

AUGUST 2014

MAGAZINE OF THE MARINES

# Leatherneck

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## The Medal Of Honor—

Cpl William  
Kyle Carpenter



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**COVER:** Cpl William Kyle Carpenter receives his Medal of Honor flag at a ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., on June 20, 2014. Photo by Cpl Larry Babilya. Copies of the cover may be obtained by sending \$2 (for mailing costs) to *Leatherneck Magazine*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134-0775.

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# Sound Off

Edited by R. R. Keene

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 Anonymous letters will not be published.—Sound Off Ed.

## Letter of the Month

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

With National Navajo Code Talkers Day being celebrated Aug. 14, I am reminded of a special meeting between my fiancée, Helen, and Navajo Code Talker Joe Kellwood.

About 10 years ago, Helen was in a bookstore in Paradise Valley, Ariz., looking for a Marine Corps book for my birthday. A man (later identified as Joe) approached her and asked if she was a Marine. She replied, "No, my fiance is." Joe told her he was a Marine, a Code Talker. "Would you like to hear me sing 'The Marines' Hymn' in Navajo," he asked. Helen said she would, and soon the room was filled with the sound of "The Marines' Hymn" as Joe's voice rang out loud and clear.

When he finished, Helen noted that a crowd had formed, as every customer and employee was enthralled. Joe graciously acknowledged the applause, and he and his wife quietly left the store.

SSgt George Chrisman Jr.  
USMC, 1951-54  
Peoria, Ariz.

*• Every year, on Nov. 10, my pal, MSgt Tom Bartlett, USMC (Ret), the late managing editor of Leatherneck, used to receive a phone call from a Navajo Code Talker. He would serenade Tom with "The Marines' Hymn." Perhaps it was Joe.—Sound Off Ed.*

The June 2014 *Leatherneck* contained my letter, "Platoon Numbers and 'Ike' Jackets," and the editor provided information on the origins of both.

News media on June 4 reported the death of Navajo Code Talker Chester Nez in Albuquerque, N.M. He was the last remaining member of the 29 original Code Talkers who joined the Marine Corps early in 1942 and served this nation with honor, dedication and distinction during World

War II. As a group, the Code Talkers probably made one of the most significant contributions to the success of Marine Corps operations in the Pacific region during the war. A photograph of Nez in a "tan, short jacket," possibly Australian, appears to confirm information provided by the editor on the origin of the battle jackets.

I grew up in New Mexico and have visited some reservations. Life there for Native Americans was never easy, and the Code Talkers certainly experienced hardships before they ever enlisted in the Marine Corps. These men were heroes and should never be forgotten.

Robert C. Stebbins  
Encinitas, Calif.

*• You can read Chester Nez's obituary in this month's "In Memoriam" on page 61.—Sound Off Ed.*

## Designing the World War II Uniform Of Women Marines

A humorous story of Molly Marine comes from one of their own. Marjorie D. completed college, taught school for one year, and in 1943, along with her friends, decided she had to do something for the war effort. Marjorie and her friends visited all the recruiting offices before selecting the USMC-WR [Women's Reserve].

I recently asked her why they chose the Marines. She responded sweetly in her 93-year-old voice, "We liked their hats. They were designed by Louis Chaparelli, you know. He was one of the foremost fashion designers of that day." It was an answer I never expected.

Our League Detachment will present her with a recognition award this month.

John B. Tonkin  
USMC, 1955-58  
Lebanon, Ohio

*• I went to the duty expert, Owen Connor, uniforms and heraldry curator at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Triangle, Va., who said: "The design of the Women Marines uniform was initiated in December 1942. The Commandant,*

*Lieutenant General Thomas Holcomb, requested an employee of the War Department, Mrs. Anne Adams Lentz, to be assigned to the task. Mrs. Lentz had formerly worked in the school uniform section of a prominent New York department store and had also assisted in the design of Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC) uniforms. Working with the Depot Quartermaster in Philadelphia, she was sent to New York City to supervise the creation of the uniforms by the Women's Garment Manufacturers of New York. Mrs. Lentz was commissioned in the Women's Reserve as a captain in January 1943.*

*"Her efforts and work within these various groups is credited for the style and design of all aspects of the original Women's Reserve uniforms (caps, uniforms, etc.).*

*"The talk of fashion designers and Women Marine uniforms can be traced to the next generation of uniforms created in the 1950s by the designer Main Rousseau Bocher, founder of the Mainbocher fashion label. He was influential in the new uniforms that debuted in the 1952 regulations. These were notable primarily for being the first time Women Marines received their own dress blue uniform design. Something they did not have in WW II."*

*According to Marine Corps Reserve Colonel Mary Stremlow's book, "A History of the Women Marines, 1946-1977," "When women Marines' uniforms were redesigned in the 1950s by Mainbocher [designer Main Rousseau Bocher], the one item he did not change was the cap, which Mainbocher said was the most attractive hat worn by women of any service."—Sound Off Ed.*

## Was There a Mounted Color Guard At MCLB Barstow Before 1961?

The July story "A Four-Legged Legacy: The Marine Corps Mounted Color Guard" by Sara Bock seemed to indicate the first mounted group at Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Calif., was in 1967. Not true.

In 1958 or 1959, a stable was built by Special Services outside the South Gate



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at Yermo. Once established, mounted Marines rode in parades in towns around the Barstow area and entered local rodeos. The group won many ribbons that were displayed in the office area. Sergeant Bernard P. Wylie was the noncommissioned officer in charge.

I was stationed there until 1961.

Darwinn B. Rutz  
Greeley, Colo.

• *I dug around looking to support your claim, but couldn't find anything prior to 1967. Previous articles in Leatherneck, as well as the MCLB Barstow website, state that Lieutenant Colonel Robert A. Lindsley was responsible for founding the Barstow Mounted Color Guard in 1967. It was officially designated by Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps as a mounted color guard in 1968. However, I am willing to bet that there was an unofficial mounted color guard back in your day. Perhaps our readers can provide some insight and not confuse it with the Camp Pendleton Mounted Color Guard.—Sound Off Ed.*

## These Readers Still Against "Force Integration"

Thank you, Major William Maples, for your candor and very accurate remarks regarding double standards and combat readiness [July "Sound Off," "Force Integration"]. Like you and many others, I was allowed to serve five years in the Corps, to include 2d Force Reconnaissance Bn, and another 39 years in the U.S. Army and Reserve. I cannot, in any stretch of my imagination, support the integration of ladies into a combat environment.

I challenge all proponents of social engineering that embraces lowering of physical standards for females in combat billets to adopt every physical standard prior to integration of sexes, and if all pass with absolutely no adjustments, yes, allow with no special privileges whatsoever. With that said, I can still envision complications within a warrior environment and cries of sexual harassment because of falsely perceived mental or physical abuses by male counterparts.

CWO-5 Jack A. Milavic, USA (Ret)  
Edmond, Okla.

Major Maples' letter is a bull's-eye!

Noel Young  
Sheridan, Wyo.

• *Corporal Frank Hall, combat veteran of Bougainville, Guam and Iwo Jima, and who was awarded the Purple Heart, also registered his disapproval and asks, "Why?" Cpl Hall currently resides in Teaneck, N.J.—Sound Off Ed.*

## 62 Years Later, Calls DI by First Name

I am 82 years old and graduated from boot camp at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C. In 1952, the senior drill instructor of Platoon 500, the battalion honor platoon, was Staff Sergeant Bruce W. Catherman. I respected him, and he was a positive influence on my life and helped me succeed during the nine years I was in the Corps and later when I had a different career with the federal government.

Recently, I decided to see if I could locate him and let him know how much I appreciated his efforts. Through the magic of the Internet, I was able to obtain a great deal of information about him.

I learned his full name and that he had retired from the Corps in 1971 after 24 years of service. Eventually, I found his current address and phone number. So, after 62 years, I called him, and we had a long and pleasant conversation and agreed to keep in touch. I was glad to be able to have the opportunity to thank him for his inspiration and influence on my life. I addressed him as sir, and he said to just call him Bruce. I never imagined that



COURTESY OF JACK M. SANDS

**Parris Island Drill Instructor Catherman was only three years older than one of his recruits, but mentored the recruit's development as a Marine and taught him many lessons in life.**

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someday I'd be calling my DI by his first name.

I knew he had been wounded in Korea because I remembered seeing the scars from shrapnel on his arm at Parris Island. I learned that he also suffered a gunshot wound in Korea, which resulted in him being transferred back to the States. He was awarded a third Purple Heart after being wounded by artillery fire in Vietnam. I am pleased to report that Master Gunnery Sergeant Catherman still is going strong at age 85.

SSgt Jack M. Sands  
USMC, 1952-62  
Waldorf, Md.

### They Talked to "Top" Collins About the Old Corps

I just received the July issue of *Leatherneck* and, as usual, devoured it. Noting the article on air-ground support "Gunfight at Ocotol: The Birth of Integrated Air-Ground Combat" by Major Allan C. Bevilacqua, USMC (Ret), I couldn't help but recall my first of two tours at Marine Barracks Philadelphia from 1959 to 1960.

In those days, for enlisted promotions up to sergeant, we had to pass both TT (Technical) and GMSP (General Military Subject Proficiency) tests. After testing, we would spend time in the barracks

small "club" where Master Sergeant A. B. Collins held court on a regular basis.

The "top" was a terror with more than 40 years of service awaiting his long fought-off retirement. He was very specific about our history. Every GMSP test we took in that era had the question: "When was the first air-to-ground combat support mission in the Corps?" He was always asked about that (because he was there ... and virtually everywhere), and his answer was always the same: "I don't remember the date, but it was a Tuesday afternoon about 1430."

He and a younger gunnery sergeant named Doganess kept the barracks in good military order and are still missed by this 30-year retired Marine. Thanks for bringing those good days back to me for a moment or two.

MGySgt Paul L. Everest, USMC (Ret)  
Laurel, Md.

### Marine Nurses?

I have an acquaintance who told me she was in the Marine Corps and was a Marine nurse, not a Navy nurse, in 1963 at McAllister, Okla. Is or was there a Marine Corps nurse unit? Sure would like to know.

Jerry Neve  
Sandy, Ore.

*• You and I both know Marines get their medical people from the U.S. Navy. I'm not saying it probably never existed, but it probably never existed.—Sound Off Ed.*

### Parris Island "Chrome Domes" Were Iconic, but Not Cool

When did our Corps stop using "chrome domes"? I attended Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., in 1968, and everyone was issued a silver-painted helmet liner that our drill instructors called "chrome domes." When did recruits stop having them issued and why?

Sgt Roman Milanowicz  
USMC, 1968-74  
Litz, Pa.

*• According to a Parris Island Museum historian, the silver-painted helmet liners were discontinued in 1985. I thought they were a good idea, as they kept the sun off recruit brain housing groups. According to Steve Price, who did the research, the helmets were first issued back in 1956. The Marines stopped issuing them when it was determined the chrome domes did not allow sweat to evaporate and didn't have the intended "cooling" effect. Thanks to two of my old retired leatherneck buddies—Chief Warrant Officer 4 Randy Gaddo and Master Gunnery Sergeant*





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*George Hajar—for following up on this.—  
Sound Off Ed.*

### "Parade Fists" Not so Easy to Forget

Regarding "Parade Fists" in the June issue of "Sound Off": My first duty station was ceremonial guard, Marine Barracks Washington, D.C. After two years of ceremonial and joint service drill, it is something you find yourself doing at your next duty station without intending to. You may be seeing former "8th and I" Marines who still have yet to get used to drilling "the wrong way."

Tyke T. Supanchick  
Ontario, Ore.

### Recruits' Little Red Book Had More Knowledge Than Mao Zedong's

I was issued my little red book [July "Sound Off"] in July 1962 at Parris Island, S.C. We carried it in a breast pocket of our utilities. We filled it with notes from various classes.

The book I received had a 1960 copyright and was printed by Acme Printing Company, San Diego. It contained 81 pages. It has no edition printed on it, so I'm not sure if it was a first edition or not.

Harry Tinney  
Perryburg, Ohio

In regard to your letter about the red pocket books of knowledge: I attended recruit training at Parris Island in 1975, and we carried in our back pocket of the sateen utility trousers the famous "Red Monster." Every recruit was required to have the Red Monster held at eye level and be studying general orders, chain of command, etc., whenever in formation and waiting. My biggest regret is not saving that Red Monster. I'm not sure how long it was used, but it still was part of recruit training in 1975.

Cpl Joseph Green, USMC (Ret)  
Beloit, Wis.

I went through MCRD in 1956, and I was never issued a red book with our "bucket issue." We were given a spiral notebook to keep notes. Our Guidebook was it.

Cpl Ron Baker  
Chehalis, Wash.

### Korea Was a War, Not a "Conflict"

I just received the July 2014 edition of *Leatherneck* and immediately went to the article "The In-Between: Touring the Korean DMZ" by Roxanne Baker. It is of main interest, of course, being a veteran of the Korean War and also visiting the

[continued on page 63]

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# Beyond the Medal of Honor A Genuinely Good Marine

## Corporal Kyle Carpenter Receives Nation's Highest Award

By CWO-2 Michael D. Fay, USMC (Ret)

*William Kyle Carpenter enlisted in the Marine Corps in 2009.*

*In 2010, at the time of his deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, he was a lance corporal serving as a squad automatic rifleman with Company F, 2d Battalion, Ninth Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, First Marine Division (Forward), I Marine Expeditionary Force (Fwd).*

*On Nov. 21, 2010, LCpl Carpenter and LCpl Nicholas Eufrazio were providing security for Patrol Base Dakota. The enemy attacked, throwing three grenades into the compound. One of the grenades landed near Carpenter and Eufrazio.*

*Carpenter positioned himself between*



E.J. HERSON

*the grenade and his fellow Marine in an attempt to shield him from the blast.*

*In July 2013, Carpenter was medically retired as a corporal due to his wounds. He currently is a full-time student at the University of South Carolina.*

**M**y good friend and fellow combat artist, former Lance Corporal Robert “Rob” Bates, phoned me at 11:30 a.m. I was late, very late, crawling north on Interstate 95 toward Washington, D.C. Rob nervously asked, “I’m here at the Pentagon Sheraton. Where are you?” It was the morning of Thursday, June 19, and we were supposed to meet around 11 a.m. at the hotel overlooking the Pentagon. Frustrated by one traffic jam after another and cursing myself for not allowing three hours for the otherwise one-hour drive north from my home in Fredericksburg, Va., I replied, “I’m stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic.” Rob could hear the panic in my voice.

The evening before, the Marine Corps protocol officers had told us in no uncer-



CPL MICHAEL C. GUINTO

**Cpl William Kyle Carpenter walks with the President of the United States, Barack H. Obama, and the first lady, Michelle Obama, inside the White House, Washington, D.C., prior to his Medal of Honor ceremony on June 19.**

**On March 8 of this year, Kyle's mother, Robin, sent a message through Facebook asking me to give her a call. Knowing Kyle still was undergoing surgeries, I was a bit concerned.**

tain terms that after a security screening, the buses taking us to the White House from the Pentagon Sheraton would leave exactly at 1 p.m. I was a long way off and still needed to change into my dress blues. Rob said he'd check with the protocol officers and call me back. The answer was as expected from the Marines; the day's schedule was carved in stone, and I needed to be sitting on the bus in uniform by 12:50. I've known the stress of combat, but the level of anxiety I had looking through the windshield at the unending lines of cars and trucks jammed into four lanes and slowly snaking north was unbearable. There was no way I was going to miss this once in a lifetime experience—my friend Corporal William Kyle Carpenter's Medal of Honor ceremony.

On March 8 of this year, Kyle's mother, Robin, sent a message through Facebook asking me to give her a call. Knowing Kyle still was undergoing surgeries, I was a bit concerned. During the summer of 2006, after my final tour in Iraq and while I was still the official combat artist for the Marine Corps, I began sketching wounded Marines in the various military hospitals of the Washington, D.C., area. Although I retired at the end of 2009, I've continued visiting and drawing at those hospitals. While sketching wounded Marines at the Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Richmond, Va., during January 2011, I first met then-LCpl Carpenter. It had been barely two months since he'd been wounded on Nov. 21, 2010. His injuries were extensive.

Since January of 2011 a group of artists, including Rob, have been spending time with and sketching battle-wounded and recovering soldiers and Marines (see also "Marine Artists Capture War's Realities," *Leatherneck*, June 2014). Our artistic endeavor, called The Joe Bonham Project, involves members of the International Society of War Artists and the Society of Illustrators. A few of the wounded warriors we've sat with and spent hours drawing and talking with at the surgical trauma and occupational therapy wards have turned into close friends. Occasionally we hear bad news, very bad news.



The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pleasure in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR to  
**LANCE CORPORAL WILLIAM KYLE CARPENTER**  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
for service as set forth in the following

**CITATION:**

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as an Automatic Rifleman with Company F, 2<sup>d</sup> Battalion, 9<sup>th</sup> Marines, Regimental Combat Team 1, 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division (Forward), I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward), in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, in support of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM on 21 November 2010. Lance Corporal Carpenter was a member of a platoon-sized coalition force, comprised of two reinforced Marine rifle squads partnered with an Afghan National Army squad. The platoon had established Patrol Base Dakota two days earlier in a small village in the Marjah District in order to disrupt enemy activity and provide security for the local Afghan population. Lance Corporal Carpenter and a fellow Marine were manning a rooftop security position on the perimeter of Patrol Base Dakota when the enemy initiated a daylight attack with hand grenades, one of which landed inside their sandbagged position. Without hesitation and with complete disregard for his own safety, Lance Corporal Carpenter moved toward the grenade in an attempt to shield his fellow Marine from the deadly blast. When the grenade detonated, his body absorbed the brunt of the blast, severely wounding him, but saving the life of his fellow Marine. By his undaunted courage, bold fighting spirit, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of almost certain death, Lance Corporal Carpenter reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.



**President Obama places the Medal of Honor on Cpl Carpenter inside the East Wing of the White House, June 19.**

I called Kyle's mom, and trepidation turned into astonishment. Robin had a completely different message for me. She was letting me know that Kyle had placed Rob and me on the list of personal invitees to his Medal of Honor ceremony and supporting events. She told me that the official announcement from the White House would be 30 days prior to the actual ceremony. There were two other Medal of Honor events scheduled, so it probably wouldn't happen until sometime in mid-June. She let us know to expect contact from the White House once Kyle's Medal of Honor became official. I was choked up, to say the least. What an honor! I called Rob immediately to let him know, and swear him, as Robin had with me, to secrecy.

Rumors about Kyle being recognized with the Medal of Honor had been circulating for a while. In March 2011, the same month I'd written and illustrated an article about him for the *New York Times' Opinionator*, his home state of South Carolina's legislature recognized his heroism, and local politicians started floating the rumor. Later that same year, while doing art-related work for the Vietnam Commemorative Commission, I had the chance to speak with Vietnam Medal of Honor recipient Colonel Harvey "Barney" Barnum. Col Barnum, like Kyle, was in the Ninth Marine Regiment. He told me he was providing Kyle with advice and counsel.

Being selected for a Medal of Honor is

an exhaustive process, and the outcome is never guaranteed. On March 5 of this year, the *Marine Corps Times* let the proverbial cat out of the bag, and Robin's request to call her confirmed it. Those of us who have the privilege of knowing Kyle, although not surprised, were relieved this great honor would be a reality.

The traffic on I-95 finally opened up, and I pulled into the Pentagon Sheraton at 12:15. I changed into my blues and

**The two drill instructors said  
there is a recruit in each platoon  
that you remember, and in  
Plt 1040 that was Kyle Carpenter.**

joined the other invitees in the lobby just as the protocol Marines began ushering us through the first of several security screenings conducted by the Secret Service. Rob and I climbed aboard the first of two buses, sat down, breathed a sigh of relief and enjoyed the ride to the White House.

Around us on the buses sat an extended circle of family and friends gathered from across the nation. We would be spending the next two days together. The process of getting to know each other had started the evening before during a formal reception in the Galaxy Ballroom on the 16th floor of the Sheraton.

Among those gathered in the expansive ballroom with dramatic views of the Pentagon and the nation's capital were members of Kyle's family, medical personnel, University of South Carolina fraternity brothers, squadmates from 2d Bn, 1st Marines, his boot camp drill instructors, members of the Wounded Warrior Regiment, a college professor, a disabled Vietnam Marine, several Medal of Honor recipients, Marine Corps general officers and two combat artists. Everyone had wonderful stories and insights into who this genuine hero really is.

The first close relative I spoke with at the reception the evening of June 18 was Kyle's Uncle John Carpenter. I asked him what people might not know about Kyle, and he quickly responded, "He's probably the funniest person I know. ... Nothing gets him down."

Kyle's father, Jim, would confirm this later in the night by telling a couple of anecdotes from the family's visits that day with several South Carolina politicians on Capitol Hill. Two of the prominent representatives initially didn't know who Kyle was and asked him about himself and what had happened to him. He responded to one that he was a Coast Guard cook who had hot soup splashed all over him and to the other that his wounds happened in Afghanistan as the result of a shark attack. Kyle appeared on "Late Show with David Letterman," and when



**Cpl Carpenter and his "inner circle" as they prepare to leave for the White House and the Medal of Honor ceremony. From left: Sgt Jared Lilly, Cpl Scott Condrey, Griffin Welch (fellow Marines from 2/9), Cpl Carpenter, Cpl Dominic Davila (a wounded Marine who recovered at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center with Carpenter), GySgt Paul Ramirez (Marine liaison at Walter Reed) and Mike Tinari (fellow Marine from 2/9) at the Sheraton hotel in Arlington, Va., June 19.**

**The CMC, Gen James F. Amos, and Cpl Carpenter at a June 20 ceremony at Marine Barracks Washington, during which Cpl Carpenter received his Medal of Honor flag. (Photo by Cpl Larry Babilya)**

asked by the host about the 30 broken bones in his arm, he quickly responded, "I'm an overachiever." The audience erupted in laughter and applause.

After talking to Kyle's uncle, I met two of his boot camp drill instructors, Staff Sergeants Luke Billingsley and Anthony Richard. Billingsley was "third hat" and Richard the "heavy" of Platoon 1040, "Bravo" Co, 1st Bn, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C.

Kyle stands 5 foot 5 inches, and I asked his drill instructors if they had made him their "house mouse." "No!" was their immediate answer; they had made him their 2d squad leader. They joked that Kyle spent a lot of time on the quarterdeck, but he had "heart." Billingsley called him his "Mini Me," and at the end of the Crucible, he gave Kyle the eagle, globe and anchor directly off his campaign hat.

The two drill instructors said there is a recruit in each platoon that you remember, and in Plt 1040 that was Kyle Carpenter. What in particular was so memorable? Due to blisters, Kyle did the Crucible, all 56 miles, on his tiptoes.

Perhaps one of the most insightful conversations was with U.S. Army Medal of Honor recipient SSG Ty Carter. SSG Carter, a former Marine combat engineer, spoke with me about what this honor would mean to Kyle. The first thing SSG Carter mentioned was the weight of memory that comes with talking about one's medal. While others see the blue ribbon with field of stars and metal star, the recipient is reliving the events surrounding the recognition. SSG Carter poignantly stated, "Although a 'good burden,' if you've gotten the Medal of Honor, you can be assured others around you were wounded and died." Asked what his advice to Kyle would be, he responded, "Follow your passion, help who you can and always take care of yourself and your family."

SSG Carter also said, "It's relatively easy for me to take off the uniform and return to relative anonymity when I need to step out of the limelight, but for Kyle, with his facial scars, it'll be hard to step away to relax and recharge."

During our three days of events, there were speeches and introductions from President Barack Obama, other Medal of Honor soldiers and Marines, general officers and Pentagon officials. From the Medal of Honor presentation by the Commander in Chief in the East Room of the White House, to the Medal of Honor flag presentation by the Commandant



of the Marine Corps, General James F. Amos, at a special morning parade at Marine Barracks Washington, "8th and I," into Kyle's induction to the Hall of Heroes at the Pentagon by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, certain themes resonated.

Each speaker recognized Kyle's best friend, LCpl Nicholas "Nick" Eufrazio. Nick was unable to attend due to the ongoing treatment for the wounds he sustained in the grenade blast that wounded Kyle and for which he was being awarded the Medal of Honor.



**One of the many portraits former combat artist of the Marine Corps, CWO-2 Michael Fay, USMC (Ret), sketched of Cpl Carpenter during his years of recuperation and recovery.**

The two Marines from Kyle's company who died in Afghanistan, LCpls Timothy Jackson and Dakota Huse, were remembered.

In each ceremony, the speakers, from the President to Kyle himself, had Kyle's medical team stand to be recognized. From the immediate medical attention he received on a dusty Afghan farmhouse roof by Navy Hospital Corpsman Third Class Christopher Frend, to the team at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center led by U.S. Air Force trauma surgeon Col Deborah Malone, nothing short of medical miracles were visited on Kyle during 40-plus surgeries.

The most important people to be singled out, however, were those intimately responsible for the depth of Kyle's character, his parents, Jim and Robin Carpenter.

Over the last three years I've had numerous occasions to talk with Jim and Robin. In July of 2011, Robin and Kyle joined singer-songwriter Marine Lieutenant Colonel Mike Corrado, Rob Bates, disabled combat veterans Cpl Aaron Mankin and Master Sergeant William "Spanky" Gibson Jr., a team of video and recording artists and engineers and me for a week in Greenville, S.C., at recording artist Edwin McCain's studio to create the music video for Corrado's song "Still in the Fight." You can see in the video a time-lapsed sequence of Rob sketching Kyle.

In talks with Robin over the three days of events, I asked her to share about Kyle's life and his decision to become a Marine. The choice to become a Marine is more



CPL MICHAEL C. GUINTO

**Cpl Carpenter rests his head on his mother's shoulder after leaving the White House, where he was presented the Medal of Honor, June 19. Cpl Carpenter's mother, Robin, has been by his side since he returned from Afghanistan, and according to Carpenter, "There's just not really words ... I love her more than life itself."**

than a career move; it's a calling, and it directly impacts a whole family in ways few other life choices can. Robin confirmed this.

Kyle had been talking about his desire since the 11th grade, but bowed to his parents' wish that he attend college. After one semester at Clemson University, his mind was made up. Robin was honest and direct; Kyle's decision in 2008 to enlist in the Marines the following year came as a shock. She admitted to crying for three weeks straight. The surge in Afghan-

istan was building up, and she knew he eventually would find himself in combat.

No one in Kyle's family had been in the military. Initially, she was hard-pressed to understand where the motivation had originated. The combat-camera Marines she had allowed to comb through family photos helped her realize where and when this unique "calling" began. Among the trove of photos, they found a picture of Kyle from the summer before eighth grade. He'd gone on a church trip and returned with a Marine T-shirt.

Kyle was born and raised in Flowood, Miss., but shortly before the 11th grade, his father took a new job and the family moved to Batesburg, S.C. Robin said the transition was particularly tough on Kyle. He went from a small high school where he knew everyone to being a stranger in a large school. Kyle soon transferred to a small private school, W. Wyman King Academy, and found himself again. Active in sports, Kyle excelled in football. It was while playing football at the Christian school that Kyle was to meet the gentleman who would provide the ultimate inspiration to become a Marine—disabled Vietnam Marine, author, coach and motivational speaker Lieutenant Clebe McClary.

I had the honor of sitting next to Clebe at Kyle's Hall of Heroes ceremony at the Pentagon. At the ceremony, Kyle's name was added to the list of seven Medal of Honor awardees of the global war on terrorism.

McClary, a native South Carolinian, was severely wounded on Hill 146 southwest of An Hoa. His 13-man patrol was attacked and overrun by a numerically superior force of North Vietnamese Army regulars. In the ensuing battle Clebe lost his left arm and eye to an NVA suicide satchel charge. Robin said she finds it interesting that Kyle and the Marine who inspired him share almost the exact same wounds, but on opposite sides.

Kyle first heard Clebe give a talk at his high school during 11th grade. The following summer, his high-school football coach, Jolly Doolittle, took the team to work at a retreat McClary had created for wounded veterans at Lake Lure, S.C. In the Vietnam Marine, Kyle found the example of profound spirituality coupled with the warrior ethos for which he longed.

At first Kyle's parents admitted feeling



CPL MICHAEL C. GUINTO

**Cpl Carpenter attends a Washington Nationals baseball game with his parents, Jim and Robin Carpenter, and younger brothers, Peyton and Price, in Washington, D.C., on June 17.**



**Cpl Kyle Carpenter works out in the fitness center inside the Sheraton hotel in Arlington, Va., June 16, a few days before being presented the Medal of Honor. (Photo by Cpl Michael C. Guinto)**



CPL MELISSA ESCHENBRENNER

**Cpl Carpenter speaks to junior Marines during an evening colors ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., June 23. Carpenter was the guest of honor at the ceremony and spoke about the impact noncommissioned officers can have on junior Marines.**

guilty with his plan to leave Clemson and enlist. His father asked him, “Is it because we moved to South Carolina that you feel like you don’t belong?” Kyle replied unequivocally, “No, I feel like I’ve been preparing for this my whole life.” And so, as Kyle has said in multiple interviews, “I stood on those yellow footprints and joined something bigger than myself.”

After so many trials, tribulations and miracles, Jim and Robin Carpenter said they finally “get it.” They understand their son’s calling and his devotion to something bigger than himself, to that ineffable thing called “service” which they themselves planted deeply within Kyle. Joining the Marines was literally the ultimate expression of a seed they had planted; getting to know Clebe McClary had merely triggered it.

Robin then shared a final revelation. On the morning of June 19, mere hours before their son would be awarded the highest honor our nation can bestow, when the President of the United States and general officers would humble themselves before a corporal of Marines, his father penned and gave his son a letter. In that letter a father thanked his son for protecting his family, not just on the battlefield with an incredible act of selflessness, but for shielding them through years of surgeries without one word of pain or hopelessness in the face of his catastrophic wounds

and all the challenges they have and will continue to present.

My most recent conversation with Kyle happened during an afternoon break on the final day of events, June 20. I had taken a short walk from the hotel to Arlington National Cemetery. As I returned to the hotel, from the direction of the cemetery Kyle came jogging up, dressed in our Corps’ ubiquitous silkies and green T-shirt.

**“I feel like I’ve been preparing for this my whole life. ... I stood on those yellow footprints and joined something bigger than myself.”**  
**—Cpl William Kyle Carpenter**

There he was, a young man who supposedly would never run or do another pull-up, his healed but heavily scarred arms, legs and face sweating profusely, coming in from a run while others rested in their rooms before attending the Friday Evening Parade at “8th and I.”

My first conversation with him took place in a hospital room more than three years earlier. At that time his arms and legs were heavily wrapped in gauze, his face deeply etched with blue gunpowder

“tattooing” from the grenade blast and the effect of pain medication evident in his tired good eye and speech. He’d already endured 40 surgeries to remove shrapnel, piece together a shattered right arm and rebuild his jaw.

On the afternoon of June 20, he was the picture of health and clarity, grinning from ear to ear and ready, as always, to give me as much time as I needed to ask him questions. I had one question: “Give me one word for these past 3½ years.” Kyle shot back without a moment’s hesitation, “Surreal.”

My response was easy: “Semper Fi!”

*Author’s bio: CWO-2 Fay served as the official combat artist for the Marine Corps from 2000 to 2009. In that capacity, he deployed twice to both Iraq and Afghanistan. Fay created and oversees The Joe Bonham Project, a joint endeavor of the International Society of War Artists and the Society of Illustrators where artists visit with and sketch America’s most profoundly battle-wounded soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines.*

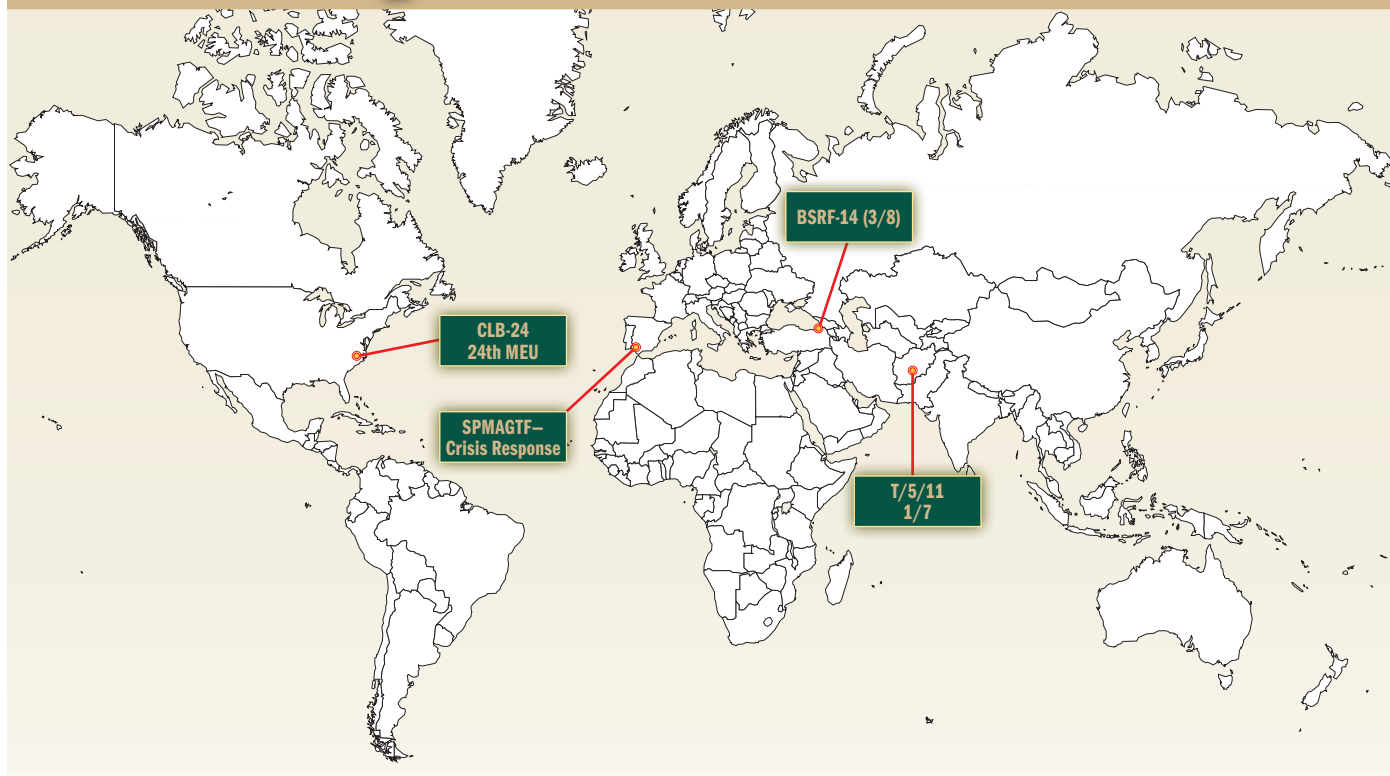


**Leatherneck—On the Web**

To see more photos and video of Cpl Kyle Carpenter, go to [www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/mohcarpenter](http://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/mohcarpenter)

# In Every Clime and Place

Edited by  
R. R. Keene



## ■ CAMP LEATHERNECK, AFGHANISTAN

### “Tango” Btry Still Providing Artillery For Forces in Afghanistan

In a noncombat environment, a Marine Corps artillery battery is made up of two platoons containing one type of weapon system, either M777A2 howitzers or High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) launchers. However, “Tango” Battery, 5th Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, at Camps Bastion and Leatherneck, has a unique makeup for an artillery battery.

“We’re a hybrid battery, both a cannons platoon and a HIMARS platoon, and we’re here supporting all operations in Regional Command [Southwest],” said First Lieutenant Michael Wish, Executive Officer, Tango Btry.

“Both platoons bring a great capability to the fight. You need both of those capabilities, especially in an environment like we’re in here. They complement each other, so if you were to miss one of those capabilities, it would be a significant gap in your surface-to-surface fires.”

While leathernecks in Cannons Plt pro-

**Marines with Cannons Plt of Tango Btry, 5/11 fire their M777A2 howitzer during a fire mission at Camp Bastion, June 13. The Marines at Camp Bastion and Leatherneck have a unique makeup for an artillery battery, with one platoon of M777A2 howitzers and one platoon of HIMARS launchers.**

vide greater operational flexibility for the close fight, their fellow Marines in HIMARS Plt are able to reach out farther and with greater precision.

“Cannons are important because they can shoot closer than HIMARS,” said Sergeant Steven Soper, a battery section chief. “We have other rounds, so we can do other things besides just blow stuff up. The illum mission is important because it shows the enemy that we’re watching, as well as lighting up the area for infantry units.”

The rounds used during HIMARS missions are strictly high explosive. The cannons, however, can be used for various missions due to the diversity of rounds available for the howitzer including high explosives, smoke and illumination. Illumination missions have been the most common for Tango Btry since their arrival in January.

The Marines in HIMARS Plt, however, take pride in their accuracy as well as the effects they are able to achieve due to the missions they conduct.



SGT FRANCES JOHNSON



**Leathernecks with B/1/7 conduct a security patrol during a mission in Helmand province June 5. During the previous mission on May 29, the company discovered a drug lab and removed more than one metric ton of narcotics.**



CPL JOSEPH SCANLAIN

“Our ability to hit so close to the target and neutralize the target without taking any collateral damage allows the people to see that we’re here to help them rather than just destroy stuff,” said Sgt Kevin Toledo, a launcher chief. “[Precision] is important for the fact that with the rockets and their capability you’re not going to have any collateral damage. It’s going to keep all the surroundings intact, but at the same time it will eliminate the enemy threat.”

“The best part of the job is the pride that comes with it, teaching the motivation to my Marines, the simple fact that Marines’ lives get saved every time a rocket goes downrange,” said Corporal Michael Rivera, a field artillery fire control man.

Sgt Frances Johnson  
Combat Correspondent, MEB-Afghanistan

## **■ CAMP BASTION, AFGHANISTAN** **Marines Confiscate Narcotics,** **Prevent Taliban From Reaping Profits**

Nearly a month into Afghanistan’s summer fighting season, leathernecks with 1st Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment continued a series of disruption operations in Now Zad District, Helmand province, Afghanistan.

One of their most successful missions yet took place during a May 29 patrol in the district. Marines with Company B

discovered a drug lab that contained more than one metric ton of narcotics. Although counternarcotics is not the Marines’ primary mission, they removed the discovery from the battlefield and prevented Taliban fighters from using profits from the sale of narcotics to purchase weapons, ammunition and improvised explosive device (IED) materials.

Under the cover of night, the company inserted into Now Zad via CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters.

“I noticed a couple [of] spotters as we were moving into the area,” said Corporal Cody Evans, a squad leader.

Spotters often are used to monitor coalition force movements and can aid with targeting.

“About an hour after we set up our security positions, an insurgent fired a rocket-propelled grenade and it exploded next to my truck,” said First Sergeant Michael Grassl.

The infantrymen began maneuvering into the town, and a squad quickly discovered an emplaced IED and other IED materials. The leathernecks cordoned off the area and within minutes came under enemy fire. They tactically maneuvered toward the enemy fighters in an attempt to return fire, but the fighters retreated before the Marines could close the distance.

“We soon discovered that the enemy fighters were maneuvering through underground wells to run away after shooting at us,” Cpl Evans said.

The squad continued to move north through the town and ultimately discovered the narcotics lab. The leathernecks cordoned off the area and came under enemy fire.

“The enemy definitely valued the narcotics lab we discovered,” Grassl said. “They continuously tried to keep us away from the compound by engaging us with small-arms fire.”

Ultimately, the Marines deterred further enemy fire and removed the narcotics, concluding the operation.

“Our success is attributed to the Marines and their hard work and efforts,” Grassl said. “What we accomplished shows that steady tactical patience and steady operations pay off. It’s not every day that we hit a home run, but it just happened to be the right time and the right place.”

With the mission an enormous success, the company returned to Camp Bastion before departing to a known Taliban location on June 5. The infantrymen patrolled the area for two days without encountering any enemy fire or IEDs.

“Between the two operations, we’ve kept the insurgency on their toes,” Grassl

said. “They don’t know why we keep coming up there and harassing them, but we’re harassing them to the point where they don’t feel safe where they live, so they’re on edge.”

Cpl Joseph Scanlan  
Combat Correspondent, MEB-Afghanistan

## ■ SIERRA DEL RETIN, SPAIN American, Spanish Marines Take Their Training to the Limit

Exhaustion had set in and the summer heat was wearing them down, but the Marines knew that the only choice was to accomplish the mission.

U.S. Marines from Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force–Crisis Response and Spanish Marines joined together for a bilateral training event known as BREDEX, in Sierra del Retin, Spain, June 2-6.

Bilateral training such as BREDEX is useful to the Marines for traditional reasons such as maintaining and improving tactics, techniques and procedures for infantry-related skills. Additionally, bilateral training offers different national armed forces a chance to develop a sense of camaraderie and improve their ability to operate together. Ultimately, the intent is the advancement of international security through skillful and integrated military cooperation.

“We conducted this training to increase our familiarity with the Spanish and help build a rapport with them,” said First Lieutenant Dustin Allen, commander of 2d Platoon, SPMAGTF–Crisis Response. “In the process, we gained a tremendous respect for the Spanish Marines. They do tough realistic training just like we do. They had to operate in the same rough environment. Just like us, they were short on supply, and so we all had to rely on each other.”

The physically demanding training began with hands-on instruction with the SuperCat rapid boat. The classes were led by the Spanish Marines from the 1st Marine Landing Battalion, who explained the boat’s capabilities and how to tactically employ the vehicles.

In addition to the amphibious training, the Marines moved to a live-fire range where they conducted squad- and platoon-level fire and movement drills in preparation for the battalion-level tactical exercise.

“We conducted basic drills and patrolling fundamentals, and it culminated into a 24-hour field exercise where we were attached with a Spanish company. This training definitely challenged the Marines mentally and physically,” said Staff Sergeant Joseph Perusich, the platoon sergeant for 2d Plt.

As a part of that 24-hour field exercise, the U.S. and Spanish Marines combined

as an integrated unit, using their skills and equipment to perform an assault on their target objective.

“This training definitely showed us how far we can push ourselves, how to conserve our water, how to push through an objective while being exhausted,” said Lance Corporal John Cooper, a machine-gunner. “It really gave me confidence in my abilities and in those of my fellow Marines.”

In addition to the various infantry-based events during the training, Spanish and American explosive ordnance disposal experts also exchanged information and tactics.

EOD Marines conducted range-sweeping training and demolitions training at the high explosives ranges in Sierra del Retin. The goal for the Americans was to learn more about different types of foreign ordnance and how best to locate, neutralize and dispose of them.

“[The Spanish] were more than happy to demonstrate and show to us what they do tactically, how they operate and then allowing us to show them what we do,” said 1stLt Allen. “And throughout the training there were little things that they did and things that we did that neither of us had seen before. That was really beneficial and motivating to the Marines.”

The Marines of SPMAGTF–CR are forward deployed out of Morón Air Base, Spain, to provide a rapid response to U.S.

Africa Command and to promote regional security interests through cooperation with international partners.

Capt David David  
MARFOREUR and Africa

## ■ VAZIANI TRAINING AREA, GEORGIA Live-Fire Exercise in Eastern Europe Hones Interoperability Capabilities

Exercise Agile Spirit 14 started with a “bang” as Marines and sailors with Black Sea Rotational Force (BSRF) 14, from 3d Battalion, Eighth Marine Regiment, fired on various weapon ranges with soldiers of the Georgian armed forces in the Vaziani Training Area, Georgia, June 10-11.

Agile Spirit 14 is an annually scheduled bilateral engagement hosted by Georgia that began in 2011 to strengthen interoperability between the two countries. Throughout the exercise, brigade- and battalion-level training is conducted to include small-unit interaction between the Marines and Georgians that demonstrates their commitments toward collective global security.

“The ranges were pretty well-paced,” said Lance Corporal Patrick Phelan, a forward observer with 81 mm Platoon, Weapons Company. “It gave some Marines the opportunity to fire a lot of weapon systems they don’t normally fire. There were known range shoots, which is always good practice for us. The machine-gun



GySgt Matthew J. Richey of BSRF-14 from 3/8, far right, explains the components and functionality of the AT-4 antitank weapon to Georgian soldiers during a live-fire exercise at Agile Spirit 14, Vaziani Training Area, Georgia, June 11.



LtCpl Scott W. Whiting

**HM3 James White, a corpsman with 3/8, fires an M2 .50-caliber heavy machine gun on target during Exercise Agile Spirit 14, an annually scheduled multilateral engagement hosted by Georgia.**

range builds familiarity with those of us who don't typically get time to fire [heavy machine guns]."

The Marines and Georgians fired the M2 .50-caliber heavy machine gun, the M249 light machine gun, the M240B medium machine gun, the AT-4 antitank weapon system and the Light Armor Weapon trainers, along with their standard service rifles, the M4 and M16, and the M27 infantry automatic rifle.

"These are weapons organic to an infantry unit," Phelan said. "These are all things we should be familiar with. We won't always be using our service rifles; we may have to pick up a machine gun and know how to use it."

The live-fire weapon ranges set the tone for the rest of the exercise.

"This really joins the Marines and Georgian soldiers at the hips," said Captain Thomas Perna, commander of Combined Anti-Armor Team, Wpns Co. "The more exposure we have to each other's techniques, we can integrate and operate more effectively and focus on the nuts and bolts of making a cohesive unit together."

The Marines and Georgians then trained together, reacting to different scenarios, to include improvised explosive devices, cordoning and searching and security patrolling.

"I think [Agile Spirit] is a great opportunity to build those relationships," Perna said. "We're teaching them things, and they're teaching us a lot as well."

They do some things differently, which is good because it exposes us to a different mindset. I'm excited to see what happens during the rest of the exercise."

BSRF-14 is a rotational contingent of Marines and sailors positioned to build military relations with partner nations and increase regional stability and interoperability while providing contingency response in the Black Sea, Balkan and Caucasus regions of Eastern Europe.

LtCpl Scott W. Whiting

Combat Correspondent, MARFOREUR and Africa

### ■ **CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C.** **Noncombatant Evacuation Operations: 24th MEU Trains for Potential Turmoil**

Noncombatant Evacuation Operations, known as NEOs, are operations to rescue American citizens from foreign countries when their lives are threatened by war, civil unrest or natural disaster. NEOs are directed by the Department of State and often are supported by Marine expeditionary units (MEUs). The Marines get in quick and protect and evacuate American civilians and others safely and efficiently.



Cpl Devin Nichols

**Leathernecks with BLT 3/6, 24th MEU interact with role players during a simulated NEO at MCB Camp Lejeune, June 6. The training was part of a larger field exercise that served to better prepare the Marines for their upcoming deployment.**



**Marines of CLB-24, 24th MEU move out from a VMM-365 (Rein) Osprey toward an entry control point during a simulated NEO. Such exercises prepare Marines for the multitude of contingencies they may encounter as they patrol the seas bordering Europe, Africa and the Middle East. (Photo by Cpl Devin Nichols)**

It takes a great deal of practice.

During June 1-10, Combat Logistics Battalion 24, the logistics combat element for 24th MEU, conducted NEO training to prepare for an upcoming deployment.

“The intent is to focus more upon the MEU missions that are less combat-oriented and more on disaster relief and humanitarian aid,” said First Lieutenant Taylor C. Neason, assistant operations officer with CLB-24. “I want the Marines and sailors to start to understand that there is going to be a shift in the way we operate in the world, so we are no longer mainly focused on ground combat. We need to start focusing on humanitarian-type missions.”

“I didn’t know how complex it was to evacuate people. You would think everyone just runs onto a ship, train or plane, but there is much more planning to it,” said Corporal Christiania D. McLaughlin, a combat engineer with CLB-24. “This is part of our mission; it’s important to have this training so we know what to expect. We are going to different countries

and we need to know how to help other people.”

During the NEO, a contingent of Marines from Battalion Landing Team 3d Bn, Sixth Marine Regiment conducted simulated embassy reinforcement, providing security and entry for CLB-24 Marines to establish an evacuation control center (ECC). Both CLB-24 and BLT 3/6 were transported by MV-22B Ospreys from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 365 (Reinforced).

“Anytime we can get the four elements of the MAGTF [Marine air-ground task force] to work together in a training opportunity like this, it’s good,” said Lieutenant Colonel Matthew A. Dumenigo, commanding officer of CLB-24.

Marines working the ECC provided security and searched the role players. Marines also worked with simulated embassy staff to process the “evacuees” and ensure proper accountability of everyone.

LtCol Dumenigo said: “I want them to gain familiarity with the process, as well as deal with some of the friction in

fog-of-war-type scenarios that may pop up when we are doing this. Evacuation control center or embassy reinforcement can potentially be a dangerous situation, so the Marines need to be able to think on their feet and make the right decisions.”

Role players with the MEU set up various scenarios to test the security element and ECC to prepare the Marines and sailors for any situation.

“As we planned this exercise, we discovered that it was a great opportunity to integrate with the rest of the units of the MEU,” said 1stLt Neason.

In addition to the NEO training, CLB-24 performed additional tasks during the 10-day exercise to prepare them for an upcoming deployment, including counter-improvised explosive device training; a mass casualty; evacuations; basic warrior skills training; and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear-defense training.

Cpl Devin Nichols

Combat Correspondent, 24th MEU



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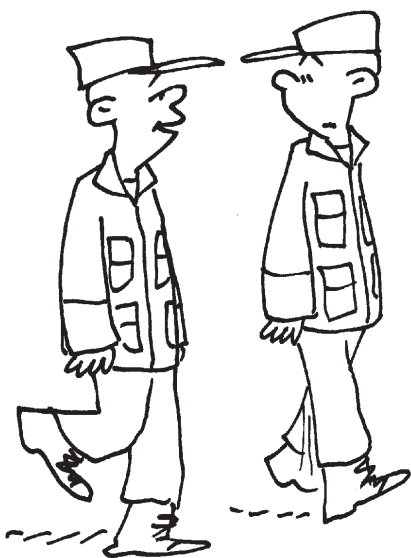
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"It's a little early for Christmas decorations, Sergeant."

James  
Estes



"Have you joined a fraternity yet?  
They do *have* fraternities here, right?"

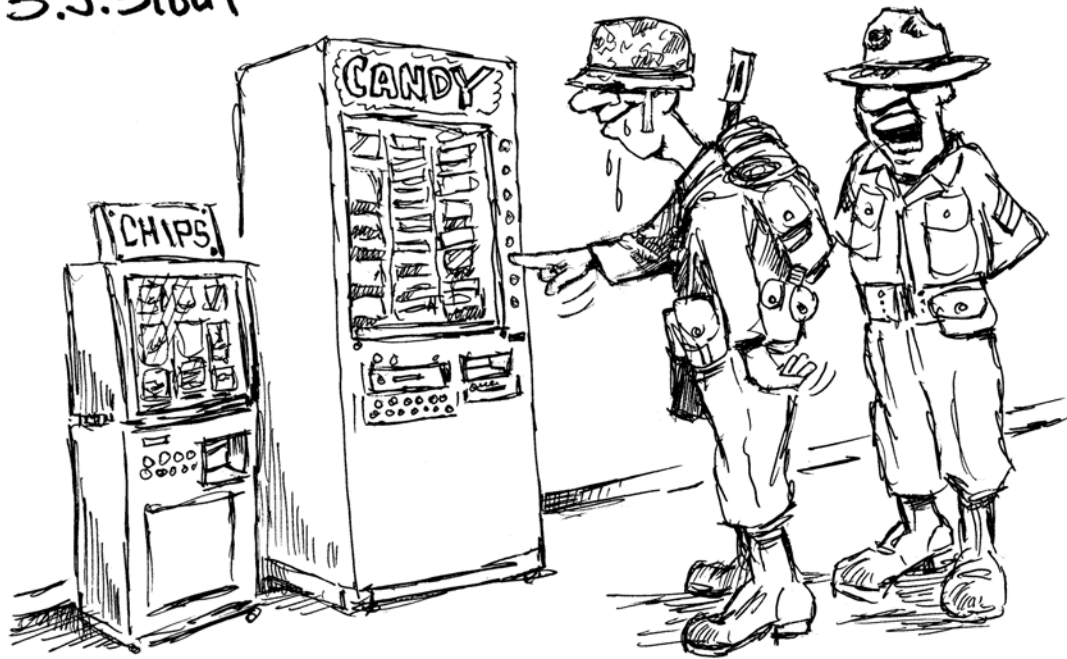


SHEPARD

"See much combat?"

# BOOT CAMP

S.J. Stout



"Don't even think about it!"

# BOOT CAMP

S.J. Stout



"He ate my weapon!"



George Van Orden



George Owen Van Orden



George Mason Van Orden



George Kelley Van Orden

# GUNPOWDER IN THEIR BLOOD— Four Generations of George Van Ordens

Story by Kyle Watts · Photos courtesy of  
CWO-3 George Kelley Van Orden,  
USMC (Ret)

**T**he United States Marine Corps celebrates many warriors. Leathernecks recognize names like Lejeune, Butler, Daly and “Chesty.” We know their accomplishments.

Many times, though, names are not included with the stories. Sometimes, we know actions and results, rather than the people behind them. Thousands of Marines have made incredible contributions still felt today, but their names are remembered only by those who served with them. Every weapon and tactic we use, the training we receive, every duty station to which we receive orders has a Marine behind it.

One of those unrecognized names represents not just a Marine, but a family. Four generations, totaling more than 100 years of service. All of them made lasting contributions. All of them exceptional Marines. All of them named George Van Orden.

The first George was born in 1878. He earned an appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., at age 15, graduating in 1897 as the youngest in his class.

In 1912, after serving in multiple stations around the world and completing both Army and Navy graduate schools, Captain Van Orden transferred to Norfolk, Va., to command Marine Officers School, the forerunner of The Basic School. With Ma-

rine officer training still being developed, he created and instituted a two-year course, drawing on instruction received from the Army, as well as his own naval experience. His first class of 40 students experienced the most formal and lengthy Marine commissioning program to date. In today’s Corps, a colonel commands The Basic School—Van Orden was only a captain when he set the bar for prospective officers.

In 1915, Van Orden commanded a famously executed landing during the Haiti rebellion, taking Port-au-Prince without

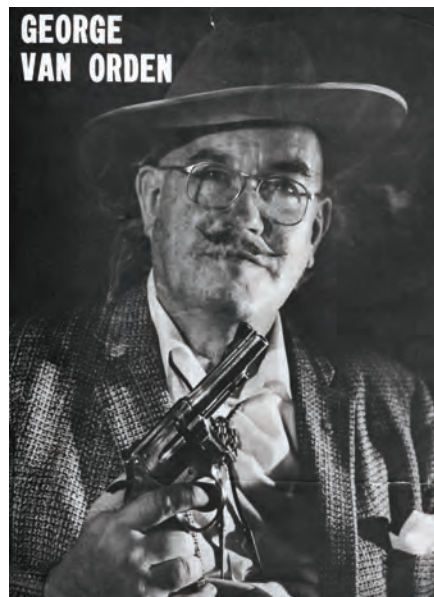
losing a man. Afterward, his career exploded. In less than three years, he advanced from captain to colonel.

In 1917, Van Orden and two others were charged with selecting land for a new base. The Corps was expanding to fight World War I and needed training ground in short order. Their instructions stated that the area should be near Washington, D.C., and “of sufficient size to accommodate approximately 7,500 men with necessary maneuver field and target ranges.” They quickly set their sights on Quantico, Va. Once the land was purchased, the new base became the Marine Corps’ main East Coast training facility for officers and remains so to this day.

Van Orden served six more years after selecting Quantico. He helped to activate the 11th Marine Regiment during WW I, attended the Army General Staff College, and returned to Port-au-Prince for the final expedition of his career. He retired in 1923.

Although he had retired, his spirit and commitment to the Marine Corps remained strong. On Dec. 7, 1941, at age 63, just hours after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, Van Orden sent a blunt message directly to the Commandant: “Request that I be restored to active service and ordered to duty. Van Orden.”

While his father, the first George Van Orden, served around the world, George Owen Van Orden grew up fully intending to be a Marine. From the beginning, two things characterized his career: shooting and ordnance training.



**The second George Van Orden, George Owen, continued a family legacy of service that would ultimately span more than 100 years.**



In his first eight years of service, Lieutenant “Bang Bang” Van Orden competed in shooting matches at every duty station. He attended advanced weapons courses in Quantico and spent months at sea learning naval gunnery and antiaircraft fire. As a range officer and later chief range officer, Van Orden taught marksmanship fundamentals to thousands. “Accuracy is the one thing we are looking for, and there is no easy way to get it,” he said. “If we do slack work on the rifle range, they’ll get slack results on the battlefield, which is bad business in a gun fight.”

George Owen assumed command of the rifle range at Quantico in December 1939. The scout-sniper school, still in its infancy, fell under his purview. He and Marine Gunner Calvin Lloyd undertook formalizing the program. After extensive research, they published “Equipping the American Sniper.” This expert treatise defined sniper usage and made specific recommendations for their armament.

After testing hundreds of rifle and scope combinations, Van Orden picked his perfect match: a Winchester Model 70 bolt-action rifle with the 8-power Unertl scope. The Marine Corps purchased limited quantities, but opted against the rifle’s adoption. The scope, however, was selected. Attached to the Model 1903 Springfield, the long, slender scope was used in WW II and became an icon of early Marine snipers. Van Orden and Lloyd saw their vision of a formal sniper program realized. Small schools opened in different locations, teaching the skills their treatise outlined, and graduates were dispatched promptly to the Pacific.

As chief range officer at the training hub of the Marine Corps, Van Orden had an incredible opportunity to impact combat performance in WW II. For his trainees, that went beyond skillful manipulation of the trigger. He developed a reputation. They caught his passion and flair and would remember him for it.

One Marine Raider recounted: “His ambidexterity with the .45-caliber service pistol had amazed us all. Once after a spectacular demonstration of pistoling, one of the candidates asked him if he could also fire the rifle left-handed. Van Orden’s immediate response was to dress down the candidate for daring even to suggest that left-handed shooters might be tolerated in the Corps, all the while brandishing his pistol in his left hand.”

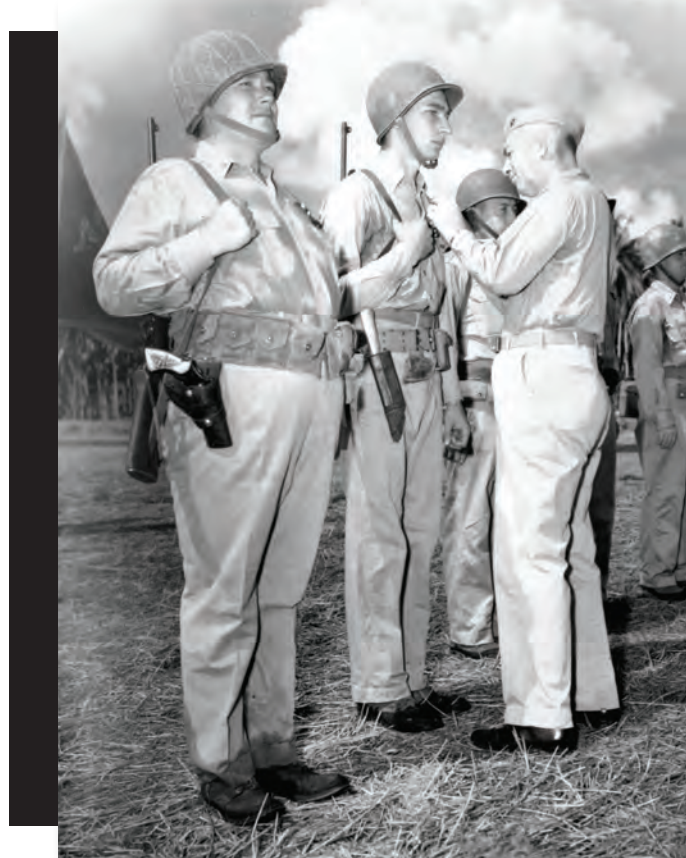
Van Orden’s turn to fight came in 1942. He reached the front as the executive officer [XO] of Third Marine Regiment. The unit’s first trial came in November 1943 on an island called Bougainville.

As the 3d Marines motored toward Cape Torokina, the Japanese opened fire.

Artillery hit home, destroying six landing craft and scattering the rest. Marines hit the beach and sprinted through the bullets into the tree line. Confusion ensued as they realized the boats landed in an order almost opposite what had been planned, and no unit larger than squad size had landed together. Recognizing the chaos and impending disaster, Van Orden climbed aboard a landing craft and headed for the beach. Taking several hits, the boat grounded, and Van Orden re-established control.

for his own safety, inspired and encouraged the men to complete their vital task.”

For his heroics, Marines nicknamed their XO “The Beast.” He continued earning that reputation on Bougainville and on Guam in 1944. Despising the safety of the command post, Van Orden was found always “hunting for battle,” as one front-line correspondent commented, “with his own private arsenal of pistol, carbine and Johnson light machine gun in order to get ‘one last crack at the Japs.’” His reckless, inspiring leadership earned



**LtCol George Owen Van Orden, far left, after receiving the Navy Cross for his extraordinary heroism as the Executive Officer, 3d Marines on Bougainville, Nov. 1, 1943.**

**“Accuracy is the one thing we are looking for, and there is no easy way to get it. If we do slack work on the rifle range, they’ll get slack results on the battlefield, which is bad business in a gun fight.”—George Owen Van Orden**

Constantly exposed to enemy machine guns, he moved throughout the area forming new units, appointing leaders and directing the attack. One Marine witnessed him “blazing away in the direction of the enemy with his pistol. ... After emptying a magazine at the invisible (at least to me) target, Van Orden stepped back from the rear wall of the bunker, cleared, reloaded, and holstered his pistol ... with a self-satisfied grin on his face as if he had just completed a successful string of rapid fire.” As the shore party arrived with supplies after the initial assault waves, Japanese machine guns halted their unloading. Van Orden “unhesitatingly proceeded to the area and, with utter disregard

him a Navy Cross, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

The second George Van Orden retired as a brigadier general in 1949. Establishing a gun shop near Quantico, his reputation in the firearms industry continued to grow. His innovation in sniping and marksmanship would be referenced by future generations, both by Marines and by his family.

Given his heritage, it isn’t surprising that George Mason Van Orden followed in his father’s and grandfather’s footsteps. “I remember having a CO [commanding officer] rather than a father,” he wrote. It was expected he would be a Marine.

Like his father and grandfather, he was



**Maj George Mason Van Orden stands next to a match-winning target fired from the 1,000-yard line in 1976.**

**His [George Mason's] expertise was instrumental in shaping the sniper community after Vietnam. Van Orden incorporated his father's guidance and lessons learned on the modern battlefield into sniper courseware.**

a skilled marksman. At age 15, George Mason won the Junior National Rifle Championship. *Sports Illustrated* named him an Olympic hopeful. "Part of his blood contained gunpowder," said a fellow shooter, Colonel David J. "Dave" Willis, who was "double Distinguished" in rifle and pistol shooting and at one time served as CO of Weapons Training Battalion at Quantico.

After graduating from Virginia Military Institute, The Basic School and the Engineer Officer Course, Second Lieutenant Van Orden received a peculiar set of orders. His fellow engineer graduates headed to their new units, but he stayed in Quantico. A general there had cancelled his original orders, instead detailing him to the range detachment. He wanted the newly commissioned but already reputable shooter to help his rifle team win the 1962 Eastern Division matches. Van Orden stayed, and the general received his trophy.

Such experiences became a recurring theme throughout his career. He attempted to "retire" from competitive shooting sev-

eral times, but was not allowed to focus on his engineering specialty. Even so, Van Orden dedicated several years to engineering, including two combat tours in Vietnam where he earned a Combat Action Ribbon and Navy Commendation Medal with combat "V."

Van Orden greatly enhanced the USMC's reputation of premier marksmanship. He returned to Camp Perry, Ohio, for the prestigious national shooting matches several times after winning the junior title as a teenager. In 1967, Marines won first place in the National Team Trophy event. Van Orden fired as team officer in charge. His final visit as a competitor occurred in 1979. Winning four trophies in four days, he was dubbed the National Service Rifle Champion. He later wrote that the accomplishment "was without question the highlight of my shooting career."

The Marine Corps utilized Van Orden's wisdom to strengthen marksmanship training. In 1967, as the Marines moved away from Army doctrine, Van Orden wrote the Fleet Marine Force Manual

(FMFM) 1-3 "Basic Rifle Marksmanship." He received commendation for "producing the well-written initial manuscript draft," which "represents the first formal Marine Corps doctrinal publication on the subject." This manual, along with Van Orden's second publication, FMFM 1-3A "Field Firing Techniques," formed a foundation on which the program could be built.

His expertise was instrumental in shaping the sniper community after Vietnam. Van Orden incorporated his father's guidance and lessons learned on the modern battlefield into sniper courseware. Called "an original thinker of the sniper business," he offered valuable opinions on sniper operating procedures and integration into infantry units and co-wrote revisions of sniper manuals.

Van Orden remained active in the shooting community, giving speeches and presentations after retiring as a lieutenant colonel in 1983. Tragically, his influence and life abruptly ended on March 29, 2013. Following dinner out with family, Van Orden's car was struck by a driver fleeing police. He passed away the following day at age 73. Although devastated by the loss, his family and

the marksmanship community continue to celebrate his life and recount his accomplishments.

Unlike the previous three generations, George Kelley Van Orden did not grow up dreaming of becoming a Marine. Ten-year-old George moved with his mother to Virginia after his parents divorced. His father became a birthday telephone call. Not until age 20, as a laid-off concrete truck driver, did George decide to enlist. On Feb. 3, 1982, he was sworn in by his father and one week later began boot camp.

Private First Class Van Orden entered the "high speed" world with 9th Engineer Battalion's newly formed Engineer Reconnaissance Team in Okinawa, Japan. There he received advanced training in demolition, jungle warfare and route reconnaissance.

He transferred Stateside one year later to Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, Calif. Initially assigned to the maintenance section, Van Orden volunteered for an instructor billet. The staff turned him down, given that he was only a lance corporal, but eventually conceded. He instructed company-size units on topics such as demolition, rock climbing, navigation, digging snow caves and making survival kits. Holding a posi-

**Wearing flak and diaper, the only protection minefield maintenance Marines had, George Kelley Van Orden holds a deer skull found in the minefields at Guantanamo Bay.**

tion typically occupied by a sergeant or higher, Mountain Warfare staff dubbed him “Lance Corporal of the Marine Corps.”

Following another fleet tour and more than two years on the drill field, Van Orden again volunteered, this time for a position typically filled through the “voluntold” path of many Marine Corps assignments. He went to the minefield maintenance section of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, a little-known and little-loved duty. Conditions were arduous, the work tedious and dangerous.

Marines assigned the task of “locating, disarming, removing, replacing and re-arming” live mines in one of the largest minefields in the world required acute presence of mind and extreme attention to detail. “I always described it as the only job I ever had where you could do everything right and still get killed,” said Van Orden. A stray animal or even roots of the dense vegetation growing around the mines could cause just enough pressure to set one off.

Mistakes accounted for many deaths and close calls. A Marine died the year Van Orden arrived. A mine detonated when a pocket knife fell from the sergeant’s flak jacket. For all the incidents involving a mine that should have blown but didn’t, surviving Marines were inducted into the “ghost club.”

Hunting was an essential part of the job. Deer constantly worked their way into the minefields, causing accidental detonations and posing a serious threat. Once, after receiving word of a detonation at night,



Van Orden’s team responded. Spotlighting the area yielded no information, so the following morning they went in. Van Orden and another Marine carefully made their way through waist-high grass into the section where the detonation occurred.

Suddenly, right beside them something moved. A startled deer, with hind legs paralyzed from the previous night’s blast, crawled away through a mine cluster three paces from their safe zone. Purely out of instinct, the men dropped, backs to the blast, arms shielding their heads. They waited with resignation. One antipersonnel mine was plenty to do the trick. The deer was crawling through four of them, surrounding an antitank mine. They waited, but nothing happened. When the deer

stopped before entering the next distant group of mines, the Marines rose and moved back to safety faster than they ever previously had dared in a live minefield.

The Marines tried to understand why the mines had not detonated. Checking records from the last time the mines were replaced, they made an astonishing discovery. Sitting in a depression on the landscape, pooling water had rusted the antipersonnel mines, rendering them useless. It was determined for that cluster, and only that one, the antitank mine should be replaced, but the antipersonnel mines were to be removed and not replaced. It was a lifesaving decision, and an unbelievable break for Van Orden. He had become a member of the ghost club.

Van Orden completed his minefield tour in 1991, entering again into the Special Operations community. As an instructor at Amphibious Reconnaissance School in Coronado, Calif., Van Orden taught demolition, survival and land navigation to new recon Marines. He rewrote his entire course curriculum. He was “unparalleled as a demolitions instructor,” wrote one reporting senior, and “could teach a blind man to see.”

In 1996, Van Orden was promoted to warrant officer, assuming much of the same responsibilities that his grandfather had as a range officer. Van Orden also acquired the responsibility of weapons testing. His role was key in testing and fielding weapons such as the Joint Service



**Proud father George Mason Van Orden congratulates his son, Sgt. George Kelley Van Orden, at Drill Instructor School graduation, where George Kelley finished as honor graduate.**



**George Kelley Van Orden, third from left, with his Engineer Reconnaissance Team on Okinawa in the early 1990s.**

Shotgun, second generation Designated Marksman Rifle (DMR) and M16A4. He evaluated the Squad Advanced Marksman Rifle (SAMR), helping develop the SAMR currently used by Marines in Afghanistan.

In 2003, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Van Orden retired, but still was not finished. Through years of teaching survival and experimenting with all the gear, Van Orden developed his own survival kit. Founded in 2002, Pro Survival Kit Company has become one of Van Orden's lasting contributions to the U.S. military. The Navy currently purchases his kits for standard issue to Navy SEALs. The Special Forces community is his principal customer and has carried his survival kits around the world.

**Many accomplishments adorn the careers of these men, but one remains unique. Their family boasts three generations of "Marine Distinguished Marksman." That high honor is coveted by all competition shooters.**

Many accomplishments adorn the careers of these men, but one remains unique. Their family boasts three generations of "Marine Distinguished Marksman." That high honor is coveted by all competition shooters. "The Distinguished Badge is

probably the most important thing he shoots for," said George Mason. "He's a professional. For that reason, Marines achieving that award never have to qualify again."

The first George, although an expert rifleman with multiple awards, did not achieve the Distinguished level. George Owen, a competition shooter from the beginning, earned the badge over a five-year period. George Mason, always known for his marksmanship exploits, earned it in three.

George Kelley displayed the same attitude toward competitive shooting as he had toward the Marine Corps in early life—not interested. Not until he became a warrant officer did Van Orden return to competition shooting. In 2001, he earned the Distinguished badge, thus completing the legacy of his family and name.

George Kelley Van Orden's father, grandfather and great-grandfather are buried in Virginia's Arlington National Cemetery. Climbing to visit their graves in Section 30 is a humbling experience. There is a spectacular view of countless rows of headstones. It is striking to think the view contains a mere fraction of the 400,000 veterans buried in Arlington. Each one has a story. Many of those stories, including those of the Van Ordens, still are inspiring Marines today.



**Three generations of Van Orden Marines are buried in Section 30 of Arlington National Cemetery near the nation's capital.**

*Author's bio: Kyle Watts served as a Marine officer. He is a contributing writer for Leatherneck magazine and currently is living near Philadelphia.*





Photo by: Sgt. Eric S. Wilterdink



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Sgt Jeremy Wellenreiter, a primary marksmanship instructor with Weapons Training Bn, MCB Quantico, Va., participates in the Warfighting Lab's LOE on techniques for hitting moving targets in September 2013.



# HITS COUNT

CPL DANIEL WETZEL

## In Marine Corps Rifle Marksmanship

By Otto Kreisher

**T**he Corps must do a better job of training its Marines on how to hit enemy combatants when they are moving, according to the results of a limited objective experiment (LOE), conducted by the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory (MCWL), Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va.

The data collected during three days of extensive shooting last September (see "Combat Shooting: Corps' Newest Marksmanship Training Focuses on Moving Targets," *Leatherneck*, January 2014) revealed what appears to be the most effective techniques for hitting a moving target and demonstrated the value of training to do that.

Also revealed by the experiment was a deficiency in the Rifle Combat Optic

sights currently used on the M16A4 rifle and M4 carbine. The Squad Day Optics on the M27 Infantry Automatic Rifle were found to be better suited for hitting an enemy on the move.

The value of additional training on hitting moving targets became evident as experienced Marines showed marked improvements during the course of the experiment.

In his review of the LOE's findings, Captain Benjamin Brewster, the coordinator for the MCWL experiment, said, "This type of shooting instruction must be developed and integrated into infantry marksmanship training to prepare Marines for the enemy targets they will realistically engage in combat."

The data from the experiment were analyzed by the Center for Naval Analysis (CNA) and are being reviewed by the

Marine Corps Training Command, which will decide whether to order changes in marksmanship training. In his endorsement of the LOE's results and Brewster's recommendations, retired Colonel Vince Goulding, the director of the Warfighting Lab's Experiment Division, said: "Moving Target Engagement Techniques planning and execution consistently flew under the radar. The results cannot."

Current Marine Corps marksmanship qualification involves shooting 100 rounds, but only eight at a moving target, which usually is a printed human form carried by a Marine walking across the target range butts. Reports that Marines in Afghanistan were having trouble hitting moving Taliban insurgents prompted General James T. Conway, the 34th Marine Corps Commandant of the Marine Corps, to demand that something be done to correct that.

Responding to the Commandant's order, the Warfighting Lab planned and conducted the Moving Target Engagement Techniques Limited Objective Experiment, which was held Sept. 16-27, 2013, on MCB Quantico. The stated goal was: "Determining the most effective technique and method of engaging moving targets with the M4 carbine and the M27 Infantry Automatic Rifle."

The shooters were experienced enlisted marksmen from the staffs of The Basic School and Weapons Training Battalion at Quantico, supported by personnel from those organizations and the lab.

The LOE also was supported by soldiers from the U.S. Army's Asymmetric Warfare Group (AWG), who controlled the T-40 robotic moving targets (RMT) from Marathon Targets of Sydney, Australia, which AWG has been testing.

The targets have a plastic upper body shaped like a man, mounted on a computerized four-wheeled electric-powered cart. When hit by a bullet, the target stops, and the human form flops back. It also sends data on whether the shot was a fatal hit or a likely wound outside the center body or the head.

The range was set up to create four 30-foot-wide urban "streets" between 8-foot walls. The robots would emerge from behind one of the walls and cross the street at either a walking pace of 4 mph or a running stride at 8 mph. That gave the shooter either about 5 seconds or 2½ seconds to attempt a hit.

Shooters fired from 75 and 140 meters, using the three standard firing positions: standing, kneeling and prone. They used three specified techniques: ambush, tracking and swing through.

In ambush they aimed in front of the target and shot as it approached. In tracking they aimed just in front of the target and followed it as it moved before shooting. Swing through involved swinging the rifle from behind to a shooting position in front, as in skeet shooting.

They also used three methods: semi-automatic, which gave one shot per trigger pull; the three-round burst; or full automatic with the M27.

Shooters fired while wearing just their field uniforms or with protective vest and helmet.

All data on the technique, method, range, target speed and hits were recorded carefully to be evaluated by CNA.

The final report on the LOE said that "during the course of the experiment, eight Marines fired more than 7,500 rounds during 2,300 target exposures. The



PHOTO BY PFC ERIC T. KEENAN

**Above: Robotic moving targets were used throughout the LOE to depict life-size enemy combatants. The RMTs were developed by an Australian company, Marathon Targets, which assisted in the testing.**

**Below: Cpl Brandon Harris, marksmanship coach with Weapons Training Bn, cleans his weapon after a day of firing as a member of the test group for the LOE. (Photo by Cpl Daniel Wetzel)**



**The Corps must do a better job of training its Marines on how to hit enemy combatants when they are moving, according to the results of a limited objective experiment.**

use of RMTs as a surrogate technology allowed shooters to fire at targets that more closely resembled a real-world mobile enemy combatant than current large-scale moving target ranges provide."

Data collected "included rounds fired, number of hits, kill shots, and hit position. Effectiveness and efficiency metrics were

developed to quantitatively determine which aiming technique provided a Marine with the best chance of success during a moving target engagement," the report said.

Only one hit was scored for each engagement, which "normalized the semi-automatic, automatic, and burst firing



**Marines from both The Basic School and Weapons Training Bn fire at RMTs operated by the Army's Asymmetric Warfare Group.**

technique results in order to conduct a comparative analysis.”

The results of the shooting were calculated into a “probability of hit per engagement” and showed a clear advantage of the ambush and tracking techniques over swing through.

The data also showed that overall, semi-automatic shooting was more accurate than burst or automatic for kneeling and prone while the multiple-round methods were better in the standing position.

However, at 140 meters, the shooters, on average, required one less trigger pull to hit the target on burst than on semi-automatic, indicating burst might be more effective at longer range.

The results also showed a “decreased probability” of hitting a moving target after two shots.

A finding produced by the post-experiment reports from the shooters, rather than from the data, was that the reticle in the M27 optics provided a better reference for aiming at moving targets than the Rifle Combat Optics (RCO) on the M4 and M16.

In forwarding the CNA analysis, Capt Brewster made a series of recommendations, including one to “explore the development of an enhanced RCO or optical overlay for the M16A4 and M4 that provides mil gradients for moving targets at 5 mils from the stadia post.”

The main thrust of Brewster’s statement forwarding the LOE findings up the chain of command and Goulding’s endorsement was to use the results as a starting point for future larger-scale experiments to develop

a comprehensive program to train Marines how to hit a moving enemy.

“This experiment produced conclusive data on the two most effective techniques to shoot moving targets and has provided the scientific groundwork for future experimentation to develop the best way to train Marines in these techniques,” Brewster wrote.

The future trials should “explore the potential of training Marines to fire on the burst setting in certain circumstances, namely between 100-200 meters in scenarios likely to produce laterally moving targets,” and should “include novice shooters to develop a more thorough understanding of the overall ability of this training to improve moving target engagement results.”

Capt Brewster suggested that lab personnel observe the Army AWG’s night



The lab saw the need for up to three more LOEs on moving targets, including one utilizing nearly a platoon of Marines in a multiday exercise to develop training procedures for unit training.



CPL DANIEL WETZEL



PFC ERIC T. KEEMAN

Sgt Eduardo Benavides, a combat instructor from TBS, assists in testing techniques using semi-automatic, burst and automatic fire in the prone position.

moving-target experiment for information to guide a joint Training Command and Warfighting Lab effort “to develop and validate night engagement techniques with current illumination devices.”

He also recommended that follow-on experiments on moving targets should explore using a technique some of the LOE shooters developed that involved an ambush-initiated engagement followed by tracking shots if the first shot missed.

Brewster proposed that the robotic targets used in the LOE that are owned by Marine Corps Systems Command be transferred to Weapons Training Bn “for continued study and employment” and that research be conducted “to determine the requirements and costs associated with the employment of RMTs as part of established predeployment training events.”

Goulding, a former infantry officer,

endorsed Capt Brewster’s recommendations, emphasizing the importance of developing better training procedures on moving targets.

“As the Marine Corps, with active MCWL participation, develops an experiment line of effort designed to examine infantry battalion manning and equipping for future operations in complex terrain, nothing is more fundamental than combat marksmanship,” Goulding wrote.

Goulding also said the deficiency discovered in the Rifle Combat Optic needs to be addressed.

The results of the LOE and the Warfighting Lab’s recommendations were discussed in a meeting involving the major Marine Corps commands on MCB Quantico. Brewster said the lab saw the need for up to three more LOEs on moving targets, including one utilizing nearly a platoon of Marines in a multiday exercise to develop training procedures for unit training.

He and other lab officials also briefed the findings of the LOE to the annual Combat Marksmanship Symposium that met at Quantico on April 7-10, involving the Corps’ top shooters and marksmanship trainers.

Capt Brewster said the “community of

gunners” is recommending that the number of shots used on moving targets in the annual qualification be doubled to 16.

While admitting that isn’t huge, Brewster still saw it as a step in the right direction to have “the gunners, as a community, believe we should be placing more emphasis on shooting moving targets.”

The gunners also endorsed the Warfighting Lab’s effort to develop a moving-target-training capability in the Corps’ existing simulation marksmanship trainer.

Lab officials saw the support from the Marksmanship Symposium and Weapons Training Bn’s agreement to cooperate on developing new training standards as evidence of a growing consensus on the need for better training on moving targets.

*Author’s bio: A former Marine artillery fire-direction controlman, Otto Kreisher became a U.S. Navy officer through the flight program. As a correspondent for Copley News Service, he was with the First Marine Division in Operation Desert Storm and in Somalia, with the 2dMarDiv in Haiti and now is a freelance defense writer.*



# In the Highest Tradition

Edited by R. R. Keene and Tina Pearce

## Swift Action by MARSOC Marine Leads to Capture of Insurgent Leader



Master Sergeant Donovan Petty, with 2d Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command, was awarded the Silver Star, May 12, 2014, by Major General Mark A. Clark, Commander, MARSOC, at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C.

MSgt Petty served as a team chief with Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force–Afghanistan in 2012 when his unit was tasked with capturing a local insurgent leader. During the operation, Petty and his unit came under attack inside an open courtyard.

Armed insurgents fired at Petty as he maneuvered through the courtyard in an attempt to suppress the enemy fighting position. During the exchange, insurgents lobbed hand grenades at Petty's position, forcing him to withdraw from the courtyard.

As the team chief, Petty knew he needed

to gain a position of advantage over the enemy fighters, so he moved to the rooftop of a nearby building. Again, he exposed himself to enemy fire while throwing a grenade at the enemy. Petty's initiative and swift action resulted in the capture of the insurgent leader.

"The Marine Corps isn't about awards," said Petty. "The Marine Corps is about the Marine who stands next to you, both to the left and to the right. Each one of my Marines who were there that day are deserving of this award."

LCpl Ryan A. Young  
Combat Correspondent, MARSOC

## FAC Calls in Air Strike That Kills Enemy And Saves Wounded Marine



Pinned down in a shallow ditch, Captain William T. Paxton, a forward air controller serving with 2d Battalion, Eighth Marine Regiment, II Marine Expeditionary Force, spent five hours calling in air

strikes over Afghanistan last year.

For his actions, Paxton was awarded the Bronze Star with combat "V" during a May 5, 2014, ceremony aboard Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C.

On Aug. 22, 2013, Paxton was part of a small command element inserted into enemy territory. Paxton was pinned down by enemy fire and began directing accurate air strikes onto the enemy. After a Marine was wounded, Paxton continued to call in air strikes, allowing the Marine to be evacuated.

"We inserted there early in the morning, and we extracted just before dusk that evening," said Paxton, an F/A-18 Hornet pilot with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 251, Marine Aircraft Group 31.

"Once [the enemy] saw where we were, they started to move around. Before we knew it, we were pinned down in a firefight. We hid behind anything we could and fired back for several long hours," he added.



LCPL RYAN A. YOUNG

MajGen Mark A. Clark, Commander, MARSOC, presents the Silver Star, May 12, to MSgt Donovan Petty, a critical skills operator with 2d MSOB. MSgt Petty's team captured a key insurgent leader in Afghanistan.



CPL BRENDAN ROETHEL

Capt William T. Paxton, an F/A-18 pilot with VMFA-251, is awarded the Bronze Star with combat "V" at MCAS Beaufort, S.C., May 5. While serving with 2/8 as the FAC, Capt Paxton spent five hours calling in accurate air strikes on enemy targets, enabling the evacuation of an injured Marine.

Paxton continued directing air strikes, allowing his team to move to a safe area.


“I only played a small part in that. I was just doing my job, just doing what I was trained to do,” said Paxton. “Even when the bullets were fl iring, we took cover and kept pushing. I just kept my thoughts on the here and now. I couldn’t let myself think about anything else. I had to stay focused.”

Paxton is credited with calling in close air support that killed nine enemy fighters, destroyed a Taliban prison and demolished an untold amount of enemy ordnance. Aside from the wounded Marine who was evacuated, no one else was injured.

Captain Paxton said the Marines with him that day were the real heroes.

Cpl Brendan Roethel  
PAO, MCAS Beaufort, S.C.

### MARCENT Honors Civilians, Earns Meritorious Unit Commendation

 Lieutenant General Robert B. Neller and Sergeant Major Lawrence P. Fineran of U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Command affixed the Meritorious Unit Commendation streamer to the MARCENT Battle Color at a May 6, 2014, award ceremony at MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa, Fla.

MARCENT received the unit award from the Commandant of the Marine Corps for exceptionally meritorious service during assigned missions from January 2010 to December 2011 in support of national security objectives in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

LtGen Neller and SgtMaj Fineran then presented the Secretary of Defense Medal



MSGT WILLIAM PRICE

**SgtMaj Lawrence P. Fineran, left, and LtGen Robert B. Neller affix the MUC streamer to the MARCENT Battle Color during a ceremony at MacDill AFB, May 6. MARCENT received the award from the CMC for exceptionally meritorious service during assigned missions from January 2010 to December 2011 in support of national security objectives.**

for the Global War on Terrorism to nine MARCENT civilians for their outstanding service: Don Lorkowski, Jerry Lyons, John Marques, Terry Moores, Charles “Gramps” Peterson, Ben Philhower and

Allen Rupenski. Not present, but also awarded the medal were Jeff “Bird” Hibbard and Jim McSpadden.

MSGT William Price  
PAO, MARCENT

### Personal Combat Awards

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

The following awards were announced in May:



#### Bronze Star With Combat “V”

GySgt Joshua C. Hamblin, 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion (MSOB), U.S. Marine Forces Special Operations Command

HM2 Maxwell Hargrove, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

1stSgt Daniel A. Headrick, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

SSgt Taylor J. Morgan, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

SSgt Ronald A. Pedroza, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

MSgt Yasmany Perez, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

SSgt Joshua B. Roye, 1st MSOB, MARSOC

GySgt Adam J. Rutherford, 1st MSOB, MARSOC



#### Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal With Combat “V”

Sgt Anthony E. Callister, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

GySgt Charles P. Speitel IV, 2d MSOB, MARSOC

Sgt Aaron M. Vanderbeck, 1st MSOB, MARSOC



#### Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal With Combat “V”

Cpl Beau T. Feerick, 2d MSOB, MARSOC





# Operation Jackstay

## Dealing With an Elusive Enemy in the Rung Sat Special Zone, 26 March–6 April 1966

By Nicholas Warr

Operation Jackstay, an amphibious operation, launched surface-borne and helicopter-borne assault forces of Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 1st Bn, Fifth Marine Regiment into the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ) on 26 March 1966. The RSSZ was a densely covered tidal mangrove swamp of approximately 485 square miles.

A native population of about 15,000 people lived in nine villages on the few dry islands in the area. The only road in that zone crossed the Long Thanh Peninsula, but locals used the extensive waterway system to travel the area by boat. Dense vegetation severely limited access to interior areas, and extensive flooding at high tide impeded movement. The few deep channels forming the main shipping route upriver to Saigon, about 25 miles

to the north, provided the only sea approaches to the area.

The naval force assigned to the operation was the 7th Fleet's amphibious force, Amphibious Squadron One (PHIBRON ONE) consisting of the flagship, USS *Princeton* (LPH-5), with USS *Alamo* (LSD-33) and USS *Pickaway* (APA-222), along with six other U.S. Navy warships. Aircraft from USS *Hancock* (CVA-19) provided daily air support for the operation.



Left: Typical terrain in the Rung Sat Special Zone, Vietnam.

Inset: Marines of Delta Co, 1/5 at MCAS Kaneohe Bay, on the island of Oahu, Hawaii, prior to departing for Vietnam. Front row, kneeling, from left: Jon Johnson, Claude Pierce and Ignacio "Nash" Contreras. Back row, from left: Troy Hatfield, Ron Krodel and James Ward.



COURTESY OF JON JOHNSON

COURTESY OF MIKE MAVAR

Phase One dictated that a provisional rifle company land over Red Beach to establish blocking positions, accompanied by Battery D, 2d Bn, 11th Marines (105 mm howitzers) and the 107 mm Howtar battery from the same unit. At the same time, the Marines of Company C, BLT 1/5 heli-lifted into Landing Zone (LZ) Sparrow and established blocking positions, and "Alpha" Co landed in LZ Robin to secure the area and provide a defensive perimeter for subsequent landings. Bravo, Delta and Headquarters and Service companies, along with other combat support and service support elements, followed Alpha Co into LZ Robin.

Phase Two operations would be largely dependent on the situation as it developed and the availability of helicopters and surface craft, in addition to the time and space factors dictated by the terrain and weather. Generally, the BLT planned to move north



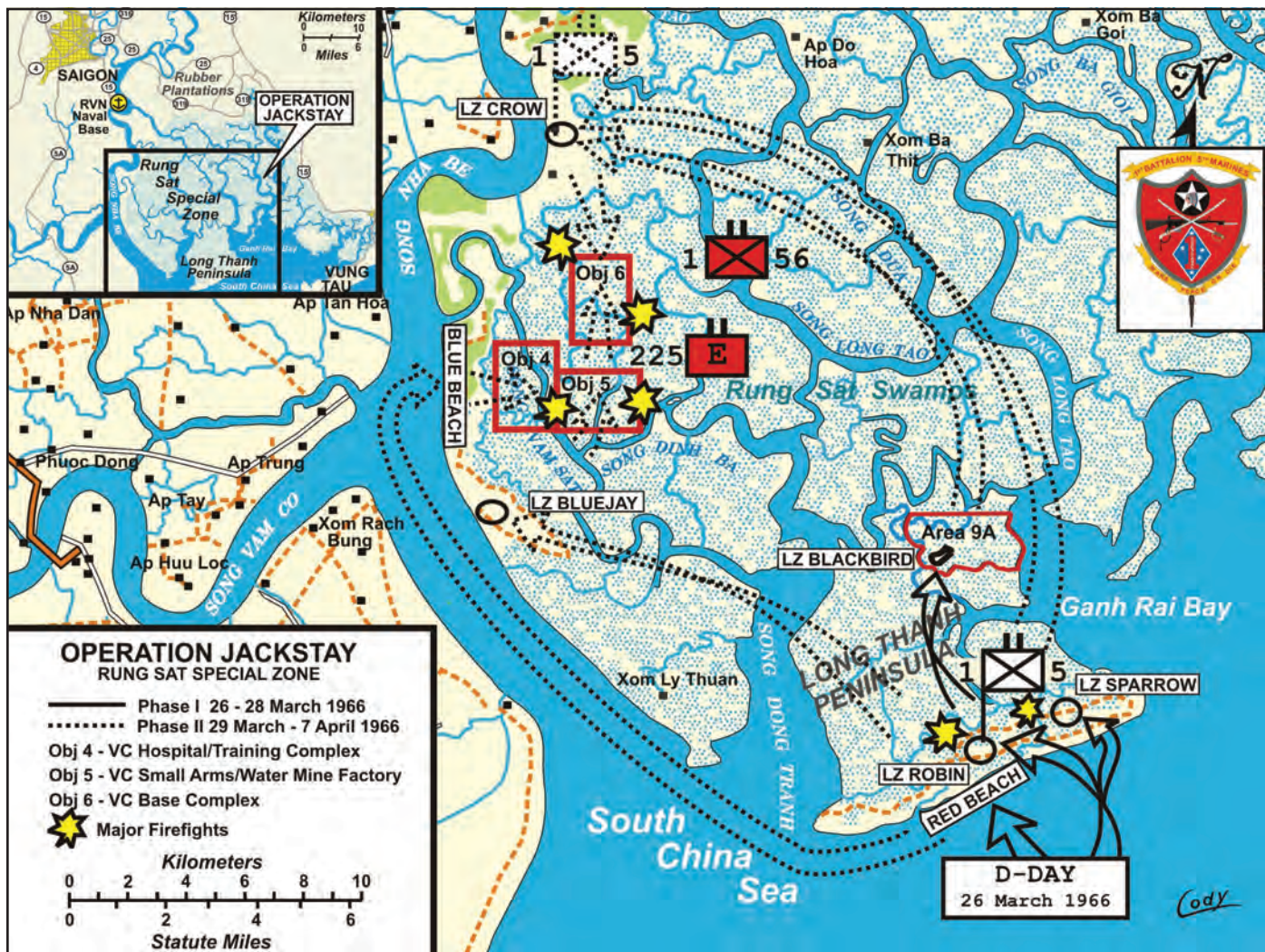
USN

USS *Pickaway* (APA-222), one of the nine ships of 7th Fleet's PHIBRON ONE.

during Phase Two with particular emphasis on Objectives 4, 5 and 6 (see map on page 36).

Although several Viet Cong (VC) installations had been identified in the RSSZ, their organization and strength varied considerably from day to day. Based on enemy activity, reconnaissance

sightings and interrogation of captured prisoners, Marine intelligence estimated nearly 1,000 enemy soldiers inhabited the RSSZ. The primary enemy units occupying the very challenging terrain, which had long been considered a "safe zone" for the enemy, included 1st Bn, 56th VC Regt, and 225th Engineer Bn; both enemy



LT COL RICHARD L. "WILD BILL" CODY, USMC (RET)

units were expected to be located in the heart of the RSSZ, and each had approximately 300 soldiers.

Viet Cong units of company and smaller size, along with bunkers, water-mine factories and ammunition and gun caches, also populated the area. In addition, VC engineer units operated in the area on a regular basis in an attempt to block the shipping channel to Saigon. During late February and early March, the VC attacked shipping in the channel on several occasions.

Second Lieutenant Marshall Buckingham "Buck" Darling loved his job as a leader of Marines in combat, and he took every aspect of it very seriously. He and the Marines of 1/5 had spent several months at Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, training for that kind of combat, before arriving off the coast of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam). Darling remembered those long soggy days in the RSSZ swamps. The battalion stayed ashore for almost two weeks in the swamps during Operation Jackstay. His unit, 3d Platoon, Charlie Co, BLT 1/5, was assigned as a main maneuver element responsible for establishing the blocking positions.

Darling took pride in the fact that his platoon and later the companies he led in combat during the early years of the Vietnam War got their job done with very few casualties. "Third Platoon didn't lose any people during Jackstay," he said. "We ran ambushes and patrols day and night, and we killed a whole bunch of Cong. We patrolled the Rung Sat Special Zone for about 10 days during that operation, and there was nothing good about it. It was a nasty, horrible place. But our company took no casualties that I was aware of. We had three or four good days, striking and ambushing, striking and ambushing, day and night. It seemed like every five minutes we made contact and killed Viet Cong."

Corporal Keith Vollendorf had served in Charlie, 1/5 for more than two years when the battalion arrived aboard ships off the coast of Vietnam. Vollendorf had made squad leader (a billet that normally carries the grade of sergeant, E-5) a few months before while afloat.

He wrote home regularly, sending detailed letters to his family. Those letters home provide an excellent snapshot of the life of a U.S. Marine in combat during that period of the Vietnam War. One of his

earliest letters home contained a brief but thorough diary of events during Operation Jackstay.

"8 April 1966  
"Dear Family,  
"Here's a little breakdown about Operation Jackstay.

"1st day—We got up at 0300 and drew our ammo. ... They really had us loaded down. 0600 rolled around and they called my team up on the flight deck and we got into a chopper. It took us about 15 minutes to get to the Landing Zone (LZ Sparrow). We came in and I was the first one out. I ran across the opening and into some bushes. Nobody was firing at us so we set up around the LZ and waited.

"About 2 hours later I got the word to take my squad out and set up an ambush on the river. The rest of the company stayed at the LZ. We waded through mud that was waist deep and everybody was dead tired. We made it to the river and I set my men in. Everything went good for the rest of the afternoon, but then something bad happened—night came! It was just about everybody's first time in combat and we were all jumpy. Then the firing started—all I could hear was bullets



USMC

whizzing over my head. It would stop for a while, then start all over again. At 8:30, Hill was shot, so I called in on the radio to have a chopper get out there real fast. The choppers were out on the ship and they couldn't make it in time. PFC Richard K. Hill of Seaford, Delaware, was dead.

"2nd day—Then they told me that two more men had been killed, Lance Corporal Anthony G. Velardo, and Lance Corporal David Colvin had been killed at the LZ. ... Then they flew in choppers and we were lifted out to RED BEACH. We then caught boats to an LST (a type of ship). We stayed there that night.

"3rd day—We boarded boats and headed for BLUE BEACH—we had to take this one. We hit the beach but received no fire. We ran into about 40 booby traps and we had to disarm them. Progress was real slow and the mud was waist deep. We moved inland for about a mile and stayed for the night. Still no contact with the VC.

"4th day—We moved out again and headed for a big river where we were supposed to pick up boats. We walked all day long and finally came to the river. We were then informed that we would not be picked up until the next day. So we went out on an ambush patrol and 30 minutes



COURTESY OF JON JOHNSON

**Left: PFC Jon Johnson, a rifleman with Delta Co, 1/5, at Kaneohe Bay before leaving for Vietnam.**

stay. He wrote about returning to the ship on the 12th day.

"12th day—Flew back to USS *Princeton* and took my first shower after 12 days and changed my clothes for the first time. We really smelled raunchy! All the time we were out there, one day was like all the rest. Walking through the waist deep water and mud, mosquitoes, bugs and big red ants."

Private First Class Jon Johnson remembers Operation Jackstay as if it took place yesterday. Johnson, serving as an 0311 rifleman in the 1st Squad, 2d Plt of Delta, 1/5, went to war aboard USS *Pickaway*. When the ship neared the coast of South Vietnam, Delta Co departed *Pickaway* and went aboard the amphibious assault ship USS *Princeton* on 25 March. The leathernecks were transported into the RSSZ on D-day by waves of UH-34 Seahorse helicopters, landing in LZ Robin, which had been secured by Alpha Co.

The Marines of Delta, 1/5 operated in the extreme southern edge of the Long Thanh Peninsula for two days, and then on D+2, 28 March 1966, Co D was heli-lifted into LZ Blackbird to investigate

later all hell broke loose. We got 4 VC in a sampan. The VC didn't even know what hit them."

Vollendorf's letter continued his day-by-day account of the horrible conditions and infrequent but deadly encounters with an elusive enemy during Operation Jack-

suspected enemy activity in what was called “Area 9A.” Movement was extremely difficult on foot through the swamp. After fruitlessly wading through waist-deep water for several hours without making enemy contact, the company was ordered to return to the LZ. The next day, the company was heli-lifted to LZ Crow. Phase Two had begun.

Jon Johnson said, “We were in the mangroves before too long. The more we moved, the more difficult it was to move through those swamps and in that heat. There was nothing they could have done to prepare us for the heat and the physical toll it took on us. On the 29th, we were deeper in the mangrove swamps, and it was getting more and more difficult to move. We were constantly at least knee-deep in water, having to pull each other

radic. However, at 0120H, Company D received a 57 mm Recoilless Rifle round which resulted in friendly losses of one KIA and five WIAs. The night helicopter evacuation was completed by 0220H.”

PFC Johnson’s memories of that night are much more descriptive. He said, “I could hear George screaming at me, asking me if I was dead; I couldn’t really understand any of the other noises because the explosions had ruined my hearing. As the sounds started to come back, I told George to get ready because I expected a human wave attack following the artillery. That never developed.

“Staff Sergeant Joyce, our platoon sergeant, came running by, and I was still on my back and my hearing was coming back. He yelled at us to give him some help with the wounded. Then I understood

“I knew that Staff Sergeant Joyce and Sergeant Herrera were good friends. I found Staff Sergeant Joyce sitting on a log, his head bowed; he had a green towel around his neck and his M14 laying across his legs. I asked him how he was doing. He paused and said, ‘Herrera had six kids. This is my third war, and I’m not going to make it through this one.’ I found out years later that on May 14, 1967, Staff Sergeant Joyce was killed in action down near the Song Ly Ly in the Que Son Valley. He was awarded the Bronze Star.

“A day or two later, we were going through the swamps in column, and I heard some shots from out in front of us. I dove off the side of this trail and right into a nest of red ants. Later on that night, my body had swelled up like a Macy’s Day balloon and I was throwing up. They couldn’t get me out that night, so I had to lay there all night long in all that misery.

“The next day they flew me out to USS *Washoe County* [LST-1165], an LST. They put me in a medical ward, and after the doctor examined me, he said that just on the back of my hand I had over 700 bites, and my whole body was like that. The only medication they could give me was that I had to take three showers a day with some kind of medicated soap. When I was taking those showers, the orderlies had to change my sheets because they were just soaked with pus.

“I don’t remember how many days I was aboard that ship, but I remember that one day Charlie Company had run a bunch of VC out onto the beach, and they announced that anyone who had a rifle could come up on the main deck. We had them between us, and I don’t know if we got any of them, but I do know that we drove them back into the swamps toward Charlie Company.

“While I was gone, Delta Company and Charlie Company had found a hospital and a weapons cache. Finally they flew me back to Delta Company, and when I stepped off that helicopter, I was in clean utilities and my canteens were full of fresh water, and I caught seven kinds of hell from those guys. They were all dirty and grungy and looked like ‘the meanest sons of bitches in the valley.’ It didn’t take long before I was just as dirty and grungy and physically exhausted as they were.

“We were in column, moving forward, but this just seemed to be the absolute worst in terms of our ability to move through the swamp. The guy in front of you would pull you out of the mud, and then you would reach around and pull the



COURTESY OF JON JOHNSON

### Operation Jackstay Marines prepare amphibious transportation during training at Kaneohe Bay, 1966.

forward. We couldn’t dig in—even on the so-called ‘high ground’—as just a few inches down we would hit water.

“I remember at one point late on the night of 29 March, I was in a position with George LaPlaca. All of a sudden, I heard the most terrifying sound I’d ever heard. It sounded like a freight train coming out of the sky. My instinct told me that it was up and to my left, and then there was a blinding flash and a tremendous explosion. It knocked me stupid. I landed on my back, things sounded far away, and my head hurt—it felt like my head would explode.”

An entry in the BLT 1/5 Combat After-Action Report (CAAR) for Operation Jackstay explains in very unemotional words the facts on the ground that night: “VC contact during the night was spo-

the sounds, the screams. We didn’t have to go too far when Staff Sergeant Joyce found Sergeant Francisco Herrera, who had been killed. We took the wounded—Sergeant Pagett and Dick Rolfes, along with others—to an LZ. The choppers came in to get our wounded, but they were full, and they wouldn’t take Herrera because he was dead.

“Next morning, when they came in to get Herrera, Captain Matthew T. Cooper, our CO [commanding officer], walked beside him to the helicopter, and he saluted that helicopter until it was out of sight. I knew at that minute that we were under good leadership. I saw it on his face—he had lost a family member. Captain Cooper would later retire as a lieutenant general of Marines.





**USS Princeton, flagship for PHIBRON ONE during Operation Jackstay.**

guy behind you forward. All of a sudden, here comes Staff Sergeant Joyce, back through the column, and he was at his Parris Island Drill Instructor best, yelling at us about ‘snapping to, get your heads out of your asses’ and so forth. We all thought he was nuts. Then he proceeded to start singing ‘The Marines’ Hymn.’

“Up ahead, I could see a light at the end of the swamp. It had to be open air, and then there it was—Blue Beach. We could see the landing craft, sitting there with their ramps open on the edge of the beach, waiting for us. Jackstay was over, and *Pickaway* was out there in the water, waiting for us. All of a sudden, we experienced a burst of energy that was unbelievable. Then everyone started singing ‘The Marines’ Hymn’—we were yelling and hugging and celebrating. We got in the boats and headed back aboard *Pickaway*.

“By the time we got out to the ship and realized that we had to climb those cargo nets, all of that enthusiasm and energy had dissipated. As I got to the top of the cargo net, and I had my hands on the steel rail of

the ship, two sailors grabbed my arms and threw me up on the deck. I landed on my feet, and one sailor handed me a baloney sandwich and another handed me a cold bottle of San Miguel beer, and I thought I was eating steak. ‘The Marines’ Hymn’ was playing over the loudspeaker[,] and up on the bridge there was a big banner stretched across that said, ‘*Pickaway* Marines are the best Marines!’ ”

As planned, on 6 April 1966, the Marines of BLT 1/5 withdrew from the Rung Sat Special Zone and went back aboard USS *Princeton*, USS *Pickaway* and the other ships they had called home for several months. According to the CAAR compiled by BLT 1/5’s battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel H. L. Coffman, Operation Jackstay accounted for at least 63 Viet Cong killed by 1/5 Marines, and probably 60 more either killed or wounded. In addition, BLT 1/5 captured and/or destroyed a substantial amount of enemy equipment and material.

The Rung Sat Special Zone proved to be a very difficult area to conduct combat

operations in. But overall, the Marines of 1/5 accomplished their mission with great success and took very few casualties which proved the Marines were up to the task.

*Author’s bio: Nicholas Warr served with the 1st Bn, 5th Marines, First Marine Division as a platoon commander, company executive officer and company commander from November 1967 to December 1968. His memoir about his experiences as a platoon commander during the fighting inside the Citadel fortress of Hue City, “Phase Line Green: The Battle for Hue, 1968,” was on the Commandant’s Professional Reading List for nearly 10 years, is well-read within the Marine Corps and often is used as a textbook during Marine Corps training for urban warfare. His second book, “Charlie One Five: A Marine Company’s Vietnam War,” was re-released in August 2013. This article was derived, in part, from the opening chapter of that book.*



# We—the Marines

Edited by Sara W. Bock

## 3dMarDiv CBRN Platoon Exercise Tests Team's Adaptability

■ Marines and sailors of the Assessment and Consequence Management Team conducted environmental training at Landing Zone Westfield, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, May 13.

The team is made up of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Marines and is part of the CBRN platoon assigned to Third Marine Division, Okinawa, Japan.

During the exercise, the team underwent assessment and consequence-management training scenarios, which tested the team's adaptability to changing scenarios while applying the proper safety procedures for conducting research in a contaminated environment.

Throughout the training, the Marines utilized the new Rapid Area Sensitive Sight and Reconnaissance (RASSR) robot. Controlled via a remote controller and laptop, the RASSR's main function is to identify

current conditions and eliminates the need for CBRN Marines to physically touch nerve agents.

The only one owned by the Marine Corps, this RASSR robot is equipped with an extending claw to pick up debris and gather samples. It also is equipped with a camera that constantly monitors the environment around the device. Another feature is a laser that can identify the chemical compounds in unknown substances.

"The RASSR is a great tool because it identifies the problem within minutes and helps mitigate most of the hazards we face," said Lance Corporal Ryan Siebert, recon team member B, CBRN Plt, Headquarters Battalion, 3dMarDiv. "It's a new piece of technology, so we want to take advantage of it."

The first training scenario involved a wrecked aircraft that was leaking chemical agents, and the RASSR was sent in first to investigate the area. After the robot examined the aircraft and helped identify

the problem, two CBRN Marines donned Level B hazardous materials suits and went to the crash site.

After conducting a security check, the Marines carefully gathered samples of the nerve agent to conduct more research. When they finished collecting data, they packed their gear and headed back to the base site to begin their decontamination process.

"Chemical warfare is something we have to concern ourselves with," said Corporal Tyler Olson, recon team leader, CBRN Plt, Headquarters Bn, 3dMarDiv. "Our enemies could implement a nerve agent anytime, so these training scenarios are just one of the many things we go through to make sure we're prepared."

The next scenario again utilized the RASSR to identify a chemical problem. Once they received the information from the robot about the contamination, three Marines dressed in Level B hazmat suits went to address the situation. Upon scanning the area, they discovered a dummy, simulating a casualty.

Reacting quickly, the Marines put a gas mask connected to an oxygen tank on the casualty and transported the dummy onto a stretcher, escorting it to a safety zone before returning to fix the problem of contamination.

After resolving the situation, one of the Marines collapsed in the field as a simulated heat casualty. Running low on air, the other two Marines sent out a distress call signaling for help from a quick reaction force.

The two Marines returned to the safety zone before running out of oxygen as the quick reaction force team left to rescue the heat casualty in the affected area.

"The purpose of these mobility exercises was to stress the Marines out," said Chief Warrant Officer Christopher Joy, 3dMarDiv CBRN officer and officer in charge of the 3dMarDiv Assessment and Consequence Management Team. "They already know the procedures, but what we wanted to do was put them in situations where they're required to think on their feet to be better prepared for potential ops."

At the conclusion of both scenarios, the Marines conducted an after-action report to discuss what they took away from the training.



LCPL MATTHEW BRAGG

After collecting samples from a simulated aircraft chemical leak, LCpl Ryan Siebert, left, and Cpl Tyler Olson clear the area at LZ Westfield, MCB Hawaii. Marines with CBRN Plt, 3dMarDiv conducted assessment and consequence management training through several scenarios on May 13, using a RASSR robot to gather samples and identify chemical compounds.



L CPL JOHN TUCKER

**OLD BREED—NEW BREED**—A retired reconnaissance Marine reminisces with a Marine from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 464 at the Marine Corps air-ground task force demonstration in the Bronx, N.Y., during Fleet Week 2014. Held this year from May 21-27, Fleet Week New York is an annual celebration of the sea services and allows local residents the opportunity to see the capabilities of America’s maritime forces.

The 3dMarDiv currently is using the RASSR to research how beneficial the robot would be if implemented in CBRN platoons throughout the Marine Corps.

LCpl Matthew Bragg  
PAO, MCB Hawaii

### Wounded Warriors Learn Legacy On PME Visit to Belleau Wood

■ The long wheat fields and dense forest of Belleau Wood in France have deep roots in the history of the Marine Corps.

From the day they enter recruit training, Marines learn of the June 1918 offensive, led by the 5th and 6th Marine regiments in the heart of the French countryside during World War I. However, very few Marines have the opportunity to see Belleau Wood in person.

For the Marines with the Wounded Warrior Regiment, the opportunity to view the historic ground became a reality during an annual professional military education (PME) program.

According to Colonel Willard Buhl, Commanding Officer, Wounded Warrior Regiment, many of his Marines share deep ties with the Marines of the Battle of Belleau Wood because a large portion of them were injured while serving with the very same regiments during modern-day conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“Imagine walking through this open field with wheat up to your knees,” said Buhl. “The first and second wave didn’t even make it across, and the parts of the third and the fourth finally broke the tree line.”

The tour began with a visit to the Chateau-Thierry American Monument overlooking the Marne River. At the monument, the Wounded Warriors began to learn about the beginning stages of Marine Corps involvement in WW I.

“Our nation and our Marines were ready to go to war,” Buhl explained to them. “Not a lot about Marines has changed because Marines continue to be ready when the nation is least ready.”

After leaving Chateau-Thierry, the Marines visited towns involved in the battle—Lucy-le-Bocage and Bouresches. They then moved on to Belleau Wood where fierce fighting took place for nearly a month between the Marines and the German army. Many of the fighting positions are visible to this day.

“The first day you get into the Marine Corps, you hear about Belleau Wood a lot,” said Lance Corporal Justin Beer, a Marine with the Wounded Warrior Regiment. “However, being here and seeing it makes you feel like you are a part of it.”

The Marines of the Wounded Warrior



MSGT CHAD MCMEEN

Marines from the Wounded Warrior Regiment observe the Belleau Wood Memorial Day ceremony on May 25 at the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery in France—marking the 96th anniversary of the historic battle.



KANITTA WELLS



PAUL URSCHALITZ

**A TRIBUTE TO THE FALLEN**—After three years of planning and fundraising, Marine veterans from Basic Class 6-67 unveiled a monument outside of Reasoner Hall, The Basic School, Quantico, Va., dedicated to their 50 classmates who were killed in Vietnam and in training accidents. In attendance were nearly 300 people, including families of 20 classmates who died in Vietnam. Above left: Nell Hannah, center, whose son was killed in Vietnam, represented those families by assisting in the unveiling. She is pictured with Dale Wittler, left, and John Propis, two of the 10 members of the monument committee. Above right: The 7-foot monument is made of polished black granite and features an image of 1stLt Thomas Keppen, a member of Basic Class 6-67.

Regiment heard stories of how the Marines operated during the battle and then proceeded to the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery, where fallen Marines are buried.

Many of the Wounded Warriors could not help but feel a deeper understanding of their brothers who fought in 1918, as well as a greater appreciation of the Corps' values.

"I think we share the same warrior spirit that makes us look after our buddy to the left and the right of us," said Beer. "Being injured makes you appreciate things a lot more and feel connected with the Marines who were here," he added.

Programs sponsored by the Wounded Warrior Regiment, like the visit to Belleau Wood, are designed to instruct Marines on the legacy that Marines have created in the past, and the legacy they continue to uphold. The Wounded Warrior Regiment provides assistance to wounded, ill and injured Marines; sailors attached to or in support of Marine units; and their family members, in order to assist them as they return to duty or transition to civilian life.

The Marine Corps Association and Foundation, a key supporter of PME, provided substantial funding for the trip to Belleau Wood.

Sgt Wayne Edmiston  
PAO, Wounded Warrior Regiment



CPL LAWRENCE BABIYA

**First Sgt Patricia Trotter, left, demonstrates the prototype for the new female dress blue coat while LCpl Elizabeth Delladonna wears the current female dress blue uniform. The Marine Corps is expanding its field testing of the prototype, which is designed to be similar to the male dress blue coat with the traditional collar.**

### Marine Corps to Expand Testing Of New Female Dress Blue Coat

■ The Marine Corps is considering a recommendation to redesign the female officer and enlisted dress blue uniforms to a style similar to the male dress blue

coat with the traditional high collar. In the coming months, the Corps will expand its field testing of a new female dress blue coat prototype.

In 2013, Colonel Christian G. Cabaniss, commanding officer of Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., requested and conducted a field test over a period of several months—implementing a female dress blue coat similar to the male dress blue coat. The goal was to achieve uniformity in appearance and improve functionality during ceremonies and parades.

"The one uniform between males and females that isn't similar is the blues," said Cabaniss. "Providing female Marines the opportunity to wear the most identifiable uniform in the Marine Corps would recognize their significant achievements on the battlefield over the last decade plus," he added.

Following last summer's study, a recommendation was forwarded to the Marine Corps Uniform Board requesting a review of a permanent change to the female dress blue coat. The request was approved for further consideration.

"As president of the board, I will work through Marine Corps Systems Command to identify vendors to prepare a prototype that should be ready for a wear test in late summer/early fall," said Col Todd

Desgrosseilliers, commanding officer of The Basic School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. "The wear test for the new prototype will be done by band members, recruiters, selected Marines in the National Capital Region and potentially Marine Barracks personnel again."

Following the testing period, results will be presented to the uniform board, which will consider the issue and provide a recommendation to the Commandant.

According to Desgrosseilliers, the Commandant could make a decision regarding the female dress blue coat during the summer of 2015. After approval, it takes 12 to 24 months to field a new uniform item, he said.

Sgt Chelsea Flowers Anderson  
Office of Marine Corps Communication, HQMC

### Quick Shots Around the Corps

#### CG Shows Appreciation For Firefighting Operations

■ Brigadier General John W. Bullard Jr., Commanding General, Marine Corps Installations-West/Commander, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., extended his gratitude to more than 1,000 firefighters, as well as military and civilian

aircrews for their efforts to extinguish wildfires on the base in May.

"Everyone came together to form an integrated team focused on protecting the lives of our Marines and their families here," said Bullard. He added that "their execution was well-planned and flawless."

The San Mateo, Las Pulgas and the Naval Weapons Station Fallbrook fires burned 21,900 acres and led to the evacuation of several thousand base personnel and residents. The fires covered approximately 18 percent of Camp Pendleton before reaching 100 percent containment.

Bullard thanked Cal Fire; the U.S. Forest Service; Camp Pendleton Fire Department; I Marine Expeditionary Force; the Navy's 3rd Fleet; the Southern California Incident Management Team 2; and all the various fire departments throughout California and Nevada who worked to contain the fires.

Sgt Christopher Duncan  
PAO, MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif.

#### Language Training Courses Now Activated on MarineNet

■ The Marine Corps has announced the activation of an initial suite of language training courses on MarineNet as part

of the Regional, Culture, and Language Familiarization (RCLF) Program.

The program ensures that Marine units are globally prepared and regionally focused so they are effective at navigating the culturally complex landscape of the 21st century.

The program is now operational for all 17 culture regions and is available for the grades of second lieutenant to major, warrant officer to chief warrant officer 4 (CWO-4) and sergeant. RCLF courses will be available for the grades of staff sergeant and gunnery sergeant by the summer of 2014. Courses for Marines in the grades of lieutenant colonel, CWO-5, sergeant major, master gunnery sergeant, first sergeant and master sergeant are still under development.

All Marines assigned a RCLF region are required to select a language and complete the associated blocks of RCLF education on MarineNet.

For details on how to enroll in or complete the program, refer to Marine Administrative Message 231/14.

Sgt Adwin Esters  
PAO, MARFORRES, New Orleans



## Crazy Caption Contest

### Winner



"Remember—yell 'Geronimo' on the way down. Then tuck and roll. Tuck and roll!"

Submitted by  
Matt E. Valenzuela  
Moorpark, Calif.

### This Month's Photo



(Caption) \_\_\_\_\_

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



MCSN CHRISTOPHER PRATT/USN

Amphibious dock landing ship *USS Rushmore* (LSD-47) is towed to her home port after completing an eight-month Western Pacific deployment. The decline in the number of amphibious ships in the Navy inventory will make execution of a distributed strategy in the Pacific challenging.

# The Distributed Laydown

## Shaping the U.S. Marine Corps' Future in the Pacific

By Robbin Laird

**T**he U.S. Marine Corps is in the throes of a significant shift in the Pacific in the disposition of its forces. Because two thirds of Marines are deployed to the Pacific, such a shift is a key event in shaping the Marine Corps stance in the decade ahead.

Just as the Marines are transitioning, so is the U.S. Air Force shifting toward a more flexible deployment stance as well. That means that USAF lift is going to be dedicated increasingly to supporting the deployment of distributed airpower. That will enhance the importance of the U.S. Navy-Marine approach to sustainment with their own assets.

The demand to support distributed forces is rising and will require attention to be paid to the connectors, lifters and various support elements. Part of that demand can be met as allies modernize their own support elements, such as Australia and Singapore adding new Airbus tankers which could be leveraged to support Marine Corps Ospreys as well as other aircraft.

Indeed, a key element of the distributed laydown of our forces in the Pacific is the fact that it is occurring as core allies in

the region are reshaping and modernizing their forces as well as partners coming to the table who wish to work with and host USMC forces operating on a rotational basis with their forces. The military and political demands for the kind of forces that the Marines are developing also are what allies and partners want for their operations.

In turn, this drives up the importance of exercises in the Pacific with joint and coalition forces to shape new capabilities for the distributed force. The distributed laydown, the evolution of the capabilities for distributed forces, the modernization of allied forces and the growing interest in a diversity of partners to work with the USMC are all part of shaping what might be called a deterrence-in-depth strategy to deal with the threats and challenges facing the United States and its allies in shaping a 21st-century approach to Pacific defense.

### The Distributed Laydown

The distributed laydown started as a real-estate move from Okinawa to Guam, but it is clear that due to recent events and with the emergence of partnering opportunities, the distributed laydown has become something quite different. It is

about reshaping and reconfiguring the USMC-USN presence within an overall strategy for the joint force as well as enabling coalition capabilities.

The distributed laydown fits the geography of the Pacific and the evolving partnership dynamics in the region. The Pacific is vast with many nations and many islands. The tragic events involving the missing Malaysian airliner this past March illustrate better than words the vastness of the Pacific and its impact on operations.

The expeditionary quality of the USMC, which is evolving under the impact of new aviation and amphibious capabilities, is an excellent fit for the island quality of the region. The Marine Corps is building out four major areas from which to operate—Japan, Guam, Hawaii and, on a rotational basis, Australia. (Possibly a fifth, also on a rotational basis, is the Philippines.)

But as one member of the Marine Corps Forces, Pacific (MARFORPAC) staff said: “We go from our basic locations to a partner or area to train. We are mandated by the Commandant to train our forces, and in practical terms in the Pacific, this means we move within the region to do so. And we are not training forces; we train

with forces to shape congruent capabilities.”

The basic template around which Marine training activities operate is at the intersection of three key dynamics: the required training for the Marine unit, meeting select U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) theater campaign priorities, and the partner nation’s focus or desires for the mutually training exercise or opportunity.

The template remains the same throughout the distributed laydown, but it is implemented differently, as an ability to operate from multiple locations allows the Marines to broaden their opportunities and shape more meaningful partnership opportunities.

The training regimen is translated into a series of exercises executed throughout the year with partner forces. Those exercises are central lynchpins in shaping effective working relationships in the region, which provide the foundation for any deterrence in depth strategy.

The Marine Corps is a very cost-effective force within the Department of Defense, spending less than 10 percent of the DOD budget. In the Pacific, the Marine Corps spends \$50 million per year on its exercises, and, of that, 50 percent of the cost is for lift. It is clear that this ongoing commitment for deepening working partnerships needs to be fully supported and enhanced and not be part of a salami-cutting approach to cutting defense expenditures.

Nature abhors a vacuum, and if you are not present, you are absent. By building core working relationships, there should not be a significant power void which could be filled by powers trying to rewrite the rules of the game and perhaps to impose a new order in the Pacific. Filling power vacuums by an ongoing presence is more effective than rushing in later to deal with a crisis generated by a collapse or another power trying to force its will on the region.

Another way to look at the distributed laydown is to compare the before and after of the process. A key aspect of understanding the after is that it is a work in progress and is bound to change in the fluid decade ahead as needs become redefined and new partnership opportunities are identified.

The Marines have been directed through international agreements, spanning two different U.S. administrations, to execute force-positioning moves. The U.S. Secretary of Defense has mandated that at least 22,000 Marines in PACOM remain west of the international dateline in the distributed Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) laydown.

President Barack Obama has directed the Marine Corps to shift forces from Okinawa to Guam and to develop a new



SGT JOHN ROBBART III

**Above:** A CH-53E Super Stallion with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit lands on the flight deck of USS *Peleliu* (LHA-5).

**Below:** In November 2013, MV-22 Ospreys, assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 261, First Marine Aircraft Wing, take on supplies to provide aid during Operation Damayan in the Philippines after Super Typhoon Haiyan.



MC3 RICARDO R. GUZMAN, USN

working relationship with the Australians.

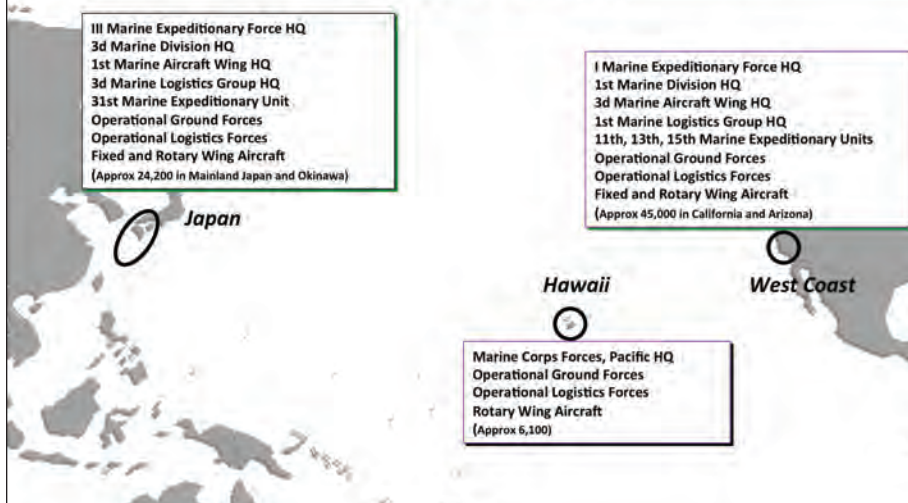
Beyond what is directed, the Marines need to maintain a ready force in the face of existing training-area encroachments, plus they have the requirement for training areas near the new force-laydown locations. Within the distributed laydown, the Marines must retain the ability to respond rapidly to crises across the range of demands, from a major combat operation in Northeast Asia to low-end humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) operations wherever they occur.

Locations for the Marines are in transition as well. From Okinawa and Iwakuni, the Marines can train locally in Japan, Korea and the Philippines, as well as respond with “Fight Tonight” capabilities if necessary. From Guam, the Marines

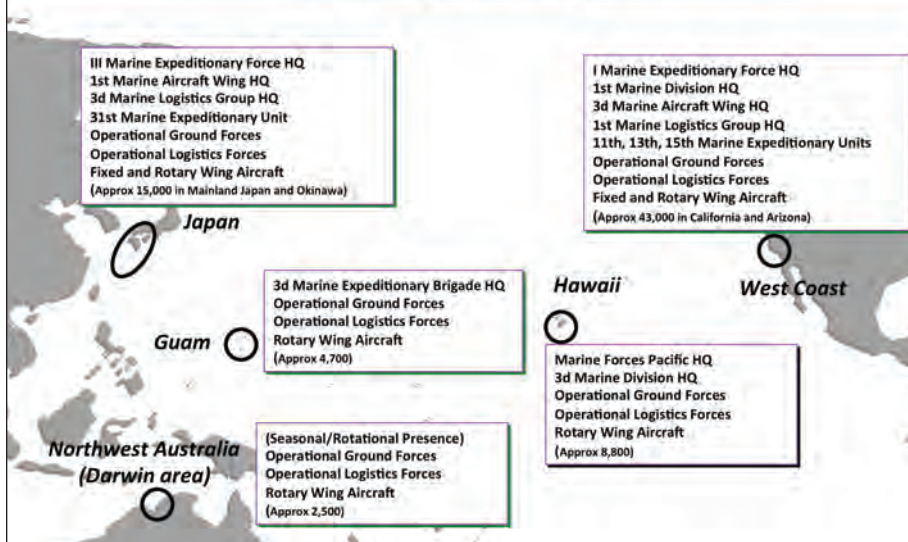
can train in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to the north, the Federated States of Micronesia to the south and Palau and the Philippines to the west. Guam and CNMI provide the Marines something they do not have anywhere else in the Pacific: a location on U.S. soil where they can train unilaterally or with partner nations.

In broad terms, prior to the start (c. 2011) of the distributed laydown, the Marines were located in Japan (25,000 in mainland Japan and Okinawa), Hawaii (approximately 6,000) and on the West Coast (approximately 45,000 in California and Arizona). With the projected end (c. 2025) of the distributed-laydown process, there will be a projected force distribution as follows: mainland Japan and Okinawa

## Today's USMC Pacific Presence *Before Rebalance*



## Future USMC Pacific Presence *After Rebalance*



(15,000), Guam (approximately 4,700), Hawaii (approximately 8,800), West Coast (approximately 43,000) and a rotational force in Northwest Australia (approximately 2,500).

This is clearly a work in progress. It is not simply moving Marines from Okinawa to Guam. There are additive elements as well, mainly from USMC aviation assets, as the Marine Corps delivers new capabilities to the Pacific in the decade ahead.

### The Importance of Performance

It is clear that the hard work the Marines have done to introduce new approaches and capabilities is preparing them for an effective strategy for distributed operations in the Pacific. The introduction of the Osprey and its growing effect on re-

thinking how to insert forces are key examples. The Special Purpose MAGTFs already have demonstrated the ability to move packages of capability at great distance; the self-deploying quality of the Osprey has been crucial in the ability of the Marines to operate at distances in the Pacific as well.

The Marine Corps is conducting experiments to provide significant enhancements in the ability of the ground combat element to plan missions before landing and to enhance situational awareness during the mission. The results certainly will become an important part of the approach in the Pacific.

It is not just about technology; training and innovating in operations are shaping new opportunities in Pacific defense as

well. A recently concluded agreement between the United States and the Philippines might not have happened without a successful support effort earlier this year in a time of crisis. The agreement is about the United States working with the Filipinos, but on a rotational not permanent basing effort.

Notably, after Super Typhoon Haiyan, the Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy arrived rapidly, created infrastructure within chaos to allow for the relief effort to follow and then within three weeks the core insertion force left. The U.S. military had demonstrated a rapid insertion of support and an ability to leave quickly as well. That operational capability underpins the evolving defense relationship.

The ability to rotate forces in support of missions is a key focus for U.S. forces in the decade ahead. The Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) commander, General Herbert "Hawk" Carlisle, has coined the term "places not bases" as his command's way of discussing working with partners and allies throughout the region. Providing logistical support and coordinated capabilities allows the United States and those partners to work together in a variety of contingencies.

Lieutenant General Terry G. "Guts" Robling, the Marine Corps Forces Pacific commander, has focused on the key role of rotational forces in enabling USN-USMC forces engaged in a distributed laydown in the Pacific. The new Marine Rotational Force-Darwin is working with the Australian Defence Force during a six-month rotation in Australia.

Rotational opportunities are a crucial building block in shaping the deterrence-in-depth strategy in which the United States and its allies are engaged in shaping 21st-century capabilities.

### Cross-Cutting Modernizations

The Marine Corps is viewed by allies in the Pacific as being at the cutting edge of working combat innovation and providing the kind of capability with which allies can work themselves in shaping their forces. Four key allies are investing significantly in new capabilities. Japan, South Korea, Singapore and Australia are all working with U.S. forces and in particular with the Marine Corps to shape their innovation moving forward. Allies are very interested in working with Marines because they have the Osprey in operation throughout the Pacific and are the first U.S. military service to take the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter into the theater.

A key example is Australia and its approach to modernization. By using training ranges operating from Australia to



**LtGen Terry Robling, Commander, MARFORPAC, right, discusses the aviation combat element of Marine Rotational Force–Darwin with LtCol Matthew Puglisi, Officer in Charge, Forward Coordination Element, MRF–D, aboard Royal Australian Air Force Base Darwin, April 22, 2014.**

the Mariana Islands to Guam, the Marines and the Aussies will shape common approaches built around new systems.

They will train with other Asian allies and other U.S. military forces, but shaping expeditionary capabilities through the Marines' 10-year approach to a distributed laydown in the Pacific dovetails with the changes which the Australians themselves are undertaking.

A significant Australian air combat modernization process began with the C-17 Globemaster and will continue with the acquisition of five new Airbus tankers (joined by six being bought by Singapore), five new Wedgetail airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) aircraft and then the F-35 Lightning II. The Wedgetail squadron is doing what no other air squadron has done to date: It is operating and leading the upgrade process of the world's first software-upgradeable aircraft. The F-35 is such an aircraft, and the squadron clearly understands that it is spearheading a broader modernization process.

The Australian navy has added new world-leading radar systems on its frigates and is adding new amphibious ships in addition to Aegis ships. It is looking to integrate the Wedgetail and its F-35s with the fleet to meet the various challenges and threats in the region.

The final major piece to be added is the F-35. The Lightning II is viewed by the



CPL JAMES GULLIVER

Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) as disruptive technology, which is embraced as such by the RAAF leadership. It is not just about doing things that can be done now with a replacement aircraft; it is about doing things that cannot be done now with a transformational system.

The Aussie approach was discussed before, during and after a workshop held by The Sir Richard Williams Foundation, an independent research organization based in Canberra, Australia, on behalf of the Australian chief of staff of the RAAF in mid-March in Canberra. The title of the seminar was "Air Combat Operations: 2025 and Beyond." The core emphasis was on the impact of the F-35 on reshaping the Australian combat approach appropriate to the challenges which Australia faced in the region and beyond.

At the heart of the program were three speakers: Squadron Leader Matthew Harper, No. 1 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force; Lieutenant Colonel David "Chip" Berke, USMC; and the then-commanding officer of Marine Operational Test and Evaluation Squadron (VMX) 22, Colonel Michael R. "Mike" Orr, USMC. The presence of the Marine aviators was a concrete manifestation of the cross-modernization opportunities.

Those three operators addressed the question of what the fifth-generation aircraft experience was about and how that experience would impact the evolution of the force in the decade ahead. Having operators address the issue of transformation and transition really focused the audience, which included the next generation of RAAF officers.



USMC

**An MV-22 Osprey from VMM-265 (Reinforced) is refueled by a KC-130J Super Hercules from Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 152.**

**Leathernecks from 1st Battalion, Fifth Marine Regiment, MRF-Darwin aboard Mount Bunday Training Area, Australia, June 19, 2014. MRF-Darwin Marines are training with the Australian Defence Force during their six-month rotation.**

In an interview, LtGen Robling highlighted that the Australians are a good example of an ally building out its capabilities as the United States does so and working out a very interactive and mutually reinforcing defense structure.

He emphasized that the impact of a fleet of F-35s being shaped by Japanese, Singaporeans, South Koreans and Aussies with those of the USAF, USMC and USN will be a key element of shaping interactive capabilities.

“The two allies see a mutually beneficial relationship,” LtGen Robling said. “The intersection of Australian training ranges with those we are modernizing in Guam is a key element of working cross-cutting modernizations. This will allow us to work with a set of allies in the region as well within the Guam context to facilitate mutual modernizations of the allies as well. We are not just building our bilateral relationships; we are facilitating multinational collaboration among our allies as well. This is a clear force multiplier.”

The opportunity is not just for training, but shaping relevant capabilities for the 21st century, and the Marines are at the heart of the innovation in the Pacific.

### The Challenge for the Connectors And Support

It is clear that as the distributed approach is shaped in the Pacific, the demand on support, connectors and lift is going to increase. There will be a need for Military Sealift Command ships and amphibious ships and to draw heavily on new ships like the T-AKE and USNS *Montford Point* (MLP-1).

The demand on airlift is significant, and it’s clear from developments in the Pacific and new approaches like Special Purpose MAGTFs that KC-130Js need to be plussed up.

LtGen Robling underscored the nature of the challenge: “The demand signal goes up every year while the cost of using the lift goes up every year as well. This has me very concerned.

“The truth of the matter is the Asia Pacific region is 52 percent of the globe’s surface, and there are over 25,000 islands in the region. The distances and times



CPL JAMES GULLIVER



COURTESY OF ROBBIN LAIRD

**Col Mike Orr, CO, VMX-22, was a key speaker at the Air Combat Operations: 2025 and Beyond seminar, hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force in March 2014.**

necessary to respond to a crisis are significant. The size of the AOR [area of responsibility] is illustrated in part by the challenge of finding the missing Malaysian airliner.

“If you don’t have the inherent capability like the KC-130J aircraft to get your equipment and people into places rapidly, you can quickly become irrelevant. General Hawk Carlisle uses a term in his engagement strategy which is ‘places not bases.’

“America doesn’t want forward bases.

This means you have to have the lift to get to places quickly, be able to operate in an expeditionary environment when you get there, and then leave when we are done.

“Strengthening our current partnerships and making new ones will go a long way in helping us be successful at this strategy,” the general added. “We have to be invited in before we can help. If you don’t have prepositioned equipment already in these countries, then you have to move it in somehow.

“And, right now, we’re moving in either via naval shipping, black-bottom shipping, or when we really need it there quickly, via KC-130J aircraft or available C-17 aircraft. Right now, we are the only force in the Pacific that can get to a crisis quickly, and the only force that operates as an integrated air, sea and ground organization.”

Allies see the Marines clearly on the right path, and that path is a powerful one. But funding for the capabilities needed and the proper training will not happen by itself. Amazingly, the USMC exercise budget is under regular attack. The KC-130Js are not being procured in the numbers needed, and too many inside Washington, D.C., have not recognized what the evolution of a tilt-rotor-enabled ground force can be for 21st-century operations. The Marines are innovators; however, they need support to turn those innovations into the combat realities the United States will need in the decade ahead.

*Author’s bio: Robbin Laird is the co-founder of Second Line of Defense and a longtime analyst of global defense issues. In recent years, he has followed closely the evolution of the new 21st-century aviation capabilities worldwide.*



### Leatherneck—On the Web

See more photographs regarding the Corps’ positioning of units in the Pacific at [www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/distributedlaydown](http://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/distributedlaydown)

# Join the **CFC** Challenge

**19,821** beads of sweat dripped from the foreheads of Marines who hiked on Commander's Forum PMEs.

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**Marine Corps**  
Association Foundation

# Devil Pups of America

## Celebrating 60 Years of Building Great Citizens

Story by P.T. Brent  
Photos courtesy of Devil Pups Inc.

### Happy Birthday, Pups!

Each summer, 600 rootin', tootin', rompin', stompin' young Americans graduate from 10 summer days of fun and excitement as Devil Pups at encampments aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Since 1954, there have been more than 50,000 graduates of the youth program. They come from hamlets and cities around the western half of the United States—all for an unforgettable experience. Eagerly, a few even return to volunteer as Eagles, assisting the Marines working with the Devil Pups.

Retired Marine Colonel Duncan Shaw Sr., his family and retired Reserve Col Raymond “Ray” Blum have left a 60-year legacy of building American citizens through the “Devil Pups Youth Program for America.” Under the leadership of the

Devil Pup chief executive officer, Rich Lindsay, and the Devil Pup camp commander, Col Trace Deneke, a new Devil Pup era has been launched. The new leaders continue the tradition of instilling good, clean, strong memories that the young people will have the rest of their lives.

A few years ago, actor Tom Selleck, Devil Pups class of 1963, said that his two summers at Devil Pups changed his life and made him feel he was kind of a junior Marine. “Devil Pups occurred during an interesting time in my life. ... I learned to do things beyond myself. It taught me that respect is not something you are given—but rather it must be earned.”

That is the story for many of the Devil Pup graduates.

### The History of Devil Pups Inc.

The idea for Devil Pups unfolded in the summer of 1953 as a result of a U.S. flag-burning incident by some youths at a Los Angeles high school. By the summer of

1954, the inaugural program began with the backing of several retired Marine Corps Reserve officers, the assistance of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the approval for the Devil Pups to come aboard MCB Camp Pendleton by the then-commanding general, Major General John T. Selden.

Through the years, the program grew into a youth-citizenship development program hosted by the nonprofit corporation Devil Pups Inc.

### Starting the Program

The philosophy of the program was that a young boy could be as rough and tough as any situation requires yet remain manly, physically and mentally adept, and respectful of himself, others, his flag and authority. That young boy could be helped toward that goal by education and personal example on a Marine Corps base under the trained and skilled eyes of Devil Pup staff and active-duty Marine escorts.



Active-duty Marine escorts lead the Devil Pups in a pass in review during their graduation parade.

**Physical development is a crucial element of the Devil Pup program, and the Devil Pups participate in a variety of physical activities similar to the training active-duty Marines undergo.**

After expanding considerably in 1955, the program became known as the “Devil Pup Good Citizenship Physical Development Program.” Devil Pups was incorporated as a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit charitable organization under federal and state laws. Trustees were elected to the board and assigned duties to steer the program according to the bylaws.

The program has evolved over the years, but continues to be primarily an education-health-citizenship-building effort where liaison representatives throughout California, Arizona and Nevada find and qualify applicants annually. In 1998, a girls platoon was added. The program now is open to boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 17. Acceptance is on a first-come, first-served basis after physical fitness examination and a desire to participate in the program is evident. Once a participant is accepted, all the costs of the program, including food, lodging and travel, are paid by Devil Pups Inc.

### **Outstanding and in Only 10 Days**

During Devil Pup training, underfed boys and girls put on weight and overweight ones get into shape. The command “Attention” develops a truer meaning as the U.S. flag is explained to young citizens at “Morning Colors.” The most difficult combination of words for some—“Sir, yes, sir”—becomes commonplace. Eager, rapt eyes watch as Marine escorts demonstrate and teach self-respect, discipline and responsibility.

“Ever since I was 8 years old, I’ve wanted to be out on the parade deck as a Devil Pup,” said Benjamin Hulbert. “My great-grandfather [Duncan Shaw] heard about the students at a local high school burning our American flag and wanted the teenagers of our country to have greater pride in the country which we live in.

“I feel like a better citizen,” said Hulbert. “I would recommend [Devil Pups] to anyone 14 to 17 years old doubting themselves and going through a hard time, needing something to strive for. ... This program taught me self-respect, personal discipline, teamwork, qualities of good citizenship, respect for others, their family and our country.”

To set the stage for all new Devil Pups, Sergeant Major Bud Dietsch, USMC (Ret), the Devil Pups’ sergeant major since retiring in 1999, always tells them Vince Lombardi style, “If you are not 15 minutes early, you are late!”

In a welcoming talk with Devil Pups,



The Devil Pups' 10 days at Camp Pendleton, Calif., are spent enhancing discipline, promoting respect for others, working as a team and learning how to be good citizens.



A. Duncan Shaw, now chairman emeritus for the program, said, “America’s detractors say America is getting soft. You Devil Pups have challenged that supposition by taking on all your NCOs [noncommissioned officers] have thrown at you, earning their respect. [There is] no doubt in my military mind after watching your training, you are ready to charge ahead as have over 50,000-plus Devil Pups before you.

“Now, it is time to go home ... and thank your parents and tell them you LOVE them! Now, you have a few new sea stories to share. Tell your friends the Devil Pup story. Let’s see if they are tough enough to sign up.

“You arrived as individuals here at Camp Pendleton. Then you evolved into squads and platoons and developed a team spirit second to none. You learned to focus on the Pup on your left and the Pup on your right instead of just yourself.”

Then speaking to the parents, he added, “Today your Devil Pup will have new

## Devil Pups Oath

On my honor, as a Devil Pup, I will do  
My best to do my duty to God  
And to my country.

I vow, on this day, to always take a stand  
For what is right—and to speak out  
Against what is wrong.

It is my life quest, as a Devil Pup,  
To seek my full potential in life.

To keep myself physically strong  
And mentally prepared in the

Long tradition of Devil Pup graduates.

I declare on this day—that I am proud  
To be in America; this is an honor I do not

Take for granted. As an American, I will  
Honor and respect my country,

Its people, its flag and  
Its warriors.

Freedom is not free—it is my responsibility.

—Tim Mincarelli and Col Raymond Blum, USMCR (Ret)

values and a new vocabulary, but the real change is one which will last them forever. It is inside them. Inside your young person—forever.”

There is no small challenge to impact

a life in just 10 days, but Devil Pups manages to get it done, using a training scenario which has been evolving since 1954. The training is designed to challenge every teenager to become self-confident and develop leadership. The program also instills self-discipline, motivation, respect and patriotism. All are essential to making good choices in their early years. Through competition and teamwork the program produces positive results, leaving each Pup with a sense of pride that can be earned only through his or her own personal effort. Growth comes through challenge.

The staff can say proudly: “No youngster who goes through the Devil Pups program is unchanged.”

*Author’s bio: Patrick “P.T.” Brent, a frequent Leatherneck contributor, is proud to have been an infantry Marine who served in 2/24. Brent also was a UPI military correspondent embedded in Afghanistan, Iraq and Africa.*



# Counterinsurgency Challenges: **EXERCISE DULL KNIFE, 1963**

Story by David G. Marr  
Photos courtesy of the author

Counterinsurgency is nothing new to the Marine Corps. During the Philippines Campaign of 1899-1901, Marines engaged in the first counterinsurgency operation of the 20th century. In the two World Wars and the Korean War, division-scale combat was the norm, but by the early 1960s, it was apparent that Marines might be called on once again to fight “brush fire” or asymmetrical wars at village level.

The summer of 1963 saw Brigadier General C. A. Youngdale’s 1st Marine Brigade, headquartered at Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, preparing for a scenario-driven counterinsurgency exercise on the island of Molokai. After landing on the west coast of Molokai, the ground combat element of the brigade, the Fourth Marine Regiment, supported by the aviation and logistics elements and the brigade command element, would quell “rebels” trying to overthrow the friendly, if fictional, government of Karibo Nation.

Planners of Exercise Dull Knife had in mind events in Vietnam, where President John F. Kennedy had dispatched military advisors, Special Forces teams and U.S. Army and Marine helicopter units. Marine officers discussed recent books about unconventional warfare in China, Yugoslavia, Malaya and Vietnam, while Fleet Marine Force, Pacific (FMFPac) staff also had access to confidential reports coming from Saigon and the observations of Marines stationed in Da Nang.

In the exercise’s scenario, Karibo’s capital was Honolulu, with province chiefs for the islands of Oahu, Hawaii, Kauai, Maui, Lanai and Molokai. In 1961, John Ona of the Karibo Sons of Freedom had begun organizing farmers and laborers on Molokai. The following year Ona’s followers seized the local armory and radio station, executed some officials and announced the formation of the provisional Democratic Republic of Karibo. “Block Nation” soon recognized the Democratic Republic and dispatched arms and military advisors. Honolulu’s efforts to stop the revolt proved ill-timed and ineffective, leading the prime minister to request direct U.S. military assistance in regaining control over Molokai province.

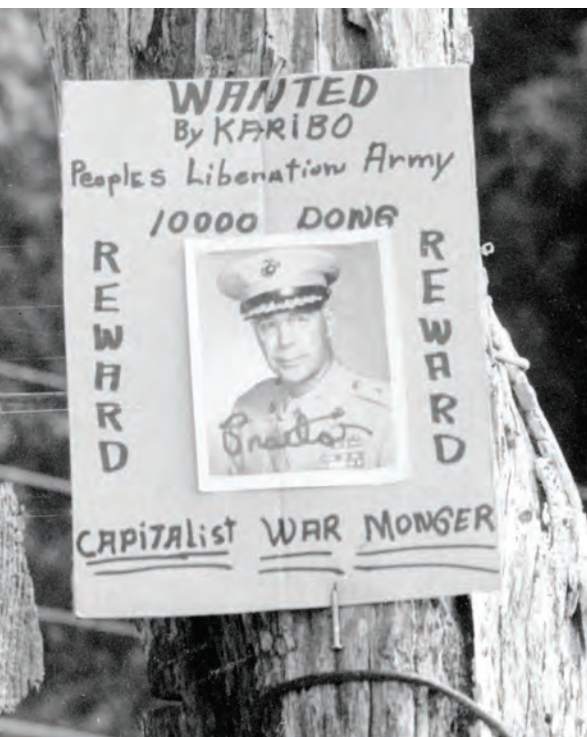


**Maj Archie Van Winkle as “Col Paul Kana,” commander of the Liberation Army of the Democratic Republic of Karibo during Exercise Dull Knife, rallies his troops as they prepare to face the 1st Marine Brigade.**

Six weeks prior to D-day, the Troop Exercise Coordinator (TEC) provided brigade intelligence with extensive military and political information. The military demands on 1st Marine Brigade were not large, since John Ona’s commander, Colonel Paul Kana, had only been able to form and train one regular infantry company, two provincial companies and a couple of district platoons. However, almost the entire population of Molokai had been mobilized in support of the Democratic Republic, and the clandestine People’s Party had cells in every village to prohibit defections.

Aware that U.S. forces soon might attack, underground caches were being prepared and mines and booby traps planted. The brigade would have to neutralize armed opposition, locate the caches and explosive devices, identify and detain People’s Party cadres and demonstrate to ordinary Kariboans that Marines were not just another colonial occupier.

The 30 Sept. 1963 landing of 7,000 Marines on the west coast of Molokai didn’t go well, with 14 landing craft (LCVP) overturned and destroyed by a sudden change in wind and wave conditions. Fortunately, there was no loss of life. The new



**A reward for the capture of BGen C. A. Youngdale, Commanding General, 1st Marine Brigade, is advertised on one of the many propaganda posters displayed throughout the island.**

resistance, they readily blanketed the enemy with fire. Marine Aircraft Group 13's A-4B Skyhawks demonstrated total air superiority. Nonetheless, most Liberation Army squads retreated adroitly, and a number of them remained at large on completion of the exercise. Marines uncovered caches, but only one battalion made a concerted effort to fix, find and report on those important stores of arms, ammunition, food and documents. Handling of prisoners proved erratic and interrogators failed to identify People's Party members.

At 1730 on D+1, 3d Bn's "Hotel" Company approached Puu Nana and began to cordon it off, with orders to prevent anyone from entering or leaving the village. Two members of the brigade counterintelligence team (CIT) arrived by helicopter and asked to speak with the Reverend Funask, a White List (friendly) citizen. They were told that he was lying injured in one of the houses. Hearing several villagers speaking Spanish, CIT radioed a request for a Spanish interpreter, who arrived at noon the next day. At 1835, the CIT and two fire teams searched for Funask, only to suffer casualties from a land mine and a booby trap. It had been a mistake to enter the village at nightfall.

At 0600 on D+2, some Puu Nana villagers gathered their tools and sought to leave for work in nearby fields. Their at-

tempts to leave were denied until a pass system could be organized. Three villagers petitioned the CIT concerning crop destruction, cattle losses and an alleged Marine assault on one man's relative. Funask died. Co H's search-and-seizure platoon began a laborious quest for mines and booby traps, locating five for removal and detonation. By the end of the exercise, however, 11 Marines in and around Puu Nana had been declared "casualties" of explosive devices.

The battalion intelligence officer arrived to question villagers about enemy locations elsewhere on Molokai. CIT determined correctly that the village schoolteacher was a significant Black List (enemy) personality, and he was taken by helicopter to the Prisoner of War compound. One villager exfiltrated Puu Nana in broad daylight without detection. The individual willing to serve as new village head was "murdered." Another villager tipped off Marines about a cache under a haystack where they discovered three pounds of TNT. An explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team was requested for the next morning. After midnight, two armed insurgents infiltrated the village and dispatched two sleeping Marines.

On the morning of D+3, Hirayamo, a White List individual, arrived with armed guards to be declared leader of the area. Hirayamo wanted to negotiate with the Marines and Karibo authorities for a suitable political position. Several villagers were denounced publicly as insurgents and arrested. Exercise Dull Knife wrapped up soon after, and Molokai's Libby plantation manager gave 5,000 prime pineapples to departing Marines.

As a counterinsurgency drill, Dull Knife left a great deal to be desired. The Landing

Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC), Admiral Ulysses Grant Sharp Jr., visited the scene and ordered an investigation. Meanwhile, the only available Marine helicopter squadron took up some of the slack by ferrying troops ashore, but the operational timetable was set back by one day. General David M. Shoup, Commandant of the Marine Corps, also observed the Molokai "operation" before continuing his mission to the Far East.

Some 350 Marines portrayed the Karibo inhabitants of Molokai, both military and civilian. They had been flown to the island early, coached on their individual roles, issued Karibo currency and ID cards and told to dig caches.

Propaganda posters were tacked up around the island, one declaring that "The Army and the People are One," another offering a reward for capture of the Marines' commanding officer. Since the middle of Molokai was covered with pineapple fields, that area was named Lake Mannaloo and declared strictly out of bounds. A makeshift village called Puu Nana was constructed with 11 thatched houses, a well and a cemetery. The TEC distributed scripts to 17 actor-inhabitants of Puu Nana and had everyone rehearse a variety of scenarios.

During D+1, 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel A. I. Thomas, and 2d Bn, led by LtCol D. T. Doxey, swept inland more than 10,000 yards by noon. Whenever Marines met

**Exercise umpires prepare to evaluate the 1st Marine Brigade's counterinsurgency efforts on the Hawaiian island of Molokai.**







Marines load some of the thousands of pineapples they received from the Libby plantation at the conclusion of Exercise Dull Knife in 1963.

Force had overwhelmed military resistance, but armed insurgents remained at large, and the enemy's party apparatus was largely intact. Only six of 33 People's Party members were apprehended. Three "Block Nation" advisors also eluded capture. The intense encounters at Puu Nana village benefitted only CIT and one rifle platoon. What if the brigade had 20 or 30 villages like Puu Nana to handle? What if the vast majority of Kariboans did not speak English but rather Spanish or Vietnamese? Where were the friendly Kariboan soldiers and police from Honolulu?

Back at Camp Smith, FMFPac staff who had helped to prepare and implement the insurgency/counterinsurgency component of Dull Knife discussed those and other questions. Should Marine civil affairs teams be trained to set rules, monitor inhabitants, deal with grievances, liaise with government officials and keep abreast of political and economic developments? Some concluded that civil affairs teams might help, but the problems identified at Puu Nana would face each and every Marine operating for weeks or perhaps months in or adjacent to a Vietnamese village.

Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem

and his brother were killed in Saigon four weeks after Dull Knife concluded. Political turmoil in South Vietnam in 1964 was not unlike that created for mythical Kari-bo, but with far more serious threats from the Vietnam People's Liberation Army and the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam. On 8 March 1965, 3d Battalion Landing Team (BLT), 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, commanded by LtCol Charles E. McPartlin Jr., landed across the beach at Da Nang and was met by high-school girls offering flower leis. That would not last.

The exercise on Molokai helped Marines prepare to fight insurgents who employed mines and booby traps extensively, sequestered supplies underground, operated mainly at night and avoided set-piece combat. The modest experience at Puu Nana village also tested infantry surveillance and control procedures for civilians and CIT's ability to identify clandestine insurgents. However, four days was not sufficient even to begin to fathom the political dimensions of counterinsurgency. Those lessons would be learned on the spot, as it turned out, in Vietnam in 1965.

It is doubtful today that the Marine

Corps would begin a counterinsurgency exercise with a brigade-size amphibious landing. Rather, company- and platoon-size encounters extending over several weeks, in both rural and urban settings, with a variety of scenarios, would prove far more instructive. Even today, Marines continue to apply counterinsurgency lessons learned that extend back more than a century.

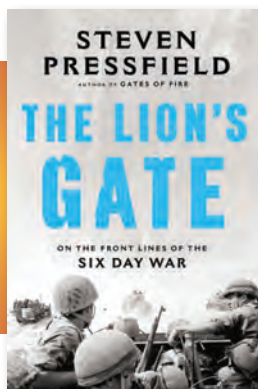
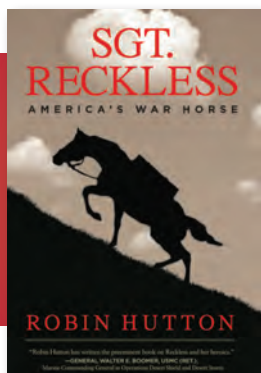
*Author's bio: As a member of the 1st Interrogation and Translation Team, FMFPac, First Lieutenant Marr helped to design and implement the counterinsurgency dimensions of Exercise Dull Knife. Earlier, he had attended the one-year Vietnamese program at the Army Language School in Monterey, Calif., and been attached to the MABS-16 unit in Soc Trang and then in Da Nang for 10 months.*

*Marr resigned his commission in June 1964 to earn his doctorate in history at Berkeley. The University of California Press has published four of Marr's books, most recently "Vietnam: State, War and Revolution (1945-1946)." Marr currently is an emeritus professor at the Australian National University, Canberra.*



# 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](http://www.marineshop.net).



**SGT. RECKLESS: America's War Horse.** By Robin Hutton. Published by Regnery History. 368 pages. Stock #1621572633. \$25.20 MCA Members. \$27.99 Regular Price.

Eight years of research and now here it is—Robin Hutton's definitive story of Reckless, the legendary Marine war horse who earned her battle stripes and place in Marine Corps history during the Korean War.

Hutton is a self-proclaimed horse enthusiast. With a career in the movie industry, she happened to hear the legend of Reckless in August 2006 and immediately was in awe. How could the dedication and commitment of this small horse with such a huge heart and giant intellect be known to so few? The more she learned, the more devoted she became not only to telling the heroism of Reckless, but commemorating Reckless through monuments, a book and a screenplay.

Reckless, a chestnut-colored Mongolian mare with a white blaze on her face and three white stocking feet, was purchased from her Korean owner at a racetrack in Seoul in October 1952 by Lieutenant Eric Pedersen. Pedersen was the platoon leader of the Recoilless Rifle Platoon, Antitank Company, Fifth Marine Regiment.

By 1952, the war was one of trench lines and bunkers on the high ground with massed enemy assaults focused on annihilating the NATO forces. Resupply was critical, but manpower killing. The novel idea of adding horsepower to the resupply equation was initially met with some skepticism,

but Reckless won over all skeptics with her fearless commitment to carrying 75 mm recoilless rifle ammunition up and down the hills to forward positions.

Not limited to ammunition resupply duties, Reckless carried heavy spools of communication wire and anything else needed by her Marines: grenades, small-arms ammunition, food, water, sleeping bags and even wounded leathernecks.

In her book, Hutton describes the background of Reckless and her Korean owner and devotes several chapters to the Marines in the Korean War and how Reckless was trained and helped in resupply, even under intense enemy shelling. Although wounded twice in one day, she continued to take supplies to besieged Marines, finding the ammunition dump in the rear, getting loaded and delivering the ammunition to her platoon.

Hutton continues with the tale of Reckless' adventures during the horse's trip to America and life at her new home, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. Hutton's detailed interviews with Marines also yielded some of Reckless' lighter moments. She was known as a voracious eater and drinker. Nothing was safe—bacon, eggs, mashed potatoes, C-rations, peanut butter as well as cookies and cakes from home. She would drink anything Marines would drink—soda, beer and even a dram or two of whiskey.

"Sgt. Reckless: America's War Horse" includes 136 photographs, with 102 of Reckless and her Marines, many of which

have never before been published. Stitched inside as a collector's bonus are four easily removed trading cards with rare photographs of Reckless. On the backs of the cards are short stories, statistics and facts about Reckless.

Currently, Hutton is president of Angels Without Wings Inc., a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization that raised funds for the sculpture of Reckless installed at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va., in July 2013. Funds for a second monument, planned for Camp Pendleton, are being raised, and a monument in South Korea is being researched.

"Sgt. Reckless: America's War Horse," by Robin Hutton, provides insights into what many know about Marines—animals and children win the hardest of warrior hearts. In this case, you will easily see how Reckless earned her position on a high pedestal. The entire family will enjoy the story of Reckless. It comes with the highest recommendation.

Col Walt Ford, USMC (Ret)

*Editor's note: See the October 2013 Leatherneck article, "Forgotten No More: Remembered Forever," by Nancy Lee White Hoffman to learn more about Reckless and her memorial at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Va.*

*Author's bio: Col Ford is a former editor of Leatherneck who served the "Magazine of the Marines" for almost 15 years after serving in the Corps for 30 years.*

**THE LION'S GATE: On the Front Lines of the Six Day War.** By Steven Pressfield. Published by Sentinel-Penguin. 448 pages. Stock #1595230912. \$26.96 MCA Members. \$29.95 Regular Price.

There are few books these days that you put down breathless, with tears in your eyes, thinking, "These were men; would that I have been with them." Unless it's a Steve Pressfield book.

Best-selling author Steven Pressfield's latest book, "The Lion's Gate," is such a

book. An oral history of 1967's famed "Six Day War" when Moshe Dayan led the newly formed Israeli Defense Forces in a pre-emptive strike against the massed forces of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Iraq, Pressfield has moved out of his comfort zone of historical fiction and tackled the challenging field of more current history, where the participants are alive, but their memories of troops in combat and engagements often differ.

Pressfield, a Marine veteran, calls "The Lion's Gate" a "hybrid history," and it makes for fascinating reading. In addition to interviewing 67 Israeli veterans of the Six Day War and recounting the war from their perspective, Pressfield took the unique approach of writing the Moshe Dayan segments in the first person—a most challenging task since Dayan died in 1981. But Pressfield, a skilled researcher, studied Dayan and met and talked with Dayan's daughter Yael (who served under General Ariel Sharon during the war); Dayan's first wife, Ruth; as well as many who served with him through the years.

The approach worked. The Dayan-Pressfield first-person accounts and comments give the reader an understanding of the need for Israel's strike in the scheme of the country's survival along with vivid stories and details of the war never before known in the West; the war finishing so quickly that most reporters were unable to reach Israel before the fighting ended.

The Six Day War is known for being "the" example of maneuver warfare. In his interviews with helicopter pilots, infantrymen, half-trackers in surplus World War II equipment, and fighter pilots pulled from flight school to fly missions against the Egyptians, Pressfield relates the stories of the helicopter pilots dropping Israeli recon forces behind massed Egyptian artillery to attack from the rear, the carnage and courage at Rafiah Junction and Jirardi Pass, and Sharon's leadership style—"If I don't hear from Danny [Colonel Danny Matt, paratroop brigade commander], everything is OK. If there is a problem, Danny will contact me."

Pressfield is a historian at heart, and the beauty of "The Lion's Gate" is how he uses the words of his interviewees to describe the context of why launching a pre-emptive strike in 1967 was so important to Israel's survival. Marine Captain Lou Lenart, a WW II fighter pilot who always wanted to fight the Nazis, recounts evading the FBI to fight for Israel in 1948.

Lenart also talks about Holocaust survivors being interned in British camps as they tried to reach Israel; he mentions a group of European Jews smuggled into Israel from Cyprus. "They had tattoos on their arms. ... They'd gotten here only a

## Leatherneck Book Browser

**"A Line in the Sand: The True Story of a Marine's Experience on the Front Lines of the Gulf War"** by Robert A. Serocki Jr. is just as the title declares—his personal effort to record the Gulf War, 1990-91. Serocki's experiences are contrary to many Americans' perceptions that the Gulf War was an easy walk in the park that was in no way comparable to the "real" wars of the last century—World Wars I and II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War.

When Serocki writes: "... rank stench of burning, rotting flesh, searing pain, utter misery, revolting scenes of disarticulated pieces of body parts, my comrades full of holes, covered in blood and bandages so that they resemble patchwork quilts," readers know this war was as impactful on those who served, and their families, as any war.

He drives home the points that anytime someone is shooting at you, it's a big firefight; that when your brother Marines lay it all on the line in life-and-death situations, often charging into the unknown because it's their duty, then it's a big fight with serious consequences. For Serocki, "A Line in the Sand" was part of a therapeutic process. He is telling his story so that "perhaps someone will learn from [him]."

Growing up, Serocki was a bit of a rebel, running away from home while in the 11th grade, getting arrested and brought back home. He joined the Corps as soon as he turned 18. He completed recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and does an excellent job of describing recruit life and training in the book. Assigned as a combat engineer out of boot camp, he goes into significant details on his training for war, which came his way about two years into his enlistment.

His letters home from Saudi Arabia are included, and therein lies the meat of the book. The stress of not knowing how bad the war will be when it begins, but planning for an all-out chemical war, takes its toll on the waiting Marines. The war he experienced is described in graphic detail, and on occasions, Serocki highlights things Marines do in war to relieve stress. The book is informative and clear in telling of the impacts of combat stress, struggles with alcoholism and drug abuse and realizing that recovery is a continuous path, never fully a destination.

Robert Serocki's "A Line in the Sand" is a 256-page softcover book, ISBN: 0-9742014-9-9 with numerous personal photographs. It is published by One World Press and available from his website, [www.robertserocki.com](http://www.robertserocki.com), for \$11.95 plus shipping, and there are a few copies available through Amazon.com.

week earlier and had only a few days of training. ... I will never forget their faces; their eyes were shining; they had weapons in their hands. They were men."

Many of the veterans Pressfield interviewed had fought in the 1948 war for independence, and they viscerally understood the need to overwhelmingly defeat the Arabs. He quotes a helicopter squadron commander, who prior to the June 1967 strike said, "We'll win. Because if we lose, what our enemies will do to us will make Auschwitz look like a summer resort."

Marines understand this. What better way to fight and perhaps die than against fearsome odds? But with an ear for quiet confidence that only Pressfield possesses, he quotes an IDF fighter pilot, age 22 at the time, recounting a conversation with Israel's air force chief who tells him, "Let Nasser bring all his divisions; the more he brings, the more we will destroy."

This is the strength of "The Lion's Gate."

It's the personal stories from a marginally remembered fight in 1967 when Israel purchased with its blood the right to stand among the nations of the world. Pressfield brings all the majesty and courage of "Gates of Fire" and "The Afghan Campaign" to the story of out-gunned Israel, outnumbered by 40-to-1, attacking and routing four Arab armies. Thank you, LCpl Pressfield; this book ranks as one of your best.

Andrew Lubin

*Author's bio: Andrew Lubin is a frequent Leatherneck contributor who has embedded with Marine units in Iraq and Afghanistan numerous times and accompanied units inside the United States on operational efforts such as responding to Hurricane Sandy's aftermath in New York City and also during training exercises.*



# Leatherneck Line

Edited by Sara W. Bock

## EFMP Hosts “Color Run” To Raise Autism Awareness

The Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) hosted a 5-kilometer “color run” to raise awareness for autism spectrum disorders on May 31. More than 215 volunteers and 1,500 runners participated in the run, which took place near the Foster Fieldhouse at Camp Foster, Marine Corps Base Camp Smedley D. Butler, Okinawa, Japan.

This was the EFMP’s fourth annual run for autism awareness at Camp Foster, but its first “color run.” To signal the start of the race, participants threw colored powder at each other; puffs of pink, purple and orange filled the air and turned white shirts into multicolored canvases. During the run, volunteers threw powder at each 1-kilometer checkpoint to create colorful clouds—giving runners an extra coating of color as they proceeded toward the finish line.

“The surrounding community really stepped up to make this event successful,” said Marcela Moody, the EFMP manager

for Okinawa. “We had an overwhelming amount of participation, so we needed a lot of help, and we got it.”

The Single Marine Program, U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa and Marine Corps Community Services assisted in promoting and coordinating the event.

“It was good to see smiling faces of friends and family, enjoying their Saturday morning together,” said Moody. “By the look on people’s faces, you can tell they think the run was awesome.”

The EFMP supports military families who have members with special needs. The program helps them receive services including medical, dental, mental health, developmental or educational support. It also assists in obtaining adaptive equipment and assistive technology devices and in ensuring wheelchair accessibility.

“If I have questions, need someone to talk to, or want educational tools, I go to my caseworker and they help me with anything to give support,” said Sheila McKoy, a participant and mother of a 5-year-old son with autism.

Autism spectrum disorder is a general term for a group of complex brain development disorders that are characterized, in varying degrees, by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication, and repetitive behavior.

LCpl Abbey Perria  
PAO, MCIPAC

## Employment Resources Available To Veterans and Military Spouses

In today’s competitive job market, it can be daunting for veterans and military spouses to find employment opportunities that are suitable to their education, skills and expertise. The 2013 Military Spouse Employment Survey showed that 90 percent of military spouses report being underemployed, likely due to frequent relocation. Here are a few of the programs and resources available to assist veterans and spouses in the job hunt.

### Hiring Our Heroes

An initiative of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Hiring Our Heroes works with partners from the public, private and nonprofit sectors to help veterans, transitioning servicemembers and military spouses find employment opportunities. Hiring Our Heroes holds job fairs and employment workshops across the nation and offers free online career tools—resumé builders, a jobs portal and a virtual mentorship program. Through partnerships with more than 1,500 businesses, the organization is on its way to meeting its goal of helping 500,000 veterans and spouses find employment by the end of 2014.

It also offers Career Spark, an online portal designed for military spouses. The site offers support in every aspect of job hunting—from interview skills to resumé writing.

To learn more about Hiring Our Heroes and to explore the resources the organization offers, visit [www.hiringourheroes.org](http://www.hiringourheroes.org). For military spouses, check out Career Spark at [www.mycareerspark.org](http://www.mycareerspark.org).

### 100,000 Jobs Mission

In the first quarter of 2014 alone, companies participating in the 100,000 Jobs Mission hired a total of 140,832 veterans. The mission, established in 2011, brings



LCPL ABBEY PERRIA

Covered in colorful powder, participants begin the autism awareness “color run” at Camp Foster, MCB Camp Smedley D. Butler, Okinawa, Japan, May 31. The 5K race, hosted by the Exceptional Family Member Program, was completed by more than 1,500 runners and made possible by the work of 215 volunteers.

together companies committed to hiring veterans and offers veterans an online “talent exchange” to input their skills and experiences. Recently, it has expanded to include efforts to hire military spouses as well. With the launch of the online military spouse talent exchange, spouses can submit resumés and profile information that will be passed on to participating companies.

For more information about the 100,000 Jobs Mission, visit [www.jobsmision.com](http://www.jobsmision.com).

### Military Spouse Employment Partnership

A part of the Department of Defense’s Spouse Education and Career Opportunities initiative, the Military Spouse Employment Partnership has more than 220 partners who have hired more than 60,000 military spouses since 2011. Through partnership with Fortune 500 Plus companies, the organization works to connect military spouses with employers and helps them become competitive applicants.

For resources offered by the Military Spouse Employment Partnership—including job search engines, career advice, and templates for resumés and cover letters—visit <http://msejobs.militaryonesource.mil>.

Sara W. Bock

### Community Organization Recognizes Future Leathernecks

Twenty-eight future Marines were recognized for their commitment to serve during the Our Community Salutes’ high school senior recognition ceremony, hosted by the organization’s Northern Virginia chapter May 29. The ceremony was held at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va.

Our Community Salutes, a nonprofit organization, was founded in 2009 and has spread nationwide. The Northern Virginia chapter is an all-volunteer organization that recognizes young men and women in the local area who have chosen to serve in the military following their high school graduation.

Christine Zinser, founder of the Northern Virginia chapter, had a personal experience which led her to participate in the program.

“When my own son entered the [Delayed Entry Program] his senior year of high school, I learned that his school would not include [in a shared recognition program] the nine students from his graduating class who had chosen to serve,” said Zinser. “It was as though the implication was that because they were not getting [a college] education first, their service was less deserving of recognition.”



LOPLASHTON BUCKINGHAM

**MARINE FOR A DAY—** After being diagnosed with medulloblastoma—a form of brain cancer—Ryan Forbes, a 13-year-old San Diego native, was granted his wish to “join” the military. The Marine Corps partnered with the Make-A-Wish Foundation and made Ryan a “Marine for a day” at Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., May 13. Accompanied by leathernecks of “Lima” Battery, 3d Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, Ryan donned a flak jacket and Kevlar, fired a howitzer, relayed orders over the radio and learned about Marine weapons systems.

This event is just one of the many held nationwide by Our Community Salutes each year. The recognition provided by the organization can help ensure that future servicemembers remain strong in their commitment to enlist in the Marine Corps and other branches of service.

“The ceremony gives them a chance to be proud of their choice,” said Sergeant Peter Ballenger, a Marine recruiter with Recruiting Sub-Station Leesburg, Va. “If you go to college, [high schools] announce it at the awards ceremonies; they put your picture up in the school under your college’s name. The parents of our poolees receive a Delayed Entry Program certifi-

cate, but there is no recognition by the county and schools. Recognizing the decisions of our youth as they transition from high school students to young adults is important,” he added.

Our Community Salutes is a key program for this type of missed recognition and gives future servicemembers an opportunity to see the support that they have, thereby ensuring their commitment. For more information, visit [www.ourcommunitysalutes.org](http://www.ourcommunitysalutes.org).

Sgt Amber Williams  
PAO, 4th MCD



SGT AMBER WILLIAMS

**SgtMaj Mark A. Byrd Sr.,** the sergeant major of MCB Quantico, Va., shakes hands with future Marine recruit Nina Garrido of Ashburn at the Our Community Salutes Northern Virginia Chapter recognition ceremony, May 29, in Fairfax. The ceremony recognized Garrido and other area high school students who are enlisting in the Marine Corps directly after graduation.

# In Memoriam

Edited by R. R. Keene

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

## Operation Enduring Freedom: Marine Casualties, May 1-31, 2014

There are no casualties to report for this month.

### "Big Ernie" Cheatham

Lieutenant General Ernest C. Cheatham Jr., USMC (Ret), who won the Navy Cross at Hue City in Vietnam and was a former National Football League defensive tackle, died June 14 in Virginia Beach, Va. He was 84.

He was commissioned in 1952 following his graduation from Loyola University with a B.S. degree in political science. He later earned a master's degree in international affairs from The George Washington University.

After completing The Basic School in 1953, he served as a platoon leader in Japan and Korea until his return to the United States in June 1954. He played football for both the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Baltimore Colts in the mid-1950s, but returned to the Corps in 1955.

Back on active duty, he commanded a recruit company at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. Promoted to captain in 1956, his subsequent assignments were as Executive Officer, Marine Barracks Adak, Alaska; company commander with the 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, and 3d Bn, Fifth Marine Regiment; Inspector-Instructor, 44th Rifle Co, Boise, Idaho; and with the 12th Marine Corps District, San Francisco.

As a major in 1963, he attended the Command and Staff College, graduating as an honor student. In July 1967, he was transferred to the First Marine Division in Vietnam where he served as a battalion XO, regimental S-3 and battalion commanding officer. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel in October 1967.

His Navy Cross was earned at Hue while commanding 2/5 during Tet of 1968. According to his citation, "Colonel Cheatham led his battalion in extremely heavy house-to-house fighting against a numerically superior North Vietnamese Army force. Advancing through the city ... to assault the well-fortified Treasury Building/Post Office complex, his unit came under intense fire from concealed enemy positions. The enemy resistance halted the Marines' advance during two days of bitter fighting. Nevertheless, Colonel Cheatham remained steadfast in his determination to

secure the enemy stronghold.

"Skillfully deploying a 106-mm. recoilless rifle squad into advantageous firing positions, he personally pinpointed the targets with M-16 tracer rounds and directed accurate fire on the enemy, which significantly reduced the pressure on his assaulting force. Completely disregarding his own safety, he joined the assaulting unit and aggressively led his men in routing the North Vietnamese from their entrenched positions. While proceeding through the city ... he organized his battalion for an assault on the enemy-held Provincial Headquarters Building. Ignoring the hostile fire all around him, he directed his men to covered positions while he fearlessly advanced to an exposed position from which he could locate the sources of enemy fire. Calling an [M50A1] Ontos forward, he directed effective suppressive fire on the enemy and then courageously led his unit as it continued the assault."

He returned Stateside to be XO, Marine Barracks Washington, D.C., and then attend the National War College. In 1973 he served as Chief, Operational Test and Evaluation Activity, Development Center, Quantico. He was promoted to colonel and later commanded 4th Marines in Okinawa, Japan.

Upon his advancement to brigadier general on June 1, 1977, he was assigned as Director, Facilities and Services Division at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps. He transferred to Norfolk, Va., in 1979 as Commanding General, Landing Force Training Command, Atlantic/CG, 4th Marine Amphibious Brigade and later assumed duties as Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans, Policy, Joint Exercises, CINCLANT/CINCLANTFLT in 1980. He was advanced to major general and commanded I Marine Amphibious Force and the 1stMarDiv, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. He was appointed to lieutenant general in 1985 and served as the deputy chief of staff for Manpower, HQMC.

LtGen Cheatham's other personal decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with combat "V," and two Meritorious Service Medals.

### "Willie" Castillo

Lance Corporal William "Willie" Castillo, who as a 19-year-old Marine in Vietnam won the Navy Cross at Fire Support Base Russell in Northern I Corps, died of a heart attack March 31 in Albuquerque, N.M. He was 64.

According to his citation, Castillo was an ammunition man with Company E, 2d Battalion, Fourth Marine Regiment, Third Marine Division on Feb. 25, 1969, when the base "came under a vicious ground attack by a North Vietnamese Army sapper unit strongly supported by mortars and rocket-propelled grenades.

"During the initial moments of the attack, several men were trapped inside demolished bunkers and Private First Class Castillo worked feverishly to free the Marines. Then, diving into his gun pit, he commenced single-handedly firing his mortar ... and although blown from his emplacement on two occasions ... [he] resolutely continued his efforts until relieved by some of the men he had freed.

"Observing a bunker that was struck by enemy fire and was ejecting thick clouds of smoke, he investigated the interior, and discovering five men blinded by smoke and in a state of shock, led them all to safety. Maneuvering across the fire-swept terrain to the command post, he made repeated trips through the hazardous area to carry messages and directions from his commanding officer, then procured a machine gun and provided security for a landing zone until harassing hostile emplacements were destroyed. Steadfastly determined to be of assistance to his wounded comrades, he carried the casualties to waiting evacuation helicopters until he collapsed from exhaustion."

He returned to Albuquerque and helped raise his three sisters and five brothers. He worked 25 years as a heavy equipment operator for the University of New Mexico and retired in 2000.

**Carl E. Amick**, 89, of Longview, Texas. A WW II veteran, he was a corpsman with the 1stMarDiv for nearly the entire war and an additional five months on mainland China during the disarming and repatriating of the Japanese.

Returning Stateside, he was employed as a chemist and later in the research lab of Eastman Kodak in Longview.

In 1960, he began a successful jewelry manufacturing business producing one-of-a-kind pieces. He sold his business to his son and retired in 1986. He and his wife, Barbara, showed Tennessee Walking Horses.

**Mouzon Bass Jr.**, 78, of Dallas. He served in the Corps and went on to become a local and national leader in the insurance industry.

**Charles D. Britton**, 87, in Livonia, Mich. He was a WW II veteran of Peleliu and Okinawa. He then worked as an electrician at General Motors' Hydramatic Plant in Ypsilanti for 37 years, retiring in 1988.

**Roy E. Cherry Jr.**, 88, in Fort Worth, Texas. A WW II veteran, he served with the 1stMarDiv from 1944 to 1948.

He later worked for General Dynamics and Lockheed-Martin Corporation. His work included contract negotiations for sales of F-111 and F-16 aircraft to the governments of Greece and Japan.

**Roy A. Elsner**, 89, of Dallas. He was with the 5thMarDiv on Iwo Jima. Although trained as a cook and baker, he found himself in combat and was wounded twice. On March 11, 1945, he was wounded in the left shoulder. On March 21, an explosion sent heavy fragments into his arm and the back of his head. He spent five months in military hospitals and was awarded two Purple Hearts.

After being discharged, he moved to Odessa where he worked as a radio announcer and later as the station manager. In 1961, he founded KQIP-FM, the first commercial FM radio station in West Texas.

**John A. Forbes**, 83, of Norwood, formerly of Walpole, Mass. He was a Korean War veteran and a member of the Disabled American Veterans chapter in Norwood.

He volunteered with Habitat for Humanity and Meals on Wheels.

**Edward W. "Eddie" Goolsby**, 83, of Longview, Texas. He enlisted in 1951 and was an artilleryman in the Korean War.

He was a gifted bass singer who sang in a gospel quartet. He also was a brick mason by trade, and he worked 32 years for Lone Star Steel. In his younger years, he was a professional boxer.

**Sgt Robert A. Hood**, 82, of Philadelphia. He enlisted in 1948 and was a member of the "Summer of 48" Parris Island veterans' group. He served as an antitank assault leader during the Korean War and a drill instructor from 1951 to 1952.

He retired as a Philadelphia police officer.

**CWO-4 Joseph C. Knapik**, 79, in Holyoke, Mass. He was a U.S. Navy veteran of the Korean War who served in USS *Coral Sea* (CVA-43) as an aviation ordnanceman. In 1956, he enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve, serving with C/1/25 in Springfield. He retired in 1990 as a designated "Gunner."

He also taught at Westfield Public Schools and retired in 1998 as a middle school guidance counselor. He became a Hampden County deputy sheriff and the Westfield Board of Public Works commissioner. He was a member of the Westfield River Valley Det. #141, MCL and the Knights of Columbus.

**SSgt Stanley W. "Pappy" LaBauve**, 68, of Bastrop, Texas. He enlisted in 1973 at age

26 and was dubbed "Pappy" because he was the oldest recruit in his platoon. He was an aircraft communication systems technician until he left active duty in 1984.

He worked for Hughes Aircraft Microelectronics Division as a senior quality assurance inspector until 1991 when he went to work for the Texas Department of Transportation Traffic Division, a job he held prior to entering the Corps. He retired in 2009. He founded and served as the first commandant of the Lost Pines Leathernecks Det. #1384, MCL in Bastrop County.

**David M. Littrell**, 67, of Arlington, Texas. He was a Vietnam veteran who served as an equipment mechanic and engineer. He was injured in Vietnam and later stationed in Hawaii.

After the Corps, he worked for Ling-Temco-Vought, headquartered in Dallas, and coached T-ball and high school baseball.

**Col James M. "Mike" Lowe**, 59, of Stafford, Va. He was a 30-year Marine who entered the Corps through a Marine ROTC scholarship to the University of South Carolina and was commissioned after his graduation in 1976. An infantry officer, he served in all four Marine divisions and made eight deployments. As a company commander with 2/6, he deployed to Beirut, Lebanon, as part of the Multinational Peacekeeping Force.

His military education included the Amphibious Warfare School, Quantico, Va.; the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.; the Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Va.; and the Marine Corps War College, Quantico.

He also was assigned to the faculty of the Marine Corps Command and Staff College in 1996 and served as the course director for warfighting. He was awarded the Marine Corps University's Rose Award for teaching excellence.

Other assignments included series officer at MCRD Parris Island, S.C.; the Officer Assignment Branch, HQMC; Special Operations Command Europe, Stuttgart, Germany; I&I, 2/24 in Chicago; Operations Officer, III MEF; Assistant Chief of Staff, Operations, 3dMarDiv; and CO, 31st MEU (SOC), based in Okinawa, Japan.

Col Lowe's last active-duty assignment was as the commander of Marine Corps Base Quantico. He joined the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies as a research fellow. For the past eight years, he led the Center for Emerging Threats and Opportunities, an in-house think tank for the Marine Corps.

According to retired General Alfred M. Gray, 29th Commandant of the Marine Corps, "Mike is a very special Marine Warrior, one of a kind, who has made many significant contributions to our country and to the nation's Corps of Marines."

He was a longtime friend of the *Leatherneck* staff.

**Cpl J. John Mercado**, 92, in St. Paul, Minn. He was the St. Paul Golden Gloves middleweight champion in 1941 and enlisted in 1942. He fought at Bougainville, Guam and Iwo Jima, earning two Purple Hearts.

He became a St. Paul police officer in 1948

and retired in 1983. For his long, distinguished service in the police department, he was awarded SPPD's highest award, the Medal of Valor. He served on the St. Paul Police Retirement Association board for many years.

**Chester Nez**, 93, in Albuquerque, N.M. He was the last of the original Navajo Code Talkers, 29 men who created a code from their language that stumped the Japanese during WW II. He was a member of the 1942 all-Navajo Recruit Platoon 382 at MCRD San Diego.

The Marines were looking for young Navajos to help, and Nez and his friends volunteered because they were eager for adventure. He saw action at Guadalcanal, Guam, Peleliu and Bougainville. He didn't speak of his missions until the 1960s, preferring to remain quietly on the reservation.

**1stSgt Walter H. O'Keefe**, 90, of Dolton, Ill. He enlisted in 1943 and served in WW II and the Korean and Vietnam wars. He saw action on Saipan, Tinian and Okinawa and was aboard the attack transport USS *Hinsdale* (APA-120) when she was hit by a *kamikaze*. During the Korean War he was at the Chosin Reservoir and took part in the 1951 Spring Offensive at Mason, South Korea.

He was also on alert in 1961 during the CIA's failed operation at the Bay of Pigs. In Vietnam he served at Dong Ha with Co C, 9th Motor Transport Bn.

He retired in 1971 and joined the American Red Cross and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**PFC Arthur V. Pace Jr.**, 90, of Kerrville, Texas. He served during WW II with Co F, 2d Bn, 27th Marines, 5thMarDiv on Iwo Jima, was wounded by mortar fire and later was awarded the Purple Heart.

He went on to become director for Prosperity Bank, Commercial Bank Shares Inc. and Heritage Bank Shares Inc. He was president of the Hill Country Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

**Sgt John H. Parcell**, 76, in Orangeville, Pa. He enlisted in 1955 and served his entire tour as a hydraulic technician with VMR-252 at MCAS Cherry Point, N.C. He returned home, attended Millersville University and became an Indiana County sheriff and police officer.

He became a Pennsylvania State Police officer in 1966 and retired in 1987. He coached football and baseball and umpired Little League and NCAA baseball. In 1980, he was an umpire for the Senior League World Series in Gary, Ind. His two brothers, two sons, grandson and nephew all served as Marines. Additionally, his niece and granddaughter served in the Army.

**Col John J. Peeler**, 86, of San Antonio. He served 30 years and was an enlisted man with the MarDet, USS *New York* (BB-34) during WW II. Commissioned in 1951, he was an infantry platoon leader and company commander in the Korean War where he was awarded two Silver Stars and a Purple Heart for action in 1953.

Col Peeler commanded two infantry battalions in Vietnam and held staff positions with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C., and the U.S. European Command in

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Germany. He also was CO of Camp Garcia, Vieques, Puerto Rico. His personal awards also include the Legion of Merit with combat "V," the Meritorious Service Medal and the Joint Service Commendation Medal, among others.

Col Peeler became a financial planner with IDS/American Express, retiring in 1988 after 22 years. He was a member of the 1stMarDiv Assn., 3dMarDiv Assn., Purple Heart Assn. and MCL.

One of Col Peeler's daughters, Linda, the wife of LtCol Edward J. "Rocky" Ball III, USMC (Ret), was the administrative assistant at the MCA during 1981-82.

**Cpl Glen B. Perttula**, 64, of Bessemer, Mich. He served from 1971 to 1974.

**Col James A. Poland**, 80, of Virginia Beach, Va., "is hereby relieved of his duties here on earth and told to report to his personal commander in chief," wrote his wife, "Butch" Poland.

Col Poland attended Illinois Institute of Technology on a scholarship and was commissioned in 1955. He served 30 years including duty in the 1958 China Strait Crisis off the Nationalist Chinese islands of Quemoy and Matsu and two tours in Vietnam, one of which was as an advisor to the Vietnamese Marines.

His other assignments include the MarDet, USS *Los Angeles* (CA-135); the personnel department in HQMC; Inspector-Instructor, Buffalo, N.Y., where he was a casualty assistance officer; faculty member at the

Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Va.; CO of H&S Bn, FMFPac and Camp Commander, Camp H. M. Smith, Hawaii.

After retirement from the Corps, he became a deputy chief probation and parole officer in Norfolk for 17 years. One of his sons is SgtMaj Bruce J. Poland, USMC (Ret). Col Poland and his wife have five other children and a total of 26 grandchildren and great grandchildren.

His personal decorations include the Legion of Merit with combat "V," the Bronze Star with combat "V" and the Purple Heart.

**Channing R. Prothro**, 64, of Krum, Texas. He was a Vietnam veteran who was awarded the Bronze Star and the Combat Action Ribbon.

He returned to Texas and became a master plumber. He owned Prothro Plumbing and also was a computer technician and owner of Pro-Tech Consulting.

**LCpl Andrew Silva**, 23, of Union City, Calif. He was struck and killed by an alleged drunken driver March 25 in the San Francisco Bay area while on his motorcycle. LCpl Silva had just returned from Afghanistan in February.

**Edison W. Tecco Sr.**, 90, of Catonsville, Md. He was a WW II veteran who served with the 1stMarDiv, including action on Peleliu.

He later worked as a hearing examiner and equal opportunity specialist for the Department of Health and Human Services and the National Institutes of Health. In the 1960s, he volunteered to work registering blacks to vote in the South. He was a member

of the 1stMarDiv Assn., serving more than 20 years as its treasurer.

**1stSgt Robert O. Ward**, 74, of Austin, Texas. He served from 1957 to 1959 and from 1961 to 1984. He was awarded the Silver Star as a staff sergeant while serving with B/1/26, 3dMarDiv (Rein), June 7, 1967, in RVN.

**Erwin K. Wood**, 89, in Hickory, N.C. He enlisted in 1942 and volunteered to be a Paramarine, training at Camp Gillespie, El Cajon, Calif. He saw action during WW II at New Caledonia, Guadalcanal, Vella LaVella and Bougainville.

In 1944, he made the assault on Iwo Jima with the 28th Marines, 5thMarDiv. He was shot in the right lung and spent five months recuperating before being discharged at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Before enlisting, he attended the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, and he returned there to finish his studies in commercial art. He later earned degrees in journalism and literature from Biscayne College in Florida. He worked at home and abroad and was awarded more than 15 press prizes for his work as a journalist, editor and commercial artist.

Before retiring in 1986, he taught more than 10 years at Catawba Valley Community College and Lenoir-Rhyne College in Hickory. He also was a leader of Great Books discussion groups in Hickory.

He was a member of the Iwo Jima Survivors Assn., Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the ACLU and the MCL.





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## SOUND OFF

[continued from page 7]

Demilitarized Zone last September on a revisit Korea tour. I'm disappointed in the article's fifth paragraph, which states, "learning about the Korean conflict." Being one of the 348,000 U.S. troops who served, and in memory of the 4,267 Marines killed in action, this was a war and not a conflict or police action as it is commonly referred to in the press.

Our local newspaper makes the same error in its obituaries of those who served. Numerous letters to the editor have been in vain. Ask anyone who served in Korea between June 25, 1950, and July 27, 1953, especially as a Marine, and they will confirm that they were in a war.

Congressman Ralph M. Hall of Texas introduced a resolution to authorize a wall of remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The wall will encircle the back half of the pool of remembrance, be made of glass, and the names of our fallen, missing in action and prisoners of war will be inscribed.

Unfortunately, Congress could not pass the resolution during the 112th Congress. The resolution was reintroduced as House

Resolution 318 in the 113th Congress but still needs more co-sponsors.

This wall is to be 100 percent funded with donations from the public. All Korean War veterans and/or their families should contact their representatives for support. Our military veterans who gave their all deserve to be remembered, not forgotten.

Sgt Lew Bradley  
USMC, 1950-54  
Chandler, Ariz.

### Out of Uniform in the Old Battle Jacket

After college, I renewed my association with the Marine Corps by enlisting in a Reserve unit: 1st Supply Company in Charlottesville, Va. This took place in 1957, at which time I was issued the standard complement of uniforms including a green battle jacket, but no service blouse.

In March, I was called to active duty to attend a unit instructors' course at Henderson Hall in Arlington, Va. The first morning, as I was headed to class, I was stopped by a colonel who informed me that I "was out of uniform" for having no blouse. I explained that I was a Reservist and was wearing what I had been issued. His parting words were: "Sergeant, I don't care what you are or where you come from. Don't let me see you in that jacket again." Fortunately for me, I returned to

civilian life seven days later. Today, 57 years later, I still have the jacket, carefully preserved.

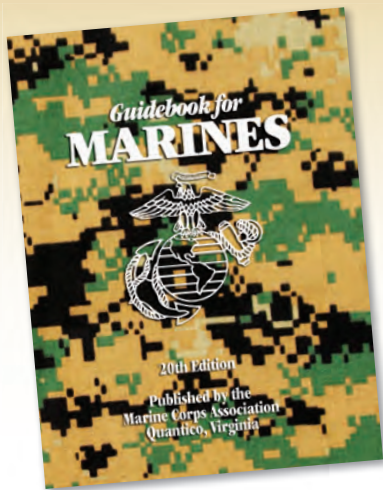
Sgt Joseph Poleo Jr.  
USMC, 1948-52; USMCR, 1957-60  
Chosin Reservoir survivor  
Roanoke, Va.

### "OK, I'll Go Regular"

I had just turned 18 and was looking for a new thing in life. Being raised in Southern Ontario, Canada, I decided to go into the city of Windsor and sign up at the Royal Canadian Air Force recruiting station. A young lady at the recruiting station administered the entrance exam. I finished the exam and sat there waiting for the clock to run out. Unbeknownst to me, the last pages were stuck together, and of course, I failed the exam. I asked the lady when I could retake the exam. She said, "In six months."

Weeks had passed, and while I was out in the marsh hunting geese, I thought of going to Detroit to the federal building. Someone told me the U.S. Army recruiting station was in that building. I hitched a ride to Windsor, took the tunnel bus to Detroit and walked a number of blocks to the federal building.

As I entered the U.S. Army Recruiting Station, a man in uniform asked me, "May



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I help you?" I shared with him that I was from Canada and that I was there to join the Army. The Army recruiter told me, "Go back to Canada and get your visa, and when you return, we will give you the entrance exam." I decided I would not do that because I had just failed one test, and I did not want to spend the money on a visa and end up being a "no go."

I walked out of the Army recruiting office and walked down the hallway and saw the Marine Corps sign. I went in and told the recruiter, "I am here to join the Reserve." A friend of our family was in the Marine Reserve and had told me: "If you ever go with the Marines, go into the Reserve."

The recruiter said, "Have a seat." He gave me the exam and I passed it. He then told me, "Go get the proper paperwork, come back, and we will start the ball rolling."

When I filled out the paperwork, I put my home address as the Brodhead Naval Armory/Marine Corps Reserve Center in Detroit since I did not have a home address in the United States. On the next visit to the recruiting station, they shared with me the fact that I could not use the armory as my home address. The recruiter said to me, "The only option that you have is to get another address or join as a regular

Marine." I replied, "OK, I'll go regular."

It was December 1961 when I became a regular Marine. As I look back, I can honestly say it was the best of times.

I had the privilege of serving with the old-salts from World War II and the Korean War. Not that all Marines are not special, but it was something more for me being around those vets. Now at age 70, I still feel the same way when I am with them.

When I graduated from boot camp as a private first class, I went on liberty to Disneyland wearing my dress blues, which *Leatherneck* magazine awarded me.

From then on, I could be wearing the uniform of the day on liberty or I could wear the herringbone utilities on duty and was proud of it.

The best of times for me was when as a drill instructor in San Diego, I became a U.S. citizen. The Marine Corps and those seasoned warriors of old had a lot to do with my decision to become a citizen.

We did not have the Crucible. Today, Marines are proud to complete the Crucible. Someday in the distant future they may look back and say it was the best of times.

SSgt O.R. Grant  
USMC, 1961-68  
Lakeland, Fla.

• O.R. also told us: "You can't let a good Leatherneck go to waste. When I get my haircut, I always take my Leatherneck with me. My barber, Hardy Barefoot, is a Marine. His shop is located in North Lakeland—'Barefoot's Barber Shop.' It's a cool place to go with many vets as patrons." Hardy, you just got a free plug. Maybe someday I'll get a free haircut?—Sound Off Ed.

## Young Marines Are Learning Early To Take Care of Their Own

The picture of the Young Marines on page 34 of the June issue with General James F. Amos, 35th Commandant of the Marine Corps, includes Young Marine Sergeant Major Mary Wessel of Ohio's Ashtabula County Detachment of Young Marines visiting Guam and Iwo Jima.

YM SgtMaj Wessel is second from the left in the front row. She honored me by bringing back a vial of sand from the Guam beach where I landed on July 21, 1944, with 2d Battalion, 22d Marines.

Jack E. Baker  
Ashtabula, Ohio

## Reunions

• **2dMarDiv Assn.**, Aug. 5-9, Jacksonville, N.C. Contact LtCol David Brown, USMC (Ret), P.O. Box 8180, Camp Lejeune, NC 28547, (910) 451-3167, david.brown3@usmc.mil.

• **3dMarDiv Assn.**, Aug. 13-17, Reno, Nev. Contact GySgt Don H. Gee, USMC (Ret), P.O. Box 254, Chalfont, PA 18914, (215) 822-9094, gygee@aol.com, www.caltrap.com.

• **3dMarDiv Assn. (Texas Chapter)**, Oct. 9-12, San Antonio. Contact Mike Sohn, (210) 654-3310, jumient2@hotmail.com.

• **5thMarDiv Assn.**, Sept. 8-13, Tampa, Fla. Contact John A. Butler, 11871 Raintree Dr., Temple Terrace, FL 33617, (813) 985-0657, jbutler813@verizon.net.

• **6thMarDiv Assn.**, Oct. 7-12, Dumfries, Va. Contact Holiday Inn Quantico Center, 3901 Fettle Park Dr., Dumfries, VA 22025, (703) 441-9001, www.sixthmarine division.com.

• **FLC-FLSG (all units, RVN)**, Sept. 11-14, Portland, Ore. Contact Jim Kadas, (503) 998-3516, kadas3516@aol.com, mbaker.fl.g@gmail.com.

• **China Marine Assn.**, Sept. 17-21, Charleston, S.C. Contact AFR Inc. (Attn: China Marine), 322 Madison Mews, Norfolk, VA 23510, www.afr-reg.com/chinamarine2014.

• **Marine Corps CI Assn.**, Sept. 8-10, Quantico, Va. Contact Clay Niles, (540) 840-8013, clayton.niles@comcast.net, www.mccia.org.

• **USMC Combat Correspondents**

Assn., Sept. 8-11, Oceanside, Calif. Contact Jack T. Paxton, 110 Fox Ct., Wildwood, FL 34785, (352) 748-4698, usmccca@cfl.rr.com, www.usmccca.org.

• **Marine Corps Engineer Assn.**, Oct. 20-23, Pala, Calif. Contact Ken Frantz, 807 Carriage Hills Blvd., Conroe, TX 77384, (936) 273-4830, execdir@marcorengasn.org, www.marcorengasn.org.

• **USMC Motor Transport Assn.**, Sept. 21-24, Camp Pendleton, Calif. Contact Marcel Arbelaez, P.O. Box 1372, Jacksonville, NC 28541, (910) 450-1841, secretary@usmcmta.org, www.usmcmta.org.

• **Marine Corps Mustang Assn.**, Sept. 16-18, Las Vegas. Contact Sue Haley, (520) 628-7809, (541) 535-7117, suzhaley@gmail.com, www.marinecorpsmustang.org.

• **USMC Tankers Assn.**, Oct. 2-4, San Diego. Contact Buster Diggs, (619) 873-7385, bdiggs60@gmail.com.

• **Tri-State Marine Detachment #494, Marine Corps League**, Aug. 16, Youngstown, Ohio. Contact Chester Kaschak, (330) 533-6084, (330) 799-8497.

• **West Coast Drill Instructor Assn.**, Sept. 4-7, San Diego. Contact Gregg Stoner, (619) 884-9047, greggstoner22@aol.com, or SgtMaj Bobby Woods, USMC (Ret), (760) 215-9564, www.westcoastdi.org.

• **Marine Corps Air Transport Assn.**,

Oct. 1-5, Branson, Mo. Contact Retired Marine Humberto C. Reyes, 2103 W. Mulberry Ave., San Antonio, TX 78201, (210) 867-9226, (210) 734-5967, hreyes5416@aol.com.

• **Anacostia Marines**, Sept. 21-27, Oklahoma City. Contact Ron Bursch, (928) 533-4349, ronbur38@gmail.com.

• **MarDet/Barracks, NOB/NAS Bermuda**, Oct. 19-23, Branson, Mo. Contact Dennis McDonald, (763) 473-3458, d.mcdonald82575@comcast.net.

• **MarDet, U.S. Naval Prison Portsmouth/USNDC**, Sept. 17-22, Portsmouth, N.H. Contact Steve Jennison, (603) 988-9867, sajbuilds@aol.com, www.mardet.usnec.com.

• **Marine Barracks Sasebo, Japan**, Oct. 7-9, San Diego. Contact SgtMaj James Abraham, USMC (Ret), (949) 951-3824, (949) 433-3998, a-abraham@sbcglobal.net.

• **USMC Postal 0160/0161**, Oct. 19-24, San Antonio. Contact Harold Wilson, (740) 385-6204, handk.lucerne06@gmail.com.

• **Subic Bay Marines**, Sept. 2-7, San Diego. Contact John Laccinole, (818) 591-8916, johnlaccinole@aol.com, www.subicbaymarines.com.

• **CUPP Marines (RVN)**, Sept. 27-Oct. 2, Washington, D.C. Contact Rick

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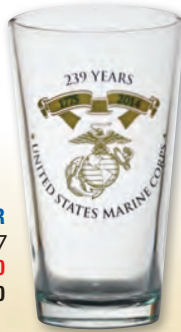


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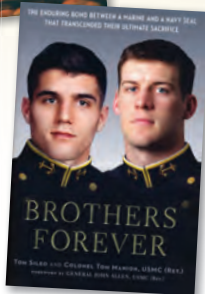
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Stanford, (850) 443-6373, rickstanford46@gmail.com.

- **Veterans of Guam and Iwo Jima (70th Anniversary)**, March 16-23, 2015, Iwo Jima. 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](http://www.miltours.com).

- **2d Bn, 4th Marines Assn.**, Aug. 13-17, Portland, Ore. Contact John Schassen, 14740 S. Sugar Pine Way, La Pine, OR 97739, (541) 536-5863, jnschassen@aol.com, [www.2-4association.org](http://www.2-4association.org).

- **3d Recon Assn.**, Sept. 16-21, Reno, Nev. Contact Doug Heath, (770) 684-7668; Bob Hoover, (843) 302-2151; or Cyndie Leigh, (702) 271-0365.

- **7th Engineer Bn Assn. (RVN)**, Sept. 18-21, Alexandria, Va. Contact Doug McMackin, (623) 466-0545, gunnymac@hotmail.com; Norm Johnson, (989) 635-6653, nwgj@outlook.com; Jim Taranto, (518) 567-4267, tarantoj@gmail.com; or Harry Dill, (704) 708-9865, hdill@carolina.rr.com.

- **1/27 (RVN, 1968)**, Sept. 18-21, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact Felix Salmeron, 1406 Nighthawk Dr., Little Elm, TX 75068, (469) 583-0191, mar463@aol.com, or Grady Birdsong, (303) 466-6491.

- **2/1 (RVN)**, Nov. 6-11, Charleston,



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S.C. Contact Mike Valdez, (713) 822-1165, mvaldez@windstream.net, www.ghostbattalion.org.

• **2/26**, Sept. 18-22, Charleston, S.C. Contact Sonny Hollub, (512) 825-4730, sonnyusmc@gmail.com.

• **3/11**, Sept. 10-14, San Diego. Contact Doug Miller, (402) 540-9431, dmiller48@gmail.com.

• **“Stormy’s” BLT 3/3 (1961-62)**, Oct. 20-23, Las Vegas. Contact James Burrus, (949) 830-1732, calpacgp@pacbell.net.

• **BLT 3/9 (50-Year Reunion)**, Sept. 8-12, 2015, San Diego. Contact Charles Saltaformaggio, (504) 812-7369, csaltaformaggio@yahoo.com.

• **Wpns Co, 1/1 (1988-92)**, Sept. 27, Las Vegas. Contact John Patricio, (916) 941-6791, john.patricio@patricio-systems.com.

• **Co A, 1st Bn, 7th Marines Assn.**, Oct. 19-22, North Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact Leonard R. “Shifty” Shifflette, 25 Emery St., Harrisonburg, VA 22801, (540) 434-2066, (540) 745-2066, captshifty@comcast.net.

• **Co B, 7th Motor T Bn (RVN)**, Oct. 1-3, San Diego. Contact Tim Weddington, 2527 S. Glen Ln., Independence, MO 64052, (816) 808-2357, timweddington@comcast.net.

• **A/1/12 (3dMarDiv, RVN)**, Sept. 17-21, San Diego. Contact Bob Schoenleber, (425) 822-7474, bobschoenleber@comcast.net.

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

• **D/1/7 (RVN)**, Aug. 28-31, Alexandria, Va. Contact Pat Hanley, (989) 859-5915, patkeenanhanley@gmail.com.

• **D/2/13 (Battle of Ngok Tavak and Kham Duc, 1968)**, Oct. 8-13, St. Louis. Contact Greg Rose, gregvn68@gmail.com, or Bill and Ann Schneider, wschnei591@aol.com.

• **G/2/7**, Aug. 6-10, Portland, Ore. Contact John Jones, (207) 717-3861, jjones48@gmail.com.

• **G/3/1 (Korea)**, Sept. 29-Oct. 3, Beaufort, S.C. Contact Carleton “Bing” Bingham, 1453 Patricia Dr., Gardnerville, NV 89460, (775) 265-3596, bingbingham@msn.com.

• **I/3/1 (Korea)**, Aug. 13-17, Branson, Mo. Contact Suzi Woodward, (860) 262-1334, suzil1111@aim.com.

• **I/3/9**, Aug. 5-11, Philadelphia. Contact Barbara Cunningham, 3075 Pine Rd., Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006, (267) 325-5226, silverwings4me2@yahoo.com.

• **K/3/1 (RVN, 1966-71)**, Aug. 21-24, Rochester, Minn. Contact David Crawley, (507) 273-7183, rocketsup@charter.net.

• **K/3/7 (and attached units, RVN)**,

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• **2d Topographic Co**, Oct. 26-29, Beaufort, S.C. Contact James Martin, 7 Crocket Dr., Chelmsford, MA 01824, (781) 572-7924, toptrooper@aol.com.

• **3d 155 mm Gun Battery (SP)**, Sept. 11-13, Alexandria, Va. Contact Ed Kirby, (978) 987-1920, ed-kirby@comcast.net.

• **Point Mugu Marine Detachment (1946-60)**, Sept. 5-8, Branson, Mo. Contact Arthur Smallenberger, (816) 436-6493, pt.mugumarine@kc.rr.com.

• **Yemassee Train Depot**, Oct. 17-18, Yemassee, S.C. Contact Roy Hughes, P.O. Box 265, Yemassee, SC 29945, (843) 589-3385.

• **“Alpha” Btry, 1/11 (RVN, 1965-66)**, Oct. 12-15, Las Vegas. Contact Gordon Hansen, (928) 757-4882, glhansen@citlink.net.

• **American Embassy Saigon, RVN (all military and civilian personnel stationed pre-April 30, 1975)**, May 17-21, 2015, Louisville, Ky. Contact MSgt Gus Tomuschat, USMC (Ret), (804) 693-3007, saigongunny@yahoo.com, www.saigonmac.org.

• **TBS, Co H and Co I, 5-62**, Sept. 25-28, San Diego. Contact Peter Obernesser, (719) 331-9510, peterjobernesser@gmail.com.

• **TBS, Co F, 6-79**, is planning a reunion. Contact LtCol Tom Conners, USMC (Ret), (919) 303-2697, (919) 418-5757, tconners3@yahoo.com.

• **USMC SATS/EAF**, Aug. 12-16, Baltimore. Contact James Halterman, (443) 402-0720, halterman1944@msn.com.

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(**Camp Sukiran, Okinawa, 1959-60**), Sept. 16-18, Quantico, Va. Contact Ron Peacock, 95383 Nassau River Rd., Fernandina Beach, FL 32034, (904) 583-2640, prpeacock2@gmail.com.

• **Plts 17 and 19, Parris Island, 1955 (and others who went through PI during 1955 are welcome too)**, June 4-6, 2015, Parris Island, S.C. Contact Al Pasquale,

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(484) 802-2516, [pasquale@bigplanet.com](mailto:pasquale@bigplanet.com).

- **Plt 296, Parris Island, 1965**, Nov. 7-10, Parris Island, S.C. Contact SgtMaj Jim Butler, USMC (Ret), (910) 340-7074, [jbutler29@ec.rr.com](mailto:jbutler29@ec.rr.com).

- **Plt 331, Parris Island, 1959**, Sept. 24-27, Quantico, Va. Contact MGySgt Bob Daniels, USMC (Ret), (904) 579-4346, [bertojotol@gmail.com](mailto:bertojotol@gmail.com), or Bob Wood, (205) 903-7220, [bwood@bellsouth.net](mailto:bwood@bellsouth.net).

- **Plt 358, San Diego, 1959**, Aug. 7-10, San Diego. Contact MSgt John Newport, USMC (Ret), (770) 926-4752, [mrnmrs41@aol.com](mailto:mrnmrs41@aol.com).

- **Plt 1096, San Diego, 1968**, Oct. 10-13, Phoenix. Contact Dan Hefner, (312) 504-4658, [drh818@msn.com](mailto:drh818@msn.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](mailto:jrj430@yahoo.com).

- **Plt 3042, San Diego, 1968**, September 2014, Washington, D.C. Contact Gary Berry, (301) 871-1040, [tagpresident@verizon.net](mailto:tagpresident@verizon.net).

- **Plt 4035, "Papa" Co, Parris Island, 2000**, is planning a reunion for 2015. Contact Tammy (Manyik) Epperson, (571) 451-7263, [tammy.epperson@gmail.com](mailto:tammy.epperson@gmail.com).

- **Marine Air Groups (WW II-present)**, Oct. 1-4, Branson, Mo. Contact James Jordan, (417) 535-4945,

[james.m.jordan@hughes.net](mailto:james.m.jordan@hughes.net), or Bob Miller, (636) 327-5854, [mbobsue13@gmail.com](mailto:mbobsue13@gmail.com).

- **VMF/VMA-311 Assn.**, Oct. 1-5, San Antonio. Contact Jim Galchick, 1290 E. 12th St., Salem, OH 44460, (330) 337-9383, [jgalchick@neo.rr.com](mailto:jgalchick@neo.rr.com); George Phander, 3032 Potshop Rd., Norristown, PA 19403, (610) 584-5654, [piboxer@comcast.net](mailto:piboxer@comcast.net); or Cecil Cheeka, 2207 Lilac St. S.E., Lacey, WA 98503, (360) 352-7227, [ccheeka@comcast.net](mailto:ccheeka@comcast.net), [www.vmf-vma-311reunion.org](http://www.vmf-vma-311reunion.org).

- **VMF-323/VMF (AW)-323 (1960-64)**, Sept. 2-5, Pensacola, Fla. Contact T. C. Crouson, (209) 369-6793, [tc@inreach.com](mailto:tc@inreach.com).

- **VMA (AW)-533 (Chu Lai/Iwakuni, 1969-70)**, Sept. 5-7, Havelock, N.C. Contact Jerry Callaway, (303) 946-7893, [j2callaway@q.com](mailto:j2callaway@q.com), or John Murphy, (609) 313-8434, [jmurphy317@gmail.com](mailto:jmurphy317@gmail.com).

### Ships and Others

- **USS Antietam Assn. (CV/CVA/CVS-36)**, Sept. 17-21, Branson, Mo. Contact Erma Booth, 5406 N. 37th St., Tacoma, WA 98407, (253) 752-6158, [ermabooth@aol.com](mailto:ermabooth@aol.com).

- **USS Canberra (CA-70/CAG-2)**, Oct. 8-12, Norfolk, Va. Contact Ken Minick, P.O. Box 130, Belpre, OH 45714, (740)

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

• USS *Elokomin* (AO-55), Sept. 23-26, Myrtle Beach, S.C. Contact Robert F. O'Sullivan, 25 Denny St., Dorchester, MA 02125, (617) 288-3755, [theeloman@verizon.net](mailto:theeloman@verizon.net).

• USS *Hornet* (CV-8, CV/CVA/CVS-12), Sept. 9-14, San Antonio. Contact Carl or Sandy Burket, P.O. Box 108, Roaring Spring, PA 16673, (814) 224-5063, [hornetcva@aol.com](mailto:hornetcva@aol.com), [www.usshornetassn.com](http://www.usshornetassn.com).

• USS *Houston* (CL-81), Oct. 20-25, Norfolk, Va. Contact Donna Rogers, 3949 Little John Dr., York, PA 17408, (717) 792-9113, [dlr71110@yahoo.com](mailto:dlr71110@yahoo.com).

• USS *Inchon* (LPH/MCS-12), Oct. 12-16, Norfolk, Va. Contact David F. Fix, 131 Waypoint Dr., Lancaster, PA 17603, (717) 203-4152, [ussinchon@gmail.com](mailto:ussinchon@gmail.com).

• USS *Iwo Jima* (LPH-2/LHD-7), Aug. 27-31, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact Robert McAnally, 152 Frissell St., Hampton, VA 23663, (757) 723-0317, [yujack46709@gmail.com](mailto:yujack46709@gmail.com).

• USS *John R. Craig* (DD-885), Sept. 24-28, Portland, Ore. Contact Jerry Chwalek, 9307 Louisiana St., Livonia, MI 48150, (734) 525-1469, [jermail@ameritech.net](mailto:jermail@ameritech.net), [www.ussjohnrcraig.com](http://www.ussjohnrcraig.com).

• USS *Perkins* (DD-26, DD-377, DD/DDR-877) Assn., Sept. 10-14, Fort Worth,

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Texas. Contact Billy or Sue Orr, 2388 E. State Hwy. 56, Bonham, TX 75418, (903) 227-1852, [jackaloperancher@msn.com](mailto:jackaloperancher@msn.com).

• USS *Ranger* (CVA/CV-61), Oct. 1-4, Jacksonville, Fla. Contact Larry Schmuhl, (904) 997-2217, [lschmuhl@gmail.com](mailto:lschmuhl@gmail.com).

• USS *Saratoga* (CV-3, CVA/CV-60), Sept. 25-27, Louisville, Ky. Contact Harvey Hirsch Jr., 139 Beechwood Dr.,

Franklin, VA 23851, (877) 360-7272 (SARA).

• **U.S. Navy Amphibious Force Veterans Assn.**, Sept. 7-10, New Orleans. Contact John J. Walsh, 2745 Dalton Ln., Toms River, NJ 08755, (732) 367-6472 (do not call after 8:30 p.m. ET), [navy\\_guys@verizon.net](mailto:navy_guys@verizon.net).

# Reader Assistance

Edited by Sara W. Bock

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

## Mail Call

- Marine veteran Gary Starbard, 1046 W. 26th Ave., Apt. 212, Anchorage, AK 99503, (907) 310-1568, to hear from members of **Plt 1083, San Diego, 1971**; or from those who served with **Range Co, Co D, 7th Engineer Bn, Japan, 1972-73**.

- Marine veteran Noel Garcia, P.O. Box 77, Falfurrias, TX 78355, (361) 667-0120, to hear from anyone present when **Co B, 1st Bn, 26th Marines** was ambushed at **Happy Valley, RVN, September 1968**.

- Marine veteran Franklin Johnson, (423) 802-8787, johnson4320@comcast.net, to hear from members of **Plt 185, Parris Island, 1950 (below)**.

- Marine veteran Al Pasquale, 5214 Kelly Dr., Norristown, PA 19401, (484) 802-2516, pasquale@bigplanet.com, to hear from or about **J. McMENAMIN, "Mike" Co, 3/1**, whose dog tag he located in Lower Providence, Pa.

- SSgt Thomas L. Ross, USMC (Ret), 0720 Victoria Mansion, Bitas Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija, Philippines, 044-464-

1669, engr.thomross@yahoo.com, to hear from those who served in **2d Plt, Co M, 3d Bn, 5th Marines, 1966-67**, who fought in **Operation Hastings, July 1966; Operation Colorado, August 1966;** and the **Battle of Hill 54, January 1967**.

- Edward Keller, 261 First Ave., St. James, NY 11780, edwardkeller36@yahoo.com, to hear from Marines who served with his late father, **1stLt Edward KELLER, in 2dMarDiv, 1961-64**.

- Marine veteran Don Clough, 6946 Old Pasco Rd., #197, Wesley Chapel, FL 33544, sandy80014@yahoo.com, to hear from **PFC MARX or anyone else who observed Clough's injuries** after he was wounded in **Korea on Sept. 25, 1950**.

- Col John R. Pierce, USMCR (Ret) and LtCol Kim E. Smith, USMCR (Ret), 409 N. Pacific Coast Hwy., #774, Redondo Beach, CA 90277, kimsmith@fastmail.net, to hear from **Col Christopher BAKER, USMCR (Ret)**, last known to be in the **Philadelphia area** and a **member of the Marine Corps League**.

## Wanted

*Readers are cautioned to be wary of sending money without confirming authenticity and availability of products offered.*

- Marine veteran Robert Kimble, 894 County Rd. 1067, Auxvasse, MO 65231, (573) 386-5707, wants a **recruit graduation book for Plt 191, San Diego, 1961**.

- Marine veteran Roy Lundquist, 810 Fifth Ave., Two Harbors, MN 55616, (218) 834-4917, wants **sateen utility trousers, size 32 waist**, as used in the 1950s and '60s.

- Marine veteran Stuart Ammerman, 132 N. Main St., Mifflintown, PA 17059, wants a **10-pocket cartridge belt** and a pair of **canvas leggings** from **WW II-Korean War era**.

## Sales, Trades and Giveaways

- Marine veteran Carl Withey, (315) 689-3653, crwithey@twcny.rr.com, has a **recruit graduation book for Plt 138, Parris Island, 1976**, which he will give to any member of the platoon.



**Marine veteran Franklin Johnson would like to hear from members of Plt 185, Parris Island, 1950.**



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Marine-to-Marine classified ads are accepted on a space-available basis and available only to those and/or their spouses who served in the United States Marine Corps. The ad must list the years served in the Marine Corps.

All ads are black-and-white in this section. Ads are accepted camera-ready and electronically; pdf, tif or jpeg formats (300 resolution). Any classified ad may occupy one column width (2.25 inches) by a maximum of 10 inches of column height.

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# Gyrene Gyngles

Edited by Sara W. Bock

Please submit copies of original poems with first publishing rights and author's permission to print granted to *Leatherneck*. Poems may be edited or shortened, as necessary. Due to volume received, submissions will not be acknowledged or returned.

## Thirteen Weeks and Counting

From the moment you step off the bus,  
You're in a different world.  
Duty, honor, and respect—  
All hopes come unfurled.

You try to remember those reasons why  
You found yourself on this path,  
Naïve dreams ravaged by  
This bone-chilling aftermath.

You falter—seeing an angry man  
Gravitate towards you.  
Why a bull's-eye on your forehead has been drawn?  
You haven't a single clue.

Barked orders carry spittle  
With marksman trajectory.  
At attention, you bear the angst  
Brought by this man's energy.

Shock—then fear—takes hold,  
Cold sweat worms down your spine.  
Too late you realize, here's one more decision  
You label "asinine."

"What am I doing here?  
What was I thinking?"  
Eyeballs strained and focused—  
"Please, Lord, keep me from blinking!"

"I am your mother, your father,  
Your sister and your brother.  
No one before me—  
There is no other."

"Thirteen weeks and counting,  
To make you a fighting machine,  
And God help me, ladies,  
I will build me a Marine!"

Billie Jo Edmunson  
(formerly GySgt Billie Jo Hill Stovall)

## Service

Some chose to join the Army, wearing berets of black and tan,  
Others joined the Navy and sailed to foreign lands.  
I chose to join the Marine Corps, the first to fight and die,  
From the halls of Montezuma, to the shores of Tripoli—  
Our motto: Semper Fi!

Some chose to join the Air Force, soaring the skies of blue,  
Others joined the Coast Guard—the littoral security crew.  
I chose to join the Marine Corps, the first to fight and die,  
No worse enemy, no better friend—  
Our motto: Semper Fi!

Regardless of our branch, we serve freedom every day—  
And those who never served trust us to pay their way.  
I chose to join the Marine Corps, the first to fight and die,  
Once a Marine, always a Marine,  
Our motto: Semper Fi!

Marine veteran Robert S. Shaw

## One "Jarhead" Left

When the Forces of Darkness have gathered,  
And Greed has the whip and the might—  
Lord, make it your will that there's one "jarhead" still  
To stand up for all that's right.

When Evil's revealed in its power,  
And Hatred is stalking our land,  
One Marine in the right can fight the good fight,  
And our people will need such a man.

When Wrong's in the saddle and rides,  
And Freedom is lacking a friend,  
We won't be bereft if there's one jarhead left—  
We know he will win out in the end.

Former SSgt Robert A. Hall



*Editor's note: We at Leatherneck are constantly working to ensure we publish the best possible magazine for our readers. On occasion, making changes and updates to Leatherneck's layout and content is required. This is one of those occasions—this will be our last issue containing "Gyrene Gyngles" as a monthly department. We have seen a significant decline in the number of poems submitted in the last few years and can no longer sustain "Gyngles" as a separate department. We will continue to accept poems for publication, however, and either publish them individually or save for a quarterly version of "Gyngles."*



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