

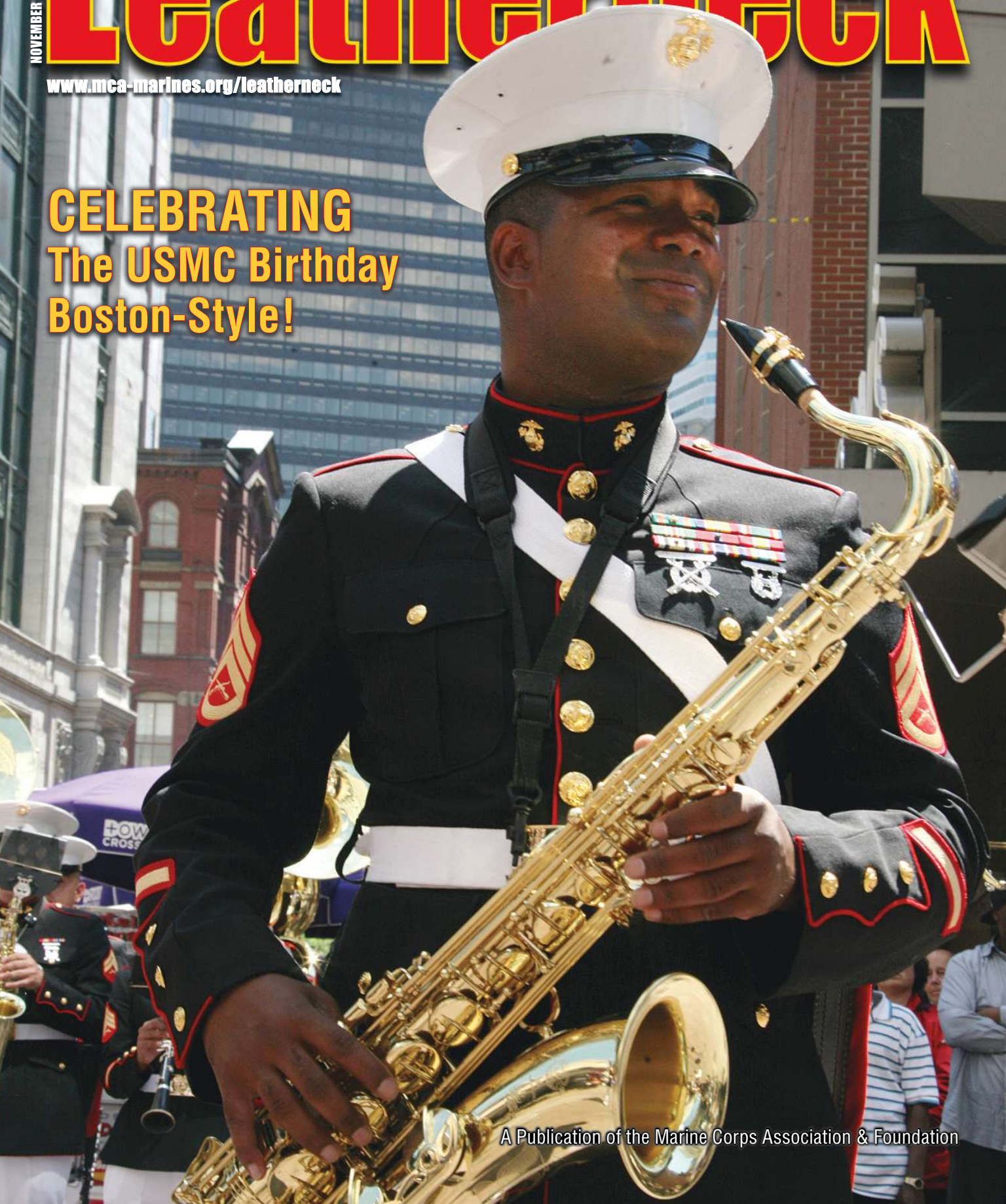
NOVEMBER 2015

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

Leatherneck

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**CELEBRATING
The USMC Birthday
Boston-Style!**



A Publication of the Marine Corps Association & Foundation

Welcome to *Leatherneck* Magazine's

Digital Edition **November 2015**



We hope you are continuing to enjoy the digital edition of *Leatherneck* with its added content and custom links to related information. Our commitment to expanding our digital offerings continues to reflect progress.

Also, access to added content is available via our website at www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck and you will find reading your *Leatherneck* much easier on smartphones and tablets. Our focus of effort has been on improving our offerings on the Internet, so we want to hear from you. How are we doing? Let us know at: leatherneck@mca-marines.org.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary H. Reinwald". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the "Semper Fidelis" text.

Col Mary H. Reinwald, USMC (Ret)
Editor



TO ALL WHO DARED TO...

raise your hand and take the oath
deploy... and deploy again
watch your children grow from afar
re-enlist
take that gas mask off
work longer and harder than you
ever had, or ever will
march in a rainbow flight
eat that veggie omelet MRE
finish The Crucible
leave the wire
join a dustoff crew
dig a fighting hole
join the Caterpillar Club
ride the highline chair
serve as an Eleven Bravo
learn what a shellback is
ship out on an icebreaker
push a wheelbarrow of supplies

...THANK YOU





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11 Passage of Command: General Robert B. Neller Becomes 37th CMC

By Sgt Melissa Karnath, USMC

"Now, let's do this," said Gen Robert Neller after accepting the colors and command of the United States Marine Corps, Sept. 24. The 40-year Marine succeeds Gen Joseph F. Dunford Jr., who became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

20 Corps Album: Celebrating the Marine Corps Birthday

Compiled by Nancy Lee White Hoffman

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Hobnobbing with dignitaries, jumping from airplanes, eating rations on patrol with Marines and covering the war in Vietnam were all part of photojournalist Dickey Chapelle's world. She was feisty and bold. It got her published, but eventually got her killed in action.

34 Marines in Australia, 1943: "Bring Your Lads Here. We Will Show You and Your Men Every Hospitality."

By Maj Allan C. Bevilacqua, USMC (Ret)

The Southern Cross, "Waltzing Matilda" and a famous nude painting named "Chloe" all became part of 1stMarDiv lore as it mended its wounds in Australia, regained its fighting strength and became enamored with those "sheilas" from "down under."

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Beer heavily flavored in patriotism with a Boston accent is only part of the manner in which the Marines in the Massachusetts area celebrate the Corps' Birthday thanks in large part to veteran Marine Tommy Lyons.

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By Capt Mark A. Bodrog, USMC and GySgt Daniel I. LeBron, USMC

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64 Kowalker's Calling: Mission to Honor Veterans Brings Healing for All

By Christopher Hoffman

A mounted Marine sergeant leading a riderless horse is a sight to behold. Meet Purple Heart Vietnam veteran "Rick" Kowalker who fought his way back from PTSD and now honors fallen fellow veterans with an age-old salute.

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COVER: SSgt Jordan Dixon, a saxophonist with Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany Band, performed before enthusiastic crowds of Bostonians on May 4, 2010, during Marine Week Boston, celebrating the Corps' traditions, history and culture. Photo by Cpl Alicia R. Giron, USMC. Copies of the cover may be obtained by sending \$2 (for mailing costs) to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134-0775.

Sound Off

Edited by R. R. Keene

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

Letter of the Month

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

My son lives and works on the Triple S Ranch near Redding, Calif. I visited him there a while back. During the visit he introduced me to a man who had worked on the ranch for almost 40 years. The man lives on Social Security, and by way of a pension, ranch owners let him live rent-free in a small trailer on the property.

As we walked down a path to the trailer, my son Josh said to me, "Sam's a veteran Marine too. He served in the Pacific during World War II." We found Sam sitting on an old wooden swing in the shade of an oak tree. He and I talked long enough for me to find out he was wounded in 1943 with the Second Marine Regiment on Tarawa and he fought again with the 8th Marines in 1945 on Okinawa. He served in the Corps for eight years before becoming a cowboy on the Triple S.

As we left, Josh said sadly, "He can't see very well, so he doesn't ever go very far from that trailer."

A few days later I wrote a letter to my son and included a Marine Corps emblem sticker. I asked Josh to give it to Sam and tell him I said "Semper Fi."

Josh called us and said he gave Sam the sticker. He said that Sam just looked at it for a long time and didn't say anything. Josh broke the silence by saying, "My dad says Semper Fi." Sam looked up from the sticker, and Josh said he was surprised to see tears welling up in the old man's eyes.

Sam said, "Sit down, boy." He talked with my son for more than an hour about

being a Marine and his experiences in the Corps, repeatedly wiping his eyes with an old red bandana. Yep ... "Once a Marine, always a Marine."

Robert D. Wenger
Cottonwood, Calif.

Choosing Words Carefully Matters

Since the announcement was made that United States Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC) units would be re-designated Raider units ["Marine Raiders Reborn," September 2015 *Leatherneck*], a number of questions and assumptions have risen regarding the lineage and honors of the "new" units. This has, largely, been fueled by the use of vague terms such as "legacy" and "heritage." More than one article has appeared in the press, stating that the MARSOC units can claim the "lineage, heritage and history" of the World War II-era Raider battalions. While the new Raiders may lay claim to the title and a sense of symbolic ties to the World War II Raiders, they do not have the lineage and honors of those storied units.

As many people are aware, the four Raider battalions were activated in 1942. However, most Raider operations saw them deployed as light infantry, and few missions were conducted using them as originally envisioned—amphibious raiders.

In December 1943, the planned 5th and 6th Raider Battalions were deleted from the Operating Force Plan, and it was directed that the Raider battalions be reorganized as conventional infantry. Marine Corps leadership also planned to reactivate the Fourth Marine Regiment, who fought so valiantly on Bataan and

Corregidor, and who were ultimately lost in 1942. It was a very conscious choice on the part of Marine Corps leadership to reactivate the 4th Marines using the personnel from the Raider battalions. Indeed, the 4th Marines were activated almost entirely from the Raider units on Feb. 1, 1944.

It is important to understand that the Raider battalions of World War II, with the exception of Lieutenant Colonel Evans Carlson's 2d Raider Bn, were *not* deactivated, but rather re-designated. The 1st Raider Bn was *re-designated* 1st Bn, 4th Marines. The 4th Raider Bn was *re-designated* 2/4. The 3d Raider Bn was *re-designated* 3/4. The 2d Raiders were deactivated on Jan. 31, 1944, and the unit's personnel were largely folded into Weapons Company, 4th Marines and used to fill out the other three battalions.

In a very unique situation, the reconstituted 4th Marines kept the lineage and honors they earned prior to their surrender to Japanese forces on Corregidor and kept the honors earned by the Raider battalions. As stated, this was a very conscious decision on the part of the Marine Corps leadership, an effort to honor the legacy, service and sacrifice of both the valiant 4th Marines and the Raider battalions.

Said Colonel Harry Liversedge, who commanded both the 3d Raider Bn and the 1st Raider Regt, in a speech after the reconstitution of the 4th Marines: "For many of the original Fourth Regiment, Bataan and Corregidor were epitaphs; for the few battered survivors, the oblivion of capture by the Japanese, but the name of the Fourth lived on. They were the 'storied' China Marines, who upheld the dignity of the United States in the East for 14 years. The name of the Fourth could not die.

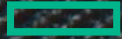
"Then in the spring of 1943, the Raiders were banded into a regiment. For a while the regiment was known simply as the First Marine Raider Regiment, but if any Marine organization had ever earned the right to carry the banners of the Fourth, they had.

"The men of the Raiders were given that right, and once again the honored name of

Calling All Sea Stories, Anecdotes and Tall Tales

Do you have a great story from your time in the Corps that will give our readers a good chuckle? Maybe it's a boot camp tale or a good old sea story that will have us in stitches? We would love to hear your stories and possibly feature them in the magazine's newest department. Write them down (500 words or less) and send them to: Sara W. Bock, *Leatherneck* Magazine, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or e-mail them to s.bock@mca-marines.org. We offer \$25 or MCA&F membership for the "story of the month." Spread the word!—*Leatherneck* Ed.

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the Fourth Regiment appears on the rolls, and in the history of the Marine Corps."

The men of the 4th Marines went on to fight in the campaigns on Guam and Okinawa.

Lineage and honors cannot be shared by two units, nor can lineage and honors be arbitrarily changed. The Fourth Marines have far more than a tenuous "claim" on the lineage and honors of the World War II Raider battalions. The Marine Corps Bulletin 5400, released in January 2015, which ordered the re-designation of the MARSOC units, also states that the lineage and honors will remain with the 4th Marines.

One can certainly appreciate the desire by Marine Corps leadership to pay homage to the Raiders of World War II. One also can understand the desire to keep that storied name alive, and part of the Marine Corps lexicon, a name that has come to symbolize hard training and hard fighting. With the re-designation of the MARSOC units, that desire has been fulfilled. The Marine Corps has a new generation of Raiders. The lineage and honors of the new units will be traced back to the activation of the MARSOC units. The lineage and honors of the World War II Raider battalions remain, rightfully, with the 4th Marines.

Beth L. Crumley
Unit Historian
Marine Corps History Division
MCB Quantico, Va.

• *Beth Crumley is a noted historian and historical writer whose works have appeared often in Leatherneck. We thank her for her historical insight.—Sound Off Ed.*

That's it! We've Lost It!

I'm sounding off in reference to the front cover of September's issue. Nothing says the Marine Corps has lost its warrior spirit more than the cover photo.

We've got a Marine running with a rifle with a BFA [blank firing adapter], no magazine inserted, an ACOG [advanced combat optical gunsight] with 550 cord dummy corded to the rifle with an over-hand knot.

We've lost it. God save America!

SgtMaj Ernest Hoopii, USMC (Ret)
Jacksonville, N.C.

• *The picture may not have pleased you for various reasons, but the Corps has hardly "lost it." We all have a tendency to believe the Corps went to hell in a handbasket the day after we left. But it is amazing how well it goes on without us.—Sound Off Ed.*

Questions on the CAR, Myths And Lou Diamond

Two questions from the September issue: Since my father (I can guess many other readers have family in the same situation) was a World War II Marine veteran of Guadalcanal, Tulagi, and Guam, what must I do to prove, and have the CAR awarded to him? The discharge papers (similar to today's DD 214) are vague. What proof must be given to show his combat experience, engaging the enemy, etc.?

Questions on the "Seven Marine Corps MYTHS—Truth or Fiction?" Was then-Major General John A. Lejeune the first Marine to command an Army division? And, was Colonel Charles Doyen the most qualified to command the first Marine regiment to deploy with the Army to France? Colonel Glenn A. Harned, USA (Ret) just says "Neither myth is true."

He does not state further about MajGen Lejeune commanding an Army division. So, did he command an Army division, the 2nd Infantry as we have all been told, or was he not the first Marine to command an Army division?

About the modern climate of seeking the exact truth, I think we should follow



"Just eat it. Don't worry about the calories."

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*Iwo Jima MOH Recipient
Woody Williams on top
of Mt. Suribachi*

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Reunion of Honor Historical Symposium - Guam - Charter Jet to Iwo
Pre Tour: 11 - 15 Mar Saipan/Tinian
Post Tours: 21 - 24 Mar Hawaii/21 - 26 Mar Peleliu/ 21 - 26
Mar Imperial Japan Adventure

18 - 28 Jul Marianas Campaign 1944

Liberation of Guam, Tinian & Saipan
Post Tour: 28 Jul - 1 Aug Honolulu, HI

2 - 12 Aug Guadalcanal "Turning the Tide"

Edson's Ridge - Henderson Field - Iron Bottom Sound - Tulagi
Post Tour: 11 - 17 Aug Solomon Islands "Up the Slot"

10 - 23 Oct 70th Anniversary of the China Marines

Beijing - Tientsin - Xian - Post Tour: Shanghai

In Planning for November: WWII CBI Theater Burma & Thailand

Post Tour: China

4 - 9 Dec 75th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor - 1941

Waikiki Beach Hotel - Punch Bowl - Dec 7th Ceremonies

8 - 14 Dec 75th Anniversary of the 1941 Invasion of Guam and Battle of Wake Island

Guam - Charter Flight to Wake - Post Tour: 14 - 17 Dec Saipan & Tinian



65th Anniversary of the Korean War

Korea Revisits & Peace Camp For Youth (Grandchildren) Subsidized
Tours to Seoul, South Korea - PCFY college-age students in July

PCFYers having fun in China.

VIETNAM BATTLEFIELDS



*Gen Peter Pace back
where it happened
with MHT!*

27 Feb - 11 Mar Battle of Hue City & Tet Offensive

Phu Bai - Da Nang - Chu Lai - Khe Sanh

9 - 21 Apr 50th Anniversary Search & Destroy Operations in I-Corps 1966

Da Nang - Chu Lai - Leatherneck Square - DMZ

9 - 21 Apr Operation Dewey Canyon - I-Corps

A Shau Valley - Khe Sanh - Dong Ha

7 - 20 May 50th Anniversary of Vietnam War "Delta to the DMZ" Op Birmingham 1966

I - II - III Corps - War Zone C - An Loc - Tay Ninh
Bien Hoa - An Khe - Pleiku - Qui Nhon



*Multi Generations back at Chu
Lai!*

15 - 27 Jul 50th Anniversary of Vietnam War I Corps Op Hastings 1966

The Ques Sons - Chu Lai - Hoi An - Da Nang - Hue City
Leatherneck Square - Khe Sanh - Con Thien - Quang Tri

20 Aug - 2 Sep 50th Anniversary of Vietnam War Op Prairie - 1966 I Corps

Chu Lai - Red Beach - Hoi An - Da Nang - Hue City - Leatherneck Square
Khe Sanh - Con Thien - Quang Tri - Dong Ha



*The Most Interesting Gunny in the World says I don't go back to
Vietnam often but when I do I go with MHT!*

20 Aug - 3 Sep 50th Anniversary of Vietnam War Cav & Air Mobile "Delta to the DMZ"

I - II - III Corps - War Zone C - An Loc - Tay
Ninh - Bien Hoa - An Khe - Pleiku - Qui Nhon



Good food, good friends...

3 - 13 Dec Holiday Return

I - II - III Corps - War Zone C - An Loc - Tay Ninh - Hue City - Da Nang

EUROPE BATTLEFIELDS

25 Mar - 4 Apr 100th Anniversary of the Easter Rising 1916

Dublin - Belfast - Derry - Easter Rising Ceremonies

19 - 27 Apr Turkey WWI Dardanelles Campaign

Istanbul, Gallipoli Battlefields & Troy
ANZAC Day Ceremonies - the best way to see Turkey

21 May - 1 Jun 100th Anniversary of World War I Verdun - 1916 & USMC Battlefields

Paris - Belleau Wood - Chateau Thierry - Mont Blanc - Reims
Meuse-Argonne - The Somme - Ypres - Passchendaele

1 - 9 Jun 72nd Anniversary of D-Day 1944: "Normandy to Paris"

American Cemetery Ceremony - Omaha Beach - Utah Beach
St. Mere Eglise - Pegasus Bridge - Bayeux

2 - 12 Jul WWII Russia 75th Anniversary of Operation Barbarossa "Eastern Front"

Battles of Kursk, Moscow, Stalingrad
Post Tour: St Petersburg

10 - 21 Sep WWI 100th Anniversary of the Great War - 1916 Battle of the Somme

Paris - Belleau Wood - Chateau Thierry - Mont Blanc - Reims
Meuse-Argonne - Ypres - Passchendaele
Post Tour: Battle of the Bulge - Bastogne - Gen Patton's Gravesite -
"Siegfried Line" - Malmedy - Easy Company 516th P.I.R. "foxholes"

29 Sep - 11 Oct Ireland "All of the Emerald Isle" plus WWII U.S. Marines, Soldiers & Sailors

Dublin - Belfast - Southern Counties - WWII Sites
Post Tour: Scotland & England - 950th Battle of Hastings

31 Oct - 10 Nov Military & Cultural History of Israel

Jerusalem - Haifa - Masada - Bethlehem - Dead Sea - Golan Heights

MILITARY HISTORICAL TOURS AND VACATIONS

15 - 22 May The Gardens of London

8 - 17 Oct Italia "Rome & The Amalfi Coast"

Rome - Naples - Pompeii - Capri - Amalfi Coast - Sorrento
Post Tour WWII Sites: 17 - 20 Oct



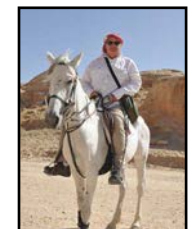
*Wreath Laying at USMC Irish
Marines Memorial!*



*Bucket List Drink...from Bulldog
Fountain Belleau Wood!*



*D-Day Navy Vet Bob Jagers inter-
viewed in Normandy with MHT!*



*Holy Land
Photo Ops ...
Lawrence of Arabia
or
Indiana Jones?!*



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the guidance given in "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance." When faced with the legend and the truth, print the legend. (I still believe Master Gunnery Sergeant Leland "Lou" Diamond launched a mortar round down the smokestack of a Japanese patrol boat, and don't try to change me!)

Lawrence M. Inscoe
Lusby, Md.

• For guidance on the CAR, it is best to start by writing Military Awards Branch, 2008 Elliott Rd., Quantico, VA 22134-5103; tel. (703) 784-9342.

Col Doyen commanded the Fifth Marine Regiment when it deployed to France. In October 1917 the regiment became part of the Fourth Infantry Brigade of the new Second Division.

When Col Doyen was promoted to brigadier general, he became the first Marine officer to command an Army brigade and an Army division. On July 26, 1918, MajGen Lejeune took command of the Fourth Brigade and, two days later, the Second Division.

MGySgt Diamond was a "salty" diamond in the rough (no pun intended) who had fought in World War I. During WW II he did magic with both 60 and 81 mm mortars. His accurate fire is credited as key to the Marines coming out on top in

many actions at Guadalcanal. However, stories of him lobbing a mortar round down the smokestack of an offshore Japanese cruiser are just that: sea stories. He did, however, drive the cruiser away with his harassing and accurate "near-misses." But, you can believe what you want.—Sound Off Ed.

Being Squared-Away Far Outweighs The Alternatives

In 1977 I was leaving a company party at Onslow Beach, Camp Lejeune, N.C. I was not drinking so I was the designated driver.

As I drove toward the 10th Marines regimental area, I passed a military policeman who had a vehicle on a traffic stop. I slowed and drove around. The private first class MP immediately got into his M880, activated his lights and siren and pulled me over. He ticketed me for encroaching on the oncoming lane even though there was no traffic.

When it came time to report to the traffic magistrate who was a lieutenant colonel, I was dressed in my Class "A" uniform with ribbons.

I observed the room was full of people dressed in shorts, T-shirts and sneakers. I overheard murmuring references to me as: "gungy kiss ass."

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When the magistrate called my name, I promptly marched to the bench, came to attention and stated, “Corporal Lillard reporting to the traffic magistrate as ordered.”

The magistrate asked me the specifics of my infraction. Upon my explanation, he dismissed the charges. He then dismissed me. I took one step back, did an about face and began to depart the area.

I overheard the lieutenant colonel admonish the remaining servicemen in the room saying, “This is how you report to a court of law, and none of you can expect to be treated as that Marine.”

Donald L. Lillard
USMC, 1975-79
LaBelle, Fla.

Yellow Footprints at Quantico Station

I get hand-me-down copies of *Leatherneck*, which I read from cover to cover. I have belatedly been following the letters concerning the history of the yellow footprints at the recruit depots. I wanted to add an item of possible interest.

As a PLC (Platoon Leaders Class) candidate, I rode the RF&P [Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac] Railroad train from Washington, D.C., to Quantico, Va., in June 1959. It was to begin 12 weeks of training to qualify for a Marine Corps

commission on graduation from college. I was with a group of PLC candidates who arrived at night at the small station.

There, we were immediately ordered off the railcar and to stand at attention on yellow footprints painted on the open platform. After much screaming and harassment, we were loaded on buses for the trip to Camp Upshur where the first six weeks of the grueling training would take place.

Times have changed. There are no more eight- or 12-man squad drills, World War II- and Korean War-vintage 782 gear, herringbone or sateen utilities and officers with swagger sticks.

I’m sure the trains no longer bring officer candidates to Quantico. The yellow footprints at the railroad station are probably long gone, but in *The MARINE Shop* in Quantico, doormats with yellow footprints were still available as recently as a few years ago.

Capt Walt Smyth
USMC, 1958-70
St. Petersburg, Fla.

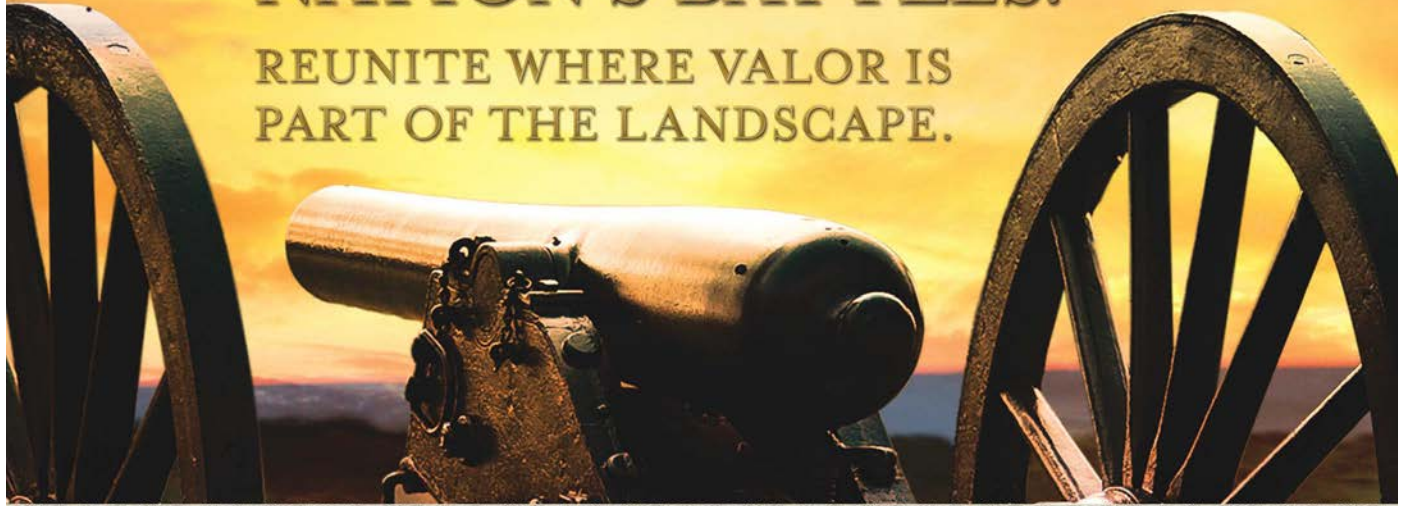
The Philadelphia Navy Yard Has a Unique Marine History

Thank you for the outstanding story on Alfred A. Cunningham [September]. His story is personal to the Philadelphia



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Marines. Legend has it that Lieutenant Cunningham had permission to practice on the Marine Corps parade ground, an 8-acre swath in front of Buildings 101 and 102 of the Navy Yard. Those buildings and the parade deck are still there, although the “yard” has been given over to business development.

It is likely that your picture of Cunningham and “Noisy Nan” was taken on the parade field. Bldg. 101, in particular, is steeped in history. It was at one time the Marine Basic School (TBS) and served as headquarters for Marine regiments and commands for a hundred years (also see the story “Seven Marine Corps Myths” by Colonel Glenn M. Harned in the September issue). Nicholas Biddle, famed Philadelphia banker and socialite, trained Marine lieutenants in fencing and swordsmanship on the parade deck.

The Philadelphia Aero Club later merged with the Aero Club of Pennsylvania. I am a member, and they have meetings at the historic Wings Field airport where I fly.

In my time, Bldg. 101 was the headquarters for Marine Wing Support Squadron 474, a reserve support squadron in the Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing, Fleet Marine Force (I was the squadron commanding officer from 1990 to 1992. I enlisted in that building in 1967).

True story: I was in the reserve unit at the Navy Yard circa 1974. We drilled on weekends. During the week a small cadre of regular Marines ran the place. One Wednesday around midday chow everybody was out, and a young lance corporal was minding the office in Bldg. 101. The 25th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Robert E. Cushman Jr., walked in the office door, in full uniform, all by himself.

The youngster gaped in shock, looked at the picture on the wall, then looked back at Gen Cushman standing at the counter. Like many Marines, he had never seen a Commandant before. Gen Cushman put the Marine at ease, apologized for the unannounced visit, and said, “Son, I don’t want to take you from your work, but I went to The Basic School in this building, and I’d just like to look around. Could you give me a tour?”

For the next 15 minutes the Commandant and the lance corporal toured Bldg. 101, including the long abandoned third floor where TBS lieutenants bunked. The tour finished, and the Marine escorted Gen Cushman out to the porch, where his car was waiting. The Commandant shook the lad’s hand, walked down the steps and was driven away.

[continued on page 74]

DISTINCTIVE STYLE BOLDLY SHOWS YOUR MARINE PRIDE



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BACK

"The United States Marines Semper Fi Established 1775", displayed on hood



"USMC Semper Fi" Hooded Fleece Jacket

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A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

“All previous guidance remains in effect”

To all Marines, Sailors, civilians and families, I am honored to serve as your Commandant. To General and Mrs. Dunford, as you transition to your next assignment, please know that you go with the respect and thanks of every Marine, Sailor and their families. It is now our responsibility to maintain the institutional momentum of the past year in our efforts to sustain and continue to improve our Corps. That said, no later than the New Year I will publish a “FragO” to the current CPG [Commandant’s Planning Guidance].

“Like war itself, our approach to warfighting must evolve”

As the Nation’s crisis response force and force in readiness, Marines remain forward deployed, ready to fight and win tonight. However, we cannot rest on our past successes and our current efforts because our Nation’s enemies are continuously adapting and challenging us with new and different forms of warfare. We must continue to improve our readiness for today’s fight, while at the same time ensuring we remain relevant for the conflicts we know will come in the future. As Marines have always done, we will continue to seek new opportunities and develop solutions that maintain an overwhelming tactical advantage over any adversary. We must know how we will operationally apply our capabilities against our adversaries, but also **study and be aware of how they will apply their capabilities against us.**

“For the strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack”

Our strength is the talent, skill and discipline of our Marines and Sailors. Today, we are a ready and capable Corps of Marines because of patriotic Americans who are willing to step forward and accept the challenge of being a Marine in order to serve our Nation. Since our friendly center of gravity is our “Team of Marines,” it is appropriate to begin our tenure by communicating clear expectations for leaders and those they serve.

“The senior is obligated to provide the guidance and the example that allows subordinates to exercise proper judgment and initiative.” This includes providing a clear mission and intent ... What to do, not how to do it.

What Marines should expect from leaders:

Firm but fair leadership. Marines and Sailors will be treated with dignity and respect.

Accountability. All Marines will be held to the highest standards of conduct and performance.

Leadership from the front. Leaders will set the highest examples in their professional and personal life.

Realistic and challenging training. We will train hard in every clime and place, day and night.

Weapons and equipment that is on the cutting edge of technology. Marines must quickly recognize and leverage technology to make us better warfighters.

Opportunities for advancement. All Marines will be recognized for a high level of performance.

Care and support for families and our wounded. Both are critical members of the Marine Corps team and have earned our support.

Honesty, Integrity, and Loyalty. Trust is a two-way street. Listen to and take care of Marines in your charge, and they will take care of you.

Compassion. All leaders will provide those in their charge sincere and concerned assistance with problems.

“The subordinate agrees to act (with discipline, respect and loyalty) and not exceed the proper limits of authority”

What leaders should expect from Marines:
Always give 100 percent to the mission. Bring your “A” game every day.

Be technically and tactically proficient. Learn, study, read ... know your profession.

Be physically, morally, and mentally fit.

Lead a healthy and disciplined lifestyle. Condition your mind and body for the rigors of combat. Use of illegal drugs and abuse of legal drugs and alcohol are not conducive to this goal.

Be accountable for your actions. If you make a mistake, admit it, correct it, and press on.

Care for and maintain your weapons and equipment. Readiness depends on it.

Overcome adversity and exercise initiative. Seek solutions and never run away from problems.

Tell the truth—ALWAYS! Bad news does not get better with time. Things cannot be fixed if they are not talked about.

Set goals and then strive to achieve them. Have a plan for your life whether you serve four or 40 years.

Earn trust in all things, every day. Be loyal to your unit, your peers, your subordinates, and your leaders.

“Human will, instilled through leadership, is the driving force of all action in war”

Being a Marine is not a job but a way of life. Give your all to be the best human being, teammate and Marine or Sailor possible. The end result will be an unbeatable force ready to take on any mission, any place, and any time. When we do execute our missions and our lives in this way, we will take our proper place alongside the long line of Marines and Sailors who have preceded us. **Let’s go!**

Semper Fidelis,

Robert B. Neller
General, U.S. Marine Corps



USMC

Passage of Command

General Robert B. Neller Becomes 37th CMC



SGT MELISSA KARNATH, USMC

The 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen Robert B. Neller, center, accepts the Marine Corps colors from Gen Joseph F. Dunford Jr. at the passage of command ceremony held on Sept. 24, 2015. At right is the 18th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, SgtMaj Ronald L. Green.

By Sgt Melissa Karnath, USMC

General Robert B. Neller received the battle colors of the Marine Corps from Gen Joseph F. Dunford Jr. during a passage of command ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington, Sept. 24, 2015, signifying his new position as the 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Gen Neller, an East Lansing, Mich., native and 40-year Marine veteran, assumes responsibility as the senior ranking officer of the Corps. “I am honored, proud and humbled to be here,” Gen Neller said. “I appreciate your support. Now let’s go do this.”

During the ceremony, Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter spoke highly of Gen Neller and his ability to lead the Marine Corps. He also spoke about Gen

Neller’s “greatest trait”—his love for the troops. “They light up when he’s talking to them, and he lights up too,” Carter said.

Gen Dunford, a Boston, Mass., native, relinquished command of the Marine Corps after serving in the top post for less than a year. “In his short but significant tenure, Gen Dunford guided the Marine Corps during the final drawdown in Afghanistan and maintained the Corps as the most formidable expeditionary fighting force that has ever existed,” said Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus. “He kept it ready to respond to any crisis throughout the globe in spite of budget constraints, threat of sequestration and the impact of continuing resolutions.”

During his time as the 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen Dunford moved forward to meet challenges with his

planning guidance, stressing innovation, adaptation and winning America’s battles. “I feel fortunate because a few minutes ago General Neller became my Commandant,” said Gen Dunford. “Just like all the other Marines and sailors, I have the good fortune to have a leader who’s passionate, has extraordinary operational capability, and he has extraordinary energy and vision to take us into the future. We couldn’t be in better hands.”

Gen Dunford assumed his new position as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Sept. 25, 2015.

Author’s bio: Sgt Melissa Karnath is a combat correspondent with Defense Media Activity.



In Every Clime and Place

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

■ SOUTHWEST ASIA Security Forces Refine Combat Skills In Realistic Conditions

Enthusiasm: It's one of the intangible characteristics that separate the Marine Corps from every other branch of service. Austere conditions, limited resources and daunting odds are reduced to nothing more than minor setbacks when placed before a group of Marines.

This is exactly the mindset that security force leathernecks with Marine Wing Support Squadron (MWSS) 371 took with them to the range while deployed with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force–Crisis Response–Central Command (SPMAGTF–CR–CC) to Southwest Asia, Aug. 19.

The live-fire combat maneuver range is designed to emulate realistic combat conditions and force Marines to shoot, move and communicate to overcome targets at an unknown distance.

“I’m not the type of person who enjoys shooting in static positions at a fixed yard line,” said Sergeant Torrence Nelson, a platoon guide and weapons instructor with MWSS-371. “I think that it lacks realism, and Marines lose interest in that. Shooting on the move and engaging targets from multiple yard lines sparks interest within the Marines because it forces them to have a more combat-oriented mindset. It’s a more accurate simulation of what they would be doing in an actual combat environment. Taking all that into consideration, we decided to create this range.”

Training and motivation go hand in hand for Nelson. He believes both are required in order to push his Marines to their limits.

“I try to apply a certain energy to things that helps engage others. Without motivation, a Marine just becomes a body following orders; with it comes strong bonds

that help you to overcome nearly anything.”

Nelson’s desire to train and inspire stems from his understanding of the role the platoon plays in protecting Marines. He knows their efforts make others successful, and he seeks to inspire them through actions rather than just through words.

“Our mission as security forces is to protect Marines on our base,” said Nelson. “It really comes down to protecting military assets and personnel. Standing post for hours every day becomes tedious. It becomes boring, and we don’t want Marines to lose sight of what they are here for. Marines perform not because they’re told to, but because they see value in it. That creates better results 10 times out of 10.”

The security force Marines maintained their enthusiasm despite being drenched in sweat from the sweltering heat. As the temperature continued to climb, their performance was unhindered.

“You have to have enthusiasm while out here,” said Lance Corporal Ethan Johnston, a security force Marine with MWSS-371. “If you don’t, you aren’t going to sound off and you’re not going to be in the moment. Staying fully aware of what you are doing is important no matter what. Even if it’s just training, you need to be fully engaged with what you do, or you won’t be effective.”

Understanding what inspires people is just as important as understanding what you are teaching them to accomplish, said Sgt Nelson.

“It’s an overwhelmingly good feeling knowing that we play such an important role out here,” Nelson said. “Knowing that what we do prepares Marines to save lives leaves me with a feeling that can’t really be described. At the end of the day, I want the Marines out here to leave with revitalized morale and a sense that what they do is important. We are doing what needs to be done to protect those back home.”

The Marines and sailors of SPMAGTF–CR–CC provide the commander of U.S. Central Command with a unique set of solutions to emergent crises across the Middle East.

Cpl Jonathan Boynes, USMC



CPL JONATHAN BOYNES, USMC

A security force Marine with MWSS-371, SPMAGTF–CR–CC fires at a target during a live-fire combat maneuver range in Southwest Asia, Aug. 19. The range was designed to emulate realistic combat conditions and force Marines to shoot, move and communicate to overcome targets at an unknown distance.

■ COTONOU, BENIN Marine Tactics Will Help Benin In Fight Against Illicit Trafficking

An opening ceremony marked the beginning of a training partnership between the U.S. Marines and Benin's National Surveillance Police at the national police academy headquarters in Cotonou, Benin, Aug. 31.

At the request of the Beninese government, and in coordination with the local U.S. Embassy, the Marines and sailors of Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force—Crisis Response-Africa (SPMAGTF—CR-AF) were assigned to train a Beninese police unit in infantry tactics. The training was aimed at improving the unit's ability to counter illicit trafficking along the borders of the West African nation.

The Marines and Beninese police trained in a variety of events from offensive maneuvers and weapons handling to live-fire ranges and patrolling. The corpsmen with the Marine team provided instruction in medical lifesaving skills.

This particular training event was a milestone in the partnership between Benin and the United States. It was the first time in the 10-year history of the National Surveillance Police that a foreign military had come to train and mentor the specialized unit. Benin's Minister of Interior, Placide Azande; the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires, Todd Whatley; and Marines and sailors with SPMAGTF—CR-AF were on hand for the opening ceremony.

Prior to the commencement of the training, Azande spoke at a meeting with U.S. officials at Benin's Ministry of Interior headquarters and said that the training would help his country and its people. He said that the Marines' advice, mentorship and specialized skills were exactly what Benin's National Surveillance Police need.

"I am very grateful to see all the Marines here today. It gives me a great feeling," said Azande during a press conference. "This is an example of how fruitful the collaboration is between the U.S. and Benin governments. In order to be more effective on the ground, we need this training, and I am confident we will benefit from their efforts."

Benin and the U.S. share concerns about illicit trafficking along Benin's border.

"We all know the difficulties," said Whatley. "We have great hope that with initiatives like this training that brings us together today and with the steady collaboration between Beninese authorities and the diplomatic community, our combined capacities will allow us to achieve a new level of security that is unprecedented in Benin."

SPMAGTF—CR-AF, Detachment A is



Following an opening ceremony, Marines of SPMAGTF—CR-AF greet Beninese officials and members of Benin's National Surveillance Police in Cotonou, Benin, Aug. 31. The Marines had the unique opportunity to help train and mentor a Beninese police unit, equipping the local force to better fight illicit trafficking along the borders of the African nation. (Photo by SSgt Bryan Peterson, USMC)

based out of Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy, where its Marines, sailors and Coast Guardsmen stage and prepare for theater security cooperation missions in various African nations.

SSgt Bryan Peterson, USMC

■ CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA U.S., South American Marine Leaders Collaborate During Conference

The Marine Leaders of the Americas Conference 2015 concluded with a closing ceremony in Cartagena, Colombia on Aug. 26.

Co-hosted by the *Infantería de Marina*

de Colombia—the Colombian Marine Corps—and U.S. Marine Corps Forces, South, the conference provided an opportunity for 15 partner nations to combine experiences and work together, focusing on continuing relationships and humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief efforts.

Then-Lieutenant General Robert B. Neller, Commanding General, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command, represented the Commandant of the Marine Corps alongside regional naval infantries from Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El



CPL DEREK PICKLESIMER, USMC

BGen Eric M. Smith, right, CG, MARFORSOUTH, speaks with members of the *Infantería de Marina* de Colombia at the Marine Infantry Training Base in Coveñas, Colombia, during the Marine Leaders of the Americas Conference in August. The conference provides a forum for regional and senior naval infantry leaders throughout the Western Hemisphere to discuss shared interests and improve training programs among partner nations.

Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay.

“When I was given the opportunity to come to this meeting, I was very excited,” said LtGen Neller, who added that his excitement was based on the knowledge that during the next four years, the U.S. Marine Corps and the participating naval infantries will have the chance to work together more closely than they have previously.

The conference concentrated on continuing relationships within the Western Hemisphere, improving Marine Corps training programs and enhancing naval infantry support to operations.

“The subjects that were addressed at this conference went well due to our partnerships,” said Major General Luis Jesús Suárez Castillo, Commander, Infantería de Marina de Colombia. “In this private setting, we built bridges. Each counterpart can talk about solutions and about their own capabilities and capacities about technology and training that could be beneficial to each other.”

The leaders were able to gather in small working groups and in a one-on-one setting to discuss interests in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations. These bilateral sessions are a stepping-stone to future relationships and operations.

The conference enhances each participating nation’s ability to communicate jointly with other countries, according to Brigadier General David Jones, Commanding General, Belize Defense Force. “You have an understanding of how each other works and what each other can bring

to the table to help each other,” he said.

Senior leaders also had a chance to tour the Marine Infantry Training Base in Coveñas, Colombia. The base is home to three recruit battalions—modeled after Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C.—and the specialist center where the Colombian Marine Corps’ noncommissioned officers receive specialized training courses such as drill instructor, military working dog handler and anti-explosives. The center is supported by a U.S. Marine Corps gunnery sergeant.

“Coveñas represents what we have to do to prepare; prepare for amphibious operations, preparation for riverine operations,” said BGen Eric M. Smith, Commanding General, MARFORSOUTH.

BGen Smith also said the facility is needed to train both the officers and senior enlisted.

“One is not more important than the other. Coveñas has everything we need to train all in one location, and that is why it is extremely important. I am grateful to the Colombian military for allowing us to use this facility,” said BGen Smith.

At the closing ceremony for the conference, LtGen Neller and MajGen Suárez Castillo presented awards to the participants and their spouses, thanking them for their contribution.

“I learned a great deal from our discussions, both one on one and in our meetings on how we could better coordinate, cooperate and communicate. Thank you for what you do for your countries, your Marines and your Navy,” said LtGen Neller.

Sgt Alisa Helin, USMC

■ TWENTYNINE PALMS, CALIF. “War Dogs” Participate in Squad Competition

Leathernecks with 2d Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment were put to the test during Exercise Chosin, a squad-level training evolution held at Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., Aug. 24-28.

“At the end of the day, if you unpack any tactical situation, you will find that it will always come down to the rifle squad,” said Lieutenant Colonel Christopher T. Steele, Commanding Officer, 2/7. “It is up to them to close the last 100 yards, and they are the ones that win battles. . . . When we look at a deployment, we ask ourselves the question, ‘What are the most arduous circumstances we might find ourselves in?’ The answer to that question is offensive and defensive operations. We might be asked to perform them in the desert or an urban environment,” he added.

The exercise, which was organized as a competition among squads, evaluated the Marines on efficiency and precision as they performed not only offensive and defensive operations, but military operations on urban terrain (MOUT). Throughout the exercise, the companies within 2/7 alternated between Ranges 100, 215 and 410 at the combat center.

“The ultimate goal is to create an environment that challenges the squad leader,” Steele said. “What we are looking to assess, at the battalion level, is their proficiency in offensive and defensive operations as well as to observe them in both a desert environment and an urban environment.”



Senior leaders of the Colombian Navy and Marine Corps and the Senior Defense Official of Colombia stand with BGen Eric M. Smith and LtGen Robert B. Neller, Commanding General, MARFORCOM, during the opening ceremony of the Marine Leaders of the Americas Conference 2015 in Cartagena, Colombia, Aug. 24.



LCPLEVI SCHULTZ, USMC

PFC Juan B. Garcia, a rifleman with Company E, 2/7, leaps into a trench during an assault course at Range 410, MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, Calif., as part of Exercise Chosin, Aug. 26.

While at Range 100, the Marines were tasked with hastily setting up squad-level defensive positions, where they fended off simulated attacks.

To evaluate the Marines in urban operations, the squads conducted simulated assaults at Range 215, which is home to a MOUT town. Role-players brought a sense of reality to the assault as Marines took to the streets and stormed buildings to clear the sectors of the town.

Rifle squads executed an assault course with support from M224A1 60 mm mortars at Range 410. The mortars served to destroy a simulated bunker while the maneuver element breached barbed wire to begin live-fire on a trench. Upon clearing the trench, the squad leader received a situation report from his Marines before they repelled a counterattack.

“If we can excel in the high end of military operations, we will be able to excel in the low end as well,” Steele said. “The design of this exercise really speaks to that. Our focus is solely on our core tasks and ensuring our Marines are ready for whatever a deployment might throw at them.”

Recently, many of the battalion’s junior Marines have begun filling squad leader positions, Steele added.

“Many of the Marines have done an excellent job of stepping into leadership positions,” said Corporal Kevin Clark, a squad leader with 2/7. “It’s very important to do training evolutions with the focus on the squad like this. If you have strong fire teams and strong rifle squads that can act independently, you can be prepared for anything.”

Clark stressed the importance of taking care of Marines and ensuring they are ready for any situation.

“As an individual rifleman, your weapon is your rifle; as a squad leader, your weapon is your three fire teams,” Clark said. “You should always know the job that is two billets above you and ensure the Marines under you know yours.”

With the exercise completed and all squads successfully evaluated in offensive and defensive operations and MOUT, Steele expressed optimism for the future of 2/7.

“I have come to expect exceptional

things from these men,” Steele said. “I have been with 2/7 for just over 2½ months now, and I’ve been nothing but impressed with our squad-level leadership.”

The Marine rifle squad has been the basic tactical unit of the Marine Corps since before World War II. While the composition of the rifle squad has evolved throughout the Corps’ history in battle, its significance has not.

LCP Levi Schultz, USMC

■ CHESAPEAKE, VA. FAST Participates in Advanced Urban Combat Training

There was complete silence in the air in the seconds leading up to the loud “pop” emitted by a flash-bang grenade dropped down a flight of stairs. Suddenly, chaos seemed to erupt as Marines made their way down a tiny staircase into a room. One of them proceeded to fire a live round into a simulated “threatening target.”

That scene was part of a training event set up for Marines with “Alpha” Company, Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team (FAST), Marine Corps Security Force Regiment, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command at a “shoot house” at the Naval Support Activity Northwest Annex, Chesapeake, Va., Aug. 28.

The training required the members of the unit to utilize both tactics and teamwork in order to successfully take over a simulated residential structure, using both live rounds and flash-bang grenades.

During the week prior, the Marines of Alpha Co took classes and conducted rehearsals designed to prepare them for conducting the training with live rounds.



CPL ANNE HENRY, USMC

Leathernecks with Alpha Co, FAST prepare to breach the door to a “shoot house” at the Naval Support Activity Northwest Annex, Chesapeake, Va., Aug. 28. Once inside, the Marines neutralized different kinds of targets and were tested on their reaction during stressful situations.



SGT EMMANUEL RAVOS, USMC

FROM DUSK UNTIL DAWN—LCpl Alexander Bosco, left, and Cpl Dakota Thomas-Nye, machine-gunners with “Kilo” Company, Battalion Landing Team 3d Bn, First Marine Regiment, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, rehearse machine-gun drills in Kuwait, Aug. 25. Elements of the 15th MEU were ashore in Kuwait for sustainment training and worked around the clock to maintain and enhance the skills they developed during their predeployment training period. Embarked with the USS Essex Amphibious Ready Group, the 15th MEU was deployed to maintain regional security in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations.

“Throughout the week, the Marines will be receiving classes on defensive positions, urban patrolling and isolating the objective,” said Sergeant Julian Paige, a close-quarters battle instructor with Marine Corps Security Forces Training Co. “Once they receive all of these skill sets, they apply everything they have learned.”

Due to the nature of this training, all of the Marines had their marksmanship skills tested on a range, according to Staff Sergeant Bradley Krueger, a close-quarters battle team leader with the unit.

“From day one, we start evaluating the Marines’ marksmanship,” said Krueger. “Only the Marines who meet our qualification course of fire are allowed to have live rounds inside the house to shoot.”

According to Krueger, for the majority of FAST Marines, this event is their first time participating in an advanced urban combat training exercise.

“This training gives them the basic tools they will need to know to accomplish the mission,” said Krueger. “From there, the platoon will develop their own personal

techniques for what they are going to utilize.”

After a week of classes and rehearsals, the Marines who qualified to carry live rounds entered the shoot house with the goal of applying everything they learned as well as controlling the numerous types of targets.

“All of the students will have live rounds in both of their weapons systems [rifle and pistol],” said Krueger. “There will be targets on the walls that will act as a threat, non-threat, or even a threat controlling a hostage.”

For the Marines to succeed in the shoot house, teamwork was critical, according to Sgt Paige.

“Teamwork is a huge factor with this,” said Paige. “They must be able to communicate with each other and understand what everybody is going to be doing.”

For the Marines who participated, the exercise was highly beneficial, according to Lance Corporal Thomas Allis, a FAST squad leader, who added that it gave them a better understanding of the fundamentals and a greater sense of camaraderie.

In addition to feeling confident in their own abilities, the training also left the Marines comfortable with the abilities of those around them, according to Captain Patrick Hassett, a FAST platoon commander.

“I am much more confident with our abilities as a unit and in myself as a shooter. Live fire is always a confirmation of previously learned training,” said Hassett. “I have seen significant improvements in the Marines. Live fire is always a confidence booster especially in a shoot house or close-quarters environment. They have more confidence in themselves and the members of their fire team.”

The Marine Corps’ FAST companies are part of Marine Corps Security Force Regiment, which is tasked with providing limited duration expeditionary antiterrorism and security forces in support of designated component and geographic combatant commanders in order to protect vital naval and national assets.

Cpl Anne Henry, USMC



Always Faithful



USMC Women's Embrace Ring

 Set with genuine diamonds

Sculpted Marine Corps Emblem

Finely hand-crafted in solid sterling silver with 18K-gold plating

Engraved inside with *Semper Fidelis*

A Fine Jewelry Exclusive from The Bradford Exchange

Members of the United States Marines are true heroes dedicated to the values of Duty, Honor, and Courage. With their *Semper Fi* spirit, Marines are always ready to proudly serve their country. Now, there's no better way to celebrate the values of these distinguished individuals than with our meaningful women's "USMC" Embrace Ring, an exclusive design from The Bradford Exchange.

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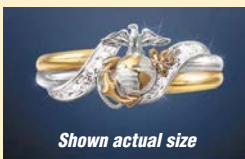
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01-19310-001-E50203

BIRTHDAY BALL

By Gordon Bess

SSgt Gordon C. Bess, a cartoonist, drew this Birthday cartoon, which appeared in the November 1955 issue of *Leatherneck*. Bess enlisted in 1947 and went on to create illustrations, posters and charts for the Corps' training aids section in San Diego, Calif. After a year of service in Korea, he became a staff cartoonist and the cartoon editor for *Leatherneck* in 1954. He continued with the magazine until 1957 when he left the Corps. In 1967, he created the comic strip "Redeye," about a screwball Indian tribe. He died in 1989 at the age of 60.





CORPS ALBUM

Compiled by Nancy Lee White Hoffman



MARINE CORPS HISTORY DIVISION

For years, Marines have celebrated the Marine Corps Birthday all over the world in every clime and place: foxholes, embassies, ships and aircraft hangars to name but a few. On a shell-scarred ridge in Korea on Nov. 10, 1951, these First Marine Division leathernecks didn't let the absence of a cake knife deter them. Instead, they used a bayonet to slice their cake, which was complete with frosting and a Marine Corps emblem.



SUBMITTED BY FORMER SGT THOMAS RING

At a Birthday celebration at Camp Henoko, Okinawa, in 1976, good friends LCpl Thomas Ring, left, and LCpl James Katrouba, Ammunition Company, 3d Supply Battalion, Third Force Service Support Group, share a moment as brothers in the Corps.



SUBMITTED BY MSGT JOHN LUKONDI, USMC (RET)

GySgt John Lukondi, the noncommissioned officer in charge of Marine Security Guard, American Embassy Brasilia, Brazil, and wife, Sally, enjoy a dance at the embassy's celebration of the 200th Marine Corps Birthday in 1975.

CELEBRATING THE MARINE CORPS BIRTHDAY



SUBMITTED BY HELEN PETROWSKI

TSgt Stanley J. Petrowski was a recruiter in New Haven, Conn., when he and his wife, Helen, attended a Nov. 10, 1950, celebration.



SUBMITTED BY LTCOL JOHN R. GAMBRINO, USMC (RET)

LtCol John R. Gambrino, USMC (Ret) submitted this Nov. 10, 1951, photo taken by his late father, Capt Robert Gambrino. LtCol Gambrino believes the 1st Amphibian Tractor Bn was near Masan, Korea, at the time the photo was taken. Capt Gambrino was the S-4, or logistics officer, for the unit.



SUBMITTED BY FORMER CPL PHIL MASON

Marine Corps Birthdays are about celebration, ceremony and camaraderie. Marines with Electronic Maintenance Co, Material Supply and Maintenance Bn, 3d Force Service Regiment gather prior to a 1960 Birthday celebration at Camp Courtney, Okinawa. The Marine at far left is PFC Eber G. Hasley from Buena Park, Calif., a ground radio repairman with military occupational specialty 2771.



SUBMITTED BY AMY YAVENEU WYAND

Above: At 90 years old, Richard Yaveneu, a World War II veteran and Purple Heart recipient, has been to quite a few Birthday celebrations, according to his daughter, Amy Wyand. Here, he addresses those gathered for the Corps' Birthday at J.J. Kelley's restaurant and pub in Lansing, Ill., in November 2014.

Right: The current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen Joseph F. Dunford Jr., far right, also has been to a good many Birthday celebrations, including this one with his family at Camp Lejeune, N.C., in 1986. From left: Gen Dunford's brother, then-Capt Michael P. Dunford; parents, Katherine and Joseph Dunford Sr.; and wife, Ellyn. Gen Dunford's father is a Marine veteran of the Chosin Reservoir.



SUBMITTED BY ELLYN DUNFORD



SUBMITTED BY A. J. DEBIASE

The cake-cutting ceremony is one of the highlights of any Marine Birthday celebration. MSgt Lucy Cozzi along with two other Marines were honored with the task at Marine Corps Schools, Marine Barracks "8th and I," Washington, D.C., Nov. 10, 1954. According to Marine veteran A.J. DeBiase, a *Leatherneck* reader for more than 60 years, MSgt Cozzi was the sister of "Flo" Consiglio, the late owner of Sally's Pizza in New Haven, Conn. Flo was so proud of sister Lucy's service in the Corps, she never charged any Marine in uniform for pizza.



SUBMITTED BY FORMER SGT LARRY J. BAEHRE

Somewhere in the Mediterranean between Naples, Italy, and Marseille, France. Capt J.J. O'Brien, Commanding Officer, Marine Detachment, USS *Boston* (CAG-1), gives a piece of birthday cake to RADM Fredrick H. Schneider, Commander, Cruiser Destroyer Flotilla 10, and CDR William M. McDonald, Executive Officer, USS *Boston*. Prior to receiving his piece of cake, the admiral presented the youngest and oldest members of the detachment, PFC David A. Byers and 1stSgt Norman L. Engstrom, with the first pieces of cake. Sgt Larry J. Baehre, a member of the detachment from 1965 to 1967, said that upon arrival in Marseille a few days after the Corps' Birthday, the members of the detachment "attended a Marine Corps Ball hosted by the locals, complete with music, food and beverages."



SUBMITTED BY FORMER SGT HAROLD CHIDESTER

Sgt Harold Chidester worked in the post bakery from 1956 to 1959 at Quantico, Va., where they baked bread and pastries for all the mess halls and the air station. He submitted this photo of SSgt Falcon, left, and Sgt Rosenberry, who decorated one of several 1958 Marine Birthday cakes. Thank you, Sgt Chidester, SSgt Falcon, Sgt Rosenberry and the other Marine food service specialists who baked countless Marine Birthday cakes over the years. Happy 240th Birthday to you and all Marines!

10 NOVEMBER 2015



A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS



When the Continental Congress raised up two battalions of Marines in 1775, it launched the greatest fighting force the world has ever known—a force revered globally for its uncommon valor, unparalleled adaptability, and ferocious tenacity. Over the past 240 years, the battlefields and equipment have changed, but the spirit of the United States Marine Corps has prevailed in every clime and place.

One hundred years ago, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island opened its doors as the first base dedicated solely to making Marines. Since then, hundreds of thousands of men and women have been forged into elite warriors at Parris Island, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, and The Basic School in Quantico. Each recruit had a different reason for stepping onto the yellow footprints, but all are unified by the intangible traits that characterize United States Marines and the remarkable legacy that has carried on across generations.

Whether you served on the hallowed grounds of Belleau Wood, fought on the iconic island battlefields of World War II, navigated the harsh terrain and climate of the Chosin Reservoir or Vietnam, conducted assaults during Desert Storm, marched on Baghdad, fought in close combat in Fallujah, or conducted combat operations in Afghanistan, everyone who wears the Eagle, Globe and Anchor is a member of that storied legacy.

As we celebrate the 240th birthday of our Corps, we pay tribute to all who have served and we remember our fallen heroes. We take great pride in our legacy and in the fine men and women who carry our colors into the future. And we extend heartfelt thanks to our families for their steadfast support.

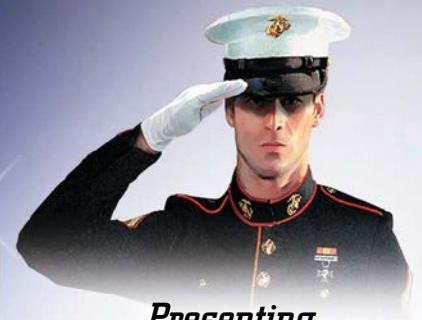
Our 26th Commandant, General Louis Wilson, once said, “In the last analysis, what the Marine Corps becomes is what we make of it during our respective watches. And that watch of each Marine is not confined to the time he spends on active duty. It lasts as long as he is ‘proud to bear the title of United States Marine.’ ” Thank you all for guarding the legacy of our Corps during your watch.

Happy Birthday, Marines!

Semper Fidelis,

Robert B. Neller
General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commandant of the Marine Corps

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Exclusive Tribute Commemorates the 70th Anniversary of a Historic Victory

A defining moment in World War II, victory at Iwo Jima was captured in an iconic photograph that became the inspiration for one of our nation's most revered military monuments — the Marine Corps War Memorial.

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Passing the Word

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

Birthday Ball Gown Giveaway Unites Spouses, Community

Each year as the Marine Corps Birthday Ball approaches, Marine wives start asking the big question: “What am I going to wear?” This year, the family readiness officers (FROs) of Fifth Marine Regiment, First Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force took it upon themselves to help answer that question by hosting a ball gown giveaway at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Aug. 22.

The major subordinate elements of 1stMarDiv were sponsored by cities throughout the Camp Pendleton area. Those cities, including Costa Mesa, Rancho Santa Margarita and Dana Point, helped reach out to the communities to collect donations for the event.

“We got an astounding amount of donations,” said Jaime Farrell, the FRO for 2d Battalion, 5th Marines. “I believe we have about 2,000 dresses and accessories.”

Farrell added that since they had more dresses than they could give away, they opened the event to include not only the families of 5th Marines, but all families living on the northern end of base.

“What we don’t use we will pass to another unit or organization that has a ball gown swap,” said Farrell. “We have a lot

of spouses, but we also have people from our adoptive cities, a couple of Marines, and even our battalion Marine and family life counselor is volunteering today.”

The volunteers handled everything from signing people in and directing crowds to organizing and rehanging dresses.

“Each one of the volunteers could be doing something else with their weekend, but we choose to be here to help the other spouses,” said Ana Davie, a 2/5 Marine spouse who volunteered her time for the event.

Davie explained that the event was a convenient tool for families preparing for the upcoming Birthday Ball, but for many it represented a much more important opportunity.

“These events don’t just offer free ball gowns, they offer a sense of community,” said Davie. “Camp Pendleton is huge, and you can get lost in the sea of fishes, but when you come to these events, you feel connected again.”

Events like the ball gown giveaway remind Marines and their families that there are many tools available to keep them united with their fellow servicemembers and prepare them for whatever challenges lie ahead.

LCpl Caitlin Bevel, USMC

VA/DOD eBenefits Site Sees Surge in Users

Participation in the joint Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense eBenefits website topped 5 million users on Sept. 1, two months ahead of schedule, officials reported.

The site allows veterans, active-duty servicemembers, wounded warriors, their family members and their authorized caregivers to safely access their clinical and benefits information, apply for disability compensation and various benefits, and access employment resources.

VA officials said they established an agency priority goal of reaching 5 million eBenefits users by the end of fiscal year 2015, but were able to reach the milestone early through aggressive outreach efforts and with the support of DOD and its veterans service organization partners.

“Veterans are encouraged to enroll in eBenefits and file their claims online through this one-stop shop for benefits-related tools and information,” said Allison Hickey, VA’s undersecretary for benefits. “We have already implemented nearly 60 self-service features, and we continue to expand eBenefits capabilities to give veterans and servicemembers greater flexibility in securing their information.”



Marine spouses wait in line to sign in to the ball gown giveaway that was organized by the FROs of 5th Marines, 1stMarDiv, I MEF, at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Aug. 22. Members of the surrounding communities donated approximately 2,000 items, including dresses, shoes and accessories.



Marine spouse Courtney Moody shops for a dress during the ball gown giveaway at MCB Camp Pendleton, Aug. 22.

According to officials, the number of registered eBenefits users is a key indicator of the VA's success in improving veterans' access to VA benefits and services.

To enroll in eBenefits, veterans and military personnel must obtain a DOD self-service (DS) logon, which provides access to several veterans and military benefits resources using a single username and password. The service is free, and the logon may be obtained at the eBenefits website, www.ebenefits.va.gov, or in person at a VA regional office.

"The successful collaboration of eBenefits and DS Logon is just one more example of how the DOD and VA are working together to continue bringing current and former servicemembers secure online access to the benefits they've earned," said Mary Dixon, director of the Defense Manpower Data Center.

The rapid and continued growth in the use of the eBenefits website demonstrates the importance of giving veterans greater access to information about their benefits, officials said. In addition to filing claims online and checking the status of those claims, veterans also can send a message to their VA doctor, order prescription drug refills and obtain official military documents through eBenefits, they noted.

More than 7.5 million VA letters that show proof of disability, income or veterans preference used in federal or state government hiring had been generated and downloaded through eBenefits as of Sept. 1, officials said.

DOD News

Local Residents Welcome Marines, Provide Support for Families

Leathernecks from Marine Wing Support Squadron (MWSS) 273, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C., had the opportunity to display some of their vehicles and equipment and interact with local residents at the Indigo Run community's car show in Hilton Head, S.C., Sept. 12.

While at the car show, Marines accepted donations of more than 250 children's winter coats to be distributed by Marine Corps Community Services' Family Services Center.

In addition to the Marines' display and coat donation drive, the event featured a classic car show and an art gallery.

"This is our third annual car and art show for the Indigo Run community," said Jean McElroy, the marketing and communications director for Indigo Run. "This year we wanted to add a coat donation component to the event. ... We've asked our community to donate coats for children of military families, and we asked for the participation of



LCPL JONAH LOVY, USMC

Above: Sgt Craig Ledyard, right, a motor vehicle operator with MWSS-273, MCAS Beaufort, S.C., accepts a children's coat from Jean McElroy, the marketing and communications director for Indigo Run, a community in Hilton Head, S.C., during their annual car show, Sept. 12. Members of the community donated more than 250 coats for military children.

Below: Cpl Connor Robinson, right, a motor vehicle operator with MWSS-273, explains the capabilities of an M1151 humvee to a resident at the Indigo Run car show in Hilton Head, S.C., Sept. 12.



LCPL JONAH LOVY, USMC

Beaufort because we wanted a local tie to contribute to. Everyone has been elated to have a way to give back and make a difference," she added.

Many veterans and friends of the Corps were in attendance at the event and were eager to lend a hand in whatever way they could.

"We got a huge excited response from the community when we advertised that the Marines were going to be here," said McElroy.

Indigo Run citizens had a chance to see Marine Corps equipment up close and ask questions.

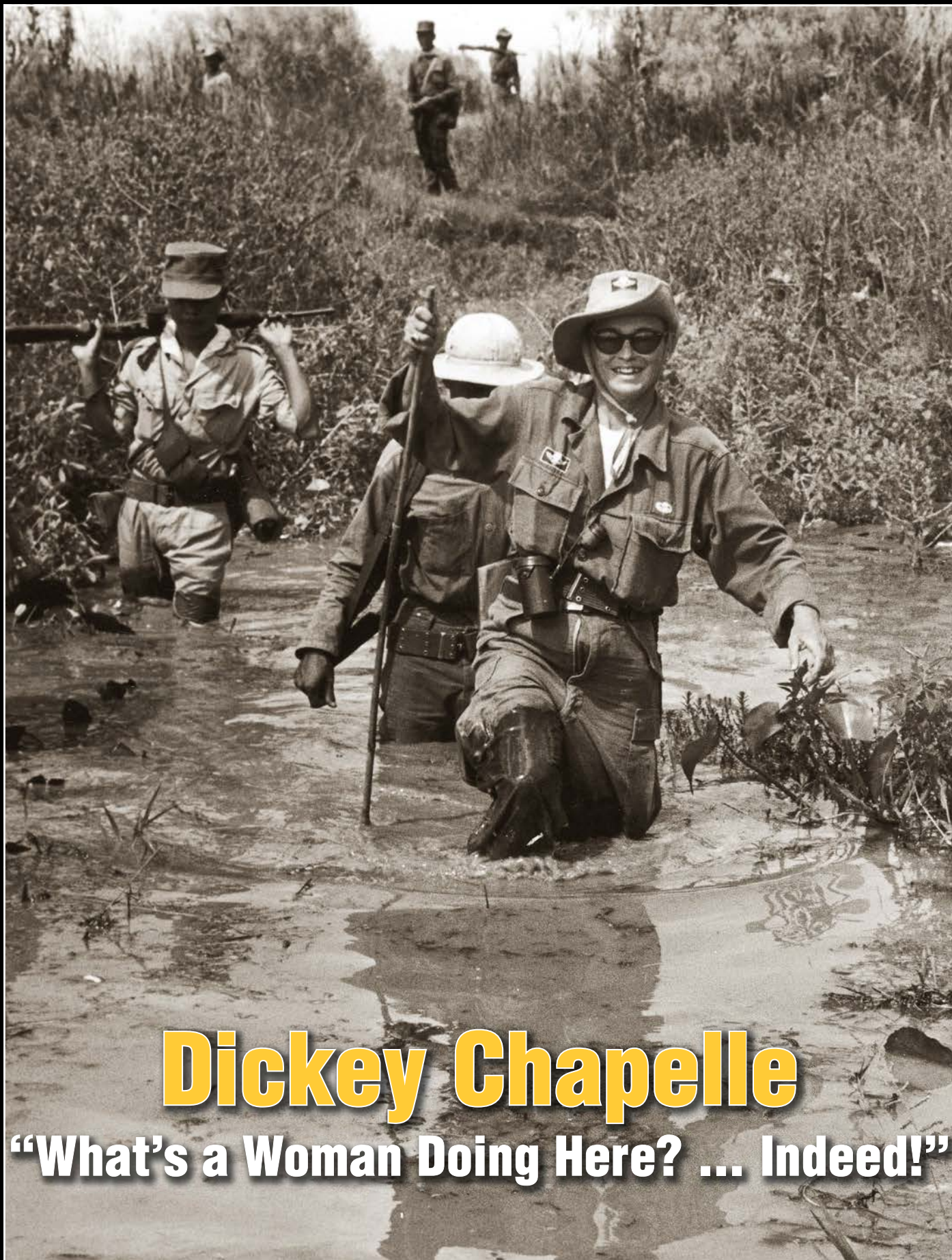
Vehicles on display were the M1151

High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle, better known as a humvee, an MKR18 Logistics Vehicle System Replacement and a Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement, better known as a 7-ton.

"We like coming out here to show off the different kinds of vehicles that the Marine Corps has to offer in the motor transportation community," said Sergeant Craig Ledyard. "We could not be more grateful to these people for supporting us the way they do."

LCpl Jonah Lovy, USMC





Dickey Chapelle

“What’s a Woman Doing Here? ... Indeed!”

It was early in the Vietnam War, and Dickey Chapelle, one of the first female foreign correspondents who had covered World War II and Korea, accompanied Army of the Republic of Vietnam soldiers into the quagmire.

Right: Well-respected as a war correspondent, Dickey Chapelle, shown here at Don Phuc in 1964 near the disputed Vietnam/Cambodia border, with 35-mm camera, black pajamas, sneakers, flak jacket and early M16 rifle with 20-round magazine. (Photo courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society)

By Capt Jack T. Paxton, USMC (Ret)

In the early 1960s, well before America was actively engaged in the Vietnam War, a well-known American woman war correspondent visited Vietnam to cover the work of American military advisors; from those early dispatches, came the book, “What’s a Woman Doing Here?: A Reporter’s Report on Herself.” That woman was “Dickey” Chapelle, and as those who knew her well might ask: Where else would you expect her to be?

Born Georgette Louise Meyer in Wisconsin on March 14, 1919, Dickey was a bit different than many women of her time. By age 16, she was studying aeronautical design at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She was a pilot who later learned how to jump out of airplanes. During World War II, she covered Marine operations on Iwo Jima and Okinawa, and in 1956 during the Hungarian Revolution, she was captured and spent seven weeks in jail.

Married to Tony Chapelle for 15 years, she was known as Dickey (in tribute to explorer Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd, USN, whom she admired) and became known as a personality to be reckoned with. If there was action anywhere in the world, you could bet that Dickey would show up dressed in her battle fatigues and wearing her pearl earrings, oversized glasses and Aussie bush hat.

I first met her while stationed at the old 3d Marine Corps Reserve and Recruitment District Headquarters, Philadelphia, Pa., in 1955. In those days national air shows were annual events attracting the latest in aircraft and aviation-related equipment. Philadelphia was the host city that year, and one of the featured attractions was the introduction of R. Buckminster Fuller’s geodesic dome, a lightweight, easily assembled domelike structure with multiple uses. Because of its portability, Marine and Army aviation units were very interested in it; it was helicopter-transportable and could provide cheap cover for both men and equipment.

Chapelle, with no global conflicts requiring her services that year, decided Fuller’s new creation rated coverage and requested assistance from “her Marines,”



so the 3d District’s Marines became involved. We were a very small staff, so a local Marine Corps Reserve captain by the name of Ed McMahon was ordered to active duty to help with the influx of media for the show at Philadelphia International Airport. McMahon, a member of the WCAU-TV staff since 1949, was hosting a show called “Five Minutes More.” His emerging talent was recognized later when he became Johnny Carson’s sidekick on “The Tonight Show.”

Dickey’s visit required us to do a bit of homework. There was no Google or

Yahoo in those days, and it took some digging to find out she had a reputation as one helluva war correspondent.

She arrived in our offices one day with little advance notice and immediately made herself at home. “Just give me use of a typewriter, show me the coffeepot and the ‘head’ and I’ll be fine,” she said. Dickey was in and out working the story for the next several days. Naturally each of us in the office wanted to squire her about, but she would have none of it. On the day Buckminster Fuller introduced his geodesic dome, McMahon somehow finagled duty as her escort, acing out the rest of us.

Fuller’s dome was located in the rear of a gigantic hangar. The placement was designed to shield the media from the blazing sunlight from the hangar’s open door at the far end. Those of us waiting for the big event were near the dome, and the large assemblage included not only the media but high-ranking military from each of the services.

As we neared the ceremony’s start, I heard someone mutter: “Holy cow! Would you look at that!” There, at the opening of the hangar with blazing sun behind them, stood Capt Ed McMahon and Dickey Chapelle hobnobbing with several other dignitaries. What drew the exclamation was Dickey. She was stylishly clad in an open weave knit dress. Dickey had made her entrance!

I did not see Dickey Chapelle again for 10 years, but this time there was no grand entrance. She arrived in Chu Lai,



LOU LOWERY, LEATHERNECK

Chapelle’s favorite photograph of her working was taken in 1959 by Leatherneck photographer Lou Lowery during Operation Inland Seas, the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

Below: Dickey Chapelle was an adventurer with a lifelong interest in aviation who could write and take pictures. She learned to fly from her flight-instructor husband, Tony, and logged her initial air time in this Stearman PT-17.



COURTESY OF WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Vietnam, on the day before Operation Black Ferret began.

I had been ordered to the Combat Information Bureau in Da Nang in August 1965 to join a group of combat correspondent and combat camera Marines to work with the media who had invaded Vietnam. More than 500 men and women were in country trying to cover the war. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) in Saigon had its hands full and earlier had decided that a facility was needed to handle the reporters in I Corps. Thus was born the Combat Information Bureau in Da Nang, located at the museum pier.

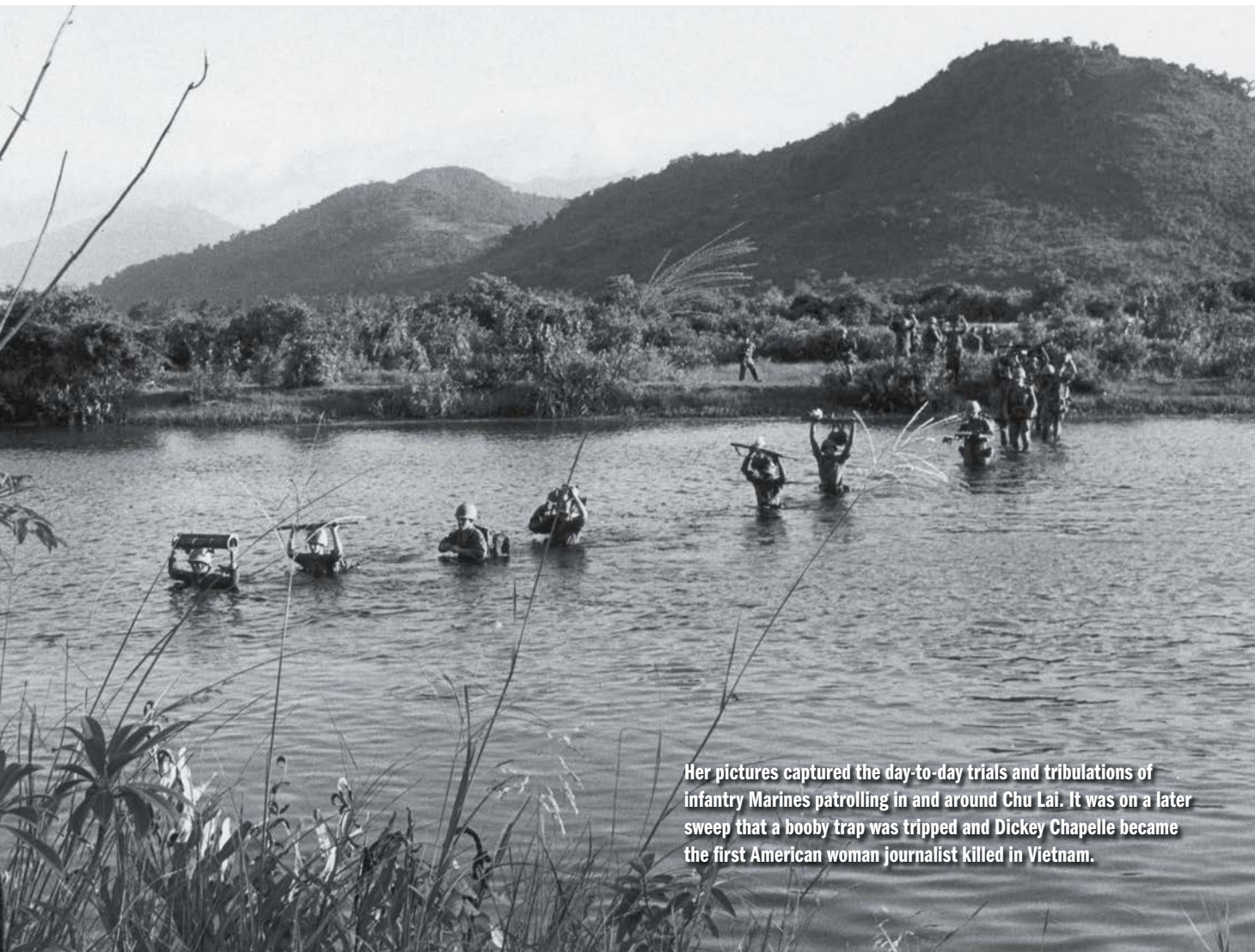
We were housed in an old French motel (read: house of ill repute) that, in 1965, contained about 30 rooms, minimal office space and a restaurant. Many of the 30 rooms were leased out to media giants of the day: the Associated Press and United Press International and the three television networks, CBS, ABC and NBC.

On May 6, 1965, units from the Army of the Republic of Vietnam's 2d Division and the 3d Battalion, Ninth Marine Regiment



COURTESY OF WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Savvy in the field, Chapelle fashioned her own field stove, used a heat tab, cracked open her C-rations and chowed down with the Marines.



Her pictures captured the day-to-day trials and tribulations of infantry Marines patrolling in and around Chu Lai. It was on a later sweep that a booby trap was tripped and Dickey Chapelle became the first American woman journalist killed in Vietnam.

COURTESY OF WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

secured the Chu Lai enclave 55 miles south of Da Nang. On May 7, the 3d Marine Expeditionary Brigade, composed of the 4th Marines, 3d Reconnaissance Battalion, elements of Marine Aircraft Group 12 and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 10, landed at Chu Lai to establish a jet-capable airfield and base area.

With the 4th Marines firmly in place, operations in Quang Ngai Province soon picked up. I was dispatched to them as senior public affairs representative, and my job was to facilitate getting media into and out of combat operations, no easy thing considering the media was free to come and go as they pleased. Embedding media with units would not take place for another 25 or so years. Field commanders, just as they had at the outbreak of WW II, did not take kindly to civilian reporters showing up unannounced. Depending on whether it was a group or a single rep, I might accompany the media to the “field,” acting as an escort, bodyguard, or both.

Many times the reporters would want to stay with a unit, yet they needed to send their stories/film back to Saigon. The

only way to ensure their stories made it there was to find a field phone and call their Saigon offices and then find a courier plane to carry back film and videotape. Barring those conveniences, the escort Marine would volunteer to get it to Saigon. That often meant hitchhiking, usually by medevac or resupply helicopter, to the nearest command post, then finding something or someone heading south.

With the 7th Marines preparing to launch Operation Black Ferret 10 miles south in Quang Ngai Province on Nov. 4, I was advised the afternoon before that a bunch of correspondents would be arriving at the airstrip late that afternoon. While I knew several of the reporters, I was surprised to see Dickey Chapelle exiting the aircraft.

I re-introduced myself to Dickey, threw her gear in my jeep and headed to the hooch. While Dickey said she remembered me from Philadelphia, I am quite sure she didn't.

Sergeant Major Neal King from 4th Marines realized the value of good media relations and made visiting media reps

welcome at all times. The regimental area was on a cliff overlooking the South China Sea, and King had created a combination staff noncommissioned officers mess and club out of two squad tents lashed together. He also somehow managed to find excellent cooks for the mess who could create masterpiece meals out of the rations we were issued.

We had a short brief on the next day's operation, then we went to chow, after which we got everyone settled in my tent. I had a small refrigerator and normally had it stocked with beer which, with this group, soon disappeared. Dickey and I discussed her Philadelphia visit and talked about Ed McMahon who had just hit the big time with “The Tonight Show.”

At 4 a.m. the following day, we were at the flight line waiting for the helicopters to arrive. I had received word the night before to wait for the arrival of Morley Safer from CBS-TV who had not made it out with the first group on the previous day. Under normal circumstances, I would have gone with the group, especially to be with Dickey.



COURTESY OF WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Above: Two years later, Marines returned to the spot where Chapelle died and paid tribute to her. LtGen Lewis Walt, left, III Marine Amphibious Force commanding general, and Marine veteran and WW II combat correspondent Jim Lucas, to the right of LtGen Walt, were among the Marines who rendered honors.

Below: There are better photos of Dickey Chapelle in Vietnam, but the one that captured her spirit and always-on-the-job endurance is this one of her taking photos for *National Geographic* from the top of the Vietnamese Navy's River Assault Group 23 command ship on the Manhtit River near Vinh Long.



COURTESY OF WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

I am not sure when I received the word that morning that Dickey had been killed by a booby-trapped mine tripped by a Marine. I was devastated! This was the death of the first civilian correspondent in the conflict.

Dickey died on the morning of Nov. 4 after being hit in the neck by shrapnel that severed her carotid artery, not on a

medevac chopper as reported by some. Her death was quick, and she apparently did not suffer. She was administered Last Rites in the field, and Henri Huet of the Associated Press took a photo of the chaplain administering the sacrament. Gunnery Sergeant Sam Durie, a combat photographer, accompanied her body back to Da Nang.

A short time later, Dickey Chapelle was honored by “her Marines” when they placed a monument at the site of her death in the field. Lieutenant General Lewis W. Walt, later to become the first four-star Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, conducted the ceremony. As a postscript to this story, the monument at her death site no longer exists. She was interred in Wisconsin, and in November 2014, she was inducted into the Milwaukee Press Club’s Hall of Fame. Dickey’s photos appeared in such publications as *National Geographic*, *Reader’s Digest*, *Look* and the *Saturday Evening Post*.

Some 50 years later I still recall my two visits with Dickey. She was sharp as a tack! While we did not use the expression “low maintenance” in the old days, Dickey epitomized that. She was not awed by rank. She required nothing from us that we would not give any other correspondent. Nor did she require any special accommodation in the field. She was never without her Aussie bush hat, even in death.

In a word: She was awesome! Above all, she loved “her Marines.”

Author’s bio: Capt Jack Paxton resides in Wildwood, Fla., with his wife, Pat. He came out of retirement in 2005 to become executive director of the United States Marine Corps Combat Correspondents Association (USMCCCA), a position he currently holds.



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2015 Theme: The overarching theme concerns formulating solutions for fighting in the urban littorals of the future operating environment and involves responding to one of five questions:

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- What is required to develop a 21st century logistics CONOPS and capability?
- What does 21st century combined arms (effects across all domains) look like in the urban littorals and how do we achieve it?
- What investments should the Marine Corps make for the 2030 timeframe to create capabilities and capacity for how we want to fight in the urban littoral, writ large?
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Marines in Australia, 1943

“Bring Your Lads Here. We Will Show You and Your Men Every Hospitality.”

By Maj Allan C. Bevilacqua, USMC (Ret)

“You were wonderful to us. You adopted a bunch of half-starved, malaria-ridden teenagers who were a long way from home and took us into your homes and your hearts. None of us will ever forget you.”

—Marine veteran John “Jack” Biggins

On Dec. 8, 1942, the First Marine Division was relieved on the island of Guadalcanal. After four months of constant and savage combat in a natural environment that truly may be described as malevolent, Japanese resistance on the island had been overcome, and Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift’s division had been wrecked. A staff officer described it by saying, “The Division sustained 100 percent casualties during the Guadalcanal campaign.”

A look at the figures leaves a distinct impression that such a belief had more than a minor basis in fact. Combat losses in killed and wounded on Guadalcanal totaled 2,138, far less than the 30,000 Japanese dead, but Marines killed or wounded in action were only a part of the story. Many more Marines were afflicted by the very nature of the campaign.

Nearly 7,000 Marines who walked away from Guadalcanal actually were ambulatory hospital cases, alternately freezing and burning with the ravages of malaria. Cases of dysentery were so far beyond counting as to be almost commonplace. So were the varieties of fungus infections: “Jungle rot” or the “creeping crud” inflamed armpits, groins and feet, leaving those areas raw, burning and bloody. Festering, suppurating and infected sores inflicted by poisonous and voracious insects were dismaying body adornments. Painful skin ulcers were a natural outgrowth of the fact that every Marine on Guadalcanal was in one stage or another of malnutrition.

Only days after L-day, the U.S. Navy cargo ships carrying the bulk of the 1stMarDiv’s supplies were forced to leave the area by the imminent arrival of far superior Japanese surface



An Australian soldier presents his nation’s flag to the First Marine Division on behalf of the city of Caulfield, a suburb of Melbourne, March 17, 1943. (USMC photo)

combatants coming down from Rabaul. From that day forward, every Marine on Guadalcanal was on short rations. Only two skimpy daily meals, many consisting of captured Japanese rations, were allowed to make limited food stocks last. Among the Japanese, Guadalcanal was “Starvation Island.” For Marines, it was only marginally less.

An old-fashioned word, practically out of the dictionary today, describes the Marines who left Guadalcanal: “starvelings.” An assemblage of starvelings called the 1stMarDiv was loaded aboard ships that took the Marines from the place no one regretted leaving. More than a few were too weak and worn down to climb the cargo nets necessary to board ship. Far too many had to be hauled aboard manually like an 81 mm mortar baseplate or a heavy machine-gun tripod. Once on deck, most of them promptly collapsed.

Subtropical Brisbane on Australia’s east coast was not the

“Never before in history has such a group of healthy, toughened, well-trained men been subjected to such conditions as the combat troops of the U.S. Marine Corps faced during the days following August 7. ... Weight losses in muscular, toughened young adults ran as high as forty-five pounds. Rain, heat, insects, dysentery, malaria, all contributed, but the end result was not blood stream infection nor gastro-intestinal disease but a disturbance of the whole organism, a disorder of thinking and living. ... And this incredible strain lasted not one or two days or nights but persisted and increased for months.”

—LCDR E. Rogers Smith, MC, USNR

place to send a collection of sick-on-their-feet young men, but Brisbane was where the 1stMarDiv was going. The upper echelons of theater headquarters, even further removed from reality than by geography, had decided that “after a short period of rest,” the 1stMarDiv would be employed in constructing and then manning beach defenses to guard against a feared Japanese invasion.

At dockside in Brisbane, descending the ladder of the transport that brought them there, the first arrivals of the 1stMarDiv looked little different from a collection of scarecrows. The ragged, dirt-encrusted dungarees most wore rarely had been off their backs since August. Few of the men walked steadily; most stumbled, staggered and lurched, not merely resembling scarecrows but drunken scarecrows in the bargain. A frightening number of them, too weak to manage something as ordinary as walking, fell and tumbled down the ladder.

Ragged, worn out and dirty they were, but practically every man had saved his prized Marine Corps emblems. The men wore them proudly, affixed to dungaree jackets and covers, telling the world they were United States Marines.

Watching them disembark was a group of senior officers from theater headquarters. Nearby, only slightly less ragged than the worn-out starvelings making their way off the ship, a division staff officer turned to the neat, clean, well-fed onlookers. “There are your saviors of Australia,” he offered.

If the arrival was disheartening, the accommodations were worse. Much was said and written—none of it complimentary—about the camp they were assigned. “Don’t call it a camp,” a battalion commander commented. “Just say we’re dispersed in a swamp.”

Gen Vandegrift moved swiftly to correct a condition that would have meant the disintegration of his command. He did not ask theater headquarters to move the 1stMarDiv to a more temperate climate. Gen Vandegrift flatly and unequivocally told headquarters that the division would be moved.

“Sorry,” came the response. There was no shipping available. Hearing that at his headquarters in New Caledonia, Vice Admiral William F. “Bull” Halsey, one of the greatest fighting seamen America ever had, proved himself to be one of the Corps’ and 1stMarDiv’s greatest friends. If the division needed transports, VADM Halsey would provide them.

Where did Gen Vandegrift wish the division to be taken? Sydney, filled to overflowing with uniforms, was considered briefly and discarded quickly. Inquiries were made in Australia’s second-largest city, Melbourne. “Bring your lads here,” was the response. “We will show you and your men every hospitality.” On Jan. 11, 1943, the first contingent of Marines began disembarking



Above: Marines from the 1stMarDiv arrive in Melbourne, Australia, on March 13, 1943, to rest and recuperate after the division’s four punishing months on Guadalcanal.

Below: The 1stMarDiv staff and band march through Melbourne, Feb. 22, 1943, in celebration of George Washington’s birthday. The division’s infantry regiments followed in trace.



from the transport USS *West Point* (AP-23) in Melbourne. It was the beginning of a love affair between U.S. Marines and Australia that never has ended.

Young June Bebee’s father watched them coming in at Williamstown docks. “Those kids looked exhausted. They’re all young, and they’ve been through a lot,” he told his family that evening. June Bebee had no idea that among those “exhausted kids” was the man who would be her husband for almost 60 years.

To sick, weary men who had been immersed so recently in near impassable jungle and all but bottomless swamps, crawling with leeches, venomous snakes, poisonous spiders, scorpions, centipedes and clouds of malaria-bearing mosquitoes, Melbourne at first sight appeared as an improbable vision from another world.

Recording his first reaction to seeing civilization after months in the green inferno of Guadalcanal, one Marine wrote: "Around us lay a city of wide streets, taxis, trolleys, department stores, bars, hotels, gas stations, street lights, soda fountains, factories, row after row of houses and thousands of friendly people."

For all of the Marines thronging the rail of *West Point* as the ship nudged her way toward her assigned berth, Melbourne was their first sight of a modern city since that very brief stay in New Zealand prior to reloading for Guadalcanal. For those who would survive until the Japanese surrender, more than two years in the future, Melbourne would be their sole contact with civilization during their entire time in the Pacific.

As fast as *West Point* and other transports arrived dockside, the men of the 1stMarDiv were transferred to camps ready and waiting for them in and around Melbourne. They would be living under canvas, that time-honored Marine Corps standby, the pyramidal tent. For the average civilian, sleeping on a bunk in a tent might have seemed the ultimate in roughing it. For men whose only roof had been the sky and their living quarters a hole in the ground, such accommodations were the equivalent of an executive suite at New York's Waldorf Astoria.

Seabags that had been left in storage in New Zealand arrived and uniforms were broken out. The word had come down from division: For the first 90 days, unlimited liberty for all hands. For 2,000 seabags there were no claimants; their owners lay in graves or hospitals. For the owners of a few more thousand, the worst of the malaria cases, there would be no liberty immediately. Those Marines lay in hospital beds of the recently finished Royal

Melbourne Hospital in Parkville, given over to the Marines for as long as it was needed.

Even without the missing, there were more than enough Marines to fill the streets and see the sights of Melbourne. Equally eager to see them were the citizens of Melbourne, who opened their homes and hearts to those young men who had come from thousands of miles away to stand beside Australia. In very little time, the openness and friendliness encountered by Marines had many of them remarking, "This place is just like home."

That impression became more pronounced on Feb. 22, 1943, George Washington's birthday, when the 1stMarDiv paraded through the center of the city. From the Shrine of Remembrance to Parliament House, past Flinders Street Station and City Hall, the parade route was packed with spectators. What seemed to be the entire population of Melbourne thronged the route, waving a forest of small Australian and American flags.

When the band played the first strains of the all-time Australian favorite, "Waltzing Matilda," the cheers from onlookers rattled the storefront windows. Bandsman Henry "Harry" Monckton thought he was "back at home on the Fourth of July." It is not by chance that "Waltzing Matilda" remains the official song of the 1stMarDiv today.

Marines in summer khaki became a common sight throughout Melbourne. The months of January and February mark the approach of autumn and winter "down under," and cotton khaki is a bit on the chilly side. Arrangements were made with Australian authorities to outfit Marines with Australian Army-issue winter battle jackets. The garments caught on, were adopted by the

"Thanks for the Memory"
*"Thanks for the memory
 Of castles in the air,
 Fingers in my hair,
 Of Collins Street
 And kisses sweet
 And those medals that you wear.
 How lovely it was."*

—Title song written by Australian Red Cross girls



The special relationship between the First Marine Division and Australia continues to this day as units with Marine Rotational Force-Darwin have been deploying to Darwin and the Northern Territory to conduct training with the Australian Defence Force. Brigadier Mick Ryan greeted the leathernecks of 1st Battalion, 4th Marines during a "Welcome to Country" brief at the Brigade Parade Ground, Robertson Barracks on April 22, 2015, by saying, "The 1st Brigade is now your home. You are our friends."



Marines from 1stMarDiv eagerly read mail from their families back home while in Melbourn, Australia, 1943. During their later campaigns, the Marines received as much mail from their new Australian friends as they did from friends and family back home in the U.S.



COURTESY OF MRS. JUNE HEIM

June Bebee met her future husband, Gordon Heim, at the Palais de Danse in Melbourn in early 1943. After serving with the 1stMarDiv on Cape Gloucester and Peleliu, Heim returned to Melbourn to marry June on Dec. 23, 1944.

uniform board and became a standard item of clothing issue for the next 10 years.

Shoulder patches, the first to be worn by Marines since leather-necks fought in France some 20-odd years before, appeared. Now identified with the 1stMarDiv and designed by Lieutenant Colonel Merrill B. Twining, the division's assistant operations officer, the blue diamond patch bore the numeral 1 emblazoned with "GUADALCANAL" and the stars of the Southern Cross, the same stars that appear on the national colors of Australia and the state of Victoria. Still the identifying insignia of the division, it remains a symbol of the special bond between America and Australia to this day.

Along with articles of clothing, Australian speech was picked up in no time. A buddy became a "cobber" or "mate." Any girl was a "sheila." Something extraordinarily good was "bonzer." A proposal that seemed reasonable and acceptable was "fair dinkum."

All day, every day the streets of Melbourn were crowded with Marines. Many were the sons of small-town and blue-collar America. Most were 20 years old or younger. Their life experiences, for the most part, consisted of high school, boot camp, advanced training in North Carolina, followed by total immersion in violent and savage combat against a tough, disciplined enemy. For many of the Marines, Melbourn was the largest city they ever had seen, and they wanted to see it all.

Any public place in Melbourn was sure to be filled with Marines. Luna Park, the walkway along the Yarra River, St. Kilda's Esplanade, the Botanic Gardens, wherever there was something to be seen, there were Marines there to see it. Many still were suffering bouts of malaria, but they weren't about to permit microbes to interfere with liberty call.

At any motion-picture theater, half of the audience was sure to be Marines. Melbourn's excellent street railway system was never without Marines going nowhere in particular, simply riding about for the sheer enjoyment of it. Marines prowled the aisles of department stores, not in search of anything special, just glad to be alive and enjoying it all. For no other reason than to see it, Marines found their way to the lobby of the Young and

Jackson Hotel where the famous nude portrait "Chloe" had long been a fixture.

Chloe may have been a painting, but there seemed to be no end of real live Australian girls to meet, girls just as fascinated by those smiling, open Americans as the smiling open Americans were by them. Dancing at the Trocadero, the Palm Garden and the Palais de Danse at St. Kilda became the destination of choice in scarcely any time at all.

June Bebee wasn't at all enthused about attending one such dance, but she had been invited to meet friends and her brother's fiancée one evening at the Palais de Danse. "There'll be no one there but girls," she muttered as she left the house. However, when she walked into the dance hall that was large enough to hold 1,000 people, all she could see were Marines. Those "exhausted kids" didn't look so exhausted to her.

Making her way through the crowd to the coat-check counter, June Bebee found herself face to face with a tall, handsome Marine. His name, she would learn later, was Gordon Heim. He was a member of Colonel James W. Webb's Seventh Marine Regiment and originally was from Baltimore, Md. She would say later that she could recall no conscious thought that prompted her to ask, "Did you say that you would like to dance?" Neither, at that moment, could she have known that her first step on the dance floor was her first step in eventually becoming a Marylander.

Gordon Heim and June Bebee weren't the only American-Australian couple. There were more and more such pairings as Marines and Australian girls met. Post-war sociologists would devote voluminous studies claiming to reveal the reasons for young American men being attracted to foreign girls. All the studies missed the most obvious reason: They were there.

As Marines and Australian girls met, Marines in ever greater numbers became unofficially "adopted" by Australian families. The residents of Melbourn truly opened their homes and their hearts to those young men from distant shores. So many young men away from home and family for the first time in their lives were taken into the circle of Australian families. The requests for Marines as dinner and weekend guests of Australian families



never ceased. That first step quickly led to Marines becoming part of the family in all but blood.

It wasn't all quiet and tranquility. Veterans of the 9th Division, Australian Imperial Force, who recently had returned from the Middle East and soon would fight again on New Guinea, took exception to Marines dominating the social scene. More and more fistfights broke out when the two uniforms collided.

Captain Leon Brusiloff, the division band officer, suggested a solution. Have a beer bust and old-fashioned American barbecue at the Melbourne Cricket Ground that had been turned into an encampment for Col Clifton B. Cates' First Marine Regiment. Serve the beer in paper cups so "some character doesn't throw a beer bottle in the air and hit somebody with it." And no military police were to be present.

That Capt Brusiloff's suggestion worked was best attested to by one Australian. "What the hell are we fighting for, Yank? There are plenty of sheilas to go around, and there are more than enough Japanese. Let's have a beer, mate!" It was just a case of fighting men getting to know one another.

Whether it was excellent Australian beer or excellent Australian food, Melbourne had something for everyone. For men who had subsisted on a starvation diet of captured Japanese rice and fish, Melbourne was a chowhound's dream come true. The Australian favorite that rapidly became a Marine favorite, steak and eggs, could be had for as little as two shillings, six pence (less than \$1). Mario's Italian restaurant, close to the YMCA, served up the best Italian cuisine outside of Rome.



COURTESY OF MRS. JUNE HEIM

Gordon Heim told his future bride that he was from "Balmer, Murland." Her father had never heard of such a place and told his daughter that after a line like that, she shouldn't expect to see the Marine again. Mr. Beebe eventually discerned the accent, and upon meeting Heim, asked, "Are you by any chance from Baltimore, Maryland?" He was, and his widow, June Beebe Heim, still lives in Maryland today.

Islands in preparation for the campaign on the island of New Britain. The division never returned to its home away from home in Australia. For the first year after departing Melbourne, the 1stMarDiv received more mail from Australia than it did from the United States. "You would never know these fellows were Americans," wrote one division chaplain. "All they talked about was Australia."

At war's end, nearly 15,000 Australian war brides journeyed to America to join their husbands. In the decades since then, those young Australian girls, their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren have become Americans but have not lost their connection to families and friends "down under" or their love of their homeland or heritage. The bonds of friendship and family that the two countries forged more than 70 years ago remain.

Author's note: Special thanks for their invaluable assistance in the preparation of this article are due to June Heim, who danced with a Marine, and Rear Admiral Kenneth G. Haynes, USN (Ret), who was a corpsman with 7th Marines in 1943.

Author's bio: Maj Allan C. Bevilacqua, a Leatherneck contributing editor, is a former enlisted Marine who served in the Korean and Vietnam wars, as well as on an exchange tour with the French Foreign Legion in Algeria. Later in his career, he was an instructor at Amphibious Warfare School and Command and Staff College, Quantico, Va.



LCPL KATHRYN HOWARD, USMC

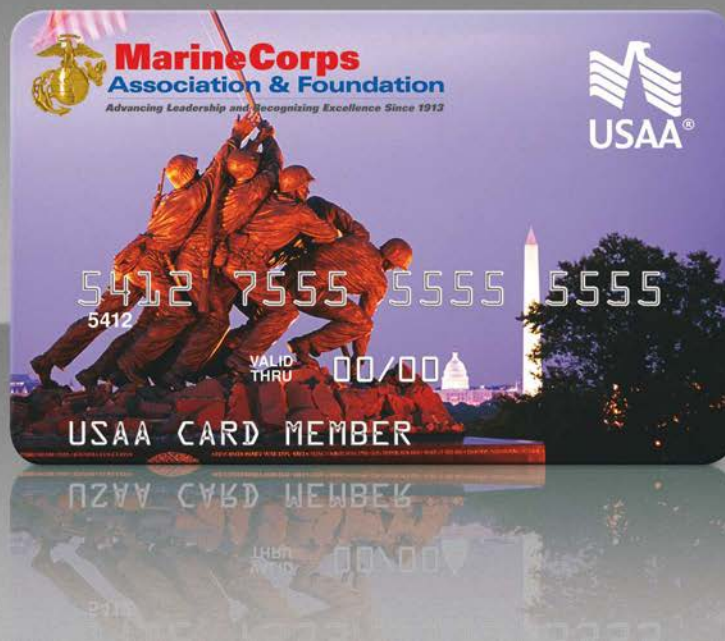
Almost 75 years later, Marines are still visiting Australia, this time to train in the Northern Territory. HM2 Jordan Mullan, Combat Logistics Detachment 1, Marine Rotational Force-Darwin, is pulled out of the audience by an aboriginal dancer during a "Welcome to Country" ceremony April 22, 2015, at Robertson Barracks, Palmerston, Australia.





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The Birthday in BOSTON

Tommy Lyons and the Growth of the Semper Fidelis Society

By Sara W. Bock

Visit Boston, Mass., around the 10th of November, and you're likely to run into a few four-star Marine generals, Medal of Honor recipients and high-ranking politicians. You're guaranteed to notice the presence of Marine veterans both young and old, united by a common bond, and of an unmistakable spirit of pride in the Corps that

resounds through the streets of a city with a rich and illustrious history of patriotism and service.

It's not a coincidence that they all have converged there. They come together every year to celebrate the Birthday of the United States Marine Corps at the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston's Marine Corps Birthday Luncheon, which, over the past 28 years, has evolved into quite the event—undoubtedly the largest of its kind.

It certainly didn't start out that way, but sometimes the most remarkable of endeavors have the simplest, most humble beginnings. To Marine Corps veteran Thomas J. "Tommy" Lyons, founder of the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston, simplicity has always been the key to the tremendous success of the luncheon, which has grown exponentially and will be held on Nov. 13 this year to honor the Corps' 240th Birthday.



Marine Corps pride runs deep on the streets of Boston all year long as leathernecks from Marine Corps Forces Command, Second Marine Logistics Group, and Second Marine Division, march in the South Boston Allied War Veterans' Council St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 16.

The tradition began on Nov. 10, 1987, and it was as simple as Lyons gathering together 28 Marine veterans from South Boston for pasta and beer at Joe Tecce's Italian Ristorante to celebrate the Birthday of the Corps and to honor the memory of friends they had lost in Vietnam. They ate the obligatory birthday cake and sang along to the familiar tune of "The Marines' Hymn" as it played on a tape deck. By no means was their celebration grand or extravagant, but the opportunity to reconnect with their Marine Corps roots really made an impression on those who attended—most of whom were guys Lyons grew up with, played sports with, and enlisted alongside during the late 1960s.

The following October, Lyons began receiving phone calls from his buddies who had attended the luncheon at Tecce's, asking him if he was holding the luncheon again. He was taken aback by their enthusiasm, and until that point, he hadn't really even considered the idea of making it an annual gathering.

"You want to go out for lunch?" he recalls asking them in a somewhat puzzled tone. But Tommy Lyons isn't the kind of guy who is willing to let his fellow Marines down.

"So we did it again, and every year since then it grew in size because people talked about it," said Lyons. "We slowly built this little event, and each year when we grew we had to move to another place."

Today, that "place" is the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center, and attendance at the celebration of this year's 240th Birthday of the Corps is expected to exceed last year's grand total of 2,100.

The guest of honor will be Boston native and newly appointed Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph F. Dunford, 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps.

In a way, Lyons unintentionally fell into his role in the creation of the Semper Fidelis Society. It certainly doesn't hurt that he seems to know just about everyone in Boston, and everyone in Boston knows him. After a while, the senior leaders of the Marine Corps came to know that if they

CPL DESIRE M. MORA, USMC



SGT GABRIELA GARCIA, USMC

Tommy Lyons, Semper Fidelis Society of Boston founder and chairman of the Boston Medal of Honor Convention Host Committee, speaks at the convention on Sept. 19, which was held in Boston for the third time in 14 years.



Gen James F. Amos, the 35th Commandant of the Marine Corps, meets with officers from the Boston Police Department and the Massachusetts State Police outside the Seaport Hotel in Boston, Nov. 8, 2013. Gen Amos was the guest of honor at the 2013 Semper Fidelis Society of Boston's Marine Corps Birthday Luncheon. (Photo by Sgt Mallory S. VanderSchans, USMC)



COURTESY OF THOMAS J. LYONS

From the left, Scottish-Canadian tenor John McDermott; guest of honor and Boston native Gen John F. Kelly; and a luncheon attendee enjoy one another's company at the 2014 Semper Fidelis Society of Boston's Marine Corps Birthday Luncheon.

needed something in Boston, Lyons was their guy—and he has always delivered. He was instrumental in bringing “Marine Week” to Boston in 2010 and making it a wild success. When the Marines wanted to land an MV-22B Osprey on Boston Common, Lyons was the man who made it happen.

Over time, a variety of factors con-

tributed to the growth of the luncheon, Lyons said. In the largely blue-collar city known for holding both local and national service in high esteem, the Marine Corps presence waned in the 1990s with the closing of the South Weymouth Naval Air Station and the movement of the 1st Marine Corps District recruiting headquarters from Boston to Portsmouth, N.H.



COURTESY OF THOMAS J. LYONS

Marine Medal of Honor recipients Col Harvey C. Barnum Jr., USMC (Ret), left, and MajGen James E. Livingston, USMC (Ret) were present at the 2014 Marine Corps Birthday Luncheon in Boston.

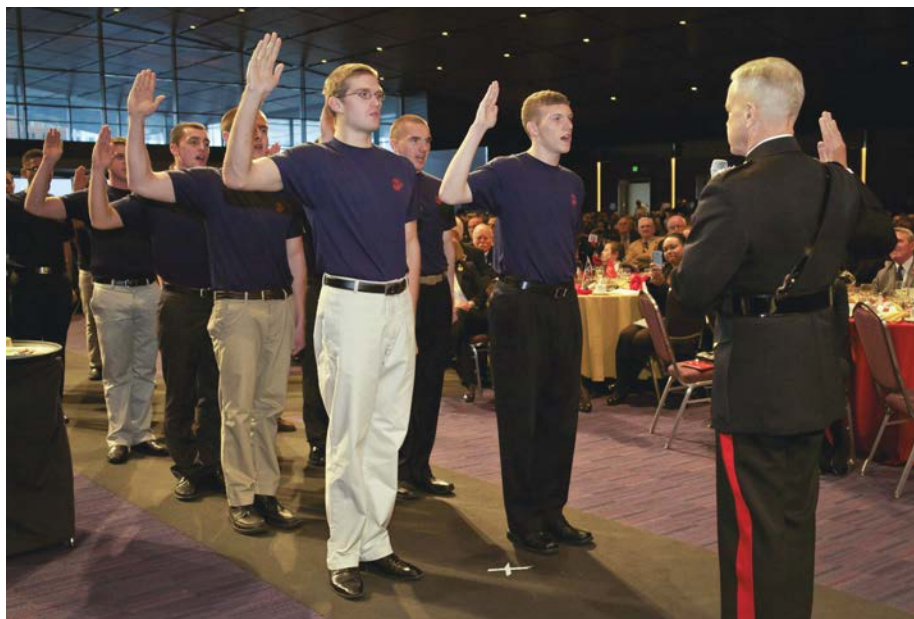
“I think the Semper Fidelis Society filled a void that was happening in and around Boston,” Lyons said of the increase in attendance at the luncheon during the 1990s.

“Boston has always had a rich history of service,” Lyons said. “In the community I grew up in, South Boston, I remember sitting there as a young kid listening to

Jean and Tommy Lyons visit with Boston native Gen Joseph F. Dunford Jr., 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps, at the Medal of Honor Convention in Boston, Sept. 19. During the convention, Gen Dunford was recognized as the recipient of the 2015 Patriot Award.



SGT GABRIELA GARCIA, USMC



SGT MALLORY S. WANDERSCHANS, USMC

Gen James F. Amos, 35th Commandant of the Marine Corps, recites the Oath of Enlistment with local poolees at the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston's Marine Corps Birthday Luncheon, held at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center, Nov. 8, 2013.

the older guys ... who were on Iwo Jima and came back—listening to them tell their story.”

And despite the fact that the scale of the event has far surpassed Lyons’ wildest imagination—like filling the convention center to capacity or having the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as his honored guest—he insists that “keeping it simple” remains his motto.

“We keep the focus of the day the Marine Corps,” he said, deeming anything beyond that to be inconsequential. He emphasized that he never tries to “outdo”

the previous years, but, rather, make the day what it’s about: camaraderie and esprit de corps.

Each year, the luncheon features the traditional Marine Corps Birthday cake-cutting ceremony, with the first piece of cake going to the oldest Marine present, and the second, to the youngest Marine in the room. One guest speaker addresses the crowd; last year, Gen John F. Kelly, a native of Boston, gave a stirring and heartfelt speech in remembrance of “those who have gone before,” which evoked a great deal of emotion among those in

attendance. It was especially powerful considering that there were a number of Gold Star family members in attendance, Gen Kelly included. (Editor’s note: Gen Kelly’s speech to the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston was published in the May 2015 issue of *Leatherneck*.)

There have been quite a few remarkable and memorable moments since the luncheon began; some emotional, some humorous. Prior to one luncheon during the early years, Colonel Edward Fitzgerald, USMC (Ret) asked Lyons if he could bring a guest along. The guest was wearing a wig and no one could quite figure out who he was, said Lyons, until the colonel introduced him as Felix de Weldon, sculptor of the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Va. He stood and spoke to the Marines, all of whom were both shocked and mesmerized, Lyons recalled, himself included. You never know who is going to show up at the luncheon, Lyons said with a laugh.

On a lighthearted note, one year Lyons told Lieutenant General Bernard E. “Mick” Trainor, USMC (Ret) and Marine veteran and U.S. Senator Jim Webb that he would pick them up at Harvard the morning of the luncheon. Lyons arrived in a borrowed Budweiser tour bus that was blaring “The Marines’ Hymn” from its loudspeaker instead of its usual Budweiser jingle. After driving through Harvard Square, the bus pulled up to the two waiting for its arrival, the door opened, and Lyons said, “Can we give you gentlemen a ride?”

Another year, when LtGen Raymond P. Ayres Jr. was the guest speaker, he presented a posthumous Silver Star to the mother of a fallen Marine 30 years after her son’s death.

“It was quite emotional,” said Lyons. “Again, those are the things that make it special.”

In 2014, the luncheon hosted 18 Gold Star families and numerous wounded warriors. Their presence was impactful for all; Lyons recalls many poignant moments.

Also last year, the local recruiting station brought 20 or 30 young poolees and marched them down the center aisle, long hair and all, amidst lively shouts of “You’ll be sorry!” and “Wait until you get to the yellow footprints!” from the spirited crowd. The poolees were sworn in to the Marine Corps right then and there, and the noise died down to the point that you could hear a pin drop, Lyons said. Afterward, when they marched the poolees out, the whole place went crazy, he recalled.

“You know, that’s the kind of stuff I think we’ve created, but it wasn’t intentional,” Lyons said.

Recently, the society has seen an increase in attendance of veterans from



Leathernecks with MARFORCOM, 2d MLG, and 2dMarDiv march in the South Boston Allied War Veterans' Council St. Patrick's Day Parade in South Boston, March 16. The Marines traveled to Boston from Norfolk, Va., in USS *Arlington* (LPD-24). (Photo by Cpl Desire M. Mora, USMC)

younger generations at the luncheon, many of whom now serve in the Boston police and fire departments.

"I didn't want these kids to come home to the homecoming I got," said Lyons. "I wanted them to realize that their time in the Marine Corps not only meant something, but it will continue as long as you continue to do the things Marines do on the Marine Corps Birthday."

One day, he hopes he will pass the torch of the Semper Fidelis Society to one of them.

"I think when all is said and done and I pass the mantle along to other Marines, I want them to understand what we built and I want them to maintain it. ... I feel really proud of what we've built," Lyons said.

The society's mission is straightforward: to offer the members of Boston's Marine Corps community, young and old alike, an opportunity to toast to the birth of the Corps, to enjoy one another's company and to remember those who never returned home. It's a brotherhood unlike any other. Beyond that, the society supports veterans and their families through programs, awards and scholarships.

Relying solely on word of mouth to grow the society's "ranks," Lyons has never advertised the luncheon, nor has he ever given any sort of official invitation to attend. As the years went by, he watched in amazement as friends brought friends, who in turn brought friends, and before he knew it, he had every living Marine Medal of Honor recipient in attendance; numerous Commandants of the Marine Corps; and last year, the newly elected governor of Massachusetts, Charlie Baker.

Call it influence, call it a charismatic personality—whatever it is, Lyons has "it," and has spent the better part of his life using it to improve the lives of Marines and other servicemembers, both active-duty and veteran.

Born and raised in South Boston, he graduated from high school in 1967. He had a passion for baseball and the natural talent to accompany it, so he tried out for the Boston Red Sox, the New York Yankees and the Washington Senators. His dreams got dashed pretty quickly though, he said, when he found himself competing against the nation's best. So instead, he found himself enlisting in the Marine Corps alongside four of his

closest childhood friends. They all were in Vietnam by early 1968, and only two of the five survived to return home.

In 1970, Lyons had been honorably discharged from the Corps and was right back in South Boston, where he worked nights digging ditches for Boston Edison and attended school during the day. Like many of his fellow Vietnam veterans, he didn't really let himself look back on his time in the Corps.

"I ... never did much talking about the Marine Corps, never did much talking about Vietnam with family and even with friends; we never talked about that experience," he said.

Around 1978, he recalls, remembering his childhood friends who were lost in Vietnam—Joe Desmond, Donald "Donny" Turner and Johnny Cole—wasn't enough.

"It felt like there had to be more," said Lyons. He attended a Mass and a breakfast to remember the three, 10 years after they had been killed. Afterward, he began to wonder how many other families in South Boston lost a loved one in Vietnam and whether they would appreciate a gesture of remembrance—a sign that their loss hadn't been forgotten or taken for granted.

Below left: Lyons, left, presents the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston's Ted Williams Award to former Boston Red Sox pitcher Tim Wakefield at the 2014 Birthday luncheon in Boston.

Below right: The establishment of the South Boston Vietnam Veterans Memorial, dedicated on Sept. 13, 1981, was a grassroots effort led by Lyons in the late 1970s to remember local servicemembers killed during the Vietnam War. He considers the project to have been the impetus of the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston.



COURTESY OF THOMAS J. LYONS



2ND LT JASON M. PRAIT, USMC

“To my astonishment, I found out there were 22 other families who had lost someone in Vietnam between 1966 and 1969. Fifteen were Marines; nine, Army; one, Air Force,” Lyons recalled, and with the help of some other Boston-area veterans, he began a grassroots effort to raise money for what would become the South Boston Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Expecting a political pushback of sorts in a city known for being home to a wide variety of strong opinions, Lyons and his committee were able to keep the politics out of it, he said. Over the course of time, they raised the money, and artist and Vietnam veteran Harry Carroll, who happened to be Lyons’ cousin, designed the memorial. On its front is a list of all the names of the 25 sons of South Boston who were lost in Vietnam. At the base, 10 words are inscribed: “If you forget my death, then I died in vain.”

On the back are two words that “we wish we heard when we all came home: ‘Welcome Home,’ ” said Lyons.

In September of 1981, Boston welcomed them home with the official unveiling and dedication of the South Boston Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Each fall, a ceremony is held to rededicate the monument.

Clearly, it’s not really feasible to separate the man from the organization when talking about Tommy Lyons and the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston. He says that the society really was born with the memorial, and from that point on he was wholly committed to honoring, supporting and serving his fellow veterans.

“The motto for Marines is Semper Fidelis—always faithful. Since returning home from Vietnam, Tommy Lyons has



COURTESY OF THOMAS J. LYONS

A young Tommy Lyons is pictured here in Dong Ha, Vietnam, in 1968. Lyons was one of five close friends from South Boston who enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1967; only two returned home.

lived by those words,” said Gen Dunford to *Leatherneck*. “He has remained faithful to the memory of the fallen by leading the establishment of the South Boston Vietnam Memorial. He has remained faithful to veterans with his engagement across the full range of veterans issues from housing to employment to health care.

“Tommy has also ensured that the Marine network in Boston remains strong. He has grown the Semper Fidelis Society from a handful of Marines in South Boston to thousands of Marines from across new England,” the general added.

Lyons’ work with the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston is just a fraction of what he has contributed to improving the lives

of veterans in his home state of Massachusetts. He served as the commissioner for Veterans’ Services in the city of Boston from 1984 until 1995; afterward, he went on to work as the executive director at the New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans. Today, he works as the director for Community Services at MassHousing Agency and is a member of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs’ Advisory Committee on Homeless Veterans.

In 2011, Gen James F. Amos, 35th Commandant of the Marine Corps, presented Lyons with a “Marine for Life” award for his 30 years of service as a stalwart advocate for America’s veterans.

“For military issues in general across the board, he’s the soul of Boston. He’s the go-to guy,” said Gen Richard I. Neal, USMC (Ret) of Lyons. Gen Neal, who hails from Massachusetts, served as the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps from 1996 to 1998 and attends the Semper Fidelis Society of Boston Birthday Luncheon each year. “He’s so dedicated and committed to servicemembers in general and Marines in specific,” Gen Neal added.

Philadelphia may have been home to Tun Tavern, the birthplace of the United States Marine Corps, but Boston was home to Joe Tecce’s, and something remarkable began there as well; a phenomenon that attests to the unique spirit of camaraderie among Marines both young and old. The Semper Fidelis Society of Boston is a testament to the enduring impact the Marine Corps experience has on all who have earned the title, whether they served for three years or 30.



We—the Marines

Compiled by Sara W. Bock

Ceremony Pays Tribute to the Sacrifice of Fallen Brothers

■ Throughout America's history, there have been times when heroes were forged from all walks of life and were brought together for a greater purpose.

Company H, 2d Battalion, 26th Marine Regiment was a prime example of that during both World War II and the Vietnam War, and many of its surviving members gathered for a remembrance ceremony held at the Marine Corps War Memorial in the heat and humidity of Arlington, Va., Sept. 3.

"It is the goal of any captain to lead his Marines into battle, and I got the honor of leading 'Hotel' Company," said Lieutenant Colonel Charles O. Broughton, USMC (Ret), who was the commanding officer of the company in Vietnam from 1967 to 1968.

The War Memorial immortalizes the

iconic scene of the Marines' raising of the flag at Iwo Jima, made famous by Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his photo. To the veterans of Co H, the monument reflects the hard-fought struggle of their own unit to take the island of Iwo Jima some 40 years before they carried their battle colors during the Vietnam War.

LtCol Broughton said that "1945 may seem like a distant memory," but "look at the helmets and the K-Bar knives; they had not changed much during our time in the 1960s."

Broughton recalled the experiences and heroism of a few of their men—a corpsman, a chaplain and a combat photographer, as well as numerous other warriors who did not make it home.

"It is an honor to share in this day," said U.S. Navy Rear Admiral Brent W. Scott,

Chaplain of the Marine Corps. "This past year, I have traveled the world hearing stories about courage. Courage is bold and bright and pushes through fear to achieve a purpose greater than yourself. Not only does [the company] have the courage to serve, but the courage to remember."

Co H, 2/26 was activated at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., and in 1967 stood against a surrounding communist force during the siege of Khe Sanh. The company and the rest of 26th Marines received a Presidential Unit Citation for actions during that battle.

"We joined today to not only celebrate accomplishments during the war, but the strength it took to deal with the animosity they received after coming home," RDML Scott said.

When he concluded his remarks, the ceremony closed with the laying of a wreath at the memorial. Both LtCol

Members of Co H, 2/26, along with RDML Brent W. Scott, the Chaplain of the Marine Corps, return from laying a wreath during a remembrance ceremony held at the Marine Corps War Memorial, Arlington, Va., Sept. 3. The wreath was laid in honor of the 74 Marines and sailors of the company who never returned home from Vietnam.



SGT JUSTIN BOLING, USMC

Broughton and RDML Scott presented the wreath as the names of the 74 Marines and sailors who never returned home were read aloud.

“Their images burn into our soul,” Broughton said. “We were honored to serve with them, and there is no greater tribute we can give to these men than remembering their duty.”

Sgt Justin Boling, USMC

Bogue Bids Farewell to Prowlers

■ With no fanfare other than the fading rumble of twin turbojet engines, the last EA-6B Prowler student pilots to fly at Marine Corps Auxiliary Landing Field Bogue, N.C., disappeared into the afternoon haze after practicing landings on the airfield’s expeditionary-style runway Aug. 21.

The training flight, which was designed to build student pilots’ confidence in their ability to land on expeditionary airfields, was just another phase of education for the final Prowler pilot trainees at Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Training Squadron 1, Second Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C.

VMAQT-1 is slated to retire next summer as part of the four-year phase-out of the Corps’ venerable EA-6B Prowler, but the squadron still has students completing their training to ensure that an adequate number of qualified pilots will be available to meet the mission requirements into 2019.

According to Major Mark Weinrich, the executive officer for VMAQT-1, the Navy’s EA-18G Growlers have taken over the mission, and the Marine Corps will assist them in systems concepts to help cover any gaps in electronic warfare or attack. He added that the F-35B Lightning II and unmanned aerial systems will essentially replace the EA-6B by taking on its traditional missions.

“It is the Prowler ‘sundown,’ which means that the platform is going away,” said Maj John Brennan, the director of safety and standardization with VMAQT-1. “Our squadron is training our last four pilots here today at Bogue.”

Auxiliary Landing Field Bogue was used to train student pilots for landings on shorter runways under less-than-ideal conditions.

“Bogue field is about half the runway length of normal runways,” said Weinrich. “If they had to come into an expeditionary airfield, they could do so with confidence, or if they had to come in during an emergency.”

According to Brennan, the students’ training syllabi will be completed in May 2016.



LCPL JASON JIMENEZ, USMC

An EA-6B Prowler prepares to make an arrested landing during VMAQT-1’s last flight operations at Marine Corps Auxiliary Landing Field Bogue, N.C., Aug. 20. Four student pilots are among the last to learn to fly the Prowler before the Marine Corps begins phasing out the aircraft next year.

“It is a little bit like going back to square one,” said Captain Zebulun Josey, a student pilot with VMAQT-1. “Generally a lot of the newer pilots will learn or transition to learning a different aircraft after the Prowler goes away.”

When VMAQT-1 retires next summer, all the current students will go to VMAQ-2, VMAQ-3 and VMAQ-4; and nearly half the staff will go to VMAQ-2 or VMAQ-3.

“There is a lot of history in the Prowler, and I feel privileged to be one of the last few people to learn how to fly it,” said Josey.

LCpl Jason Jimenez, USMC

Ajax Challenge Tests Endurance And Leadership Skills

■ Marines and sailors assigned to 3d Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment, First Marine Division executed the “Dark Horse Ajax Challenge” at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Aug. 20.

The 8-mile course tested the Marines’ and sailors’ endurance and leadership skills with trials spread across the San Mateo area of the base.

“We call it the Ajax Challenge because out of all the Greek warriors, Ajax is the only one that did everything with pure brawn. All of the other warriors who



Marines assigned to K/3/5, 1stMarDiv work together to complete fire team push-ups as part of the Dark Horse Ajax Challenge at MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Aug. 20. The 8-mile course included many obstacles designed to test the endurance of the unit’s Marines and sailors. (Photo by Cpl William Perkins, USMC)



CPL WILLIAM PERKINS, USMC

Above: Leathernecks of K/3/5 run through the hills of Camp Pendleton, Calif., during the Dark Horse Ajax Challenge, Aug. 20.

Below: A Marine assigned to K/3/5 climbs a rope during the Dark Horse Ajax Challenge. Participants were also required to crawl through trenches and carry simulated casualties over the course of 8 miles.



CPL WILLIAM PERKINS, USMC

fought in “The Iliad” had help from the gods,” explained Lieutenant Colonel Hunter Rawlings, Commanding Officer, 3/5.

The Marines kicked off the challenge by memorizing a radio transmission and a list of gear they’d be required to recite at the end of the course, according to First Lieutenant Peter Delany, the CO of Company K, 3/5. Throughout the course,

the Marines overcame many physical challenges, including climbing ropes, crawling through trenches full of mud and water, running up hills and carrying simulated casualties.

Rawlings explained that the event is designed to motivate the Marines to be like Ajax by dividing the battalion into fire team-size elements and conquering each obstacle.

“It’s a challenge to be like Ajax,” Rawlings said. “To be a combat-intelligent warrior, you don’t have to be the smartest Marine, you just have to be able to overcome obstacles and have the spirit that you can do it.”

According to Rawlings, Marines get tired on long runs, so adding obstacles and incentives for motivation allowed them to blow right through the challenge. Despite being caked in mud and sweat, the Marines crossed the finish line with smiles.

The hills surrounding San Mateo can be a metaphor to life, Rawlings said. The hills represent obstacles the Marines must overcome every day, and if they can conquer the hills, they are ready for anything.

“What I asked the Marines to do on top of First Sergeant Hill is to look down at the crosses at the memorial to remember the ‘devil dogs’ we’ve lost and look over the horizon and realize they’re on top of the hill. They’re Marines, they can do anything,” Rawlings added.

The Ajax Challenge helped prepare the Marines and sailors of 3/5 for their upcoming participation in the Unit Deployment Program.

Cpl William Perkins, USMC

MAGTF Demonstration Wows Crowds At Marine Week Phoenix

■ An MV-22B Osprey flew over the crowd, F/A-18 Hornets soared across a clear blue sky, and helicopters hovered above the ground just long enough for Marines to jump out and secure a perimeter at the Arizona State University stadium, Tempe, Ariz., Sept. 11.

The Marines arrived in town for Marine Week Phoenix and took the opportunity to show off a variety of resources and capabilities during a Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) demonstration.

Instructors from the Martial Arts Center of Excellence exhibited different levels of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, ranging from tan belt to second-degree black belt. Military working dogs and their handlers demonstrated the different ways a canine can take a bite out of a hostile threat.

“Reaching out to the community is important because the community is our main supporter,” said Sergeant Derek Patrick, a military working dog trainer from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. “So this event is a good way to show the public all the different types of assets that we have.”

Marine Band San Diego gave a musical performance and the Silent Drill Platoon showed off their precise moves as the Corps pulled out all the stops to wow

Arizona crowds. Finally, the MAGTF demonstration kicked off the big event. An announcer set the stage for the mock scenario to be performed.

Snipers lay in position in front of the audience, barely visible in their camouflage gear. Aircraft circled above the stadium. Troops were inserted at the far end of the field to expose security tactics used in real operations.

“After coming to see this today, I understand a little bit more about the Marine Corps,” said Kirk Colburn, a resident of the Phoenix area. “There are a lot more elements to the Marine Corps than I ever knew.”

The MAGTF put on an exciting show, maximizing air capabilities, ground movements and fire team rushes to show the public a detailed display of the Corps’ capabilities.

“As a Marine, I know what our capabilities are, but I really enjoyed seeing the demonstration,” said Corporal Anthony Mercurio, a machinist with Combat Logistics Regiment 15. “As much as I liked it, I can’t imagine the impact it must have had on people who don’t have any background knowledge of what we do. It was an amazing show.”

Despite the high temperatures and bright sun, the large crowd applauded the day’s events after experiencing firsthand how the Corps fights the nation’s battles. Cpl Nicholas Brown, a generator mechanic with CLR-15, said he ap-

preciated the chance to interact with his home community.

“I had the opportunity to visit my family in the crowd and see the show from their perspective,” said Brown, a native of Shillow, Ariz. “Everybody has been so supportive, and it’s great to see all the smiling faces. It’s been hot, but it’s made for a warm welcoming.”

Marine Week is a celebration of community, country and Corps, providing the American public in various cities the unique opportunity to directly connect with hundreds of Marines.

Sgt Michele Hunt, USMC

Editor’s note: The Marine Corps Association and Foundation also participated in Marine Week Phoenix with a luncheon at which Lieutenant General David H. Berger, Commanding General, I Marine Expeditionary Force, was the guest speaker. Special guests included several Navajo Code Talkers from World War II and Sergeant Major Bradley Kasal, I Marine Expeditionary Force sergeant major and recipient of the Navy Cross.

Quick Shots Around the Corps

Marathon Founder Honored With Building Dedication

■ Family and friends of the late Colonel James L. Fowler, USMC (Ret), founder of the Marine Corps Marathon, gathered for the dedication of Fowler Hall, previously

known as the Marine Corps Marathon Building at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., Sept. 14.

In 2005, Fowler cut the ribbon for the opening of the building.

“Ten years later we are now adding the name to this building that represents the vision Jim held so dearly,” said Rick Nealis, the Marine Corps Marathon race director.

“I think of Jim looking down on us right now, seeing a twinkle in his eye and a smile with a hint of mischief in it,” said his widow, Betsy Fowler, who attended the ceremony. “I’m sure he would be very pleased today.”

Fowler founded the marathon in 1975, while serving at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, to help create a community of goodwill between the Corps and the civilian populace. Known as “the People’s Marathon,” the Marine Corps Marathon has grown to 30,000 participants.

Sgt Melissa Karnath, USMC

Marine Corps Releases Results Of Integrated Task Force

■ The Marine Corps Force Integration Office released the Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force (GCEITF) research results Sept. 10, following a one-year research effort to conduct integrated, gender-neutral training in the execution of both individual and collective training tasks within designated ground combat arms occupational specialties.

Activated in July 2014 at Marine Corps



SGT CUONG LE, USMC

Sgt Derek Patrick, a military working dog trainer from MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., demonstrates the capabilities of his military working dog behind the University of Phoenix Stadium at Glendale, Ariz., Sept. 11. The demonstration was part of Marine Week Phoenix, which allowed the Marine Corps to showcase its traditions, capabilities and values to the local community.



DREAMA OVERFELT

ALWAYS A MARINE—Frank G. Kingery served in the Corps from 1952 to 1955. In addition to his assignment with the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean, he served as a tank operator during the Korean War. Today, at age 82, he stands proudly beside a tank that was built for him by his son-in-law and grandson. He rides in the tank in veterans parades and other events near his Vinton, Va., home.

Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., the GCEITF was made up of roughly 100 female Marine volunteers, 300 male Marine volunteers and 200 assigned Marines from active and reserve units throughout the Marine Corps.

The command structure of the GCEITF was modeled after a battalion landing team—consisting mostly of infantry Marines, reinforced with combat engineers, artillery, tanks, amphibious assault vehicles and light armored vehicles.

After four months of military occupational specialty schools, the participating Marines deployed to Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif.

According to Paul Johnson, the principal investigator, Marine Corps Force Integration Office, the result was that the all-male units outperformed the integrated units; however, there were some examples in which integrated units outperformed male units.

The GCEITF deactivated in July, and the full results of the research were expected at the end of September.



Crazy Caption Contest

Winner



LCPL ISAC IBARRA, USMC

“This job of cleaning helicopter windows is a little different than I thought.”

**Submitted by
Jack Hughes
Hamilton, N.J.**

This Month's Photo



CPL COREY DABNEY, USMC

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The “Wolf Raiders” of VMA-121 in the Korean War

Story by Warren E. Thompson
Photos courtesy of Lawrence Alley

Commissioned on the eve of the United States entering World War II, Marine Fighting Squadron (VMF) 121 flew missions during the war in the F4F Wildcat and later the legendary F4U Corsair. The squadron, flying combat operations in the South Pacific, produced 14 aces, including Joseph J. Foss, whose 26 kills made him the Corps’ leading ace of the war.

When the war ended, the squadron returned to the United States where its designation was changed to Marine Attack Squadron (VMA) 121. Based at Naval Air Station Glenview, Ill., the pilots flew a variety of aircraft, including Corsairs, Grumman F8F Bearcats and Douglas AD Skyraiders. In early January 1951, the members of VMA-121 received word at NAS Glenview to mobilize and await further instruction. By the end of the



COURTESY OF WARREN E. THOMPSON

month, they received orders to move by April 16 to Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) El Toro, Calif. The commanding officer and a few other pilots flew the squadron’s new AD-2 Skyraiders to their new base.

For the next four months, the pilots perfected their new attack mission, flying as many as four flights per day, concentrating on familiarization, tactics, simulated bombing and rocket attacks.

In July 1951, the squadron began Field Carrier Landing Practice (FCLP) in preparation for qualifying to operate from aircraft carriers. Finally, on Aug. 25, it was announced by headquarters that the squadron would deploy to the Far East to fly missions in the Korean War. The squadron boarded USS *Sitkoh Bay* (CVE-86) on Oct. 2 and headed into combat by way of Yokosuka, Japan. VMA-121 was attached to First Marine Aircraft Wing (1st MAW). By that time, the war was at least 15 months old, and the front lines had stabilized. The squadron established itself at Pohang Air Base and began combat operations on Oct. 19, 1951.

The Skyraider was not new to the Korean War. The Navy had been flying missions with the aircraft since August

Lt Jack Benton in the cockpit of his Skyraider at Pyongtaek Airfield (K-6) prior to launching on another close air support mission. The painted ordnance just under the canopy represents the aircraft’s number of missions.





1950 from USS *Boxer* (CV-21). The Marine Corps squadrons, however, had an advantage over the Navy's Skyraiders because the Marines were flying from land bases that had huge runways, which meant that the ADs could carry their maximum loads to any target in North Korea. Navy Skyraiders had to carry lighter loads due to the limited length of their carriers' flight decks.

The Marines started out with the AD-2s, and they would quickly bring the AD-4s into inventory. The Marines could carry the maximum weight to a distance that exceeded 1,300 miles. VMA-121 began writing itself into the record book.

According to some of VMA-121's senior pilots, they began referring to themselves as "Wolf Raiders," a name that was based on a "Li'l Abner" comic strip character, "Wolf Girl," drawn by Al Capp.

The winter weather was setting in, and the ability of pilots to get ready by flying familiarization flights and learning vital landmarks would take time, but bad weather in early November cancelled flights for five days. Once it settled down, more than 60 percent of the missions flown were attacking railroads while close air support (CAS) was limited to only 32 percent. The limited close support was highly contested by senior Marine leaders, and it soon was increased, as most Marine troops preferred to be backed up by Marine air.

One of the first major missions was flown on Nov. 9, when Major General Christian F. Schilt led an attack of more than 80 aircraft (all of VMA-121 plus Corsairs) against communist forces on

Above: It was spring of 1953 and VMA-121 pilots prepared for a group photo on the Pyongyang flight line prior to an entire squadron mission over North Korea.

Below: This AD sits loaded and ready for the chocks to be pulled. The Skyraider was able to carry large payloads of ordnance and ammunition over long distances, stay on station longer than other aircraft, and withstand ground fire better than most.



Hill 1052, which was right in the face of First Marine Division. The attack lasted two days, and it included dropping 50,000 leaflets inviting the communist forces to the Marine Corps Birthday dinner. Twenty North Koreans surrendered, although some doubt did exist as to whether they were responding to the leaflets or if they were afraid of the bombs and napalm.

VMA-121 became a close air support squadron by helping the troops and also going against targets deep in North Korea.

Lieutenant Thomas Murphree recalls a difficult mission he flew in very bad weather with a low ceiling over a heavily defended target in central North Korea. "This was a major strike that called for every flyable AD we had in the squadron. It was a big logistics center hidden in a very mountainous terrain. We had to hit it under the 2,500-foot ceiling, and on our first pass, I spotted a poorly concealed warehouse and put four 250-pound bombs right in the middle of it. ... When I pointed

Accompanied by a Marine Corsair off its left wing, this Skyraider returned from a mission over North Korea having used all its ordnance. The tail code of "AK" was used by VMA-121 while deployed to Korea; its tail code is usually "VK." Today, the squadron, based at MCAS Yuma, Ariz., flies the F-35B Lightning II and is known as the "Green Knights."



the nose up, I realized we were going to have a very difficult time delivering our big bombs under such a low ceiling.

"At that time, I decided to stay underneath it anyway and take my chances, and [as] I glanced over to the right, I saw three golf ball-size holes in my right wing. To my amazement, there were no rips or tears," Murphree continued. "After each bomb run, however, the number of holes would increase. Thank goodness, I was in one of the toughest aircraft you could be in. The strike completely obliterated that Chinese logistic complex, and the only loss was to a colonel that was flying in a Corsair and monitoring our efforts. He went down under a hail of ground fire, and we made every effort to protect him with our 20-millimeter fire until a chopper could arrive to rescue him. We were able to stay above him for the entire time, thanks to staying power of the Skyraider which allowed us plenty of time over any target.

"If the strike force had been made up with F-51 Mustangs with their vulnerable cooling system, they probably would have had several losses because of the intense small-arms fire we faced in that limited space down at that low altitude!" This was only one of hundreds of targets north of the bomb line that VMA-121 pilots took out during their tour.



Marine close air support often means treetop altitude which draws small-arms fire. This AD took on small-arms fire that resulted in the aircraft losing its right wing controls and landing gear on the right side. Fortunately, the pilot was able to land safely at K-6.

On Oct. 19, 1952, VMA-121 moved to a bigger base at Pyongtaek (K-6) where it remained until the war ended. From that base, the squadron attacked anything from the front lines to the bridges and power plants over the Yalu River. On missions over the front lines, VMA-121 was under the guidance of the forward

air controllers, whose pilots preferred to work with the prop types instead of the jets because loiter time over a potential target was never a problem for the props. The jets always were in a hurry because of fuel consumption. The Marine AD-2 could carry three 2,000-lb. and eight 250-lb. bombs on the same mission, or they

might have a mix of 1,000-lb., 500-lb. and 250-lb. GPs on other missions.

The newer AD-4s that the squadron received were much heavier, and when operating from K-6 with its Marston-matting runway and a full bomb load, the pilots had to deal with a “washboard effect” caused by the bumpy surface of the Marston matting when taking off. That meant they sometimes launched before they had sufficient takeoff speed, resulting in a dangerous situation that included minor damage to the tips of the props.

Most of the pilots from VMA-121 flew in a two-a-day routine due to their mission loads. Lt James W. Shank recalls the second mission he flew that day was targeting a bridge north of the front lines. “I was flying the leader’s wing when we crossed the bomb line, and he passed the lead to me. Fortunately, we were in the correct valley, and just ahead was the railroad bridge. I made my dive without turning on the bomb sight. But I did feel uneasy in the real steep dive of 70 degrees. Now, I figured when we got back to base, I had better learn to use the sight on every mission.

“Captain John Paolo was one of the top dive bombers in -121, so I went to him for help. His only comment was, ‘I don’t use it.’ His procedure was that about 3,500 feet, he started firing his 20 millimeters, working the tracers (every fifth round) to the target and then pickled his bombs. After that, I never turned on the sight for the rest of my 102 missions.

“When dropping napalm,” Shank continued, “I flew about 150 feet and 220 knots, and when a specific point on the right of the engine nacelle hit the target, I immediately dropped my bombs. After considerable use by me, I could boresight that target on both types of ordnance. So as not to overlook one napalm run I made, the North Koreans had a habit of taking a village and placing ammo and fuel in one hooch and making a family live in an adjacent hut. My wingman and I hit two houses, while I just missed killing a family running out the door. My wingman had hit the one with the ammo, and the explosion was so great that he came home with shrapnel caught in the bottom of his AD. It’s a wonder that the family escaped without getting hurt!

“I was later flying a strike that was made up of two divisions of ADs, when we were jumped by a ... Mustang. We immediately went into a Luftberry Circle. The [F-51] lined up for another firing pass, and our leader radioed that if any of us had the Mustang in their sights, to shoot him down. Lead scored multiple hits on it, and since we figured that maybe a North Korean might have captured one

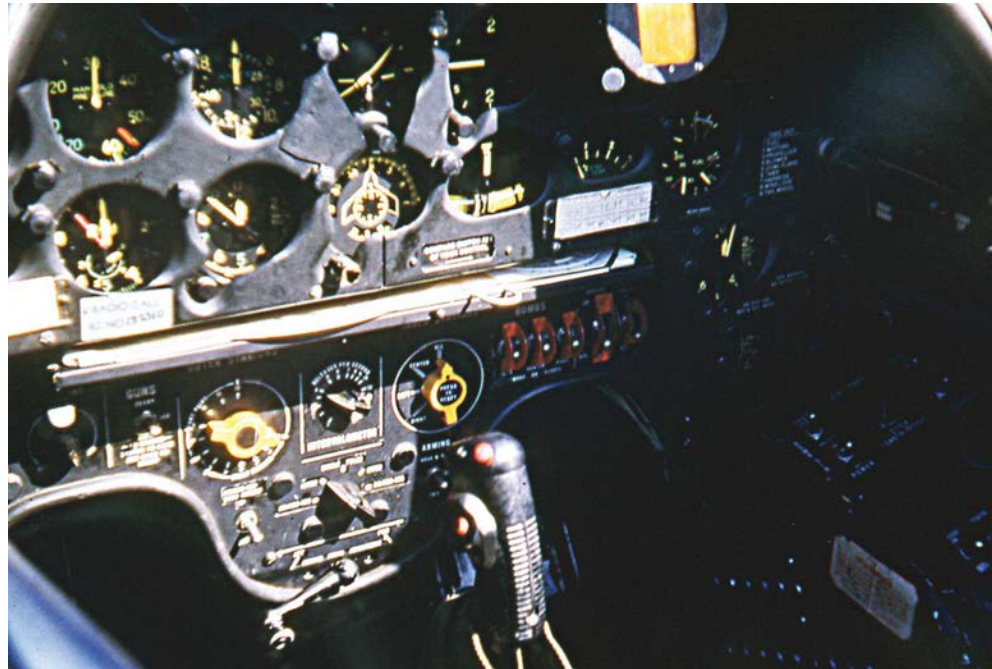
... there was no sense in taking chances. When we returned to base, we learned that a South African squadron had just lost one of their Mustangs. This was a very unfortunate incident! Soon after this, our two squadrons became very close, and they frequently flew escort of us when we were on the deep missions north of Pyongyang.”

The CAS missions kept coming, and the amount of small-arms fire was becoming too intense. Most of the AD pilots claimed that when the Chinese had to start running their supplies during the night,

significant jolt. Fortunately, it landed upright in a rice paddy, and I was able to get out and start walking back to base as I was in friendly territory.

“What happened to my Skyraider was that one of the props started to turn due to a large crack because of metal fatigue. The prop went all the way out of collar, and the vibration from the remaining props still running under full power shook the engine loose from its mounts, and it dropped from the aircraft.”

On March 3, 1952, the Marine Skyraiders were selected to start testing the



This is what the AD pilots had to work with while in the cockpit of their attack aircraft. The ordnance panel is in the lower panel.

the squadron began flying night missions to counteract the nighttime vehicular traffic. First Lieutenant Dale Gough flew many night missions against unseen targets close to the front lines. He remembers one of them in particular.

“This one night a call came in about 1 or 2 a.m. ... The weather was miserable, and visibility was about zero. I was on instruments as soon as I pulled the gear up and headed north. ... I remember passing through 500 feet when all hell broke loose. Without warning, my aircraft began running very rough and made a sharp roll to port. I had put both hands on the stick in order to get it straight and level.”

Gough continued: “I knew I was in trouble and immediately dropped all of my ordnance, and about that time there was a huge explosion right in my face, and then it became deathly silent. The rudders were flopping, and the stick moved with no effect. I knew I was too low to bail out and realized I had to ride the aircraft to the ground. It landed flat and gave me a

2.75-inch “Mighty Mouse” rockets. There were several jet aircraft that already were using it, but mostly in an air-to-air role. The Skyraiders would be using the rockets in the air-to-ground role. The test aircraft were two AD-4s and one AD-2 carrying various numbers of the 2.75-in. rockets in seven rocket pods. The results were limited, and on March 10, the squadron began the first of 11 test missions on night armed reconnaissance sorties, using the AD-4s, armed with napalm and Mighty Mouse rockets.

They would take off on these missions (called Firefly missions) with a flare plane and proceed to the targets. The usual targets were trucks heading south toward the front lines. Those tests showed that the Skyraider was capable of carrying all types of weapons, and its ruggedness gave it an advantage over other CAS aircraft. It didn’t have too many missions where they encountered MiG-15s because they usually had F-86s protecting them. Their biggest problem was small-arms fire

while delivering their ordnance at such low altitudes.

The pilots in the Wolf Raider squadron formed a very exclusive club, aptly named "The Railroad Cutter's Union." VMA-121 was one of the most proficient squadrons that took on that task. Lt Shank explained what was required to join the elite organization. "First of all, when a pilot joined the squadron, he had to fly at least 10 missions or get shot up on one before achieving the 10 to become an unofficial member of -121. At that point, he had to throw a party for the squadron at his expense. I was ordered to write back to the States to the real Railroad Union and explain what we were doing and a little about our exclusive club. I explained that we had a rule that each pilot had to fly 10 rail-cutter missions to qualify, and we would like to have some recognition from them.

"Needless to say, we were warmly welcomed by their organization, and in short order each of us received engineers' hats and membership cards. We all took great pride in being a member! Although the Chinese had a huge civilian work force ... to repair any damage we did to the rail system, we kept all of them busy. Usually, when we did a lot of damage to the rails, they all had the rails repaired and back in



service in about a week's time."

From January 1953 until the war ended in late July of that year, VMA-121 lost only five aircraft. During the big push that occurred in July, many U.N. aircraft were lost, but the Wolf Raiders did not lose any. The Marine Skyraider low loss rate for that seven-month period was attributed to how tough and rugged the aircraft were. They always were subjected to small-arms fire due to the requirements for the low-level works. VMA-121 dropped more

bomb tonnage than any other Navy or Marine squadron during the Korean War.

Author's bio: Warren Thompson has written about military aviation history for more than 40 years, leading to numerous published articles and books. A frequent Leatherneck contributor, you see his byline regularly in the Marine Corps Aviation Association's Yellow Sheet and other aviation-related magazines.



Capt Lawrence Alley stands amid 8,000 pounds of ordnance and a full load of 20 mm ammunition prior to launch on another mission over Korea. VMA-121 dropped more bomb tonnage than any other Navy or Marine Corps squadron in the Korean War.



GEN ROBERT E. HOGABOOM LEADERSHIP WRITING CONTEST



Gen Robert E. Hogaboom.

The *Marine Corps Gazette* is proud to announce the commencement of its annual Gen Robert E. Hogaboom Leadership Writing Contest. The contest honors the essay that is the most original in its approach to the various aspects of leadership. Authors should not simply reiterate the 11 Principles of Leadership or the 14 Leadership Traits of an NCO addressed in the *Guidebook for Marines*. Authors must be willing to take an honest, realistic look at what leadership, either positive or negative, means to them and then articulate ways and methods of being an effective leader of Marines.

E-mail entries to: gazette@mca-marines.org

**DEADLINE:
31 January**

Mail entries to: **Marine Corps Gazette
Hogaboom Writing Contest
Box 1775
Quantico, VA 22134**

Background

The contest is named for Gen Robert E. Hogaboom, USMC(Ret), who served the Corps for 34 years. Upon graduating from the Naval Academy in 1925, Gen Hogaboom saw service in Cuba, Nicaragua, and China. Following action in a number of key Pacific battles in World War II, he later served first as assistant division commander, then division commander, 1st Marine Division, in Korea in 1954–55. Gen Hogaboom retired in 1959 as a lieutenant general while serving as the Chief of Staff, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, and was subsequently advanced to the rank of general.

Prizes include \$3,000 and an engraved plaque for first place; \$1,500 and an engraved plaque for second place; and \$500 for honorable mention. All entries are eligible for publication.

Instructions

The contest is open to all Marines on active duty and to members of the Marine Corps Reserve. Electronically submitted entries are preferred. Attach the entry as a file and send to gazette@mca-marines.org. A cover page should be included identifying the manuscript as a Gen Robert E. Hogaboom Leadership Writing Contest entry and include the title of the essay and the author's name. Repeat title on the first page, but author's name should not appear anywhere but on the cover page. Manuscripts are acceptable, but please include a disk in Microsoft Word format with the manuscript. The *Gazette* Editorial Advisory Panel will judge the contest during February and notify all entrants as to the outcome shortly thereafter. Multiple entries are allowed; however, only one entry per author will receive an award.

Marines of the Combined Action Company gather for a photo with their Afghan comrades. Front row, left to right: SSgt Matthew Salazar, 1stLt Joshua Freedman and SSgt Daniel I. Lebron. Back row, left to right: Gul Agha, ANA; 1stLt Mark A. Bodrog; Sgt Sayeed Agha, ANA; Capt Jason Armas; 1stSgt Brian Olea; 1stSgt Entazaar, ANA; 1stLt Seth Miller and Sgt Tay Gee Dee, ANA.



COURTESY OF CAPT MARK A. BODROG, USMC

2d Platoon: Call Sign “Hades” and the Combined Action Company

By Capt Mark A. Bodrog, USMC and
GySgt Daniel I. LeBron, USMC

Authors' note: During our war in Afghanistan, two Marine infantry platoons in 3d Battalion, Third Marine Regiment were selected to fully integrate with two platoons of Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers in order to create what author Bing West described as a “Combined Action” Company (CAC) capable of conducting counterinsurgency (COIN) operations throughout our area of operations (AO) and adjacent battlespaces. This is the account of one of those platoons from the perspective of both the platoon commander (Captain Mark A. Bodrog) and platoon sergeant (Gunnery Sergeant Daniel LeBron) of 2d Plt, “Lima” Co, 3d Bn, 3d Marines.

In May of 2010, 2d Plt, Lima Co, 3d Bn, 3d Marines deployed to the Nawa District of Helmand province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Spring was the beginning of the “fighting season” for the Taliban and also the start of a phenomenon known as “the wind of 120 days” that brought with it sandstorms and 110 mph destructive winds.

However, the spring of 2010 would be different for the Taliban as Operation Moshtarak, one of the largest joint allied operations up to this point, had destroyed vital Taliban logistical and communication lines from Quetta, Pakistan, in the south to Marjah and eventually north to Kandahar, Afghanistan. This offensive, consisting of more than 15,000 servicemembers, had severely disrupted the momentum of the enemy and their ability to transport weapons and explosives from Pakistan to Afghanistan.

Patrol Base Brannon

Our platoon of Marines and Navy corpsmen operated out of Patrol Base (PB) Brannon, a sub-base of the company’s operating base known as COB Toor Ghar. PB Brannon, named after Marine Corporal Phillip Brannon who died during combat actions in Vietnam, became home for our men during the first two months of our deployment.

Brannon, located 8 kilometers southwest of COB Toor Ghar, was surrounded by uninhabitable desert with visibility ranging from 2 kilometers in all directions. Living conditions could be characterized as being Spartan at best. Although Brannon lacked the essential creature comforts that many people take for granted (showers, Internet, refrigeration, cold water and air conditioning), the steadfast work ethic and determination of our men to make it into a patrol base that ran like a well-oiled

machine made it feel like home.

A normal day at Brannon consisted of many routines. When our men were not battling the very common Afghanistan gastrointestinal virus (which became known as “the demon”), a normal day consisted of integrated patrolling with Afghan National Army soldiers to deny the Taliban freedom of movement, encountering/diffusing improvised explosive devices (IEDs), treating the sick and injured members of local villages, constantly improving our defensive position and improving the infrastructure of the local community and government.

Our platoon’s occupation of PB Brannon and the control of its AO only lasted from May 18 to June 15, 2010. During this time, the platoon witnessed three wildfires, all of which were initiated by rival Afghanistan uniformed police units fighting over control of the land and villages in the AO. Our platoon also was responsible for discovering and neutralizing numerous IEDs, confiscating several bomb-making-material caches and arresting a local national for murder after he threw a fellow Afghan into a wood chipper. Our humanitarian efforts consisted of the constant treatment of ailments by local nationals, treating Afghan babies’ burn wounds, improving a vehicle bridge and constructing two canal water locks, five footbridges and eight water wells.

Operation New Dawn

In mid-June of 2010, the platoon was tasked to support Operation New Dawn in the Shorshorak region of the Nawa District. Shorshorak is located roughly 15 kilometers north of the Garmsir border. Operation New Dawn followed the successful Operation Moshtarak and was designed to continue the assault on the Taliban forces operating between the Marjah and Nawa districts. The platoon assumed the role of the battalion main effort tasked with clearing, interdicting and blocking the Taliban from south to north, from Nawa to Marjah.

Shorshorak was a desert tribal region of the Nawa District located 5 kilometers south of Patrol Base Brannon. The area to the north, south and west was arid; however, eastern Shorshorak was a thriving farmland that consisted of many poor indigenous people who grew fruits, corn, poppy and marijuana. When the platoon arrived in the area, “the wind of 120 days” was fully in effect and the men of 2d Plt came to know Shorshorak as a sandstorm-rich environment, with plentiful camel spiders and scorpions and temperatures reaching as high as 140 degrees Fahrenheit in the direct sunlight. A true hell on earth.

During the four weeks of Operation

New Dawn, the men of 2d Plt conducted nearly 200 integrated security patrols covering more than 500 kilometers of hostile enemy terrain. These integrated patrols, although very successful, were not without difficulty. The relationship between our Marines and corpsmen and their Afghan soldier counterparts was fraught with friction and adversity. Working with Afghans often was highly frustrating as many Afghan soldiers were untrustworthy, unreliable and heavy utilizers of drugs.

In Shorshorak, the Afghan soldiers whom we were partnering with constantly utilized opium and drugs, ran off on and quit dismounted patrols, caused repeated

materials to make more IEDs, capturing two drug dealers, confiscating more than 220 pounds of opium seeds and taking possession of 25 pounds of raw liquid opium from the enemy. The mission was labeled a success as the Taliban were severely disrupted from transporting money, arms and explosives throughout the Nawa District and Marjah.

The Unbreakable Marine

Operation New Dawn was not without its close calls. While conducting a dismounted security patrol 4 miles from our patrol base, one of the squad leaders, Corporal Matthew Garst, became involved in a situation that few men have lived to



COURTESY OF CAPT MARK A. BODROG, USMC



COURTESY OF CAPT MARK A. BODROG, USMC

Above: LCpls Peter Choi and Gabriel Ortiz demonstrate room-clearing techniques to ANA soldiers.

Left: Sgt Brent Olds’ squad discovered an IED during a security patrol on May 25, 2010. The IED was disarmed and taken back to the patrol base.

negligent discharges and threatened to join the Taliban. Rising through the constant adversity of partnering with our counterparts in the developing nation, our men were very successful in completing the mission of Operation New Dawn by the end of June 2010.

Toward the end of the operation, the platoon was responsible for disarming 18 IEDs, seizing five weapons caches, discovering 10 sites with explosive

talk about. While leading his squad on patrol to establish a vehicle checkpoint in support of our mission, Garst located a compound in which he could set up a listening post/observation post in order to establish communication with the forward patrol base.

After sweeping the compound with compact metal detectors (CMDs), Garst proceeded to enter the compound and establish communications. During his



COURTESY OF CAPT MARK A. BOOROG, USMC

The CAC was able to get every ANA soldier qualified on both the M16A2 and M249 SAW after conducting an integrated live-fire rifle range.

exit of the compound, he stepped on a pressure-plate IED and was blown up directly in front of his squad.

The IED, buried too deep for the CMD to detect it, blew Garst so far up in the air that Marines saw his feet above the walls of the compound, according to an account in *Marines Magazine* by Sergeant Mark Fayloga. Although he landed on his head and shoulders, Garst jumped to his feet quickly, rifle still in hand. In order to stay with his Marines on the battlefield, he refused medical treatment and evacuation to Camp Dwyer. The next day, although he awoke with a pounding headache, Garst was back out on patrol, setting an incredible example for his Marines.

Forward Operating Base Geronimo

Following the culmination of Operation New Dawn, 1st Plt, led by First Lieutenant Seth Miller and Staff Sergeant Matthew Salazar, and 2d Plt were detached from the company by the battalion commander. We were ordered to relocate to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Geronimo and attach directly to Headquarters and Service (Hades) Co under the command of Capt Jason Armas.

The battalion commander formed a Combined Action Company with our

two platoons and two platoons of ANA soldiers. This new unit was created to conduct kinetic and counterinsurgency warfare against the Taliban in both our AO and surrounding battlespaces.

The battalion commander envisioned the CAC as the next step in the ever-evolving Marine Corps doctrine of counterinsurgency warfare and took the idea from Bing West's book, "The

Village," in which West had used Combined Action Platoons (CAPs) to fight the enemy North Vietnamese. Our CAC was the battalion commander's personal maneuver element and the battalion's "right hand punch" against the Taliban, capable of conducting integrated COIN missions against the enemy, while simultaneously winning the "hearts and minds" of the local population.

Within days of arriving at FOB Geronimo, however, the platoon was tasked with conducting two tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel (TRAP) missions. This put the formation of the CAC initially on hold.

The first TRAP mission was in support of Kilo Co who had lost one of their Marines, Sgt Joseph Wrightsman. Sgt Wrightsman had jumped into the Helmand River in order to rescue a drowning Afghan uniformed policeman and was unaccounted for and feared drowned.

While flying enroute to the Helmand River, our platoon learned that a Navy HH-60 (Pave Hawk) search-and-rescue helicopter carrying parajumpers to assist in the regimental search and recovery mission of both Wrightsman and the Afghan uniformed police officer reported a critical mechanical failure and had to make a hard landing along



SGT MARK FAYLOGA, USMC

Mohammad Din, an ANA soldier known to the Marines as "Curious George," fires a 60 mm mortar under the close supervision of Sgt Alan Smith.

the shoreline of the Helmand River. The seriousness of this event was compounded by the fact that our battalion intelligence was reporting that the Taliban had been actively searching for the body of Wrightsman and now were looking for the downed helicopter.

Our platoon arrived on the shoreline of the Helmand River and immediately set up 360-degree security around the HH-60 to allow the aircrew to conduct their necessary repairs and deny the Taliban the ability to destroy the aircraft. After approximately two hours, Pave Hawk received the necessary repairs and soon became airborne to continue the regimental search and recovery mission. Our platoon then continued on its original mission, and after three days of relentlessly searching the Helmand River, both Wrightsman and the Afghan policeman's bodies were recovered.

The second TRAP mission occurred in India Co's area of operations where AH-1W Super Cobra helicopter pilots Lieutenant Colonel Mario Carazo and Major James Weis were shot down and killed during an enemy rocket-propelled grenade attack. Our Marines, along with 1st Plt, relieved India Co who arrived first on scene, secured the crash site and ensured that the Taliban would not recover the bodies of the fallen Marines. The mission lasted three days and concluded once the Marines were recovered, and all sensitive material was removed from the crash site by our friendly forces.

The Combined Action Company

After returning to FOB Geronimo, the platoon began the task of creating the CAC with our Afghanistan army soldiers. A training area and living sustainment area (LSA) was carved out for the company on the western side of FOB Geronimo, and the arduous task of forming the CAC began. With no previous after-action reports, training manuals or other examples to use, it became the sole mission of both platoons to create the first CAC in Afghanistan.

Throughout July 2010, each day of training consisted of police-calling our living sustainment area, followed by physical training (PT), then hours of professional military education consisting of combat lifesaving, patrolling, military bearing, history lessons, military discipline, English lessons, immediate/remedial actions drills and military operations on urban terrain training.

The company conducted mounted and dismounted patrols, tested our Afghan soldiers on medical knowledge and conducted integrated live-fire weapons ranges in order to make the Afghans proficient on

OEF, OIF Marines Must Document Stories

On April 22, 2015, Colonel Mary Reinwald, editor of the Marine Corps Association and Foundation's (MCA&F's) *Leatherneck* magazine, interviewed Brigadier General Julian D. Alford at the MCA&F professional dinner at Marston Pavilion located at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C. During the interview, BGen Alford, the assistant division commander for Second Marine Division, said that Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom and the war on terrorism were "our war; the war that's happened over the last 12 years." He stressed that as Marines, we must realize the value in documenting *our* war, the importance of our professional military education, and he urged Marines to do more to study their profession.

The amount of knowledge and history that is being lost in the aftermath of our war is staggering as many servicemen and women have been reluctant to document their experiences. In a June 2015 article in the *Marine Corps Gazette*, "Staying Focused on PME," BGen Helen Pratt, President, Marine Corps University, discussed the value of the education continuum and quoted the 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Alfred M. Gray: " 'It doesn't cost anything to think.' " Not only should we as Marines "think," but we should be writing down these lessons learned to continually evolve our professional military education and enhance the education continuum of the Corps. It is our inherent duty to document our history. Failure to document the experiences of our war creates a disservice to future warfighters and military history.

The Marine Corps (MCO 5750.1H) asserts that Marines are responsible for "recording, preserving and disseminating" their cumulative operational and institutional experiences so that many of the harsh lessons of history and war are not "painfully revisited." It is in this effort that individual Marines can strengthen our esprit de corps, toughen a unit, preserve our history, foster military virtue, evolve our military education and gain "a deeper understanding of the historical role of the Marine Corps, both in the national development of the United States and as an instrument of national policy."

BGen Alford was correct in saying that the war over the last 12 years is our war. Marines must now come forward with their experiences and document their unique part of history for future Marines to read and learn about. To that end, the "Marine Corps has dedicated [numerous] resources to amass, preserve, and use records and collections of historical value" to preserve the history of our war, and it is incumbent upon us to take advantage of those opportunities through a variety of means (the Marine Corps University, the *Marine Corps Gazette* and *Leatherneck* to name a few) to enhance the future of our Corps.

—Capt Mark A. Bodrog, USMC and GySgt Daniel I. LeBron, USMC

the M4, M16A2, M249, M240 and 60 mm mortar system. In order to facilitate this process and bridge the cultural gap, we taught the soldiers basic English, hand and arm signals and American history so that they would have a deeper appreciation for the American way of life and our mission in Afghanistan. In return, the Afghans taught our Marines both Pashto and Dari (official languages of Afghanistan) and other aspects of their own culture.

Within three weeks, our combined company did everything together: eating, sleeping, shaving, showering, studying, going on missions. Throughout the process, the three squad leaders, Sergeants Lawrence Guthrie, Tyler Brown and Brent Olds, tirelessly devoted themselves to the mission and continually motivated their Marines. SSgt Daniel LeBron, the platoon sergeant, a prior drill instructor, kept the Marines focused on the mission

and assisted them in dealing with the often frustrating Afghan soldiers.

By the month's end, our Afghan soldiers showed remarkable improvement in both their demeanor and confidence levels. Not only were they integrated on sustained patrolling operations, they were now taking the lead role in patrols, searches and seizures. While Marines provided the outer and inner cordon of compounds, our Afghans conducted the searches of both the compounds and any local nationals we encountered. Our Afghan soldiers were not bound by the same rules of engagement as our Marines were, and they often took an aggressive approach to bringing security in our AO.

During September 2010, our combined company supported both pre-election and election security for the Afghanistan Parliamentary elections. Although the election day was very successful in terms

Sgt Tyler Brown, right, Cpl Warren Truehaft, rear, and the platoon linguist, Nassir, cross a canal during an integrated dismounted security patrol on June 1, 2010. Patrols avoided the main roads and trails and worked their way through farm fields, mudded areas and canals to lessen the risk of stepping on IEDs. Many canals in the Nawa District of Helmand province were built by American contractors in the 1950s.

of voter turnout and zero Taliban attacks in the Nawa District, the pre-election period was not without its losses for our battalion. 1stLt Scott Fleming, a platoon commander with Kilo Co, was killed in a coordinated ambush by Taliban commanders Mullah Abash and Mohammed Khan.

From September through November, both our platoon and 1st Plt had many successes while conducting and supporting combat operations for our battalion. Our CAC was the main effort in two battalion operations, conducted more than 10 company operations and supported dozens of missions to reinforce adjacent companies within our AO. The company witnessed numerous kinetic engagements, facilitated humanitarian operations for local nationals and continuously tried to bring improved stability and peace to the district. By the end of November, the goal of setting conditions to leave the ANA in charge of the Nawa District was coming closer to fruition.

Conclusion

On Dec. 7, 2010, our platoon departed Helmand province to return to Marine Corps Base Hawaii. During the seven-month deployment to the Nawa District, the battalion solidified it as a model of COIN operations, with Nawa being the most stable district in Helmand. In a speech in San Diego, Calif., in November 2010,



COURTESY OF CAPT MARK A. BODROG, USMC

the 35th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James F. Amos, pointed out that the Nawa District in Helmand province was the model for conducting successful counterinsurgency in Afghanistan.

The deployment was not without losses. The battalion lost three Marines: Private First Class Jake Suter, Sgt Joe Wrightsman and 1stLt Scott Fleming. Two Marines, Maj Weis and LtCol Carazo, were killed supporting our efforts. Our Afghan friends were not without their own losses including Manan Khan, the district governor of the Nawa District. Khan worked diligently to facilitate the COIN strategy for 3/3 but was later killed by Taliban on May 18, 2015, in an ambush while traveling from Nawa to Kandahar.

In many cases, the successes of our men were achieved while encountering a great deal of unnecessary friction as a result of strict and limiting rules of engagement

(ROEs), frustrations and mistrust toward working and partnering with our Afghan counterparts and politically correct agendas permeating the war zone. Of note, Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai's "12 points," coupled with a politically motivated agenda of cultural sensitivity toward the Afghans themselves, had the ability to tie the hands of and confuse our men while they conducted COIN operations.

In writing these last points, our hope is that future Marines will not endure this aspect of uncertainty toward future enemies on the battlefield. Leadership must clearly define the enemy for the men and women on the ground in order to achieve success. Failure to clearly define the enemy we are fighting coupled with restrictive ROEs will put Marines at a disadvantage, increase unnecessary risk to human life and centralize rather than decentralize authority to the men and women on the ground.

Authors' bios: Capt Mark A. Bodrog is an infantry officer currently pursuing a master's degree at Rutgers University. He is author of the book "Second Platoon: Call Sign Hades, A Memoir of the Marines of the Combined Action Company." He has served two combat tours to Helmand province, Afghanistan.

GySgt Daniel I. LeBron is an infantry unit leader currently stationed with the Marine Corps Embassy Security Group at Quantico, Va. A former drill instructor, GySgt LeBron has served three combat tours in Iraq and one combat tour to Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was a Marine Security Guard Detachment commander in both Harare, Zimbabwe, and Panama City, Panama.



SGT MARK FAY/DGA, USMC

1stLt Mark Bodrog, left, and Sgt Tyler Brown observe areas along the Helmand River that possibly could be used by the Taliban to attack the platoon.



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COURTESY OF THE HOFFMAN AUTO GROUP

Veteran Marine Richard "Rick" Kowalker and his horses are a common sight at veterans' funerals throughout the state of Connecticut. Kowalker has participated in hundreds of funerals since 2006.

By Christopher Hoffman

For Richard "Rick" Kowalker, it was a simple matter of *Semper Fidelis*.

Over nearly a decade, Kowalker, a Marine veteran of grinding combat in Vietnam around Da Nang in 1968 and 1969, has honored deceased servicemen in Connecticut by showing up with a riderless horse at their funerals. Turned out in his dress blues, the 67-year-old former M60 machine-gunner and infantryman rides his Morgan horse, Melody, while leading a second horse. In the stirrups of the second horse's empty 1912 cavalry saddle is a pair of boots placed backward, a symbol of a fallen warrior that is believed to date from the time of Genghis Khan.

Soft-spoken and self-effacing, Kowalker is well-known and beloved among Connecticut veterans groups and funeral directors for his dedication and commitment to honoring local servicemembers. By his count, Kowalker has participated in more than 700 funerals since 2006.

"It's absolutely breathtaking when he

does appear at a military funeral," said Michael Klett, president of D'Esopo Funeral Chapel in Wethersfield, Conn. "We've had him out when it's 10 below zero. We've had him out when it's 90 degrees. He's just doing his mission."

The burial service Kowalker committed to attend on June 20 of this year was particularly special, he recalled. The deceased,

Skipping the service was out of the question. Kowalker had given his word to a fellow Marine.

Norman E. Varney of Waterbury, was more than a fellow Marine. He was a veteran of one of the Corps' bloodiest and most storied battles—Iwo Jima. Varney, who served in the Fifth Marine Division, helped guard the summit of Mount Suribachi as the American flag was raised, a key moment in the battle captured in an iconic photograph that

inspired the design of the Marine Corps War Memorial in Washington, D.C.

"I feel it's an honor just to be in the presence of that person," Kowalker said of Varney. "What they had to go through I can only imagine. I believe there's a reason they call it 'The Greatest Generation.'"

But the day before the funeral, Kowalker suddenly faced a big problem. His horse trailer was wrecked in an accident. Luckily, the trailer was empty at the time of the accident, and he and his horses were not injured.

Knowing he had the funeral the next day, Kowalker searched without success for a trailer to borrow. So the night before, Kowalker did what Marines are trained to do when facing adversity. He turned to the fourth of the Corps' 14 leadership traits: initiative. Without transportation, Kowalker concluded he would have to walk his two horses from their stables in rural Middlefield about 16 miles to the funeral home in Wethersfield near Hartford.

Skipping the service was out of the question. Kowalker had given his word to a fellow Marine.

"If the situation had been reversed, he would have done the same thing for me," Kowalker said.

At about 10 p.m., Kowalker saddled up his two Morgans and put on his dress uniform. Climbing aboard one of the animals, he grabbed the reins of the other and set out. He walked the horses along darkened rural and suburban roads all night—in itself a remarkable feat of horsemanship. His only stop was at a local bar where he had a drink.

"They invited the horses in too," Kowalker said.

Along the way, one of the boots fell from the stirrup of the riderless horse. More than a week later, a couple, inspired after reading about Kowalker, drove the route of his ride, came upon the boot and contacted him to return it.

By about 7 a.m., Kowalker had made it to Rocky Hill, a few miles from his destination. As he and his horses walked past the New York Pickle Deli, owner Kenneth Yavis sensed something was wrong. There was Kowalker in his dress uniform riding one horse and leading another on a commercial stretch of road early in the morning.

Connecticut Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Sean Connolly greets Kowalker at a ceremony during which a renovated horse trailer, complete with Marine Corps decorations, was presented to the veteran Marine to allow him to continue to support the funeral services of his fellow veterans.

Yavis, who knew Kowalker and of his practice of honoring veterans with his riderless horse, caught up with him and asked what was going on.

“I was dumbfounded,” Yavis said when Kowalker explained he had ridden all night to attend a funeral that morning. “I couldn’t let him walk the rest of the way.”

Yavis convinced Kowalker to go to his nearby home. While Kowalker rested at Yavis’ house, Yavis cleaned out his own horse trailer and drove Kowalker and his horses the last few miles to the funeral.

Kowalker arrived on time and took part in the service.

“His comment was, he made a promise that he fully intended to keep,” Klett, the funeral home president, said.

Kowalker may have made it to the service, but he still had a problem: How could he keep up his busy schedule of funerals (he did 115 last year) without a horse trailer? On 100 percent disability, he could not afford a new or even a used trailer. Kowalker figured his funeral



COURTESY OF THE HOFFMAN AUTO GROUP

attendance days were over.

But people immediately began going to Kowalker’s rescue. At the funeral that day, mourners who heard of his all-night ride began organizing an effort to get him a new trailer. Yavis found a used trailer while Kowalker’s veterinarian started a crowd-sourcing Web page to raise money to buy it. The media heard about his walk,

and newspaper and TV stories appeared.

Enter the Hoffman Auto Group, based in the Hartford area, which matched the \$4,000 raised through the crowd-sourcing page, enough money to get Kowalker a used trailer.

“It is my honor to be part of this initiative to assist a man who gives so much of himself to his fellow veterans,” according



COURTESY OF THE HOFFMAN AUTO GROUP

After the Hoffman Auto Group matched the money raised by the community to obtain a trailer for Kowalker’s horses, another local business, Turnpike Motors Autobody, renovated the trailer and decorated it with Marine Corps and other patriotic symbols.

Below left: Kowalker arrived in Vietnam on the last day of the Tet offensive and served with 1st Bn, 7th Marines. He later served as a drill instructor at MCRD San Diego, Calif., prior to leaving active duty in the mid-1970s.

Below right: Kowalker, standing, right, and fellow Marines engaged in often brutal fighting in the Da Nang area during his 13-month tour in Vietnam.



COURTESY OF RICHARD KOWALKER



COURTESY OF RICHARD KOWALKER

to I. Bradley Hoffman, the co-chairman of the Hoffman Auto Group.

Turnpike Motors Autobody in Newington agreed to fix up the rig. On July 9, the business presented Kowalker with a renovated horse trailer emblazoned with Marine Corps and other patriotic symbols. Attending the ceremony were friends, supporters, Connecticut Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Sean Connolly, local elected officials and the media.

“It is an honor for us to do this trailer for you and your horses,” Marty Smith of Turnpike Motors Autobody said at the event. “We’re just proud to be involved in this amazing project,” he added.

All the attention was a little overwhelming for the grateful Kowalker, who was there in his dress uniform and with his horses.

“It’s awesome,” he said of the new trailer. “I wouldn’t change a thing about it. These guys [his horses] will love it too.”

A Newington, Conn., native, Kowalker joined the Marine Corps when he was 17 years old. After two years, the Corps sent him to Vietnam, and he arrived on the last day of the 1968 Tet offensive.

Once in country, Kowalker was assigned to “Alpha Company,” 1st Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment, 1stMarDiv—the same battalion in which Marine Corps legends Lieutenant General Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller and Medal of Honor winner Gunnery Sergeant John Basilone served.

The war and American involvement were at their height. Based in the Da Nang area, Kowalker saw much combat during his 385-day deployment. Operating off Hill 55 and other bases, Kowalker’s unit

took part in five major operations lasting three to five weeks each. In often brutal fighting, Kowalker and his fellow Marines battled to clear tunnel-infested, booby trap-ridden Viet Cong strongholds Sherwood Forest, Dodge City and Happy Valley.

“There never were any happy incidents in Happy Valley,” Kowalker said. “It was their [the Viet Cong’s] backyard. They knew exactly what they were doing.”

After his Vietnam tour ended, Kowalker left the Marine Corps for a series of low-paying jobs and then re-enlisted. From 1972 to 1974, he was a drill instructor at Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego, Calif. He left active duty in the mid-1970s, returned to Connecticut and took a job as a security officer at a state juvenile detention center.

But as the 1970s wore on, his combat experiences in Vietnam weighed ever

more heavily. Post-traumatic stress began to overwhelm him. He increasingly feared that he would hurt someone. Around 1980, Kowalker quit his job and went to live in the woods of Vermont and New Hampshire.

“I decided to grab my best friend and get out of Dodge,” he said.

For the next 2½ years, Kowalker lived in the forest with his dog, emerging only occasionally to work odd jobs to buy food and supplies. A newspaper photograph of him taken at the time shows a lean man with a long beard weighed down by a backpack and walking with a dog carrying its own pack.

When the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was to be dedicated in November 1982, Kowalker left the forest and walked and hitchhiked to Washington, D.C. He had \$18 in his pocket, and it took him five days to get there.

One of the many adornments on the new horse trailer that Kowalker uses to transport his two horses throughout the state of Connecticut.



COURTESY OF THE HOFFMAN AUTO GROUP



COURTESY OF THE HOFFMAN AUTO GROUP

Melody, one of the two Morgan horses owned by Kowalker, awaits her next assignment in the comfort of the new trailer.

Once in Washington, Kowalker met other Vietnam veterans who like himself had hitchhiked to the dedication. They soon found themselves besieged by reporters, and Kowalker was quoted in the *Baltimore News American* newspaper.

“Being here brings back a lot of memories, a lot of pain,” he told a reporter. “It’s hard to handle. I know a lot of people on that wall.”

About four months later, Kowalker entered a Veterans Administration six-month program for post-traumatic stress and eventually was declared 100 percent disabled.

Kowalker’s idea to honor fellow veterans upon their deaths with a riderless horse came to him in 2004 when he attended the funeral of a veteran whose remains had just been discovered in Vietnam and returned home for burial. Kowalker did not know the serviceman. As he stood in the receiving line, he realized that he could say nothing to console the family.

“I really didn’t know what to say,” Kowalker said. “It dawned on me, how could I say anything that could make a difference?”

Later, he thought about President John F. Kennedy’s funeral and the riderless horse that followed his casket.

“That’s where the seed was planted,” Kowalker said.

The timing was perfect. Not long before, Kowalker had been looking for something to do and convinced a woman to let him adopt a horse from her and give him riding lessons at a discount.

“I was sleeping late, doing nothing,” he said.

As he stood in the receiving line, he realized that he could say nothing to console the family.

“I really didn’t know what to say,” Kowalker said.

An animal lover who has had therapy dogs for decades, Kowalker quickly bonded with the horse and spent as much as 100 hours a month in the saddle.

His next challenge was to get back in shape and clean up. Kowalker lost 40 pounds, shaved off his beard and got a haircut.

“If I’m going to wear my uniform, I have to adhere to the grooming standards, no ands, ifs or buts,” he said.

It was at a Marine Corps League meeting in early 2006 that Kowalker decided

to try out his idea. A Marine veteran of the Korean War, Edward A. Clapp Sr. of Cromwell, Conn., had died.

Kowalker was not invited to the service, but decided to go and take his riderless horse anyway. He admits he was nervous. Some people warned him that there might be laughter if he showed up with a horse at a funeral.

But there was no laughing at the Jan. 7, 2006, service and burial. He knew he’d done the right thing when the Marine who had handed Clapp’s family the American flag came up to him afterward and gave him a high five.

“Sometimes actions speak louder than words,” Kowalker said. “I’ve been doing funerals ever since.”

Kowalker had found his calling: helping families of veterans heal from their loss.

With his new horse trailer, he has no plans to stop doing that any time soon.

Author’s bio: Christopher Hoffman is a former state capitol reporter for the New Haven Register. He now is a correspondent for the Hartford Courant. His work has appeared in Connecticut Magazine, Yale Medicine magazine and the InsideSources website.



In Memoriam

Compiled by Savannah Norton and Nancy S. Lichtman

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

Super Stallion's Hard Landing Results in Marine Fatality

One Marine died and 11 other Marines were injured when a CH-53E Super Stallion belonging to Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 464, Marine Aircraft Group 29, Second Marine Aircraft Wing experienced a hard landing at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., on Sept. 2, 2015.

The Marines were conducting Helicopter Rope Suspension Techniques (HRST) training in a landing zone at Stone Bay, a satellite training area aboard Camp Lejeune.

The Marine who died was **Staff Sergeant Jonathan E. Lewis**, 31, of Fauquier, Va. SSgt Lewis was assigned to Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team, Company B, Marine Corps Security Forces Regiment in Yorktown, Va. He served in the communications field as a radio chief.

"We are deeply saddened at the loss of one of our students and fellow Marines," said Colonel Jeffrey Kenney, officer in charge of the Expeditionary Operations Training Group. "Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends as we all mourn this tragic loss of life."

SSgt Lewis' awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, three Marine Corps Good Conduct Medals, the National Defense Service Medal and the Iraq Campaign Medal.

Compiled from media releases

1 Marine Died, 18 Others Injured In 7-Ton Rollover Accident

Corporal Bryan M. Lauw, 21, of Denham Springs, La., died as a result of a vehicle rollover at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Sept. 10. Eighteen other Marines were injured in the incident.

"After this tragic training accident, our first concern is for the welfare of our deceased Marine, the injured and their families. They are held close in our hearts and prayers," said Major General Daniel J. O'Donohue, the commanding general of First Marine Division.

"Our commanders, chaplains, medical

personnel and families and surrounding communities have come together in support. We deeply appreciate all the support and sympathy that we have received for this tragic loss," he added.

Cpl Lauw was an antitank missileman with the 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 1stMarDiv.

The vehicle involved was a Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement, commonly known as a 7-ton truck. Its primary use is transporting Marines and supplies.

Compiled from media releases

Charles P. Atherton, 90, of Brockton, Mass. He was a Marine during WW II. He was employed at Barbour Welting Company for 42 years.

SSgt Jesse L. Baker, 85, of Lindale, Texas. He was a Marine who served in Korea. He worked for 35 years at Carrier Corporation in Tyler and loved to garden.

Claude H. Bohn, 90, of Green Bay, Wis. He left high school to enlist in the Marine Corps at 17 years old in 1942. He served during WW II in the South Pacific on Guadalcanal and Okinawa and was discharged in 1946.

Wallace C. "Wally" Carey, 90, of Piqua, Ohio. He was a WW II Marine veteran. He worked 30 years as a postal clerk and mail sorter. He was a member of the VFW Post #4874.

Clifford L. "Cliff" Dotson, 91, of Birmingham, Ala. He was a Marine during WW II from 1942 to 1946. His final duty was in the South Pacific with Marine Bombing Squadron 613. After the war he went to Auburn University. He spent his professional career as a metallurgist with steel companies, in metallurgical research, and as the owner of a metallurgical laboratory, testing and consulting in metallurgical failure analysis.

TSgt Sidney W. Farnsworth Jr., 91, of Memphis, Tenn. He attended Yale University before enlisting in the Marine Corps during WW II. He served from 1942 to 1946. He was a tail gunner in Douglas SBD dive bombers in MAG-32.

He also was a radar and radio technician and instructor.

He was an officer of the First National Bank of Memphis until 1959 when he became vice president of William A. Webster Company. Later he became a management consultant with Integrated Control Systems.

Mike G. Giordano, 93, of Tinley Park, Ill. He was a Marine veteran who saw action during WW II.

SSgt Harry J. Harding, 94, of Felton, Del. He entered the Marine Corps in 1941 and served with MAG-24. He participated in the Guadalcanal and Bougainville campaigns. His duty stations included MCRD Parris Island, S.C., Quantico, Va., and NAS Jacksonville, Fla.

He later worked for U.S. Customs as an inspector. He was a member of the Marine Corps League and the Disabled American Veterans.

Joseph P. Haverman, 88, of Smithton, Ill. A WW II Marine veteran, he was wounded in action on Okinawa. He retired from Estech Chemical Company after 42 years of service.

GySgt Robert E. Hendrix, 84, of Bossier City, La. He served in the Marine Corps.

Arthur J. Kreitzman, 86, of Seaford, N.Y. He served as a Marine. He also was a Nassau County police detective for more than 30 years.

Carmine J. Mantellino, 88, of East Meadow, N.Y. He was a Marine who served during WW II.

William H. "Bill" Mergner Sr., 95, of West Caldwell, N.J. He was a Marine who fought in WW II and saw action in the Navy during the Korean War. For more than 40 years he was employed by New Jersey Bell Telephone Company.

Robert Minnick, 90, of Alliance, Neb. After graduating from Alliance High School in 1943, he enlisted in the Marine Corps, serving in 3d Tank Bn during WW II. He was stationed in Pearl Harbor and Guam and then was deployed to Iwo Jima in 1945. When he returned home, he was employed by Northwestern Bell

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Telephone Company. He was a member of The American Legion, the VFW and the 3dMarDiv Association.

Bill Porter, 90, of Irving, Texas. He served in the Marine Corps from 1941 to 1946, seeing action on Pavuvu, Peleliu and Okinawa. He worked for Varel Manufacturing Company for 46 years and retired as vice president of sales.

Audrey (Jervis) Pricher, 95, of Medford, Ore. He was a Marine during WW II.

William A. Shipe, 92, of Fort Lauderdale, Fla. He was a Marine during WW II.

Richard A. Stoll, 95, of Cincinnati, Ohio. He was a WW II Marine who was wounded in the fighting on Iwo Jima.

Marvin S. Stump, 91, of Elkhart, Ind. He served with the Marine Corps in the Pacific during WW II.

Dominic G. Tanzi, 92, of Minden, Nev. At 16 years old, he entered the Marine Corps during WW II. He saw action on Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Saipan and Tinian. He served with the 2dMarDiv. After WW II, he returned home where he worked in his mother's delicatessen. He later worked in the hotel and casino industry.

Cpl Edwin R. Thiringer, 88, of Portland, Ore. From 1944 to 1947, he was a mechanic stationed on Okinawa. After the war he became a high school metal shop teacher for 38 years.

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William A. Walters, 25, of Farmingville, N.Y. He served in the Marine Corps.

Robert Warren, 90, of Myrtle Beach, S.C. He was a Marine who fought on Okinawa during WW II. He worked for the Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company for 37 years until his retirement.

Ronald J. Welch, 88, of Moline, Ill. He was a WW II Marine veteran, who

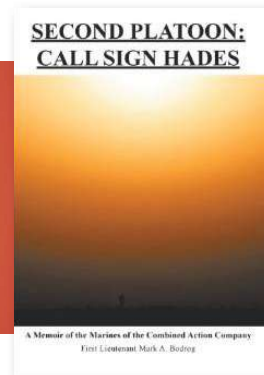
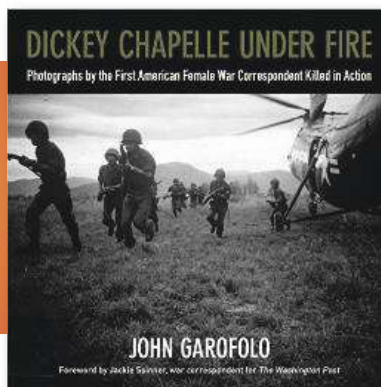
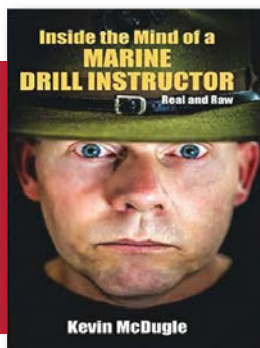
served for 18 months in the Pacific. He retired as a trooper from the Illinois State Police in 1979.

Robert L. Youngs, 91, of Delmar, N.Y. He was a Marine who served during WW II, including in the first wave on Iwo Jima and the Battles of Saipan and Tinian. His awards include the Purple Heart.



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.



INSIDE THE MIND OF A MARINE DRILL INSTRUCTOR: Real and Raw. By Kevin McDugle. Published by Total Publishing and Media. 316 pages. Softcover. Stock #1937829936. \$18 MCA Members. \$19.99 Regular Price.

Like any armchair shrink, I am fascinated by people who pretend to be psychotic. If that seems like a strange way to begin a review about the memoirs of a Marine drill instructor, consider the rise of R. Lee Ermey.

This book has one of the most frightening and confrontational covers I have ever seen in my life. Graduates of Parris Island might find the cover hysterical, but I wouldn't want this guy getting in my face first thing in the morning before I've had coffee and a cigarette.

Sergeant Kevin McDugle was an active-duty Marine from 1988 until 1996. Among his many assignments he was a drill instructor at Parris Island. The book concentrates on the DI phase of his career.

Some might complain that the ritual of turning civilians into Marines has been documented *ad nauseam*. What is so unique about Sgt McDugle's book is that, to my knowledge, there has never been a book lifting the veil about Parris Island recruit training by a drill instructor.

From square one, McDugle had problems with being abusive to third phase recruits on Parris Island and was disciplined based on what he claimed were unfair charges. Later, McDugle would earn the handle "Sgt Death" from his recruits. Apparently, he is extremely proud of that.

True tedium and horrendous ugliness are handled at times with surreal beauty. For example, take this passage written by one of McDugle's recruits at the end of a particularly exhausting, pressure-filled day, "Until the day I die, I think the soothing song of my drill instructor rising into the dust or into the first stars of evening, transcending the pain and chaos of the moment, will be counted as one of the most beautiful things I've ever heard in my life." Heavy business, huh?

McDugle is quite humble about his talents. For instance, he writes: "We're not a cultural bunch for sure, but don't disparage us for narrow aesthetics; we're the ones who fight for your rights to wider freedoms of expression!"

To drive the point home, on the topic of standards for the neatness that a recruit should attempt for his rack, McDugle writes: "Even 'perfect' can be corrected."

Readers with a love for snappy, raw prose will be entertained. McDugle is not an ice-cold ideologue. Anyone who has an appreciation for twisted American dark humor will find the price of admission well-spent. With chapter titles like "How to Make a Recruit Pee," well, I rest my case.

Like astronauts and brain surgeons, philosophers are in short supply.

Put this one on your shelf with Thomas E. Ricks' "Making the Corps" and James Webb's "I Heard My Country Calling" as essential reading.

"Inside the Mind of a Marine Drill

Instructor" should be required reading for any older teenager who plans to join the Marine Corps. Not only is it a sharp narrative, it is downright fun to read. It speaks volumes about the responsibilities of being a United States Marine.

Be forewarned—McDugle does not mince words, and as you probably expect, he can be extremely salty on occasion, so this might not be the right flavor of Alpo for the Devil Pups.

Joseph D'Alessandris

Author's bio: Joseph D'Alessandris is a freelance journalist who lives in Pittsburgh, Pa. He has a bachelor's degree in communications from Pennsylvania State University, where he studied advertising as well as film and theory and criticism.

DICKEY CHAPELLE UNDER FIRE: Photographs by the First American Female War Correspondent Killed in Action. By John Garofolo. Published by Wisconsin Historical Society Press. 136 pages. Stock #0870207180. \$22.50 MCA Members. \$25 Regular Price.

If you read the article "What's a Woman Doing Here? ... Indeed!" in this issue of *Leatherneck*, you will understand my time with Dickey Chapelle could be likened to two ships passing in the night. I first met Dickey in 1955 but wouldn't see her again until 10 years later, the night before she was killed near Chu Lai in Vietnam. To completely understand what made this marvelous woman tick, I encourage you to read John Garofolo's masterpiece of words

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and photos, “Dickey Chapelle Under Fire.”

Dickey was not a complex person. She understood early on that everyone had a story to tell, and she made telling it her life’s work. The fact that her life was cut short by a booby-trapped artillery shell 50 years ago is our great loss.

“Good correspondents are created out of the simple compulsion to go see for themselves what is happening,” Dickey wrote in her autobiography. “Other people have other missions—they can fight or halt or persuade or negotiate or barter or build or write symphonies. You may be free to do all those things or none, but what matters is that you keep your eyes open. If you call yourself a correspondent, your reason for being is first to see. And then, of course, to tell.”

And tell she did, traveling the world from various Pacific Islands, including Iwo Jima, during World War II to Europe reporting on relief efforts following the war. She would make other stops, reporting from Jordan, Iran, Iraq and India. In Hungary she was captured, along with several freedom fighters, by a Russian patrol and was imprisoned for two months. In 1958, she spent time in Cuba with the Castros, then traveled to Lebanon where Marines were in occupation status. Before her first Vietnam assignment, she recorded

fighting in Santo Domingo in 1965.

Her first foray into Vietnam was in 1961 photographing U.S. advisors. She returned in 1962 covering helicopter actions for *National Geographic*. For this assignment she won the National Press Photographers Association’s 1963 Photograph of the Year. She returned in 1964 to cover the Vietnamese navy’s junk force. Her 1965 trip would be her fourth and final.

On Nov. 4, 1965, she was killed during Operation Black Ferret near Chu Lai. A day following her death, General Wallace M. Greene Jr., 23rd Commandant of the Marine Corps, issued the following statement: “All U.S. Marines the world over mourn the death of Dickey Chapelle who died of wounds received while covering combat operations by Marines in South Vietnam on November 4, 1965. She was not only a skilled, dedicated newspaper-woman, but she was an exemplary patriot whose great love for her country was an inspiration to all who knew her and worked with her. It has been said by her media colleagues that she died with the men she loved. It must also be said that affection, admiration and respect was mutual. She was one of us, and we will miss her.”

John Garofolo’s work is not only a fine read, it is a must for any who have experienced combat, especially those of

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us who continue to tell the Marine Corps story.

Capt Jack T. Paxton, USMC (Ret)

Author's bio: Jack Paxton is executive director of the United States Marine Corps Combat Correspondents Association (USMCCCA). He reported from Korea in 1951-52 as a correspondent with the 5th Marines and 1st Tank Battalion, and later with the III Marine Amphibious Force in Vietnam in 1965-66. He resides with his wife, Pat, in Wildwood, Fla.

SECOND PLATOON: Call Sign Hades. By 1stLt Mark A. Bodrog. Published by iUniverse. 363 pages. Available through iUniverse by calling 1-800-AUTHORS (288-4677), or at www.iuniverse.com for \$34.95 (hardcover), \$24.95 (softcover) and \$3.99 (e-book).

"Second Platoon: Call Sign Hades," written by Mark A. Bodrog, recalls his platoon's 2010 deployment to Afghanistan. During this period, Bodrog commanded 2d Platoon, "Lima" Company of the 3d Battalion, Third Marine Regiment in the Nawa District in Helmand province. During this deployment, two platoons from the company were tasked to become the first Combined Action Company (CAC) Marines fielded since the Vietnam War. As a part of the sustained counterinsur-

gency (COIN) policy, this effort was designed to match a fully trained professional Marine with his Afghan army counterpart in combat field operations. The mission for Lima Co's 2d Plt was challenging, needed and ultimately rewarding.

After they arrived in Afghanistan in May 2010, members of the company became immersed in numerous cultural and religious differences. Marines were at first incensed by the unprofessional attitudes and behavior exhibited by both the Afghan police and their Afghan National Army (ANA) counterparts. Laziness and corruption ruled the day. The Afghans' use of drugs and complex Muslim religious demands coupled to create huge challenges for the Lima Co Marines. Also, the men held a long-established distrust of the Afghan soldiers. Stories circulated that these soldiers might suddenly turn on their American and coalition partners.

On top of that, the new COIN rules of engagement often frustrated the Marines' mission objectives. They quickly found, for instance, that they needed permission from a higher authority to receive fire support. Marines could not engage unless they observed the enemy fighters firing or brandishing weapons. This was quickly exploited by the observant and adaptive Taliban combatants.

Marines and corpsmen seethed with anger when they had to provide medical care for Afghan infants whose tiny feet had been burned with boiling water. Bodrog writes: "In the Afghan culture, if children cry too much and do not stop, parents will throw boiling water or chai tea on their bodies or feet as punishment." The book includes photo documentation of this disturbing form of Afghan child abuse. The Lima Co's corpsmen did their best to care for the mistreated and abused infants. This, and other cultural barriers, would complicate the Combined Action Platoon (CAP) unit cohesion.

By June of 2010, Lima's 1st and 2d platoons were selected to participate in the war's first attempt to merge Marines and Afghan soldiers into CAPs. These combined infantry platoons were supported by an integrated weapons section. The advantages of such a combat force seemed obvious. The Afghan soldiers would gain from partnering with professionally trained Marines, and many of the cultural barriers faced by the Marines soon were embraced. Now, for instance, when entering a village, Marines could secure the area, while Afghan soldiers interrogated villagers and searched the village for improvised explosive devices and weapons. Afghan soldiers were not restricted by the COIN rules of engagement.

The key to training this new combat

element was the Afghan interpreters. To this end, Bodrog writes: "... have two linguists present ... and make sure to ask the linguist if they understand what you are asking them to interpret." Many of these linguists/translators undertook their jobs in order to find a path to immigrate to America. Bodrog notes that both the Afghans and his Marines needed to acquire some key English, Dari and Pashtu language skills.

As in all training, this was carried out under the direction of the Marine officers and their highly professional non-commissioned officers. Bodrog counted heavily on his NCOs for this nontraditional training role. Throughout the book, Bodrog refers to the members of 2d Plt as "my Marines and Navy corpsmen." This book is a tribute to them all. This otherwise excellent account might have benefited from the inclusion of maps of the company's area of operations in Helmand province, and also, a listing of military abbreviations used through the book's informative combat narrative.

In time, Marines and the CAP Afghan soldiers began to work together effectively. They participated in Operation Mako and then in Operation Sledgehammer II, with mixed success. Bodrog writes: "In my mind, the operation was a successful failure. My CAP had successfully cleared every compound in the operational box; however, we had failed to find the intelligence we had been assured was there." Overall, the combined operations partnering Marines with their Afghan army counterparts into a CAP received glowing compliments from an embedded reporter. She was amazed to see how rapidly the CAP partnership between the Marines and their Afghan counterparts had advanced to become an effective fighting force.

The old Vietnam version of fielding a Combined Action Company, again, proved to be a viable way to help make the Afghan army an effective fighting force. The country's future may well depend on the further deployment and successful implantation of the old Combined Action Platoon approach applied to a modern non-linear form of warfighting.

Robert B. Loring

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



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SOUND OFF

[continued from page 8]

As the official car disappeared down the lane, the sergeant major and the gunny arrived back from their run and asked the lance corporal whose official car that was, and why was he standing on the porch. His explanation was met with stinging and sarcastic skepticism by the sergeant major. Later inquiries to our Major General Robert E. Friedrich, USMCR confirmed that Gen Cushman was indeed at the Union League for an important meeting and indeed had decided to run down Broad Street to the Yard, with only his driver and an aide for a quick tour. I learned of all this later that day. I would have paid money to see the sergeant major's face when he learned the truth.

LtCol Steve Britt, USMCR (Ret)
Plymouth Meeting, Pa.

How Many of You Remember This Little Acronym?

I enlisted in New York City in June 1961. On July 31, I left for basic training at Parris Island, S.C., where I was a member of Platoon 246.

Rifle instruction was held in a brick building just off Boulevard de France. I

remember vividly some printing on the blackboard behind our instructor. It said in big letters: "IAMUWEECAT." The two EEs stood for extraction and ejection. I think the T meant termination of the rearward movement. Can anyone tell me what each letter meant?

Former PFC Edward M. Henn
Davis, Calif.

• *If you went to the recruit depots circa the Korean War and mid-1950s, you more than likely could recite: I-A-M-U-W-E-E-C-A-T. The acronym helped explain the functioning of the M1 rifle's rearward movement of which there were 10 steps: Ignition, Action of the gas, Movement of the operating rod to the rear, Unlocking of the bolt, Withdrawal of the firing pin, Extraction of the empty cartridge, Ejection of the empty cartridge, Cocking of the hammer, Action of the follower, Termination of the rearward movement.— Sound Off Ed.*

Sgt Wadley Is a Well-Decorated Marine Who Writes Good Letters

I found the letter from Harold Wadley in "Sound Off" ["Voices From Belleau Wood and General Cates"] of the September issue very interesting. I first became familiar with Sergeant Wadley when I

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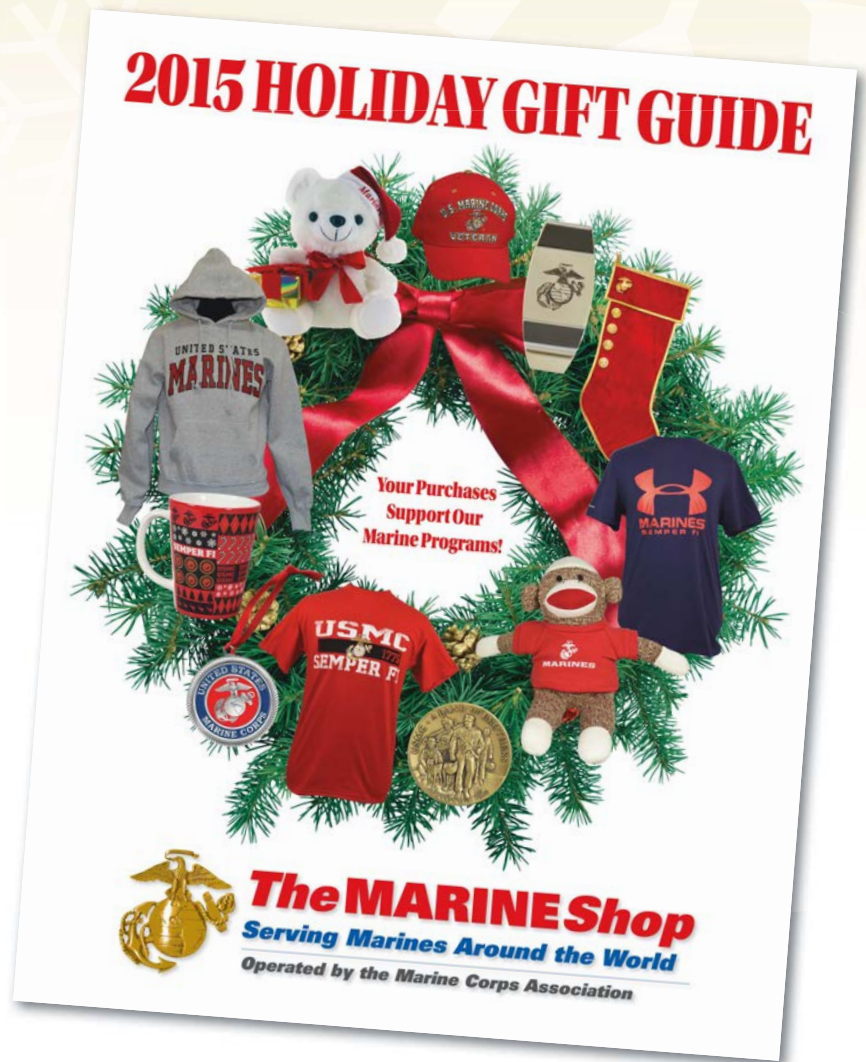
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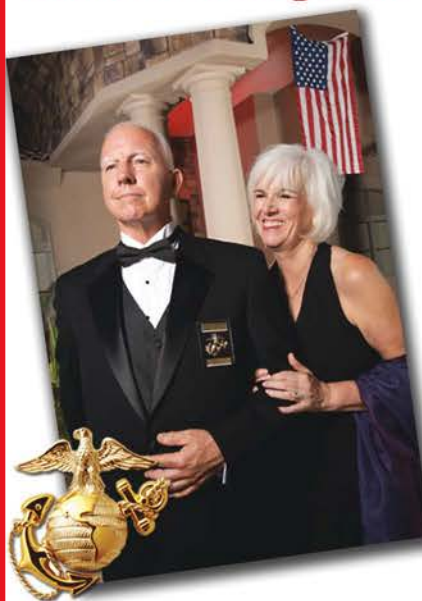
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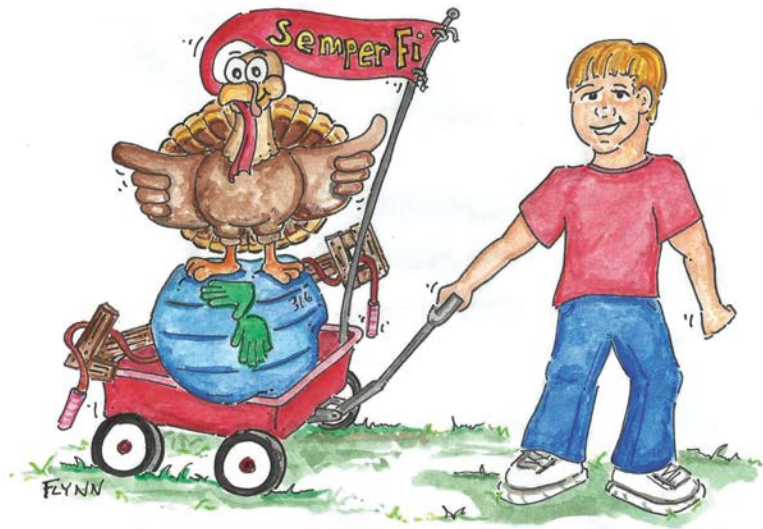
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"OK, turkey, stand up tall like an eagle so I can save you this year."

was gathering information for one of my books about Marines in Vietnam. His letter to General Clifton B. Cates, 19th Commandant of the Marine Corps, was not the only time he wrote to a Commandant. After fighting, being wounded and decorated while serving with Fifth Marine Regiment in Korea, he was discharged, went to forestry college, got a good job in Idaho and began raising a family.

When the war in Vietnam started, he couldn't bear to watch the news and see young, inexperienced Marines dying again. Wadley believed that his combat experience in Korea would be beneficial to the Marine Corps in Vietnam.

He wrote the Commandant asking if the Corps could use an experienced 33-year-old sergeant. Gen Wallace M. Green Jr., 23rd CMC, asked him one question: "Are you still in shape?" When Wadley assured him that he was, he received orders to Vietnam and was assigned to "Hotel" Company, 2d Battalion, back with his beloved 5th Marines.

Involved in the heavy fighting Sept. 10, 1967, he earned the Silver Star. During this action he aggressively assaulted the enemy and accounted for several enemy soldiers killed or wounded. Twice wounded by enemy fire, he continued to provide leadership to his platoon until they could be evacuated.

Sgt Harold E. Wadley is a good man, patriot and Marine.

William L. Myers
Maurice, La.

• *Mr. Myers served as a Marine from 1960 to 1964 and is the author of "Honor the Warrior" and "Marines, Medals and Vietnam," both of which have been favorably reviewed in Leatherneck.— Sound Off Ed.*

Reunions

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

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

• **2d Topographic Co**, Nov. 1-5, Pigeon Forge, Tenn. Contact Jim Martin, (781) 572-7924, topotrooper@aol.com.

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

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

• **D/2/11, BLT 1/5, USS Montrose (APA-212), USS Pickaway (APA-222), USS Alamo (LSD-33), USS Princeton (LPH-5), (RVN, 1965-68)**, Jan. 25-29, 2016, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Bill Collier, (559) 790-4496, bill222u@me.com.

• **I/3/7 "Band of Brothers" (RVN, 1969-70)**, Nov. 8-10, San Antonio, Texas. Contact Roger Villarreal, (832) 573-7382, rogerjarhead@gmail.com.

• **I/3/7 (all eras)**, April 27-30, 2016, Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact Dennis Deibert, 6007 Catherine St., Harrisburg, PA 17112, (717) 652-1695.

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

• **1st Provisional Marine Brigade ("The Fire Brigade," Korea, 1950)** is planning a 65th anniversary reunion. Contact Col Warren Wiedhahn, USMC (Ret), Military Historical Tours, 13198 Centerpointe Way, #202, Woodbridge,

VA 22193, (703) 590-1295, jwiedhahn@aol.com, www.miltours.com.

• **TBS Co F, 6-79**, is planning a reunion. Contact LtCol Tom Conners, USMC (Ret), (919) 303-2697, (919) 418-5757, tconners3@yahoo.com.

• **Plt 98, Parris Island, 1948**, is planning a reunion. Contact SSgt Jim Proulx, USMC (Ret), (904) 343-4850, bertojoto1@gmail.com.

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

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

• **Plt 266, Parris Island, 1962**, is planning a reunion. Contact Donald A. Welch, 129 Hawthorne Pl., Ithaca, NY 14850, (607) 256-0554, don814u@hotmail.com.

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

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

• **Plt 2086, San Diego, 1966**, is planning a reunion. Contact Bill Kennedy, (707) 527-8319, wm.kennedy98@yahoo.com.

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

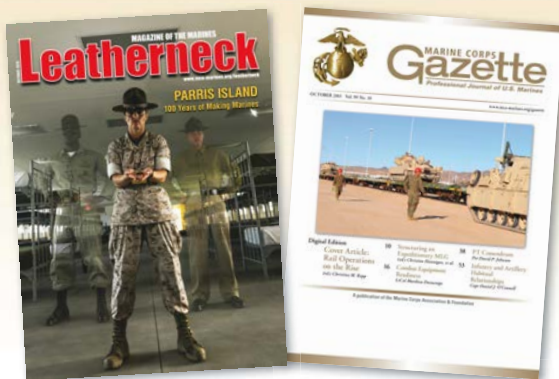
• **HMM-265 (1962 to present)**, Nov. 8-15, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (Marine Corps Birthday Ball cruise, Holland America cruise line). Contact Tim Bastyr, (770) 304-2290, tmb2sdb@numail.org.

• **VMA(AW)-242 (RVN)**, May 1-4, 2016, Gettysburg, Pa. Contact Bill Mellors, 4000 Emmitsburg Rd., Fairfield, PA 17320, 242reunion@gmail.com.

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



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Mail Call

• John Kloczkowski, 3725 Two Sisters Ferry Rd., Estill, SC 29918, (803) 625-2498, to hear from or about **LtCol Arnold BENCH**, CO, 2d Bn, 4th Marines, and **Capt Leonard CONFER** during **Operation Hastings, RVN, July 1966**. (*Editor's note: This is a correction to an item that ran in the October issue.*)

• MSgt Hank Kawa, USMC (Ret), 1201 Rachel St., Sevierville, TN 37876, (772) 971-8848, msgthawk@aol.com, to hear from anyone with information about the late **SSgt Larry Dell PHARR**, who was a ground radio technician.

• Andi Atkinson, Director of Marketing & Public Relations, Marine Military Academy, 320 Iwo Jima Blvd., Harlingen,

TX 78550, (956) 421-9225, atkinson@mma-tx.org, to hear from **members of "The Chosin Few"** who are interested in attending a **Battle of Chosin Reservoir Memorial Ceremony, Dec. 12**.

• Marine veteran William Noyes, 508 Oak St., Apt. 3, Brockton, MA 02301, to hear from or about former **1stLt R.C. DAETWEILER, XO, A/1/2, 1963**.

• Marine veteran Richard A. Newell, (407) 862-0527, ran108@cfl.rr.com, to hear from family members of **Capt Walter Edward LINDBERG**, a pilot who served with **VMA-332** and was **KIA on July 9, 1953**, during the Korean War.

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ing money without confirming authenticity and availability of products offered.

• James Beckles, 1729 Rock Bridge Mews, Apt. B, Chesapeake, VA 23320, (757) 373-7505, bear234622000@yahoo.com, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 2049, San Diego, 1973**.

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• Marine veteran Larry R. Gies, 2074 Kenneth Dr., Bay City, MI 48706, (989) 686-9937, duck6cms@aol.com, has a **Suitcase, B-4B Flyer's Clothing Bag** for sale in excellent condition for \$100 or best offer (will send photos upon request).



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 Donald Whitton, USMC, 1968-1971

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Saved Round

Compiled by *Leatherneck* Staff

Love

The wonderful love of a beautiful maid,
The love of a staunch, true man,
The love of a baby, unafraid,
Have existed since time began.

But the greatest of loves,
The quintessence of loves,
Even greater than that of a mother,
Is the tender, passionate, infinite love
Of one drunken Marine for another.

*The toast offered by General Louis H. Wilson Jr.,
26th Commandant of the Marine Corps,
Marine Corps Birthday Ball, Camp Lejeune, N.C., 1978.*



COURTESY OF DAVID J. STODGELL

The Marines of Marine Light Helicopter Squadron 169 at the Marine Corps Birthday Ball, 2003—left to right: Cpl David J. Stodgell, Cpl Nathan Rohrer, Cpl James King, Cpl Justin Hall, Cpl Andrew Shamblin, Cpl Ryan Wiley and Cpl Andrew Delligatti. “God bless the United States and success to the Marines!”





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