Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

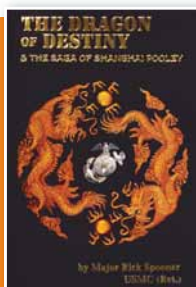
Retired Marine Colonel Tom Manion and journalist Tom Sileo have written a fitting tribute to the lives of these two fallen warrior brothers. They were among America’s best. This well-written, well-conceived book will hit you hard in the gut. You will shed a tear for the surviving families and take a moment to ponder

how our blessed country can continue to successfully turn out such brave individuals, these protectors of our freedom.

Along with other military awards, Marine Lt Manion was awarded a Silver Star and a Bronze Star with a combat “V.” Navy LT Looney earned a Bronze Star with a combat “V.” To learn more about these two valiant men and the legacy they leave a grateful nation, visit the website: www.BrothersForeverBook.com or their Facebook page: [Facebook.com/BrothersForeverBook](https://www.facebook.com/BrothersForeverBook).

Robert B. Loring

Author’s bio: Readers will recognize Marine veteran “Red Bob” Loring as a frequent Leatherneck reviewer and a noted hardworking volunteer for various charities, including a very successful Toys for Tots program in Pasco County, Fla.



The Dragon of Destiny & The Saga of Shanghai Pooley

By Maj Rick Spooner, USMC (Ret)

Published by Phillips Publications.

Available at www.marineshop.net or toll-free (888) 237-7683.

\$17.96 MCA Members \$19.95 Regular Price

Leatherneck Line

Edited by Clare A. Guerrero

From Hardship to Inspiration: Marine Wife Invests Time in Writing And Community Outreach

Adjusting to the stresses and challenges of the Marine Corps lifestyle can seem overwhelming, but for one spouse, finding peace amidst the struggles comes through creative expression.

Jessica Mastorakos, an active volunteer with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 323, the “Death Rattlers,” was inspired by the people around her who share experiences unique to military couples. Through the strength of that community, Mastorakos wrote and published a novel called “Back to You.”

“The obstacles that I’ve faced as a Marine wife are probably pretty standard to many military spouses,” said Mastorakos. “We’ve been separated on birthdays and most holidays, cancelled planned trips and even our own wedding, but the single biggest obstacle was having a complication-riddled pregnancy and the birth of our first son while my husband was deployed. You never know just how much you can handle or just how strong you are until you have no other option.”

Mastorakos self-published her book and is working toward writing others, hoping to inspire military couples and teach civilians about the hardships associated with the military lifestyle.

“I wrote it for military spouses who, like me, were looking for a love story that was similar to their own,” she said. “Being in love with someone in the military offers

unique struggles that civilian couples simply do not experience, and I feel that it is important to highlight these relationships.”

Mastorakos explained that the family readiness officer helped to support her during the difficult times. The young Marine wife hopes to give to others what she has received through her volunteer efforts and by making sure those who need help receive assistance.

“My favorite part of volunteering with the Marines is the feeling of paying it forward or everything coming full circle,” said Mastorakos. “We all need support at one time or another, and when I provide support to my fellow ‘Snake’ families, I do it with a grateful heart knowing that I have been supported in the past as well. I like that I can repay those who helped me by also helping where ever I can.”

She hopes to encourage other spouses to volunteer or help out in any way possible.

“You don’t have to start with a marathon, just go for a short jog,” she said, metaphorically. “There are many squadron-hosted events that would be fun to participate in. However, even just supporting fellow military families by being a good friend or neighbor can go a long way toward a productive unit. Start a girls’ night or join an established one, go to a L.I.N.K.S. [Lifestyles, Insights, Networking, Knowledge, Skills] class, or even bake cookies and send them to work with your Marine. All of these things can lift your spirits and connect you with others just like you.”

Mastorakos plans to continue to write and volunteer.

“I hope that as new Marines and their families join the Snake family, the sense of community will welcome them as it did for us,” she said. “All I want is for that spirit to continue.”

Cpl Melissa Eschenbrenner
PAO, MCAS Miramar, Calif.

Marine and Family Programs Launches New CAARE Center

Marine and Family Programs at Marine Corps Base Hawaii announced the opening of its new center by hosting a community fair held March 27.

The Counseling, Advocacy, Awareness and Relationship Enhancement (CAARE) Center, located in Building 216, opened for individual clients and families in need of support. The newly named CAARE Center features all previously available free services, with some departments expanded to better respond to the public.

“If you’re stressed out in your job, if you’re having problems in your marriage, if your children are in need of support to build their self-esteem, or if you have any other individual concerns, we’re here,” said Carletta Vicain, the behavioral health programs manager at MCB Hawaii. “People come in as individuals or together as families.”

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Maldonado, Commanding Officer, Headquarters Battalion, attended the fair on behalf of all MCB Hawaii units. After offering opening remarks, he signed several observances formalizing numerous “awareness” months directly relating to the new CAARE Center programs.

During the fair, staffers offered free assistance and giveaways to attendees to promote the base’s behavioral health programs. The center’s new services include having dedicated managers for both the Family Advocacy and Community Counseling programs, now expanded into two departments.

Deborah Wagner, the new manager for the Family Advocacy Program, said her office helps anyone confronting abuse. The program provides support in emergencies with victim advocacy and free resources to build healthy relationships.



KATE REICH

Upon returning from deployment in December 2013, Cpl Nicholas Mastorakos, an aviation ordnanceman with VMFA-323, is greeted by his wife, Jessica, and their infant son. Jessica gave birth to their son while her husband was deployed. She stayed connected to the Corps by volunteering with her husband’s unit, as well as writing and publishing a Marine-related novel.



CHRISTINE CABALO

LtCol Robert Maldonado, CO, Hq Bn, MCB Hawaii, gives remarks during a ceremony held for the opening of the new base CAARE Center on March 27. The center offers free programs and counseling for Marines and their families.

These free resources include hosting anger management classes, marriage skills workshops and other personal development opportunities to learn good communication. Wagner said her office strives to assist in emergencies, but provides tools to help stop abuse beforehand.

“Prevention is the key,” she said. “We’re working to eradicate domestic and child abuse through prevention education and programs.”

The center also provides free counseling through the Community Counseling Program. Military personnel, or their family members, can make appointments or take walk-in counseling sessions. Vicain said

counselors offer tools to help with stress management, grief and other personal concerns. During counseling, professionals can help to identify key issues to come up with solid goals and solutions.

Both Wagner and other CAARE Center staff members said one of the main messages they want people to receive is that the manager can readily put anyone in touch with other services they may need. Although the Substance Abuse Counseling Center (SACC) is in its own location in Building 279, the center shares contacts and resources with the CAARE Center as a behavioral health program.

Rick De Leon, clinical program mana-

ger at the MCB Hawaii SACC, said that even if someone without a substance abuse problem approaches a counselor for help with something else, that counselor can connect him or her to the right person. “The agencies are trained and ready to answer any question,” he said.

De Leon said he’s working on several upcoming free public talks with experts about alcohol and drug abuse. This is part of the push for his office and the other behavioral health programs to encourage community involvement, with programs for every need.

“The Victim Advocacy Program can help individuals, and the New Parent Support Program can help younger families,” Wagner said. “We have more prevention programs that are geared to educate everyone.”

De Leon and SACC staff members have worked previously with outside agencies including Mothers Against Drunk Driving and the Honolulu Police Department. He said his office strives to remind everyone of the dangers of substance abuse and how to stop it in their community. It also provides help for those struggling with addiction. Vicain said the move to integrate resources is part of a Corps-wide effort to provide support for any problem so everyone can get help.

“There’s no wrong door,” Vicain said. “Any behavioral health program manager can help get you to where you need to go.”

Christine Cabalo
PAO, MCB Hawaii



HEALTHY BASE INITIATIVE INCLUDES HOMESCHOOLERS—
Felicia Crosson, instructor, Semper Fit, Marine Corps Community Services, teaches Eamnah Landers, 5, daughter of Sgt Matthew Landers, Headquarters Battalion, Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., how to hit a golf ball during the Homeschool Physical Education Program at Desert Winds Golf Course. The April 1 event was hosted by Marine Corps Community Services’ Healthy Base Initiative.



CPL CHARLES SANTAMARIA

In Memoriam

Edited by R. R. Keene

"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.

Operation Enduring Freedom: Marine Casualties, March 1-31, 2014

There are no casualties to report for this month.

Carl Mundy

General Carl E. Mundy Jr., 30th Commandant of the Marine Corps, 1991-1995, died of cancer on April 2 at his home in Alexandria, Va. He was 78.

Gen Mundy served 42 years as a Marine. Although a combat veteran of Vietnam and Khe Sanh who was wounded in battle, his persona ran counter to the rugged warfighter stereotype of most Marines. Various obituaries noted that he was once described as "one of the most articulate, intelligent and polished Marines" in the Corps and "one of the most affable men ever selected as Commandant."

While serving as Commandant, he ensured the Corps remained effective and a quick response force while downsizing from nearly 200,000 leathernecks to 170,000. He was a Commandant whom younger Marines not only admired and respected, but also liked for his approachability and genuine concern regarding issues that affected them.

According to his official biography, he enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve and enrolled in the Platoon Leaders Class Program in 1953. He served in the 38th Special Infantry Company, Montgomery, Ala., and rose to the grade of sergeant. He was commissioned in 1957, following graduation from Auburn University.

He was a veteran of the 1958 intervention in Lebanon, and his other earlier assignments included service in the Second Marine Regiment, Second Marine Division; duty aboard the carrier USS *Tarawa* (CVS-40) and cruiser USS *Little Rock* (CLG-4); instructor at The Basic School, Quantico, Va.; and as an Officer Selection Officer, Raleigh, N.C.

In 1966-67, he served in Vietnam as operations officer and then as executive officer of the 3d Battalion, 26th Marines, 3dMarDiv, and as an intelligence officer in Headquarters, III Marine Amphibious Force.

After Vietnam, his principal assignments were aide-de-camp to the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps; Inspector-Instructor, 4th Air/Naval Gunfire Liaison Co, Miami; Commanding Officer, 2/4, 3dMarDiv; plans

officer, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps; assistant chief of staff for intelligence, 2dMarDiv; chief of staff, 6th Marine Amphibious Brigade; CO, 2d Marines, 2dMarDiv, and 36th and 38th Marine Amphibious units.

Following his promotion to brigadier general in 1982, Gen Mundy's assignments were Director of Personnel Procurement, HQMC; Commanding General, Landing Force Training Command, U.S. Atlantic Fleet; and CG, 4th MAB.

He was promoted to major general in 1986 and served as Director of Operations, HQMC.

Advanced to lieutenant general in 1988, he was Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans, Policies and Operations, HQMC; Operations Deputy to the Joint Chiefs of Staff; CG, Fleet Marine Force Atlantic, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Allied Command Atlantic Marine Striking Force, and designated to command Fleet Marine Forces which might be employed in Europe.

He became Commandant on July 1, 1991.

Gen Mundy was a native of Atlanta, but spent his formative years in Tennessee, North Carolina and Alabama. He graduated from the Marine Corps Command and Staff College and the Naval War College.

His United States decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal and the Distinguished Service Medals of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard; the Legion of Merit; the Bronze Star with combat "V"; the Purple Heart; two Navy Commendation Medals with combat "V"; and the Combat Action Ribbon. His foreign decorations include the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry; the Colombian Distinguished Service; the Spanish Grand Cross of Naval Merit; the French Legion of Honor, Grade of Commander; the Argentinean Grand Cross; the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit, Grand Cross; and the Netherlands Medal of Merit.

Following retirement in 1995, Gen Mundy was president and CEO of the USO, serving for four years; a director on the boards of the General Dynamics and Schering-Plough corporations; a member of the Advisory Council to the Comptroller General of the United States

and to the National Navy League of the United States; a member of The Council on Foreign Relations; and chairman and later chairman emeritus of the Marine Corps University Foundation Board of Trustees.

Gen Mundy was preceded in death last year by his wife, Linda. Two of their three children are Marine officers. The eldest is BGen Carl E. Mundy III, and his younger brother is Colonel Timothy S. Mundy. Their daughter is Elizabeth Mundy Gunter. Gen and Mrs. Mundy have 11 grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Gen James F. Amos, the 38th and current CMC, said, "With the passing of General Carl E. Mundy Jr., America has lost a valiant warrior, a dedicated public servant, and a good and decent man. He served with honor and distinction through more than four decades of devotion to country and Corps. . . . All Marines mourn his passing but celebrate his lasting legacy of service and leadership."

Gerald Russell

Colonel Gerald Russell—athlete, decorated veteran of World War II, one of the youngest battalion commanders in the Pacific, and a Pennsylvania community leader—died at Mount Nittany Medical Center on Feb. 24. He was 97.

Early in life he distinguished himself as a leader. He was a miler in high school track and earned a scholarship to Boston College. In 1940, he became the first alternate to the U.S. Olympic Team in the 800-meter race.

Upon college graduation, he joined the Marine Corps and first experienced combat in World War II at Guadalcanal where, at age 27, he was one of the youngest Marine Corps battalion commanders. He was awarded his first Purple Heart on Guadalcanal. Later, on Iwo Jima in 1945, he took command of 2d Battalion, 27th Marine Regiment, Fifth Marine Division upon the death of the battalion commander. At 29 years old, he again was one of the youngest battalion commanders. It didn't prevent him from being wounded, earning his second Purple Heart.

After the Japanese surrender, his unit provided protection for the U.S. technical teams at Nagasaki, Japan, the site of the second atomic bomb blast. He also accepted surrender of the Japanese military on the nearby Tushima Islands.

He also saw action in the Korean War, earn-

ing his third Purple Heart. He later commanded the U.S. Ground Level Defense Forces at Guantanamo Bay during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. During his career, he served in numerous leadership and mentoring roles to include instructing at The Basic School, Quantico, Va.; teaching on the NROTC staff at the University of Oklahoma; serving on the staff at Marine Corps Research and Development Center, Quantico; as director of the Amphibious Warfare School, Quantico; and as Commanding Officer, 8th Marines, 2dMarDiv, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.

He retired from the Corps in 1968 after 30 years. In addition to the Purple Hearts, his awards include the Republic of Korea Distinguished Service Medal, Bronze Star with combat "V," the Navy Commendation Medal and the Army Commendation Medal.

He was active in athletics, especially track, throughout his life. He served as military representative to the 1968 U.S. Olympic Team in Mexico, on the U.S. Olympic site selection committee, represented America with the Conseil International du Sports Militaire in 1967, and as a USA Track and Field master-level-certified finish judge, he officiated at the Millrose Games in Madison Square Garden, N.Y., and the Penn Relays. He also started and coached the first U.S. Marine Corps Track Team.

Col Russell became the assistant and speechwriter to the president of Penn State in 1970 and later became an assistant professor and assistant to the Dean of Health, Physical Education and Recreation (HPER). He became an associate dean of HPER in 1977 and retired in 1987.

Well-known and respected as a leader in community charity events, Col Russell participated in the Marine Corps Reserve's Toys for Tots program as a member of the Marine Corps League, was a founder of the local United Way for the Caring, a member of the United Way board of directors, a member of the management team for the annual Pennsylvania Special Olympics Summer Games and frequently mobilized local retired and veteran Marines to help in charity events.

Will Simlik

Major General Wilbur F. "Will" Simlik—decorated veteran of three wars, who became Fiscal Director of the Marine Corps—died Feb. 12 in Fullerton, Calif. He was 93.

A native of Youngstown, Ohio, he enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve in 1942, was commissioned in 1943, and assigned as the guard officer at Marine Barracks, Naval Ammunition Depot Oahu, Hawaii. Later in World War II, he earned the Silver Star while he was a platoon leader with Company L, 3d Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Fourth Marine Division at Iwo Jima.

He was released from active duty, but remained in the Reserve and was recalled to active duty in 1952. After he completed the Amphibious Warfare School, Quantico, Va., he was ordered to Korea where he served as a rifle company commander, an infantry battalion operations officer with 1st Bn, 5th Marines and a regimental operations officer. He was awarded the Legion of Merit with combat "V."

MajGen Simlik returned to the United States in 1953 as the officer in charge, Marine Corps Recruiting Station, Portland, Ore.

He later served as Executive Officer, 2/7, 1stMarDiv, and, in 1959, he reported to Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps as special projects officer, Analysis and Review Branch, Fiscal Division where he was promoted to lieutenant colonel.

He attended the Command and Staff College, Quantico, and remained there as an instructor in the Supporting Arms Branch until September 1963, when he was assigned to the 3dMarDiv on Okinawa, for duty as Assistant G-3, Training and Operations.

In 1964, MajGen Simlik was transferred to Naples, Italy, where he was Commanding Officer, Marine Barracks Naval Support Activity. In 1967, he returned to HQMC as Head, Enlisted Assignment Section, Assignment and Classification Branch, Personnel Department.

Ordered to Vietnam in 1969, he served as CO, 3d Marines, and later as Deputy Chief of Staff, 3dMarDiv. He also was Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4 (Logistics), III Marine Amphibious Force. He earned a second Legion of Merit with combat "V."

Promoted to brigadier general in 1970, he became Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4, HQMC and, in 1972, became Deputy for Education/Director, Education Center, Marine Corps Development and Education Command, Quantico. Following his promotion to major general on May 7, 1974, he assumed duties as Fiscal Director of the Marine Corps. He retired in 1975.

Col Harold J. "Harry" Field, 82, of Dallas. He was commissioned in 1952 and served 30 years. His awards include, among others, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star with combat "V" and the Purple Heart.

After retirement from active duty, he was employed by several Dallas banks.

MGySgt Richard S. "Dick" Gandy Sr., 88, of Havelock, N.C. He retired from the Corps in 1977 after having served more than 30 years. He worked 12 years in civil service.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Vivian; a son; a daughter; and a grandson.

Wifred Hernandez, 90, of Levittown, N.Y. He was a WW II and Korean War veteran, past commandant of the Mid Island Det., MCL and retired from Con Edison.

MGySgt Albert F. Koenig Jr., 83, in Cape Coral, Fla. He served from 1949 to 1952 in the regular Marine Corps and retired from the Marine Reserve in 1988. His assignments included MCRD Parris Island, S.C.; MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C.; HQMC, Washington, D.C.; and MWSS-473, Weymouth, Mass.

PFC Stewart A. "Pete" Nelson, 85, in Flat Rock, N.C. He served in tanks during WW II and was discharged at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., in 1946.

He was a member of the MCA&F.

Joseph Palmieri, 90, of Massapequa, N.Y. He was with the 3d Raider Bn during WW II and then was a police officer with the NYPD for more than 30 years.

Edlen C. Pearson, 87, of Levittown, N.Y. He was a WW II veteran.

Cpl Edward A. Peterson, 85, of Scottsburg, Ore. He was an MCA&F member.

Gerald P. "Jerry" Ravino, 83, of Redington Shores, Fla. He served in the Navy Reserve from 1952 to 1953 and as a Marine with Flame Plt, 1st Tanks, 1stMarDiv in Korea where he was awarded a Purple Heart. He was a board member for the Marine Corps Tankers Association Foundation, a member of the MCL Det. # 708, Spring Hill, Fla., and the MCA&F.

He retired from Charles Pfizer Corporation as a foreman in chemical operations in Connecticut after 32 years and was a substance abuse counselor for 14 years. He wrote two books: "Hearts of Iron (Flame Dragons)" and "Elite USMC First Reconnaissance Company of the Korean War, 1950 to 1953," which were reviewed by *Leatherneck* magazine.

He was honored as a member of the Lakota Sioux Tribe, Pine Island Ridge, S.D., and was presented the Eagle Feather and quilted Starburst for living a life with a kind spirit.

SgtMaj Robert B. Robinson Sr., 89, of Surprise, Ariz. He was a decorated Marine Corps combat veteran who fought in three wars. Born on the Corps' birthday, he enlisted in 1943 and served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. He made his first amphibious landing at Saipan in June 1944, followed by landings at Tinian and Peleliu.

In August 1945, he witnessed the signing of the Japanese surrender in the battleship USS *Missouri* (BB-63).

His awards include two Purple Hearts for wounds received in Korea. In one of his two tours in Vietnam he was proud to have been able to cross paths with his son, Robert B. "Bob" Robinson Jr., also a Marine serving in Vietnam. He retired in 1973.

A private pilot since 1948, he loved to travel the world. In addition to his wife of 70 years, Ethel, he is survived by his six children, 14 grandchildren, 32 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

David F. Schwing, 87, of Fort Myers, Fla. He was a sniper with the 3dMarDiv at Guam and Iwo Jima where he earned a Purple Heart. He then served with the 1stMarDiv in China.

He was later employed at General Motors in Ohio and Marion, Ind. He retired in 1982 after 30 years.

Oliver P. Snyder, 86, in Dallas. He served in the Pacific with the 1stMarDiv during WW II and in China at the American Embassy.

He worked at Johnston Printing Company until his retirement and was instrumental in the creation of the "Printing Industries of America, Texas Credit Union." He was on the board of directors, "Southwest School of Printing, Scholarship Program."

IstLt Richard J. Stepick, 76, of Dallas. He was an All-American swimmer who, after graduating from Columbia College in 1959, became a Marine and trained for the 1960 Olympic Trials in rowing. He later studied architecture at Rice University.

He founded FloorPlan, a custom merchandising and design firm, which he operated until his retirement in 1999.



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SOUND OFF

[continued from page 8]

combat need to be given the proper respect that is due to them today.

The names of the 58,000 emblazoned on the black granite "Wall" [Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, D.C.] need to be respected and never forgotten. We know that when honor, loyalty and integrity were all on the line, they fulfilled their duty.

Today, many Vietnam combat veterans still are serving honorably both within the public and private sectors.

It's time to seek a resolution and stop this useless branding of those brave young Americans who answered the call of their country to serve.

I am proud of my service to my country and my community. Not all turned to the bottle, stuck a needle in our arm, or turned to a life of crime.

Gene Spanos
 Park Ridge, Ill.

• *I think you missed the point. Mr. Hamilton described the feelings of many Marines from that era. Not all of course, but a very large number. Their problems, no matter their reasons, were and are*

real. His letter touched home because most faced similar situations at one time or another in country and at home. His letter was specifically to the Marine son of a Marine Vietnam veteran "wondering what his father could have experienced in Vietnam that was so horrible as to cause the withdrawn person with few friends and several of the other problems (drink, divorce, etc.) of the stereotypical Vietnam veteran."

As the first two previous letters indicated, Mr. Hamilton explained it very well. No resolution is going to change their feelings, and while we were all proud to have served, the reality is that a great number of Marines returned home and needed help. They did not have "a needle stuck in their arm or turn to a life of crime," but they suffered. The nation and the Marine Corps recognize the problems of our veterans of today. There is an entire Wounded Warrior Regiment in the Corps, yet we still have an extremely high suicide rate among veterans of the global war on terrorism. You are fortunate indeed.—Sound Off Ed.

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Photo (left) by USMC.
 Photo (right) by Cpl D.J. Wu, USMC.

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watch, the MCA&F is there with them. Inspiring them. Connecting them with other Marines, past, present, and future. Ready to be a resource and support system throughout their career.

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USMC Combat Correspondents Association, Colonel Walt Ford, USMC (Ret), will soon turn over his duties as Publisher/Editor of *Leatherneck*, I think I speak for all of our members in offering a salute and a wish for him for continued good health as he leaves the "Magazine of the Marines."

When I became executive director of the USMC Combat Correspondents Association, Walt was one of the first to pledge his support in any way possible. His mentorship over the ensuing years has been invaluable. I could have stumbled over many rocks and sunk in many shoals had it not been for his timeless advice and friendly encouragement.

There has not been one area of this association's operation that he has not left an imprint on. He has attended every conference and has seen that our member bags have always contained some reference to the magazine. He and his wife, Sharon, annually sponsor two categories in our USMCCA Annual Distinguished Performance Awards (formerly Merit Awards) competition.

At his urging, each year the Marine Corps Association & Foundation presents the six Marketing and Public Affairs Marines competing for MPA of the Year honors with a handsome plaque. The MPA of the Year winner receives a noncommis-

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Our association presents two major awards each year. The Donald L. Dickson Memorial Award goes to the member who has, in the opinion of the board of directors, contributed the most to the associa-

tion. The Brigadier General Robert L. Denig Sr. Memorial Distinguished Performance Award is given only to civilian practitioners of mass communications. This award honors the person or persons who has or have made significant contributions to perpetuate the ideas, traditions, stature and achievements of the United States Marine Corps. It is a rarity that one

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person wins both awards. Walt Ford deserved both ... and has won both.

If ever there has been an ambassador of goodwill for a publication or, for that matter, the United States Marine Corps, Walt Ford has been it. He will be missed.

Jack T. Paxton
Executive Director, USMCCCA
Wildwood, Fla.

Who Recalls Master of Fitness Test? It Was One You Would Never Forget

In 1966, I became the 6th Master of Fitness. When I retired in 1974, there were only a dozen or so more.

The Master of Fitness Test was made up by Major George E. Ottot, Recruit Training Regiment, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., and a Corporal Rybicki (a former Mr. New Jersey). Among other things, it included the Marine Corps Physical Test, 80 pushups, 20 pullups, jump and reach from a standstill, situps (one with a 50-pound weight behind your head), a 40-foot rope climb using only hands and arms, bench press 1½ times your body weight with a two-second hold on chest, and a three-mile run in full combat gear in less than 20 minutes. You had to complete the requirements within 90 days.

There was a corporal in the PT section



COURTESY OF RON HOOVER

SSgt Ron Hoover is awarded the Master of Fitness Award by then-MajGen James M. "Jungle Jim" Masters Sr. back in the mid-1960s.

who was in the Guinness Book of World Records for doing 10,000 situps nonstop. I challenged him to the Master of Fitness Test, but he declined. I ran into him at a drill instructor reunion several years ago. He was a major general. Again, I challenged him. He just looked at me and smiled.

Mustang Capt Ronald E. Hoover Sr., USMC (Ret)
1954-74
Carlisle, Pa.

Reunions

• **2dMarDiv Assn.**, Aug. 5-9, Jacksonville, N.C. Contact LtCol David Brown, USMC (Ret), P.O. Box 8180, Camp Lejeune, NC 28547, (910) 451-3167, david.brown3@usmc.mil.

• **3dMarDiv Assn.**, Aug. 13-17, Reno, Nev. Contact GySgt Don H. Gee, USMC (Ret), P.O. Box 254, Chalfont, PA 18914, (215) 822-9094, gygee@aol.com, www.caltrap.com.

• **5thMarDiv Assn.**, Sept. 8-13, Tampa,

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Fla. Contact John A. Butler, 11871 Rain-tree Dr., Temple Terrace, FL 33617, (813) 985-0657, jbutler813@verizon.net.

• **6th MarDiv Assn.**, Oct. 7-12, Dumfries, Va. Contact Holiday Inn Quantico Center, 3901 Fettle Park Dr., Dumfries, VA 22025, (703) 441-9001, www.sixthmarinedivision.com.

• **FLC-FLSG (All units, RVN)**, Sept. 11-14, Portland, Ore. Contact Jim Kadas, (503) 998-3516, kadas3516@aol.com, mbaker.flsg@gmail.com.

• **USMC Combat Correspondents Assn.**, Sept. 8-11, Oceanside, Calif. Contact Jack T. Paxton, 110 Fox Ct., Wildwood, FL 34785, (352) 748-4698, usmccca@cf1.rr.com, www.usmccca.org.

• **Marine Corps Engineer Assn.**, Oct. 20-23, Pala, Calif. Contact Ken Frantz, 807 Carriage Hills Blvd., Conroe, TX 77384, (936) 273-4830, execdir@marcorengasn.org, www.marcorengasn.org.

• **USMC Tankers Assn.**, Oct. 2-4, San Diego. Contact Buster Diggs, (619) 873-7385, bdiggs60@gmail.com.

• **West Coast Drill Instructor Assn.**, Sept. 4-7, San Diego. Contact Gregg Stoner, (619) 884-9047, greggstoner22@aol.com, or SgtMaj Bobby Woods, USMC (Ret), (760) 215-9564, www.westcoastdi.org.

• **USMC Postal 0160/0161**, Oct. 19-24, San Antonio. Contact Harold Wilson, (740)



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• **Subic Bay Marines**, Sept. 2-7, San Diego. Contact John Laccinole, (818) 591-8916, johnlaccinole@aol.com, www.subicbaymarines.com.

• **26th Marines Scout Snipers (1968-69)** is planning a reunion for 2014 in Omaha, Neb. Contact Cleveland Mason, (209) 358-1646, clevm@sbcglobal.net, or

Tom Phillips, (402) 672-1271, tomandwo@swvawcreek.net.

• **2d Bn, 4th Marines Assn.**, Aug. 13-17, Portland, Ore. Contact John Schassen, 14740 S. Sugar Pine Way, La Pine, OR 97739, (541) 536-5863, jnschassen@aol.com, www.2-4association.org.

• **3d Recon Assn.**, Sept. 16-21, Reno, Nev. Contact Doug Heath, (770) 684-

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7668; Bob Hoover, (843) 302-2151; or Cyndie Leigh, (702) 271-0365.

• **1/27 (RVN, 1968)**, Sept. 18-21, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact Felix Salmeron, 1406 Nighthawk Dr., Little Elm, TX 75068, (469) 583-0191, mar463@aol.com, or Grady Birdsong, (303) 466-6491.

• **3/11**, Sept. 10-14, San Diego. Contact Doug Miller, (402) 540-9431, dmiller48@gmail.com.

• **Co A, 1st Bn, 7th Marines Assn.**, Oct. 19-22, North Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact Leonard R. "Shifty" Shifflette, 25 Emery St., Harrisonburg, VA 22801, (540) 434-2066, (540) 745-2066, captshifty@comcast.net.

• **Co B, 7th Motor T Bn (RVN)**, Oct. 1-3, San Diego. Contact Tim Weddington, 2527 S. Glen Ln., Independence, MO 64052, (816) 808-2357, timweddington@comcast.net.

• **A/1/12 (3dMarDiv, RVN)**, Sept. 17-21, San Diego. Contact Bob Schoenleber, (425) 822-7474, bobschoenleber@comcast.net.

• **G/2/7**, Aug. 6-10, Portland, Ore. Contact John Jones, (207) 717-3861, jejones48@gmail.com.

• **G/3/1 (Korea)**, Sept. 29-Oct. 3, Beaufort, S.C. Contact Carleton "Bing" Bingham, 1453 Patricia Dr., Gardnerville, NV 89460, (775) 265-3596, bingbingham@msn.com.

• **1/3/1 (Korea)**, Aug. 13-17, Branson, Mo. Contact Suzi Woodward, (860) 262-1334, suzi11111@aim.com.

• **1/3/9**, Aug. 5-11, Philadelphia. Contact Barbara Cunningham, 3075 Pine Rd., Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006, (267) 325-5226, silverwings4me2@yahoo.com.

• **K/3/1 (RVN, 1966-71)**, Aug. 21-24, Rochester, Minn. Contact David Crawley, (507) 273-7183, rocketsup@charter.net.

• **K/3/7 (and attached units, RVN)**, Sept. 9-15, San Diego. Contact William Rolke, (262) 780-0993, k37usmc@att.net, or Jerry Walker, (951) 203-2280, jwalkercdr@verizon.net.

• **3d 155 mm Gun Battery (SP)**, Sept. 11-13, Alexandria, Va. Contact Ed Kirby, (978) 987-1920, ed-kirby@comcast.net.

• **Point Mugu Marine Detachment (1946-60)**, Sept. 5-8, Branson, Mo. Contact Arthur Smallenberger, (816) 436-6493, pt.mugumarine@kc.rr.com.

• **TBS, Co F, 6-79**, is planning a reunion. Contact LtCol Tom Conners, USMC (Ret), (919) 303-2697, (919) 418-5757, tconners3@yahoo.com.

• **USMC SATS/EAF**, Aug. 12-16, Baltimore. Contact James Halterman, (443) 402-0720, halterman1944@msn.com.

• **81 mm Mortars, H&S Co, 1/1/3 (Camp Sukiran, Okinawa, 1959-60)**, Sept. 16-18, Quantico, Va. Contact Ron

Peacock, 95383 Nassau River Rd., Fernandina Beach, FL 32034, (904) 583-2640, prpeacock2@gmail.com.

• **Plts 17 and 19, Parris Island, 1955 (and others who went through PI during 1955 are welcome too)**, May 14-16, 2015, Parris Island, S.C. Contact Al Pasquale, (484) 802-2516, pasquale@bigplanet.com.

• **Plt 291, Parris Island, 1964**, is planning a reunion. Contact Sgt Ernest Bennett, (304) 269-3294, sfceb@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 296, Parris Island, 1965**, Nov. 7-10, Parris Island, S.C. Contact SgtMaj Jim Butler, USMC (Ret), (910) 340-7074, jbutler29@ec.rr.com.

• **Plt 331, Parris Island, 1959**, is planning a reunion. Contact MGySgt Bob Daniels, USMC (Ret), (904) 579-4346, bertojotol@gmail.com, or Bob Wood, (205) 903-7220, bwood@bellsouth.net.

• **Plt 358, San Diego, 1959**, Aug. 7-10, San Diego. Contact MSgt John Newport, USMC (Ret), (770) 926-4752, mrmnrs41@aol.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 4035, "Papa" Co, Parris Island, 2000**, is planning a reunion for 2015. Contact Tammy [Manyik] Epperson, (571) 451-7263, tammy.epperson@gmail.com.

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• **Marine Air Groups (WW II-present)**, Oct. 1-4, Branson, Mo. Contact James Jordan, (417) 535-4945, james.m.jordan@hughes.net, or Bob Miller, (636) 327-5854, mbobsue13@gmail.com.

• **VMF/VMA-311 Assn.**, Oct. 1-5, San Antonio. Contact Jim Galchick, 1290 E. 12th St., Salem, OH 44460, (330) 337-9383, jgalchick@neo.rr.com; George Phander, 3032 Potshop Rd., Norristown, PA 19403, (610) 584-5654, piboxer@comcast.net; or Cecil Cheeka, 2207 Lilac St. S.E., Lacey, WA 98503, (360) 352-7227, ccheeka@comcast.net, www.vmf-vma-311reunion.org.

• **VMF-323/VMF (AW)-323 (1960-64)**, Sept. 2-5, Pensacola, Fla. Contact T. C. Crouson, (209) 369-6793, tc@inreach.com.

Ships and Others

• **USS Canberra (CA-70/CAG-2)**, Oct. 8-12, Norfolk, Va. Contact Ken Minick, P.O. Box 130, Belpre, OH 45714, (740) 423-8976, usscanberra@gmail.com, www.usscanberra.com.

• **USS Hornet (CV-8, CV/CVA/CVS-12)**, Sept. 9-14, San Antonio. Contact Carl or Sandy Burket, P.O. Box 108, Roaring Spring, PA 16673, (814) 224-5063, hornetcva@aol.com, www.usshornetassn.com.

• **USS Houston (CL-81)**, Oct. 20-25, Norfolk, Va. Contact Donna Rogers, 3949

Little John Dr., York, PA 17408, (717) 792-9113, dlr7110@yahoo.com.

• **USS Inchon (LPH/MCS-12)**, Oct. 12-16, Norfolk, Va. Contact David F. Fix, 131 Waypoint Dr., Lancaster, PA 17603, (717) 203-4152, ussinchon@gmail.com.

• **USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2/LHD-7)**, Aug. 27-31, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact Robert McAnally, 152 Frissell St., Hampton, VA 23663, (757) 723-0317, yujack46709@gmail.com.

• **USS John R. Craig (DD-885)**, Sept. 24-28, Portland, Ore. Contact Jerry Chwalek, 9307 Louisiana St., Livonia, MI 48150, (734) 525-1469, jermail@ameritech.net, www.usjohnrcraig.com.

• **USS Ranger (CVA/CV-61)**, Oct. 1-4, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact Larry Schmuhl, (904) 997-2217, lschmuhl@gmail.com.

• **USCGC Courier (WAGR-410)** and VOA Memorial Foundation, June 16-21, New London, Conn. Contact Robert "Bob" Hickman, 108 Gordon Rd., North Syracuse, NY 13212, (315) 458-5995, (315) 378-7443, robert.hickman1@verizon.net.

• **U.S. Navy Amphibious Force Veterans Assn.**, Sept. 7-10, New Orleans. Contact John J. Walsh, 2745 Dalton Ln., Toms River, NJ 08755, (732) 367-6472 (do not call after 8:30 p.m. ET), navy_guys@verizon.net.





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Edited by Clare A. Guerrero

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Wanted

Readers are cautioned to be wary of sending money without confirming authenticity and availability of products offered.

• MSgt Bill Dugan, USMC (Ret), (603) 424-9517, duganb_p@comcast.net, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 27, Parris Island, 1956.**

• Former Cpl Ted Hetland, 208 Prospect Ave., Middletown, RI 02842, (401) 846-7322, cplhet200@gmail.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 56, Parris Island, 1957.**

• Marine veteran Larry M. McGrath, 10342 E. Camino Quince, Tucson, AZ 85748, (520) 885-5344, wants a **recruit**

graduation book for Plt 185, Parris Island, 1957.

• Marine veteran Robert Kimbale, 894 County Rd. 1067, Auxvasse, MO 65231, (573) 386-5707, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 191, San Diego, 1961.**

• Former PFC Richard Battagliola, (516) 496-2426, rbattagliola@gmail.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 228, Parris Island, 1954.**

• Marine veteran Daniel E. Burrell, (312) 225-3101, (312) 965-3101, danielburrell1@comcast.net, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 322, San Diego, 1964.**

• Capt Gerald Rushlau, USMC (Ret),

4824 Glasgow Ave., Omaha, NE 68157, (402) 734-1775, wants four or five **green binders for *Leatherneck* magazine.**

• 1stSgt Aaron Colling, with 2d Assault Amphibian Bn, PSC Box 20070, Camp Lejeune, NC 28542, (910) 440-7509, (910) 440-7335, wants **books** to build the battalion's **professional military reading library.**

• Marine veteran Les Dienstberger, 310 S. Franklin St., Delphos, OH 45833, (419) 692-2626, wants a copy of the book "**Breakout: The Chosin Reservoir Campaign, Korea 1950**" by Martin Russ.



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Gyrene Gyngles

Edited by Clare A. Guerrero

Please submit copies of original poems with first publishing rights and author's permission to print granted to *Leatherneck*. Poems may be edited or shortened, as necessary. Due to volume received, submissions will not be acknowledged or returned.

Beach Blue Two D-day

Fifteen June, reveille at zero-three hundred—

Chow at three-fifteen,
It's the best Marine Corps breakfast
The men have ever seen.

All the steak that one could eat
With ice cream for dessert,
Troops gorge upon that sumptuous food
Until their bellies hurt.

Debarkation at zero-six hundred,
Down nets into waiting craft
Go fighting men by the hundreds,
Midships, fore and aft.

Beyond the range of land-based guns
The landing craft rendezvous,
Gathering together at the departure line
For the assault of Beach Blue Two.

"Now, all synchronize your watches!"
"Have you got your bayonet?"
"Check your gas masks, socks and rations."
"Don't get your rifles wet."

"All heads down 'cept the cox'n's—
He's the one who's got to see.
By this time tomorrow morning
I wonder where we'll be?"

Huge battle-wagon cannon
That have been firing since four,
Belch fire, death and destruction
Upon the tropic shore.
They suddenly fall silent,
Leaving a quiet that hurts the ear,
The "softening up" is over,
Invasion time draws near.

The landing craft leap forward,
Speeding o'er the ocean swell,
The valiant men inside those boats
Are being carried into hell.
Toward the distant shore they go
In evasive zigzag lines
Evading deadly shell bursts
And floating undersea mines.

When the assault craft are still
A long way from shore,
Large-caliber Jap guns
Open up a deafening roar,

The shelling takes a heartrending toll
On the unwieldy craft
Nearing the tiny atoll.

Many LCVPs and LCIs are damaged,
Wrecked or sunk,
Hundreds of men upon their decks
Find rest in a watery bunk.
Thousands more will meet their death
Before this day is through,
But the assault waves have landed
On the sands of Beach Blue Two.

Former SSgt Robert K. Austin
An excerpt from the poem "Beach Blue Two"
by a veteran from the Fourth Marine Division,
who fought on Saipan and Tinian, 1944.

Sweet Whispers

I remember a beach.
A soft hand brushed my cheek—

Gentle whispers
Carried my brothers away.

Whispers rushing past,
Streaking through a man
Beside me.

These
Whispers whisk't away
Those.

For all the running,
For all the shouting and shooting,
These whispers
Are what penetrated my shock
And pierced my belly.

Carried away by whispers
Sounds better than picked off by
Small-arms fire.

Alex Farmer



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